



Refugee Advocacy and Support Program

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM - March 2011 Update -

Helsinki Citizens' Assembly (hCa) is a non-governmental organization based in Istanbul, Turkey, promoting fundamental rights and liberties, democracy and pluralism. For more information on hCa and its work on a diversity of issues, see: www.hyd.org.tr

hCa's Refugee Advocacy and Support Program (RASP) is devoted to: ▪ ensuring the legal protection of refugees and vulnerable migrants in Turkey; ▪ monitoring state policies and practice in the area of asylum and irregular migration control; ▪ advocating for legislation and policies in line with international standards; and ▪ encouraging public awareness and local ownership.

hCa – RASP provides extensive free legal assistance and representation to individuals who wish to apply for asylum protection in Turkey and/or are in need of legal interventions to prevent being unlawfully deported or detained arbitrarily. RASP's legal assistance caseload is largely comprised of asylum seekers from Iran, Afghanistan, Sudan and Somalia, among others. RASP's legal assistance services range from basic information and counselling to drafting of legal submissions, legal representation at UNHCR and litigation interventions at Turkish courts and ECtHR.

hCa – RASP is a leading stakeholder in the policy debate on refugees and migrants in Turkey. The Program publishes reports about protection gaps, engages the government and other stakeholders, and conducts training events and media work. In 2006, hCa was among the founders of Southern Refugee Legal Aid Network (SRLAN), an initiative of legal assistance providers serving refugees in the global south. In 2008, hCa became the first NGO from Turkey to join the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), an umbrella organization of over 60 refugee-advocacy NGOs from across Europe.

Internship Program: HCA – RASP relies substantially on contributions from interns. The Program regularly accommodates 4 to 6 qualified program interns from various backgrounds, both locals and internationals.

Program interns are expected to commit for a minimum of 2 days a week for a 3-month internship period, with the possibility of an extension for another 3 months. HCA's four internship terms start in September, December, March and June. Internships are unpaid.

Program interns are provided an intensive introductory training as well as continued support and supervision throughout their involvement with the Program. They participate in periodic internal training events as well as regular team meetings, are informed on HCA's various activities and initiatives for legal and policy advocacy.

HCA – RASP offers a fast-paced, multi-cultural environment and the opportunity to work with an international group of team members. The working languages of the RASP team are English and Turkish, while Farsi, Arabic, French and Somali are among the languages regularly spoken in the RASP Office to communicate with refugee and vulnerable migrant clients.

How to Apply: Candidates are expected to send in their applications at latest three weeks before the start of the internship term for which they apply. Early applications are encouraged. Late applications may be considered in exceptional cases.

Applicants are asked to send a CV and a letter of motivation in English explaining their background and interest to volunteer with HCA – RASP. Please address applications to refugeeaid@hyd.org.tr and indicate the term you are applying for in the subject line (For example: Internship – March, 2011). Once your application material is received, a confirmation email will be sent to you.

After a preliminary review of applications, short-listed applicants will be contacted for an interview.

Core Responsibilities:

- receiving clients and applicants for assistance, conducting “intake” interviews with new clients;
- responding to telephone calls from clients and applicants for assistance;
- providing basic counselling about HCA – RASP services and the asylum procedures in Turkey;
- providing basic referrals to UNHCR, state agencies and other service providers;
- maintaining communication between clients and legal advisors;
- help maintaining client databases and assistance files;
- drafting written translations of documents;
- interpretation assistance for clients and staff members;
- accompanying clients to other service providers;
- administrative support duties (sending fax, preparing copies of documents);
- office-maintenance related tasks.

Requirements:

- fluency and writing skills in English;
- commitment to respecting personal differences based on factors including but not limited to ethnicity, skin color, religion, gender and sexual orientation;
- commitment to respecting the confidentiality of clients and any information shared with the Office;
- basic computer skills (Microsoft Office).

Preferred Skills:

- educational background in a relevant field, including but not limited to human rights, law, international relations and/or migration;
- fluency and writing skills in Turkish;
- fluency and writing skills in French, Arabic or Farsi;
- experience working with vulnerable people;
- experience working with an NGO;
- knowledge and understanding of the Turkey asylum context;
- knowledge and understanding of the legal concepts and tools used in refugee protection context.