



PRIORITISATION OF APPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION UNDER THE INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION ACT 2015 (Amended)

Note: This document amends the list of countries of origin contained in paragraph 9.3 of the information statement on prioritisation which was issued on 27 February 2017.

1. While noting that all applications for international protection should be examined in an efficient manner in the interests of justice, certain categories of applications may be prioritised in accordance with Section 73 of the International Protection Act 2015. Following consultation with the Minister for Justice, the Chief International Protection Officer is according priority to certain classes of applications for international protection under the International Protection Act 2015.
2. UNHCR, as part of its mandate in relation to international protection, has provided advice in relation to the prioritisation of applications and supports the approach taken by the Chief International Protection Officer.
3. The legal basis for the prioritisation of applications is set out in Section 73 of the International Protection Act 2015 which states *inter alia*:

“(1) Subject to the need for fairness and efficiency in dealing with applications for international protection under this Act, the Minister may, where he or she considers it necessary or expedient to do so-

(a) accord priority to any application or,

(b) having consulted with the chairperson of the Tribunal, request the chairperson to accord priority to any appeal.”
4. UNHCR supports the prioritisation of applications for international protection as a means to enable the early identification of, for example, likely well-founded cases and cases involving children or the elderly.
5. Prioritisation under section 73 of the International Protection Act 2015 is subject to the need for fairness and efficiency in dealing with applications for international protection. Accordingly, the scheduling of cases in the International Protection Office will primarily be done on the basis of the date of application (oldest cases first).



6. Prioritisation relates solely to the scheduling of interviews and will not pre-determine any recommendation to be made. Applications which are prioritised will be scheduled for interview at the earliest possible date having regard to available resources. All applications, whether prioritised or not will receive the same full and individual assessment under the procedure.
7. The scheduling of interviews will occur under two processing streams which will run concurrently.
8. **Stream one**, will comprise of the majority of applications for international protection which will be scheduled mainly on the basis of oldest cases first.
9. **Stream two** will comprise certain categories of applications based on the criteria below. Within each of these classes of cases, priority will be mainly accorded on the basis of the oldest cases first.

9.1 The age of applicants.

Under this provision, the following cases will be prioritised:

- Unaccompanied minors in the care of Tusla
- Applicants who applied as unaccompanied minors, but who have now aged out
- Applicants over 70 years of age, who are not part of a family group.

9.2 The likelihood that applications are well-founded.

Applicants who notify the IPO that a Medico-Legal report, indicating likely well-foundedness, has been submitted will be prioritised. Other applications may be prioritised on the basis of likely well-foundedness at the discretion of the IPO on a case by case basis.

9.3 The likelihood that applications are well-founded due to the country of origin or habitual residence of applicants.

UNHCR recommends the prioritisation of applications relating to the following countries on the basis of country of origin information, protection determination rates in EU member states and UNHCR position papers indicating the likely well-foundedness of applications from such countries.



- Syria
- Eritrea
- Afghanistan
- Libya
- Somalia
- Sudan
- Yemen

Non-inclusion on this list is not in any way to be read as an indication of the security or human rights situation in a country.

It should be noted that applications relating to Iran and Iraq, which were included in the list of countries contained in the information statement on prioritisation which was issued on 27 February 2017, are no longer being prioritised. Sudan and Yemen were not included in the original list but applications relating to these countries are now being prioritised.

9.4 Health Grounds.

Applicants who notify the IPO after the commencement date that evidence has been submitted, certified by a medical consultant, of an ongoing severe/life threatening medical condition will be prioritised.

10. As a general rule, applications from family members will be processed together. This will apply for prioritised and non-prioritised applications.
11. This prioritisation procedure will be kept under ongoing review and will be updated, as required, having regard to, inter alia, the nature of the changing caseload in the International Protection Office and the changing situation in countries of origin.

**International Protection Office
Immigration Service Delivery
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