

Applications for asylum from Syria are suspended

Earlier this year, UDI decided to put a hold on processing applications for asylum from Syria due to the major changes taking place after the fall of Bashar al-Assad's regime in December 2024. The Ministry of Justice and Public Security in Norway has now decided that these cases are to be suspended. What is new?

What does it mean that the applications are suspended?

When there is a possibility that the situation in a country may improve fairly rapidly, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security may decide that UDI is to suspend the processing of cases.

Being suspended means waiting to process cases until we have sufficient information about the situation in Syria, in accordance with a provision of the law. The law sets out certain deadlines and rules for how long cases can be suspended:

- We must evaluate whether we have enough information to begin processing cases again in six months at the latest. This means 24 December 2025 at the latest.
- If we then still consider the situation to be too unpredictable, we can extend the suspension, but not longer than six more months, i.e. 24 June 2026.

Why are the applications suspended?

The applications are being suspended because the situation in Syria is unclear and difficult to predict. UDI needs to have accurate information and an overview of the security situation in order to assess an applicant's need for protection. When we assess whether you have the right to protection in Norway, we consider what could happen in the future if you travel back. For Syria right now, this is very uncertain. UDI does not have enough information to determine if you will be in danger if you return there. The situation might become more stable over time, and it might become more unstable and severe.

We are following the situation in Syria while also following what other countries in Europe are doing with applications from Syria. We will make a new evaluation by 24 December 2025 at the latest. It could also turn out that we begin processing applications before 24 December 2025 if the situation becomes adequately clear.

How does UDI evaluate the situation in Syria?

UDI follows what is going on in Syria. We gather information from multiple sources in order to follow developments regarding security, political circumstances and the humanitarian

situation in Syria. We know that violence and armed clashes have occurred in Syria following the fall of the Assad regime as well, and that certain groups have been fearing what might happen to them under Ahmad al-Sharaa's new administration. We are also in contact with other countries in Europe regarding what they are doing with applications for asylum from Syria.

UDI receives reports from the Norwegian Country of Origin Information Centre (Landinfo), a separate, independent body that collects important information about what is happening in different countries, including Syria. You do not need to contact UDI to provide information about what is happening in Syria.

You will get to speak about the situation in Syria during your asylum interview

We will not process your application without interviewing you first. When UDI begins processing applications from Syria again, you will have the opportunity to explain your own circumstances and what you see to be the dangers you will face if you travel back to Syria.

You can no longer obtain a temporary work permit

If you have not had an asylum interview, you cannot be granted a temporary work permit. When cases are suspended on the basis of a situation being unclear, we can no longer grant temporary work permits. We can only grant a temporary work permit prior to an interview when it is highly likely that applicants from a country will have their applications approved.

If you already have a temporary work permit

If you already have a temporary work permit, you may work for as long as it is valid, but you will not receive a new work permit when it expires.

Do you want to return to Syria?

If you wish to move back to Syria, UDI can help with organising the travel arrangements, and you can receive money for a new start in Syria. This is called assisted return. If you have a residence permit in another country, and that permit is valid for at least six more months, you can also apply for assisted return to travel to that country.

How to apply for help to return

You apply for assisted return via udi.no. The staff working at the reception centre can help you to apply. You must not withdraw your application for protection if you are applying for assisted return.

If your application is approved, we will buy tickets for you and you will receive monetary support either at the airport (Oslo Airport) on the day you leave or after you have arrived in Syria.

For UDI to be able to help you to travel back, you must have a valid travel document.

- If you are unsure whether you have a valid travel document, you can call us and we will help you to figure it out.
- If the police in Norway have your travel document, we will obtain it for you for when you are going to travel.
- If you do not have a valid travel document, you may still apply for assisted return, and we will try to help you. In such case, you will need to send us authorisation to sign a form which gives us the right to send a copy of your documents to the Syrian embassy. The Syrian embassy will also want to speak with you to ensure that your return is voluntary. Therefore, we need you to provide us with a telephone number where we can reach you.

How much money will you get?

If you apply for assisted return before we have processed your application for asylum, you will receive NOK 15 000.

If your application was rejected and you have been issued a deadline for departure, but you apply for assisted return before the deadline has passed, you will receive NOK 15 000.

If your application was rejected and you have been issued a deadline for departure, but you apply for assisted return after the deadline has passed, you will receive NOK 5 000.

No duty to return

Return decisions for citizens of Syria are still suspended, which means that you do not have a duty to return to Syria and the police will not send you to Syria by force.

Do you have any questions about assisted return?

If you have questions about assisted return to Syria, you can call UDI's Information Service at 23 35 16 00. You can press 7 to speak with UDI about assisted return.