



Family Reunification for refugee and alternative status beneficiaries in Latvia

If you have been granted refugee status, your family can apply for a residence permit to join you in Latvia.

If you have been granted alternative status, your family can apply for temporary residence permit **only when you have lived in Latvia for at least 2 years**.

1) Which family members can apply for a residence permit to join you in Latvia?

Only closest members of your family can apply for residence permit to join you in Latvia. The following are counted as closest family members:

Your spouse (husband or wife).

The marriage must have been concluded in the country of origin before the person with international protection status departs from that country.



Your children (including adopted children) under age of 18 and who are unmarried.

IMPORTANT!

Another parent or official guardian of the child shall authorize for travel and settlement of the child in Latvia.

IMPORTANT!

Unmarried or same sex couples may not apply for family reunification.

In polygamous marriage **only one** spouse may join the person having refugee or alternative status granted in Latvia.

Underage brothers and sisters, adult dependent children or other dependent family members do not have the right to reunification.



No family reunification is possible until the person is an applicant for asylum in the Republic of Latvia.

2) Who may unaccompanied minors reunite with in Latvia?

Unaccompanied minors who have been granted international protection and are unmarried are entitled to receive their mother and father.

Person who is below the age of 18 at the time of their entry into the territory of the Republic of Latvia and introduction of their asylum application but who, in the time of asylum procedure, attains the age of majority and is thereafter granted refugee status must be regarded as a 'minor' in the process of family reunification and these persons will enjoy the rights that minors have regarding the family reunification.

3) How to start a family reunification procedure?

You will have to:

Go to the central or one of the regional divisions/offices of the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs (OCMA) and obtain an official invitation for inviting a member of your family.

You will have to provide personal information about your family member: name (names), nationality, gender, place of birth, residence address abroad, and expected place of residence in the Republic of Latvia, purpose and time of stay.

You present identification document, share your contact details and pay state fee. Unaccompanied minors' legal representative must produce a family court decision on guardianship and appointment of the guardian.

IMPORTANT!

The state fee for invitation lodged is 10 euro.
In addition 4 euro will be charged for each person over six years old and 2 euro for each child under six years old that is included in the request for invitation.

Your family member will have to:

Go to the embassy of Latvia and submit the following documents:

- completed application for temporary residence permit;
- present valid passport;
- producing visa certifying the right to stay in the country.

IMPORTANT!

Visa can be obtained at the Embassy of the Republic of Latvia and it costs 60 euro.

- State fee for requesting a temporary residence permit: 20 euro;
- State fee for requesting a permanent residence permit: 70 euro;
- Children under the age of 16 are exempt from state fee.

After entering Latvia person must go the OCMA to receive residence permit. State fee must be paid to receive a residence permit.

IMPORTANT!

Persons, who receive temporary residence permit, must submit health certificate and valid health insurance policy.

4) How to prove family links?

Official documents are accepted as proof of family relationship.

Documents are required:

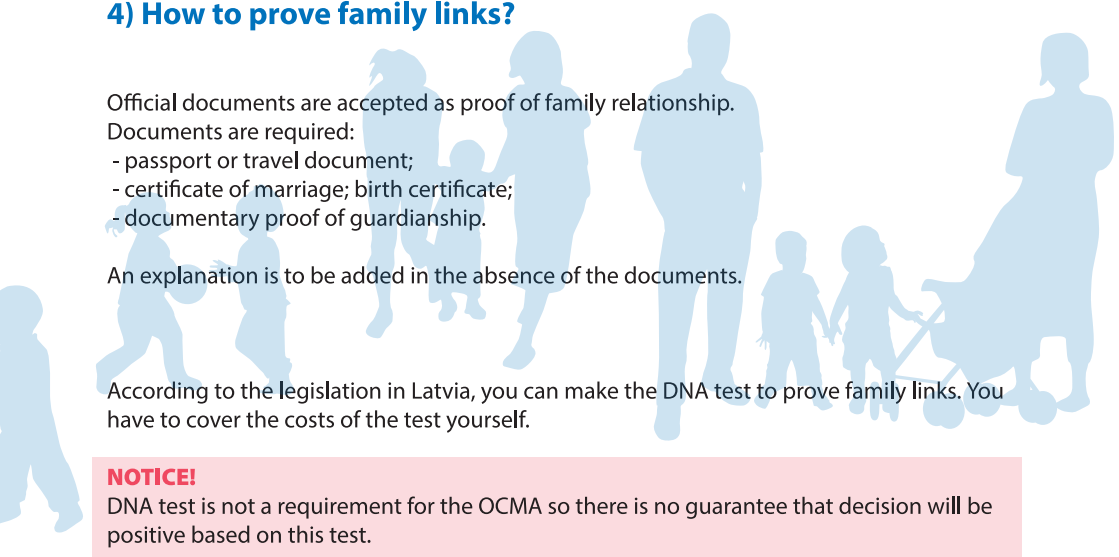
- passport or travel document;
- certificate of marriage; birth certificate;
- documentary proof of guardianship.

An explanation is to be added in the absence of the documents.

According to the legislation in Latvia, you can make the DNA test to prove family links. You have to cover the costs of the test yourself.

NOTICE!

DNA test is not a requirement for the OCMA so there is no guarantee that decision will be positive based on this test.



5) How long does it take?

The approximate length of the family reunification process is two month from the moment of processing of the invitation until obtaining residence permit after arriving in Latvia.

6) What decision can be made?

The Immigration Service can take following decision:

- A positive decision: your family member receives a visa
- A negative decision: the visa is denied. In this case you should seek legal advice from a lawyer or a specialized organization.

7) Where you can find more information?

For more information on the family reunification procedure you can contact:

Latvian Centre for Human Rights

Skolas Street 21, 6th floor, 609C, Riga, LV-1010

Phone: +37167039290; +37126303434

E-mail: office@humanrights.org.lv

The Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs

Čiekurkalna 1.līnija, k-3, Riga, LV-1026

Phone: +37167209400

E-mail: pmlp@pmlp.gov.lv

Link to the visa applications

<http://www.pmlp.gov.lv/en/home/services/visas-and-invitations/documents.html>

Link to a list of the Latvian diplomatic posts abroad

<http://www.mfa.gov.lv/en/policy/latvian-diplomatic-missions-abroad>

<http://www.mfa.gov.lv/en/consular-information/countries-where-latvia-is-represented-in-issuing-schengen-visas-by-other-member-state>

