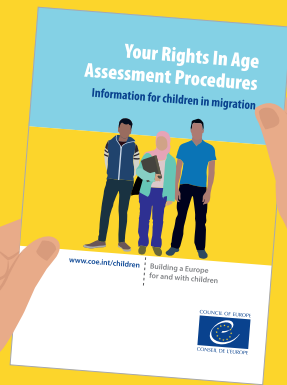


01

Hello!

You have received this leaflet because there is uncertainty about your age. If you are a child undergoing age assessment, this leaflet can help you understand the process!



Building a Europe for and with children

www.coe.int

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.



PREMS 21/1924

ENG

02

Why does my age matter?

Age is important for the authorities in the country you have arrived in to decide about how they can help you. The age assessment procedure is important for the authorities to take decisions on your accommodation, your education, the asylum procedure and other processes.

As a boy or girl under 18, you have specific rights.



HEALTH CARE



EDUCATION



INFORMATION

At 18 or over, you will be considered an adult and will have different rights to children.

MY LAWYER:

My lawyer's name is

Phone number

ADDITIONAL CONTACTS:

Ombudsperson

Child rights organisations

03

What is age assessment?

Age assessment is an official process of estimating a person's age.

Sometimes there are doubts about your age because:

- You do not know your exact age
- You do not have the documents to prove your age, like a passport
- You do have documents, but the authorities need to check if they are real



Did you know?

You have rights throughout the age assessment procedure!

Authorities should treat you as a child while they verify your age.

Authorities have to protect you during the age assessment procedure. This means that they should ensure that you receive the care and support that you need.

You have the right to an interpreter if you do not speak or understand the language of the country where you are.

An interpreter is a person who will speak to you in your own language to help you understand and communicate with the authorities. You should always ask the interpreter to repeat what has been said if you don't understand.



04

Who can help me during age assessment?

During the age assessment procedure you have the right to seek help and to get the information you need.

Different people can support you, give you legal advice, help with translation or provide you with information. Make sure you keep their names and numbers with you all the times.

You have the right to have a guardian. A guardian is a person appointed to look after you. This person should make sure that you are safe and well and give you support in all procedures. You can ask them any questions when you don't understand something. You can tell them your worries so that they can look for solutions.

MY GUARDIAN:

My guardian's name is

Phone number

Your Rights In Age Assessment Procedures

Information for children in migration



Building a Europe for and with children

www.coe.int/children

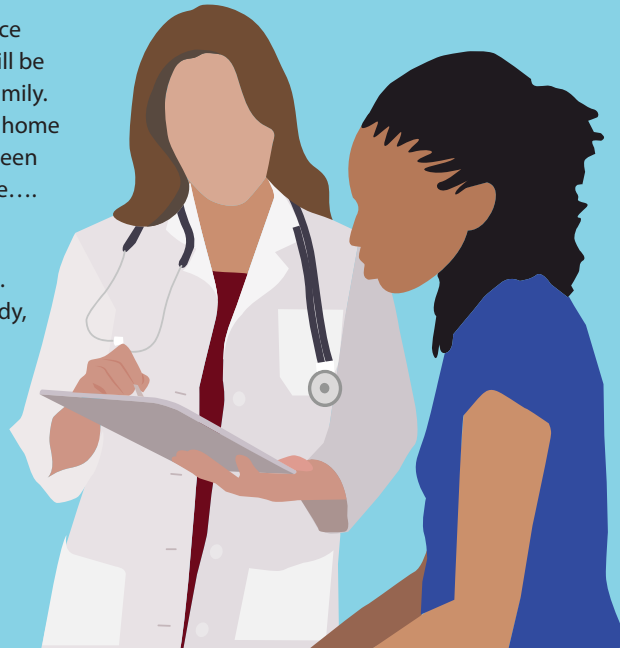


05

What will happen during age assessment?

You will meet different professionals:

- This can be a talk with social workers in an office or where you are staying. In these talks, you will be asked a lot of questions about you and your family. They may ask questions about your past, your home country, your old school, and what you have been doing for the last few years, your trip to Europe.... It is important to prepare for these talks.
- This can be an examination at a doctor's office. The doctor may do an examination of your body, your bones, your arms or your teeth, and use this information to help decide how old you could be. You or your guardian should always be asked to give your consent before a medical examination takes place. You can also ask to be examined by a doctor who is the same sex as you.



Before and during the age assessment, don't hesitate to speak to your guardian or lawyer and ask as many questions as you like about the procedure.

Speak to them, for example, if you do not want to do some medical examinations.

Don't hesitate to talk about anything that worries you and ask them to explain what you don't understand.

07

When the age assessment procedure has finished, the authorities will take some time making a decision about your age. You will then be informed about this decision, and will be given an explanation about how that decision was made. You should receive this in writing.

If the result says you are over 18 years old, there are legal and administrative consequences. You might have to change where you stay, and you will not receive child services. Ask if there are services that can help you find support, legal advice and somewhere to live.

If you think the result is wrong, speak to your guardian, social worker or legal representative! They will let you know if you can appeal your decision, and how you can find legal support and advice for this. You may be able to go to court to challenge the decision.



08

Useful Tips

If you are unwell, scared, ashamed or simply do not remember something, it is important to explain this. You can also say if you cannot talk about something.

Never feel afraid to ask for advice or to say that you do not understand what has been said.

Do not hesitate to ask questions at any time.

Say clearly when you do not agree with something.

Do not sign documents that you don't understand and ask for translation.

Ask for and keep a copy of all documents you have signed and/or which concern you.

The process can be long, so you'll need to be patient.



06

Your Rights

Remember!

- ★ It is your right to bring someone you trust with you during the age assessment procedure.
- ★ If you are asked to do something that makes you afraid or upset, speak up!
- ★ You should feel safe and respected. Medical examinations must always respect your dignity!
- ★ You have the right to say "No" and to ask for help if you think that a professional is treating you in an aggressive, violent or humiliating way, by words or by actions.
- ★ If in doubt, always speak to your guardian or lawyer!

09

Remember!

- ★ It is important that you ask and know about your rights, and challenge things you don't agree with!
- ★ Always speak to an adult you trust, or your guardian, social worker or lawyer if you need more information about age assessment, if someone made you feel uncomfortable during the procedure, if you have any worries or if you think your rights are not being respected.
- ★ They can help you!



- You have the right to be respected and treated with dignity.
- You have the right to housing, food, clothing and health protection.
- You have the right to be protected from all forms of violence.
- You have the right to education.
- You have the right to have a guardian.
- You have the right to a legal representative.
- You have the right to get information in a language you understand.
- You have the right to speak freely and participate in making decisions which affect you.
- You are entitled to exercise your rights. You have the right to file a complaint in case of unprofessional behaviour towards you. You have the right to challenge the outcome of the process.
- You cannot be arrested by the police if you did not do anything unlawful (like theft, violence, drug use or sale) and you should not be kept in a prison or detention centre during the age assessment procedure.

