



Module 3 – Solutions

Workbook for Switzerland's Asylum Process

Background

For the tasks in Module 3, you have received important information on what happens upon arrival in Switzerland. Pictures show the reception and life in an asylum centre. By completing the tasks in this workbook, you will find out how our individual characters fared in their asylum processes.

Goal

You know how to explain the most important steps in the Swiss asylum process.

You know how to describe the different stages of the Swiss asylum process by using the five ideal-typical stories.

You know how to critically reflect on the impact an asylum decision has on a person.

Work arrangement

Individual/in pairs/in groups

Overview of Tasks

Task CHAP – 1 Film Asylum hearing, goals/task of the people concerned

Task CHAP – 2 Film «Switzerland's fast-track asylum procedure», decision of SEM

Task CHAP – 3 Perspectives– Dreams and Realities

Task CHAP – 1

Hearing on the Grounds for Asylum (Process)

Watch the film “Asylum Hearing”. At the asylum centre, every person is interviewed once or several times. This interview is usually conducted by four people and is the core piece of the asylum procedure.

Write down the goals and tasks of the people participating in this interview. You will find additional information on the asylum hearing online.

Asylum seekers

Their goal :

During the hearing, asylum seekers have the possibility to state their reasons for displacement.

They can speak a language they are most comfortable in and are accompanied by different people in different roles.

Interpreters

Their role :

If an asylum seeker does not speak one of Switzerland’s official languages (German, French, Italian) well enough, an interpreter will be present at the hearing. The interpreter is obliged to appropriately and completely translate all questions and answers. They are not permitted to take their own initiative to make a question or answer more comprehensible by amending, summarising or rewording them. All official interpreters are subject to a very strict selection process during which their language skills as well as their training as translator and interpreter are being examined.

Legal representative

Their role :

Every asylum seeker shall be assigned a legal representative from the very beginning of the asylum procedure, unless they specifically renounce having such a representative. The legal representative is to participate in all steps relevant to the procedure and thus ensure comprehensive legal protection. They therefore participate in the hearing on the grounds for asylum. However, they are not authorised to answer questions on behalf of the asylum seeker. The legal representative is usually a lawyer or another person with a law degree who is professionally involved in the counselling and representation of asylum seekers.

**Interviewer of the
State Secretariat for
Migration (SEM)**

Their goal :

The interviewer conducts the hearing during which they ask the applicant questions. The behaviour of the interviewer significantly influences the hearing. Throughout the hearing, the interviewer has to act objectively and professionally and be patient and respectful towards all persons present in the hearing, in particular towards the asylum seeker. If the hearing is disrupted, the interviewer can take appropriate measures. If participants in the interview neglect their rights or violate their duties, the interviewer may give them a warning.

SEM Minute keeper






Their goal :

The minute keeper is obliged to take down the exact wording of the hearing. At the end of the hearing, the minutes must be translated back or read out loud to the asylum seeker. The minute keeper is also obliged to remain neutral in the background of the hearing.

Task CHAP – 2

Film “Switzerland’s fast-track asylum procedure”; investigate the SEM’s decision.




The film “Switzerland’s fast-track asylum procedure” explains the essential aspects of the asylum procedure. Watch the film in pairs and investigate the reasons for the State Secretariat for Migration’s decision (SEM). Write them down for every displaced character.

Aziz		SEM’s decision : Aziz is not a recognised refugee because there is no specific evidence of persecution against him. During his interviews, he explained that he fled Afghanistan because of the war. The current situation does not allow Aziz to be sent back, which means he receives ‘provisional admission’ (permit F).
Mohammed		SEM’s decision : Refugees who are admitted to Switzerland through the Resettlement Programme receive refugee status within a very short period of time. Mohammed and his family receive B residential permit. Swiss cantonal authorities offer language and integration courses for refugees to become better acquainted with life and customs in Switzerland. Certain cantons also assess refugees’ employment potential to help facilitate their integration into the job market.
Ashkan		SEM’s decision : Askhan is recognised as political refugee. He is allowed to stay in Switzerland and receives a B residence permit. Being the target of political persecution constitutes grounds for asylum. Spouses and under-age children of recognised refugees may enter Switzerland and are also granted asylum. His integration into Swiss society is supported and funded by the canton. Refugees may work in any industry.
Yasin		SEM’s decision : After two weeks, Yasin is notified that his asylum application has been rejected and that he must leave Switzerland. Under the Asylum Act, neither a lack of prospects nor poverty are reasons for granting asylum. If nothing prevents the person from returning to their country of origin, the asylum application will be rejected and the person in question will have to leave Switzerland. If the person returns voluntarily and is not liable to prosecution in Switzerland, then they may receive return assistance.
Helen		SEM’s decision : Since Helen is already registered in Italy, her case is declared inadmissible under the terms of the Dublin Convention. She must return to Italy. The authorities forgo detailed verification of asylum applications that are deemed to be inadmissible. The Dublin Convention determines which member state is responsible for processing an asylum application. This ensures that individual applications are examined only once within the EU. Individuals must apply for asylum in the country through which they first entered the territory of the Dublin Convention. Hence, the responsibility for Helen’s asylum application lies with Italy.

Task CHAP – 3

Perspectives – Dreams and Realities

The decision on whether to grant asylum or not drastically sets the course for the future of every asylum seeker. Find out how your chosen character copes with the decision. Write down your questions and thoughts. You will need these notes at the end of this exercise.

Aziz		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aziz feels safe in Switzerland – but only for the time being.• He hopes for a longer-term residential permit.• After having looked for a job for a while, he finally found work as a kitchen helper in a restaurant.• He misses his family who are struggling financially. However, he is unable to support them as his salary is not sufficient.• He dreams about having his own family one day.
Mohammed		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mohammed is relieved to have finally arrived in a safe place and have access to psychological support.• As his engineering degree is not recognised here, he works as a cleaner in a hospital. He wants to train to be an engineer.• His wife is also not allowed to work in her profession as nurse.• The children already speak fluent German and have made many friends.
Ashkan		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ashkan is now in safety. He no longer needs to be afraid to express his opinion freely.• His dream is to do a university degree one day.• He takes French classes and regularly meets a Swiss student for language tandems. He learns a lot about Swiss culture.

Yasin



- Yasin has to go back to Tunisia.
- With Swiss expert as well as financial support, he opened a motorcycle workshop in Tunis. Things are going well at the moment. He is able to earn a living, which makes him proud.
- His dream is to expand his business to be able to support his family.

Helen



- Helen was taken back to Italy, where she lives in an asylum centre near Rome.
- She is sad and lonely. She does not know anyone and does not have family here.
- She hopes that Italy will grant her protection and she does not have to return.
- Now and again, she works as a nanny and learns a bit of Italian.
- She hopes that she will be able to visit her cousin in Switzerland one day.