

Gabon

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*Note: All information cited to national laws (the Refugee Law and the Nationality Law) is analyzed through Google translate, as the source text is in French.

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| <p>Is there a refugee protection program? Please describe it.</p> | <p>Yes, Gabon’s law provides for the granting of asylum or refugee status, and the government has established a system for providing protection to refugees. Refugees require a travel document endorsed by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and government authorities in order to circulate freely within the country.[1]</p> <p>Refugees are issued with renewable refugee ID cards free of charge, which are valid for two years.[2]</p> <hr/> <p>[1] https://www.state.gov/reports/2020-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/gabon/.</p> <p>[2] https://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session14/GA/UNHCR_UPR_GAB_S14_2012_UNHCR_E.pdf, page 3.</p> |
| <p>Who runs any available refugee protection program? Who determines which applicants qualify for refugee protection?</p> | <p>The National Commission of Refugees deals with legal assistance, reception of asylum seekers, examination of asylum applications, preparation of protection documents, legal counsel</p> |

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| | <p>of refugees and asylum seekers, etc.[1]</p> <hr/> <p>[1] https://www.rabat-process.org/en/countries/78-gabon (Last updated: November 2018). https://www.refworld.org/docid/44e1e0944.html, Article 4.</p> |
| <p>Is the refugee protection program functional? For example, how long does it take for decisions to be issued? What percentage of applications are granted?</p> | <p>According to the UNHCR submission to the UN Human Rights Council for the 2012 Universal Periodic Review of Gabon, the refugee program is functional. According to the submission, Gabon has, in general, complied with the non-refoulement principle.[1] It is unclear what percentage of applicants are granted refugee status.</p> <hr/> <p>[1] https://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session14/GA/UNHCR_UPR_GAB_S14_2012_UNHCR_E.pdf, page 1.</p> |
| <p>Do refugees have a right to work? A right to education? A right to medical care? Please describe.</p> | <p>According to Article 10 of the Refugee Law, refugees are entitled to the same treatment as nationals with respect to access to education, registration fees at school and at university, and to access to basic social services. Article 11 stipulates that regarding access to and conditions of employment, refugees will be treated in the same manner as foreigners.</p> <p>While the refugee law provides refugees equal access to public services, there have been reports that in some cases school and</p> |

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| | <p>hospital employees improperly required refugees to pay additional fees.[1]</p> <hr/> <p>[1] https://www.state.gov/reports/2020-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/gabon/.</p> |
| <p>Are those seeking refugee protection free to live freely or forced to reside in camps?</p> | <p>Refugees do not live in refugee camps, but rather in Gabonese cities.[1]</p> <hr/> <p>[1] See https://borgenproject.org/about-refugees-in-gabon/ and https://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session14/GA/UNHCR_UPR_GAB_S14_2012_UNHCR_E.pdf, page 2.</p> |
| <p>Does a grant of refugee protection result in a pathway to permanent status? In other words, can a refugee eventually become a citizen? Is there another form of legal permanent status available for people with refugee status?</p> | <p>According to Article 11 of the refugee law, refugees must be treated in the same manner as foreigners.[1]</p> <p>The nationality code allows refugees to apply for naturalization; however, the process is long and expensive. At age 18 children born in the country of refugee parents may apply for citizenship.[2] According to the nationality code, it appears that an individual must reside in Gabon for 5 years in order to be naturalized.[3]</p> <hr/> |

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| | <p>[1] https://www.refworld.org/docid/44e1e0944.html, Article 11.</p> <p>[2] https://www.state.gov/reports/2020-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/gabon/.</p> <p>[3] https://www.refworld.org/country,,,GAB,456d621e2,4c5847492,0.html, Art. 31.</p> |
| <p>Does the country offer temporary protections available other than refugee status? If so, what are they?</p> | <p>Gabon’s law provides for the granting of asylum or refugee status.[1] However, the program for asylum seekers appears to be less developed, and the UNHCR has expressed concern for the treatment of asylum-seekers in Gabon.[2]</p> <hr/> <p>[1] https://www.state.gov/reports/2020-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/gabon/.</p> <p>[2] https://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session14/GA/UNHCR_UPR_GAB_S14_2012_UNHCR_E.pdf, page 3.</p> |
| <p>What, if any, penalties are there for people without status or people who are denied refugee protection?</p> | <p>According to Article 7 of the Refugee Law, a person who enters the country illegally and claims refugee status cannot be declared an illegal immigrant, detained, imprisoned or penalized in any way until their request is rejected. In order to benefit from this provision, the individual must present themselves to competent</p> |

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| | <p>border authorities within 48 hours of entry. The authorities will then issue a provisional document valid for 3 months.[1]</p> <p>According to Article 8, if an individual is denied refugee status, the individual must be granted a period of time to look for a new host country before being deported.[2] It is unclear what happens if the individual cannot find another country.</p> <hr/> <p>[1] https://www.refworld.org/docid/44e1e0944.html, Article 7.</p> <p>[2] https://www.refworld.org/docid/44e1e0944.html, Article 8.</p> |
| <p>What organizations exist in-country that can help displaced people seek available protections? What other organizations in the country may be able to help displaced people access services and rights, even if their mission is not to specifically work with refugees and displaced people?</p> | <p>Alisei[1]</p> <hr/> <p>[1] https://www.refugeesinternational.org/reports/improving-aid-one-former-refugees-story.</p> |
| <p>Is there other information that might be valuable for displaced people arriving in that country to know?</p> | <p>Despite efforts by the government and UNHCR to reduce discrimination, refugees complained of harassment and extortion by security force members. Some security force members harassed asylum seekers or refugees working as merchants, service-sector employees, and manual laborers and, in order to extort bribes, refused to recognize valid documents held by refugees and asylum seekers.[1]</p> <hr/> |

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