



# GUIDANCE PROGRAMMES

FOR INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION BENEFICIARIES

## A GUIDE FOR:

- Recognised Refugees
- People with Subsidiary Protection Status

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## INTRODUCTION

This guide has been designed to provide some basic information for International Protection Beneficiaries who are not very familiar with the Cypriot system, culture and society. It aims to help the International Protection Beneficiaries become familiar with their rights and ways to enter the Cypriot labour market. Information included in this guide refers to Cyprus employment legislation, ways to find job, tips on preparing a Curriculum Vitae, social welfare services, health care services, training programs for the beneficiaries, etc.

It should be stressed that the guide has been designed in order to provide some basic and general information to the International Protection Beneficiaries. Further details and information about certain issues, can be obtained from the relevant Governmental Authorities. A detailed contact list of relevant Governmental Authorities is provided at the end of the booklet.

This guide has been designed as part of the action «Guidance Programmes for International Protection Beneficiaries» as part of the 2009 Annual Program of the European Refugees Fund. The action is being implemented by the Consulting and Professional Development Center Ltd in co-operation with G & D Social Lab Ltd. This action is a renewal of the action that has been allocated by the Asylum Service after an open tender competition that was published on 30/10/2009 in the Government Gazette **and it is co-funded by the European Refugees Fund by 75% and national funds by 25%.**

December 2010



## **EMPLOYMENT LEGISLATION**

Employment rights relating to recognized refugees and people with subsidiary protection, vary depending on the status and the duration of stay, as follows:

### **RECOGNISED REFUGEES**

According to the Refugee Law, a person who is recognized as a refugee receives equal treatment as the citizens of the Republic of Cyprus, regarding incoming earning employment. This means that refugees have the same rights as Cypriot citizens to employment, hence there are no restrictions to any particular sector and there is no need for the Labour Department to approve and stamp a contract of employment between an employer and a recognized refugee.

### **PEOPLE WITH SUBSIDIARY PROTECTION STATUS**

A person provided with the status of subsidiary protection, is entitled to be employed in accordance with the regulations and terms generally applicable to the profession and to the public administration, regarding the recognition of degrees and the salary immediately following his/her recognition with subsidiary protection status.

**For the period of 12 months from the day of the granting of subsidiary protection status,** a person can be employed in the following sectors:

1. Agriculture – Animal Husbandry – Fishery: Workers at Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fishery
2. Manufacture: Labourers at bakeries, animal food, recycling, wooden furniture polishers
3. Construction: Ironmongers, pattern makers, construction workers
4. Trade and Repairs: Straighters and painters of cars, gas station workers / workers at car washing machines, freight handlers of wholesale Trade
5. Other activities: Cleaners of buildings, sanitation workers, garbage collectors

**After the first year under subsidiary protection status,** a person has the same working rights as recognized refugees, which means that he/she receives equal treatment as the citizens of the Republic of Cyprus, regarding income earning employment. In other words, they have the same rights as Cypriot citizens to employment, hence they are not restricted to any sector, and there is no need for the Labour Department to approve and stamp a contract of employment between an

employer and a subsidiary protection holder, when 12 months have passed since he/she gained this status.

## **BASIC INFORMATION ON CYPRUS EMPLOYMENT LAW**

This law is applicable to the recognized refugees and people who have been granted subsidiary protection status for more than a year.

Cyprus law makes provision for certain matters, such as notice periods, probation periods and annual leave, usually by laying down certain minimum standards/guidelines which must be observed.

In cases where the law lays down minimum standards it may allow the employer to determine certain terms in a manner which he may consider more convenient to him. For example, the Law allows for a probation period of six months which may be extended by the employer in certain circumstances, during which the provisions of the law which govern unlawful dismissal such as, for example, the need to establish legitimate reasons and provide minimum statutory notice, do not apply.

### **Duration of Employment**

Employment Contracts in Cyprus may be of a fixed term or of unlimited duration. As a general rule, employment under a fixed term contract is considered as automatically (and lawfully) terminated upon the expiration of the specified term.

Fixed term contracts should be genuine and not be used as a means of depriving an employee of the benefits which are provided under the legislation for open term contracts (i.e. by year to year renewal of employment by means of fixed term contracts).

### **Contract of Employment**

Contracts of employment can be concluded orally or in writing between the employer and the employee. Usually, for senior roles contracts are drafted up and signed by both parties. Any third-country nationals who need a work permit to undertake employment in Cyprus must have a contract of employment to be drafted, signed by both parties and stamped by the Labour Department.

For Cypriots, EU nationals and for anybody who can legally work in Cyprus without a work permit, there are no legal requirements for contracts to be evidenced in writing

either by contract documents or by statements of terms and conditions. However, the Law imposes an obligation on the employer to provide an employee with specific information about his terms of employment within 1 month, at the latest, from the commencement of his employment.

The information must be given in a contract of employment, in a letter of appointment, or in any other document, signed by the employer which contains at least the following:

- a) Information about the identity of the parties,
- b) The place of work and the registered address of the business or the home address of the employer,
- c) The position or the specialization of the employee, his rank, the nature of his duties, as well as the objective of his/her employment,
- d) The date of commencement of the contract or the employment relationship and its anticipated duration if this is for a fixed time,
- e) The duration of any annual leave to which the employee is entitled, as well as the manner and time it may be taken,
- f) The notice periods which must be observed by the employer and the employee in the event of a termination of the employment, either by consent or unilaterally,
- g) All types of salaries/emoluments to which the employee may be entitled and the time schedule for their payment,
- h) The usual duration of his daily or weekly employment,
- i) Mentioning of any collective agreements which govern the terms and/ or the conditions of the employee's employment.

### **Minimum Salary**

The minimum monthly salary depends on the field of service (e.g. building industry, shop assistants, security guards, petrol stations, farms, etc) and it is set annually by an Order of the Ministerial Council that comes into force on 1 April of each year. There are 20 different fields which have different minimum salaries and working hours. The Department of Labour Relations (see contact details at the end of this booklet) can provide you with all the necessary information regarding the minimum salary for each field of service.

## **Working Hours**

Working time in any week may not exceed 48 hours on average, including overtime. The reference period for calculating the average weekly working time is set over a period of 4 months. If an employer requests from an employee to work longer than 48 hours on average (over the 4 month reference period), this is only possible if the employee gives his consent. Refusing to work more than 48 hours on average should not have any negative consequences for the employee. If the employee agrees to work more than that, the employer should keep up to date records of such work and make these records available to the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance with all relevant details.

An employee is entitled to at least eleven uninterrupted hours of rest each day (in twenty-four hours) and at least twenty four uninterrupted hours of rest weekly.

## **Night Workers**

Night work includes work commencing at 23:00 and ending at 06:00 of the following day. For somebody to be considered a night worker, he should work at least three hours of his daily working time as a normal course during night time, or is likely to work during night time for at least 726 hours of his annual working time.

Night workers should not, on average, exceed eight working hours per day, within a period of one month or within any other period specified in a contract. Night workers whose work involves hazards or physical or mental stress should not exceed eight hours.

## **Mine and Metal Extraction Workers**

Every person who works permanently or temporarily in a mine or metal extraction work respectively, except for the managers /clerks that do not work manually and persons working in the health and welfare services of the mine and metal industry respectively, should work:

- a maximum of 40 hours per week or 8 hours daily if they are working as metal workers working under the earth surface
- a maximum of 44 hours per week or 8 hours daily if they are working as metal workers working on the surface or as miners

### **Annual leave**

There are 20 working days of leave for employees on a five-day week and 24 working days for employees on a six-day week. The employment contract or agreement may provide for more days of paid leave. Procedures for requesting leave vary between companies, but usually advance notice is required when taking time off.

Entitlement to holiday is paid, either by social insurance or by the employer. An employer might choose to pay the employees' annual leave. As regards to payment by social insurance there is a requirement that the employee has made use of at least 9 consecutive holidays within that year.

The annual leave may only be substituted by monetary compensation only in the case of termination of employment.

### **Sick leave**

Under Cyprus law there is no obligation for the employer to pay sick leave. Sick leave is fixed by agreement between employers and employees through collective or individual agreements. When an employer does not enter into a specific arrangement with the employees about sick leave pay, then the employees are entitled to sickness benefit from the Social Insurance Fund, given certain circumstances.

An employee is entitled to receive sick leave pay for any period of over 3 days in which he/she is unable to work in accordance with the prescribed statutory rate. The maximum number of days for which sick leave pay is payable is 156 days in relation to every period of interrupted employment, which can be extended under certain circumstances where incapacity is not of a permanent nature.

According to the collective agreement, for Hotel employees with a service of between 6 months and 3 years, the sick leave entitlement is 15 days and for those with service longer than 3 years is 24 days.

For Catering employees with a service of between 6 months and 3 years, the sick leave entitlement is 10 day and for those with a service longer than 3 years is 18 days.

## **Maternity leave**

Eighteen weeks of paid maternity leave are provided to working mothers, of which 9 must be taken within the period beginning on the 2nd week before the week of expected childbirth. The right to maternity leave is provided on presentation of a certificate from a registered doctor that she expects childbirth during a week which is designated in the certificate. Once a woman has informed her employer that she's pregnant, her employer cannot dismiss her until the baby is born and reaches the age of 9 months old (five months after the maternity leave expires)\*. During maternity leave, the employee receives maternity entitlement from the Department of Social Insurance.

During her maternity leave, the working woman will receive a maternity allowance from the Social Insurance Fund, as set out in the Social Insurance Law. The maternity leave, where there is a collective agreement, is complemented by the employer to the level of the working woman's salary, for as many weeks as the collective agreement provides for.

According to the Law, the employer may be justified in terminating the pregnant woman's services only in three cases:

- a) If she commits a serious error or if her conduct is such that justifies the termination of her employment,
- b) if the business which employs her closes down, or
- c) if she was employed on contract for a limited time, in which case when her contract expires the employer may terminate her services.

The Law gives working women the right to take one hour off work for nine months after giving birth, without any income being held back, to take care of and breast-feed her child. The working woman may use this right in three different ways, in agreement with her employer:

- To go to work one hour late.
- To leave work one hour early.
- To interrupt her work for one hour.

According to the law, maternity leave does not in any way affect the seniority of the woman or her right to promotion or to return to work or the level of her salary.

### **Parental leave**

A parent who has worked for an employer for more than 6 months is entitled to parental leave (13 weeks until the child becomes 12 years of age, from one up to 4 weeks a year). In case of natural parents the parental leave is taken after the expiration of the maternity leave and before the child reaches the age of six. In case of adoption the parental leave is taken after the expiration of the maternity leave and within the six years from the date of adoption of the child, provided that the child is not over 12 years old.

The employee is obliged to notify the employer in writing of the commencement and termination dates of the parental leave, at least five weeks before the parental leave. The employer is allowed to postpone the granting of parental leave for justifiable reasons related to the operation of the employee requesting it. For example, when the work is seasonal, when a replacement of the employee cannot be found within the notice period, when a lot of employees have also applied for parental leave at the same time.

### **Leave for Reasons of Force Majeure**

The employee is entitled to unpaid leave of 7 days per year for reasons of force majeure which are connected to family reasons in relation to illness or accident of his dependants and necessitate the immediate presence of the employee. Such leave can be granted either partially or altogether. Employees must give notice of their intention to take leave the soonest possible.

### **Public holidays**

The following are the most common public holidays in Cyprus. However, it should be noted that in certain fields, such as shops and hotels, these might be different.

1 January – New Year's Day	25 December – Christmas Day
6 January - Epiphany	26 December – Boxing Day
25 March – Greek National Day	Green Monday
1 April – Cypriot National Day	Good Friday
1 May – Labour Day	Holy Saturday
15 August – Assumption Day	Easter Sunday
1 October – Cyprus Independence Day	Easter Monday
	Monday of Pentecost
28 October – Greek National Day	

### **Discrimination (General)**

Under the Convention Relating to Discrimination, which the Republic of Cyprus has adopted:

It is specified that:

- a) Every discrimination, exception or preference based on the grounds of race, colour, sex, religion, political beliefs, ethnic origin or social background, which results to elimination or reduction of the principle of equality of opportunity or treatment in relation to occupation or profession; and
- b) Any discrimination exception or preference which may result to elimination or reduction of the principle of equality of opportunities or treatment in relation to occupation or profession, as may be determined from time to time by the State, after consultation with the representative employment and employer organizations or other competent bodies.

Discrimination, exception or preference in relation to a specific profession, which is based on the needs of that specific profession are not considered discriminatory. Equal treatment is a legal obligation of every employer under national law. This applies to full time as well as part time employees.

### **Equal Pay for the Same or Equal Value Work**

The law imposes an obligation on the employer to provide to his employees equal payment for equal work regardless of sex. Where a system of professional classification is applied for the purposes of determining pay, this system must be based on common criteria applicable to both male and female employees in such a way so that any sex discrimination is abolished. The comparison is made with reference between employees who have been employed by the same employer or by businesses controlled by the same employer during the two preceding or following years.

### **Equal Treatment of Part Time Employees**

The equal treatment at work obligation applies to full time as well as part time employees. Where the employee is a part time employee, permanent or temporary, the aim of the law is to ensure that he enjoys proportionately equal rights as full time employees.

The principle of proportionality requires that a comparable part time employee is entitled to such salary or other benefits in proportion to the number of weekly working hours, compared to the number of working hours of the corresponding comparable full time employee.

### **Health and Safety at Work**

Generally, there is a statutory obligation on every employer to ensure the safety, health and prosperity at work of all his employees. Furthermore, both employers and employees have specific statutory obligations in relation to health and safety at the workplace which must be followed.

There is a general statutory obligation for employers to ensure that every employee is provided with the necessary and sufficient training on the matter of safety and health, especially in the form of information and instructions relating to his specific work position or duties.

### **Social Insurance**

#### **General Obligations**

The law imposes an obligation on employers to register with the Social Insurance Department. Cypriot residents or EU nationals who reside and work in Cyprus have a general obligation to register with Social Insurance. Social Insurance registration and contributions is compulsory in relation to the employment of any person under an employment contract in Cyprus by a Cypriot employer. This also applies for non-Cypriots who work in Cyprus, including refugees and people with subsidiary protection.

The contributions to the Scheme both of the employees and the self- employed is 17,9% on the insured income. For employees, the contribution is paid by the employer who deducts 6,8% of the employee's income and pays 6,8% himself, while the remaining 4,3% is paid by the government.

Some of the benefits the insured are entitled to and the preconditions for someone to be entitled are the following:

<b>Contributions</b>	<b>Entitled</b>	<b>Preconditions</b>
1. Marriage allowance	Women employees, self-	a) Wedding,

	employed women and optionally insured women.	b) 26 weeks of contributions before the wedding, c) 20 times the weekly amount of basic insured income, real or credited to the previous year.
2. Child allowance	Employees, self employed and optionally insured.	a) Childbirth, b) 26 weeks of contributions of the mother or the husband before childbirth, c) 20 times the weekly amount of basic insured income, real or credited to the previous year.
3. Funeral allowance	Employees, self employed and optionally insured.	a) 26 weeks of contributions before the death, b) 20 times the weekly amount of basic insured income, real or credited to the previous year.
4. Maternity allowance	Women employees, self-employed women and optionally insured women in the service of a Cypriot abroad.	a) 26 weeks of contributions on the amount of the insured income, b) 20 times the weekly amount of basic insured income, real or credited to the previous year.
5. Sick leave allowance	Employees, self employed and optionally insured in the service of a Cypriot abroad.	a) Must not work due to sickness, b) 26 weeks of contributions on the amount of the insured income, c) 20 times the weekly amount of basic insured income, real or credited to

		the previous year.
6. Unemployment benefit	Employees, self employed and optionally insured in the service of a Cypriot abroad.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Must be unemployed and fit to work,</li> <li>b) 26 weeks of contributions on the amount of the insured income,</li> <li>c) 20 times the weekly amount of basic insured income.</li> </ul>
7. Disability allowance	Employees, self employed and optionally insured in the service of a Cypriot abroad.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) To have been unable to work for 156 days during the same period,</li> <li>b) 156 times the weekly amount of the basic insured income,</li> <li>c) a weekly average of real and credited income equal to 1/4 of the weekly amount of basic insured income,</li> <li>d) 20 times the weekly amount of basic insured income.</li> </ul>
8. Bodily harm allowance	Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) To be unable to work due to a work accident or vocational illness,</li> <li>b) not to receive full pay from the employer for as long as the affected person is not working.</li> </ul>
9. Allowance for disability from a work accident or vocational illness, a) Disability pension, b) Disability benefit	Employees	The disability pension will be given if the degree of disability is over 20%. The disability benefit will be given if the degree of disability is from 10% to

		19%.
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### **Termination of Employment**

The basic provisions of the Employment Law concern the reasons for which a dismissal may be considered justified, the period of warning the employer must give, the reasons for which an employee is considered redundant and the amount of compensation and redundancy an employee is entitled to.

Employment Law protects any employee who is employed for a period of more than 26 weeks or after the agreed probation period has passed (this can be for a period of 26-104 weeks).

Reasons for legal termination of employment (the dismissed does not receive compensation):

- a) the employee does not perform his duties in a reasonably satisfactory manner (excluding temporary disability due to illness, injury and childbirth)
- b) the employee has been made redundant
- c) the termination is due to force majeure (higher violence), act of war, civil commotion / political uprising , act of God, destruction, or fire that is not due to negligence or voluntary actions of the employer
- d) the employment is terminated at the end of a contract of fixed time or due to retirement of the employee
- e) the employee displays such conduct so as to render himself subject to summary dismissal (without notice)
- f) the employee has committed a serious error, disciplinary or criminal offence during the performance of his duties, has committed a penal crime while carrying out his duties, showed improper conduct or indecent behaviour during the performance of his duties or has repeatedly violated or ignored the work regulations.

Dismissal for any reason which cannot be justified under any one or more of the above grounds will be considered unlawful by a Cyprus court and will give rise to a right to statutory compensation. The burden of proof, which by law is on the employer, shows that in effect any dismissal is deemed unlawful unless otherwise proven. Any other ground alleged for dismissal is likely to be regarded by the courts as unlawful.

### **Notice Period for Legal Termination of Employment**

The employee is entitled to a warning when he is to be dismissed, according to the period of his service:

- a) 26 to 52 weeks of continuous employment: one week's notice
- b) 52 to 104 weeks of continuous employment: two weeks' notice
- c) 104 to 156 weeks of continuous employment: four weeks' notice
- d) 157 – 311 weeks of continuous employment: four weeks' notice for the first 156 weeks and then one additional week of notice for every period of 52 weeks
- e) 312 or more weeks of continuous employment: eight weeks' notice

The notice period can be effectively extended by agreement above the prescribed statutory minimum. The employer who serves notice of termination to an employee has the right to require the employee to accept payment instead of notice. As far as a salaried employee is concerned, such payment should cover his salary entitlement, pro-rata, for the period of the notice.

### **Notice for Termination of Employment by Employee**

When an employee decides to leave his current employment, he should also provide his employer with notice period. This is as follows:

- a) Less than 26 weeks of continuous employment: no notice period required
- b) 26 – 52 weeks of continuous employment: 1 week's notice
- c) 52-260 weeks of continuous employment: 2 weeks' notice
- d) More than 260 weeks of continuous employment: 3 weeks' notice.

The notice period can be effectively extended by agreement above the prescribed statutory minimum.

### **The Legal Provisions Relating to Redundancy (General)**

"Redundancy" is defined as termination of employment in the following cases:

- (a) The employer has ceased or intends to cease carrying on the business in which the employee is engaged
- (b) The employer has ceased or intends to cease carrying on the business in the area where the employee is engaged, unless it is considered to be reasonable that the employee will work in the new area in which the employer still carries out work
- (c) For any of the following reasons which relate to the operation of the business:

- (i) Modernization, mechanisation/automation or changes in the production or organisation methods of the business, resulting in reduction of staff
- (ii) Changes in the products or the methods of production or the necessary qualifications of the employees
- (iii) Closing down of departments
- (iv) Difficulties in placing products in the market or credit difficulties
- (v) Lack of orders or raw materials
- (vi) Rarity of means of production
- (vii) Reduction of the capacity of work

As far as redundancy is concerned, the employee who has been employed for a continuous period of 104 weeks with the same employer is entitled to payment from the Redundancy Fund of the Ministry of Employment and Social Insurance, in accordance with the Law.

Notice of termination of employment must also be given to the employee, the minimum period of which is determined by reference to the period of his continuous employment with the employer (see above).

### **Statutory Compensation for Unlawful Dismissal**

An unlawfully dismissed employee is entitled to compensation which is estimated according to the period of continuous employment with the employer who dismissed him/her.

Where, for example, prior to dismissal the employee has been employed for a continuous period of up to 4 years, the employee is entitled to 2 weeks' wages for every 52 week period, and so on. Statutory compensation entitlement will be additional to any contractual entitlements and any statutory notice period which may be applicable in any given case.

### **Hotel and catering industry**

*Working hours:* the weekly working hours should not exceed 48 hours weekly, including overtime. The maximum daily working hours for hotel employees are 8 and can be spread in a period of time not exceeding 13 hours including maximum two interruptions (3 shifts).

For Catering employees, the working hours should not exceed 8 hours daily with maximum one interruption (2 shifts).

*Overtime work:* for hotel employees overtime is up to 9 hours weekly and for Catering employees is up to 8 hours weekly. In both cases, the minimum hourly overtime rate should be 1:1,5.

*Weekly rest:* every hotel and catering employee is entitled to one day off weekly, fully paid.

*Professional booklet:* every employer is obliged to provide a professional booklet to every hotel or catering employee.

*Termination of employment:*

(a) Hotel employees: employment may be terminated without any notice during the first month of service. After completing the first month of service, the employer or the employee, whoever terminates the employment relationship, shall give notice accordingly or pay compensation in respect thereof.

(b) Catering employees: either the employer or the employee, whoever terminates the employment relationship, shall give notice of a specific time period accordingly or pay compensation in respect thereof.

*Service charge:* every hotel or catering employer charges 10% for the provision of services on the customers' bills, except in the case of certain goods and services. The total service charge is distributed among the hotel and catering employees every month.

*Display of list and table:* every hotel and catering employer is obliged to display in the establishment, a list of the employees with their corresponding occupation, a table with the daily working hours, the weekly rest day, the annual leave and the employees' points according to which the distribution of the service charge will be made among them.

### **Part-time employees**

Part-time employee means an employee whose normal hours of work, calculated on a weekly basis or on average over a period of employment of up to one year, are less than the normal hours of work of a comparable full-time employee, who is employed by the same establishment or undertaking.

### *Rights of part-time employees*

Every part-time employee shall be entitled to equal terms and conditions of employment and to equal treatment and shall enjoy the same level of protection as that provided to a comparable full-time employee, in particular with regard to:

- salary and benefits
- the social insurance scheme
- the protection of maternity
- annual leave with pay and paid public holidays
- parental leave
- sick leave
- termination of employment.

A part-time employee shall also be entitled to equal treatment and enjoy the same level of protection as that provided to a full-time employee in relation to:

- the right to join and participate in the activities of a union, the right to collective bargaining and the right to act as an employees' representative
- health and safety at work
- the protection from unfavourable discrimination in employment and occupation.

## **SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES**

According to the law, beneficiaries of international protection who reside in areas controlled by the Republic of Cyprus and who do not have sufficient income and economic sources to cover their basic needs, are entitled to social benefits.

The application must be submitted by the person who intends to receive the income, or if he/she is unable due to mental or psychological illness, by an authorised representative.

When an applicant is working at a full time job and receives a certain income or voluntarily remains unemployed, or works less hours than what he/she can, or refuses to attend approved by the government training courses, no benefits are provided.

The Director of the Social Welfare Services might examine an application for social benefits of a person who is also employed. These might include disabled people, single parents, a parent with four or more dependants who live with him/her. In all of these cases, the income shouldn't be above a certain amount.

All applications are examined and evaluated according to the individual's economic and social status. More details can be provided from the Social Welfare Services.

## HEALTH

Medical care is provided by the government medical services and the private medical sector. Public medical services can be used by anyone who chooses to be treated at a public medical institution. They provide treatment free of charge or at a reduced rate for certain groups of individuals.

Emergency care is provided free to all persons who arrive at the accident and emergency departments of state hospitals. Every city has its own hospital with an accident and emergency department. Individuals, who visit the private sector, pay the costs themselves.

Medical care is provided for free or at specific rates according to one's income and includes general and specialist care, hospitalisation, laboratory services, discounted medicine, basic dental care, maternity care, appliances and transportation.

### Medical Cards

Somebody who qualifies for Cyprus social insurance benefits can also obtain a health card. There are two cards, which are allocated according to one's means, as follows:

- **Medical Card A** – This is issued to individuals without dependants and an annual income of under €15,377, couples with an annual income of under €30,754 (increased by €1,708 for each dependent child), and members of families with four or more children (irrespective of income). It entitles the holder to free healthcare.
- **Medical Card B** – This is issued to individuals without dependents and an annual income of between €15,377 and €20,503, and to members of families with up to three children and an annual income of between €30,754 and €37,589. It entitles the holder to half-price healthcare.

Somebody who earns income above these amounts must pay around €12 for a consultation with a doctor and around €85 per day for in-patient hospital care.

The appropriate application form can be obtained from any general hospital in Cyprus and be submitted, along with proof of income and evidence of payment of tax and social insurance contributions, to the Ministry of Health in Nicosia. This can normally be done via the local health centre or general hospital in Cyprus. The

medical card is issued within three weeks. Medical cards are valid for two years, and one month before expiration, a renewal application should be submitted.

## **FINDING A JOB**

### **DISTRICT AND LOCAL LABOUR OFFICES – DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR**

The District and Local Labour Offices help employers to find suitable staff for their businesses and employees to find a suitable job. If you are a recognised refugee or a beneficiary of subsidiary protection for more than one year, you can register as an unemployed person, or as a person looking for a better job.

**When do they work:** You can visit one of the offices any day from Monday to Friday from 08:00 to 13:00 (to register as unemployed), and Wednesday afternoons between 15:00 and 17:00 (for employed people looking for a better job). You can also book an appointment with one of the officers-counsellors for a one-to-one meeting, during which they can inform you about suitable jobs, any benefits you might be eligible for and any upcoming trainings suitable for you.

**What to take with you:** In order to be able to register for these services, you should take with you your refugee ID or residence permit, or the confirmation from the relevant services that you are a person with subsidiary protection. If you wish to be registered as a job seeker, you should take with you copies of your certificates from your school, college or university and any exams you may have taken.

### **EURES**

The purpose of EURES is to provide information, advice and recruitment/placement (job-matching) services for the benefit of employees and employers as well as any citizen wishing to benefit from the principle of the free movement of persons. EURES has a human network of more than 700 EURES advisers that are in daily contact with jobseekers and employers across Europe.

In European cross-border regions, EURES has an important role to play in providing information about and helping to solve all sorts of problems related to cross-border commuting that employees and employers may experience. Set up in 1993, EURES is a co-operation network between the European Commission and the Public Employment Services of the EEA Member States (The EU countries plus Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein) and other partner organisations. Switzerland also takes part in EURES co-operation. The joint resources of the EURES member and partner organisations provide a solid basis for the EURES network to offer high quality services for both employees and employers.

Useful information can be found regarding this service, at the following websites:

[www.eures.europa.eu](http://www.eures.europa.eu)

[www.youthemployment.org.cy](http://www.youthemployment.org.cy)

### **LOCAL NEWSPAPERS**

Almost all newspapers publish a number of jobs and they are a good source of looking for a job. More specifically:

Politis – special inset on work every Tuesday

Phileleftheros – special inset on jobs every Wednesday

Souper Aggelies – every Tuesday

Chries Efkeries – every Friday

Simerini – special inset on work every Sunday

### **TRADE UNIONS**

In Cyprus, there are four main general trade union confederations in the private sector – the Pancyprian Federation of Labour (PEO), the Cypriot Employees' Federation (SEK), the Democratic Labour Federation of Cyprus (DEOK) and the group of independent trade unions (POAS). The two major unions, PEO and SEK, are both of similar size. Both have around 70,000 members. PEO traces its history back to 1941, although it changed its name in 1946, when the original organisation was declared illegal by the then British colonial regime. It maintains its position on the left of the political spectrum. SEK was founded in 1943 and is closer to the parties of the right and centre. The third union, DEOK has around 7,500 members and has links to the socialist party.

The two main trade unions are organised broadly along industry lines, with federations for construction workers, hotel workers and government employees, for example. There are eight federations in PEO and seven in SEK. PEO has a stronger base among employees of manual labour.

### **Private Recruitment Agencies**

There are a number of private recruitment agencies in Cyprus, with which you can register in order to find a job. You should submit a Curriculum Vitae/Resume to them and should they have a suitable job with one of their clients, they will contact you and

arrange for an interview. You should keep in mind that the fee is paid by the employer and not the candidates.

## **PREPARING FOR AN INTERVIEW**

A personal interview is a formal meeting of a candidate for a job with an employer. During this meeting you can explain to the potential employer some details about yourself, ask questions about the job and the company. You can then decide if this is the right job for you. The employer, at the same time is evaluating you compared to the other candidates and will decide if you are suitable for the job.

### **Useful tips for interviews**

- Arrive about 10 minutes before the scheduled time of your appointment. **NEVER** be late for an appointment with an employer
- Dress appropriately, according to the job you are applying for
- An interview might last from 15 minutes up to an hour, depending on the position
- It is common to make a handshake with the person who will do the interview
- You should be honest and explain to your employer why you left your previous job
- If you do not understand a question, you can ask again
- You can ask the interviewer about the duties of the job, the working hours and the salary, and any other important issues that will help you decide about the job. However, this should **NOT** be your only concern during the interview. The employer needs to see that you care about doing the job.
- At the end of the meeting, you can ask the interviewer when you should expect to hear back from them
- Before you leave, remember to thank the interviewer for their time and for inviting you for an interview

## **PREPARING YOUR CV**

For some jobs, especially in offices, having a complete and up to date CV is very important when looking for a job. It is the first impression your future employer gets, so you have to make sure that it contains all the necessary information about your knowledge, skills and abilities.

### **Tips on preparing a CV**

- Make sure it contains only the necessary information your future employer will need.
- It should be short: usually two pages are enough
- Adjust your CV according to the position you are looking for
- Make sure that the information you include is correct, especially your contact details

### **EUROPASS**

You can get assistance from the National Europass Centre of Cyprus, located at the Cyprus Productivity Centre.

They also run Workshops on how to build your CV, which you can attend for free.

You can also complete your CV online at <https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/>

## **TRAINING PROGRAMMES**

### **Cyprus Productivity Centre / Human Resource Development Authority / Higher Hotel Institute / Department of Labour**

The Cyprus Productivity Centre, the Human Resource Development Authority, the Higher Hotel Institute and the Department of Labour of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurances offer training courses to people who are unemployed, in order to help them get back in the labour market.

In 2010 they plan to conduct the following courses:

- Basic Computer Skills
- Basic Accounting Skills
- Basic Skills for taking care of the elderly
- Entrepreneurship and Managerial Skills
- Training for Handling Energy and Renewable Sources of Energy

Other training sessions involve topics on health and safety at the workplace, language skills, basic Greek language skills for the Hotel industry, training for the building industry, technical skills for fridge and air-conditioning technicians, etc.

For more details on the exact dates and place for the seminars, the Cyprus Productivity Centre and Human Resource Development Authority can be contacted.

### **Asylum Service / European Refugee Fund**

The Ministry of Interior and more specifically the Asylum Service, assigns private companies or voluntary organizations to carry out certain programs and provide services for Recognized refugees and people with subsidiary protection. These programs run from time to time and one should always try to be informed about them, from the Asylum Service. Such programs are: Provision of Basic Greek Language Training for Beneficiaries of International Protection.

Currently, Cyprus Labour Institute (INEK-PEO) has the responsibility to do this. Yet, it should be noted that next time they might be assigned to other organizations.

## **EDUCATIONAL CENTRES**

The Ministry of Education and Culture operates Educational Centres all around Cyprus, in an attempt to provide self-development opportunities to all the citizens of Cyprus, aged 15 years old and above, and enhance the knowledge and skills of all citizens. The various courses that run at these centres assist in the personality development of every person, and the social, economic and cultural development of the citizens and the society in general.

Most of the courses run between the end of October till the end of May of the next year. The classes are once a week, usually in the afternoon and last 90 minutes each time. At the end of the course, the participants receive certificates of attendance.

There are about 70 different topics that are taught every year and more than 20,000 people participate in these programmes every year. The topics are separated by category:

Languages: English, Arabic, Bulgarian, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Romanian, Russian, Turkish and Greek (for non- Cypriots, including asylum seekers).

Cultural topics: Graphic Design, Decoration, Flower arrangement, Theatre, Painting, Music, Photography, Cyprus Literature, Dancing, etc.

Health: Exercising, Cooking, First Aid, etc.

Technical courses: Electrical House ware, Engineering, Gardening, Automotive engineering, Building, Plumbing, etc.

Other topics: Computing, Typing, Accounting, Marketing, Public Relations, Sign language, Legal issues, Family law, Braille system, etc.

### **Tuition Fees**

Towns: €51

Villages and smaller communities: €41

Communities with less than 500 inhabitants: €20

Computer courses (for all areas): €59

People over the age of 65 years old: Free

For more details about these courses you should contact the relevant departments of the Ministry of Education and Culture (see end of this booklet).

## **PUBLIC / GOVERNMENTAL EDUCATION INSTITUTES**

The Governmental Education Institutes operate all around Cyprus, offering courses for both school-children and adults. There are more than 40 Institutes and more than 15,000 students attend courses at these. They operate in the afternoon at public schools, when the normal school day is over. Classes run twice a week, 90 minutes each time.

The courses currently offered at the Institutes are mainly foreign languages at different levels: English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Russian, Turkish and Greek for English speakers. Recently courses for Computers and Accounting are also being offered.

The fees for these courses are comparatively low. For example, for school students taking English courses the fees are between €225 for elementary level and €386 for advanced level. Accounting courses cost between €263 for elementary level and €386 for advanced level. For adult courses the fees are also low. English courses cost between €281 and €386. Computer courses cost between €300 and €386, depending on the level. Students of these Institutes take exams in order to obtain a Certificate of Completion of their course.

For more details about these courses you should contact the relevant departments of the Ministry of Education and Culture (see end of this booklet).

## **USEFUL CONTACTS**

### **DISTRICT AND LOCAL LABOUR OFFICES**

<http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/sid/sid.nsf>

#### **Nicosia District Labour Office**

3 Mousiou str., Nicosia

Telephone: 22403000

#### **Aglantzia Local Labour Office**

22 Larnacos Ave, 2101 Aglantzia

Telephone: 22874800

#### **Lakatamia Local Labour Office**

Corner Makariou III Ave. and 16 Apostolou Varnava str.

2312 Lakatamia

Telephone: 22443717

#### **Latsia Local Labour Office**

5A&B Demetri Stavrou Ave.

2224 Latsia

Telephone: 22815848

#### **Kakopetria Local Labour Office**

16 Ayiou Georgiou Str., 2800 Kakopetria

Telephone: 22463702

#### **Limassol District Labour Office**

80 Franklin Roosevelt Avenue, Social Insurance Building, 2nd floor, Limassol

Telephone: 25827350

#### **Ypsonas Local Labour Office**

2, Oresti str. , 4186 Ypsonas

Telephone: 25826900

#### **Eastern Limassol Local Labour Office**

78, Griva Digeni avenue, 3101 Limassol

Telephone: 25814914

**Agros Local Labour Office**

30, Agros str., 4860 Agros

Telephone: 25874074

**Participation at the Citizen Service Centre of Pelendri**

(Every Monday and Thursday)

Telephone: 25813400

**Pafos District Labour Office**

1, Ayiou Spyridonos str, 8021 Pafos

Telephone: 26821658

**Polis (Chrysohou) Local Labour Office**

Corner 1 Arsinoes Ave and Timohari str, 8820 Polis Chrysokhou

Telephone: 26322409, 26821841

**Larnaca (and Famagusta) District Labour Office**

Phlios Tsigarides Street, Social Insurance Building, Larnaca

Telephone: 24805312

**Free Famagusta Area Local Labour Office**

49 Acropoleos Street, 5380 Dherynia

Telephone: 23812052

**Aradippou Local Labour Office**

20 Acropoleos str. Aradippou

Telephone.: 24813295

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**DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR RELATIONS**

<http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/dlr/dlr.nsf>

**Nicosia Central Office and District Office**

54 Gr. Dighenis Ave., Silvex House, 1096 Lefkosia, Cyprus.

Telephone: 22451500 or 224515010

**Limassol District Office**

Municipality of Lemesos Building, 80 Fr. Roosevelt, 3011, Limassol

Telephone: 25819252-3, 25819401-2, 25819440

**Larnaca District Office**

Larnaca Social Insurance Building

Telephone: 24805401, 24805332, 24805402, 24805321

**Pafos District Office**

1 Agiou Spyridona Str., 8021 Pafos.

Telephone: 26822620, 26822640-1-3

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**SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES**

<http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/sws/sws.nsf>

**Social Welfare Services – Central Offices**

63 Prodromou, 1468 Nicosia

Telephone: 22406709

**Nicosia District Welfare Office**

66 Agiou Ilarionos, 1026 Nicosia

Telephone: 22804600

**Limassol District Welfare Office**

80 Franglinou Rousvelt, 3011 Limassol

Telephone: 25804535

**Larnaca District Welfare Office**

23-25 Piliou, 6301 Larnaca

Telephone: 24800101

**Pafos District Welfare Office**

28, Aristoteli Valaoriti & Kinira, 8100 Pafos

Telephone: 26306240

**Ammochostos District Welfare Office**

134, 1st Apriliou, 5280 Paralimni

Telephone: 23821551

**Morphou/Evrychou District Welfare Office**

11, Griva Digeni, 2831 Evrychou

Telephone: 22870582

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**CYPRUS PRODUCTIVITY CENTRE**

<http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/kepa/kepa.nsf/>

**Vocational Training Workshops, Nicosia**

Kallipoleos Avenue, 2100 Nicosia

Telephone: 22806000

**Vocational Training Workshops, Limassol**

1 Elpidos Str., Linopetra, 3070 Limassol,

Telephone: 25323904

**Vocational Training Workshops, Larnaca**

Spyrou Kyprianou Ave., No.100, 6052 Larnaca,

Telephone: 24630133

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**HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

<http://www.hrdauth.org.cy/>

2 Anavissou, 2025, Strovolos, Nicosia

Telephone: 22515000

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**HOSPITALS CONTACT NUMBERS**

Nicosia General Hospital                      22801400

Makario Hospital – Nicosia                      22405000

Limassol General Hospital                      25801100

Larnaca General Hospital                      24800500

Makario Hospital – Larnaca                      24304312

Pafos General Hospital                              26803100

Ammochostos Hospital                              23821211

**Rural Hospitals & Health Centres**

Akaki 22821080  
Athienou 24522328  
Avdimou 25221306  
Dali 22521922  
Drousia 26332323  
Evrychou 22932459  
Kampos 22942686  
Klirou 22632332  
Kofinou 24322352  
Kyperounta 25532021  
Leneia 25432448  
Lefkara 24342429  
Omodos 25421254  
Ormideia 24721572

Palaichori 22642726  
Panagia 26722357  
Paralimni 23821211  
Pedoulas 22952459  
Platres 25421324  
25422224  
Polis Chrysochous 26321431  
Pomos 26342338  
Pyrgos 26522353  
Salamiou 26442222  
Tersefanou 24423233  
Fiti 26732295

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## TRADE UNIONS

**SEK** <http://www.sek.org.cy/sek/>

**Nicosia - Head Offices**

Telephone: 22849489

**Limassol**

Telephone: 25861000

**Larnaca Free Labour Center**

Telephone: 24633633

**PEO** <http://www.peo.org.cy/>

**Nicosia Head Offices**

Telephone: 22866400 / 22877673

**Limassol**

Telephone: 25443000

**Larnaca**

Telephone: 24828740

**Pafos Free Labour Center**

Telephone: 26932293

**Famagusta Free Labour Center**

Telephone: 23821432

**Ammochostos**

Telephone: 23821490

**Pafos**

Telephone: 26932204 / 26321144

**Polis Chrysochous**

Telephone 26321094

**DEOK**

<http://www.deok.org.cy/>

**Head Offices - Nicosia**

Telephone: 22872194

**Limassol**

Telephone: 25376610

**Larnaca**

Telephone: 24819711

**Pafos**

Telephone: 26933047

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**Educational Centres and Governmental Education Institutes**

**Nicosia**

Telephone: 22800800, 22800803, 22800797

**Limassol**

Telephone: 25877524

**Larnaca**

Telephone: 24813264

**Pafos**

Telephone: 26804521 / 26804522

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**Other useful contacts of organizations relating to the rights of refugees and people with subsidiary protection**

**Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees**

<http://www.unhcr.org/>

**Future Worlds Center**

<http://www.futureworldscenter.org/>

**Hope For Children**

<http://www.hfc-ocr.org.cy/>

Telephone: 22103234

**KISA**

<http://www.kisa.org.cy/EN/index.html>

Telephone: 22878181

**Migrant and Refugee Center, Limassol**

Telephone: 25443088