

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	685
Land:	Sri Lanka
Kilde:	International Organization For Migration (IOM) Germany
Titel:	Sri Lanka – Country Fact Sheet 2022
Udgivet:	juni 2022
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	5. februar 2024



SRI LANKA

COUNTRY FACT SHEET 2022

Photo: Unsplash 2018 Oliver Sjostrom

PUBLISHER

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This project is funded by the German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF).



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For further information on voluntary return and reintegration, please visit the information portal www.ReturningfromGermany.de, or contact your local return and reintegration office.

Published: June 2022

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1 HEALTH CARE

General information on health care

Sri Lanka follows a publicly funded free healthcare system and is guided by a 'Free Health' Policy. The public healthcare system includes state-financed and administered healthcare facilities which are provided free of charge covering 50 percent of the outpatient services and 90 percent of inpatient admissions and all preventive services and curative care needs. The health system in Sri Lanka encompasses western allopathic and other systems such as Ayurvedic, Siddha, Unani, acupuncture, and indigenous treatments that derive from traditional knowledge in Sri Lanka. Healthcare in Sri Lanka is provided by both the government and the private sector and non-profit organizations provide limited services. Allopathic and traditional systems of healthcare are overseen by the Ministry of Health (MoH) and majority of the Sri Lankans receive treatments through allopathic system. Private healthcare services operate in parallel to the public healthcare system and mainly provide ambulatory care, inpatient care, and rehabilitative care. Private healthcare services are financed by individuals through out-of-pocket payments and private health insurance schemes. Private hospitals provide inpatient and outpatient services along with specialist consultations. There are many private pharmacies and laboratories to provide investigative services within private hospitals and as independent entities in Sri Lanka. Private health insurance market has grown during the past years and the insurance coverages are given by entities such as Sri Lanka Insurance, Allianz Sri Lanka and Softlogic Life.

Returnees could always approach public healthcare facilities in Sri Lanka as they could undergo treatments and obtain medicine free of charge.

Availability of medical facilities and doctors

Medical facilities are available throughout Sri Lanka in both metropolitan and rural areas. There are 1054 public sector hospitals in Sri Lanka covering all the 25 Districts in the country. Further information can be found on the official website of the Ministry of Health

http://www.health.gov.lk/moh_final/english/hospital_government.php?spid=24
There are 141 private hospitals in Sri Lanka that provide inward patient care services. Private sector health care brings certain benefits in comparison to public healthcare services, such as availability at convenient times and no requirement to be in waiting lists. In addition, the returnee also can choose the specialist of his/her choice and the treatments can continue under the care of the same physician.

Admission to medical facilities

In the public healthcare sector, the patient can visit the Outpatient Department to be examined by a Physician which is operational from Monday to Friday from 07:30 am to 04:00 pm and on Saturday from 08:00 am to 12:00 pm. Based on the patient's condition and the medical status, he/she will be requested to be admitted to the medical facility to undergo further treatments or investigative procedures. At that time, the individuals should have the National Identity Card of Sri Lanka, or any other

1 HEALTH CARE

identification document and the doctor's referral note. The public hospital can be freely chosen by the patient and most of the time the patients decide to visit the closest public hospital for their residences. On the other hand, if an individual decides to obtain medical facilities from a private healthcare facility, a medical appointment has to be made first through the channeling service with the preferred physician of the relevant hospital before visiting the facility. Afterwards, based on the medical condition of the individual, he/she will be asked to be admitted to the facility. The individual must have identification documents (NIC, drivers license or the Passport), doctor's referral note and substantial amount of money for the admission and treatment costs.

Availability and costs of medication

Access to medicines in public healthcare facilities in the state sector are free of charge as Sri Lanka follows a free and universal health care system. However, in case certain prescribed drugs or

treatments are not available, the patients are expected to purchase the medicines from a private pharmacy through out-of-pocket expenditure or undergo the treatment if available at a private healthcare facility. In addition, if the patient decides to consult a physician at a private healthcare facility, the individual has to bear the cost of medication, treatments and for other investigative services. (Note¹: Since the beginning of 2022, there has been a significant shortage of essential medicine in Sri Lanka due to the ongoing economic crisis. There are import delays and drastic changes of prices from time to time along with the prices for treatments. If an individual doesn't have a private health insurance and prefers to undergo medication at a private healthcare institute, the individual will have to bear a substantial cost for medication.)

General information on COVID-19

Many information materials were developed in Sinhala, Tamil, and English by

¹ Status as of 20 April 2022



Photo: IOM 2017

1 HEALTH CARE

WHO Sri Lanka with the collaboration of Ministry of Health (MoH), Sri Lanka. The Health Promotion Bureau which operates under the MoH indicates the live situational analysis of Sri Lanka for each day with the total number of new cases, deaths, and recovered. The Health Promotion Bureau <https://www.hpb.health.gov.lk/en/covid-19> also includes the COVID-19 measures implemented in Sri Lanka. In addition, the website outlines how the public could protect themselves and others with the preventative measures, advice for people with special health needs, hospitals, and laboratories for COVID-19 related services and other information for general public. The MoH has established an emergency hotline (1390) for the public to obtain free medical advice on symptoms of COVID-19. As of 1st April 2022, 65.6 percent of the population is fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and 39.1 million doses have been administered. The vaccines can be obtained through the nearest MoH office and the same procedure can be followed by the migrants residing in Sri Lanka.

Fully vaccinated overseas travelers to Sri Lanka are exempted from pre-departure COVID-19 testing and not required to quarantine. If not fully vaccinated, the travelers need to produce pre-departure COVID-19 test results and undergo PCR testing on the day of arrival to Sri Lanka (Note: This is the situation as of 20 April 2022 and the MoH issues revised guidelines for travelers time to time. Please ensure that you have the updated information before you travel to Sri Lanka.)

Access for returnees

Eligibility and requirements: Any Sri Lankan national has access to the island wide public health care facilities which are free of charge. There is no requirement to be insured in order to obtain inpatient and outpatient services from the public healthcare system. Returnees can directly go to the preferred hospital and start their treatments immediately. If the returnees prefer a private health insurance coverage, they have to get registered under an insurance organization that provides health insurance schemes and the conditions may depend on the organization.

Registration procedure: The returnee does not have to register anywhere to obtain services under public healthcare system. Private insurance companies have established its branches in many districts in the country and the registration procedure may vary according to the organization. The most prominent private healthcare insurance organizations are mentioned above. The specific procedure, requirements and the rates are available in their websites.

Required documents: The National Identification Certificate or the Passport and medical documents will be required to be admitted to a hospital or to receive any other treatment.

2 LABOUR MARKET

General information on labour market

The population in Sri Lanka ² was at 21.91 million in 2020 and the labor force in Sri Lanka declines to 8.467 million in 2020 from 8.592 million in 2019. Thereby, the economically inactive population in the country has increased to 8.273 million in 2020. This significant increase was driven by loss of employment due to restrictions, lack of job openings and health risks that prevailed amid the spread of COVID-19 pandemic. The male labour force participation rate (LFPR) has decreased to 71.9 percent and the female LFPR has decreased to 32.1 percent. The COVID-19 pandemic has intensified the gender inequalities in the labour force. The employed population has decreased to 7.99 million in 2020 and the declines were observed in temporary and casual categories of employment. The unemployment rate has increased to 5.8 percent in the third quarter of 2020. The employment in agriculture sector has increased to ensure food security with the imposed import restrictions and disruptions to food supply due to COVID-19. The foremost employment generator has been employment in industry and services which have declined to 26.9 percent in 2020. New jobs such as personal protective equipment (PPE) manufacturers, delivery workers have been created with the new demands emerged during the pandemic. The main employment generator in Sri Lanka was the private sector in 2020. The most important industries that have created employment opportunities are

agriculture, manufacturing, construction, mining and quarrying, and public utilities. In 2020, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita in Sri Lanka was record as 4052.75 US dollars and is equivalent to 32 percent of the world's average. Currently Sri Lanka is undergoing a severe economic crisis and the Sri Lankan rupee has undergone a steep depreciation which would have a negative impact on many industries and sectors.

Finding employment

If people are interested in finding employment abroad, they could approach Sri Lanka Bureau for Foreign Employment (SLBFE) and seek employment through licensed recruitment agents. Further details can be accessed via <http://www.slbfe.lk/>.

Local employment opportunities are advertised on websites, newspapers, apps and shared in social media platforms including the following:

- <https://topjobs.lk/>
- <https://xpress.jobs/>
- <https://www.careerfirst.lk/>
- <https://www.dreamjobs.lk/>

Unemployment assistance

Sri Lanka Institute of Career Guidance was established in 2019 to provide professional career guidance service to youth between age 13 to 35 across the country in order to minimize unemployment. The institute provide help to youth with career choices, career changes, career planning. The contact details of the institute are mentioned in page, further information can be obtained through <http://slcig.gov.lk/>

² Ministry of Finance, E. a. (2020). Sri Lanka Labour Force Statistics Quarterly Bulletin. Department of Census and Statistics.

2 LABOUR MARKET

slicg/. There are no employment benefit schemes that become operational when people lose their jobs in Sri Lanka. However, the government has initiated a 'Samurdhi Poverty Alleviation Program' focusing on the poor and unemployed where eligible families will receive food stamps, and loans for business support. Only the individuals below the poverty line of Sri Lanka will be eligible for the assistance. Returnees can obtain further information via <https://www.samurdhi.gov.lk/>. Overall, it is the responsibility of the individual to find an employment opportunity based on their skills and experience.

Further education and training

There are state universities and private universities to receive higher education. State universities are only allowed to a selected number of students based on their scoring of the G.C.E Advanced Level (A/L) Examination. In order to get admission to private universities, an individual has to pass G.C.E. Ordinary Level (O/L) examination or G.C.E. Advanced Level examination or any other internationally recognized examination. List of recognized private universities can be referred at https://www.mohe.gov.lk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=117&Itemid=206&lang=en.

Technical and vocational education sector provides short term certificate programs and apprenticeship training to bachelor's degrees in applied disciplines. These institutes provide national certificates, national diplomas, and level 7* bachelor's degrees under National Vocational Qualifications Framework

(NVQF). These are offered by the below institutes and further information on registration and requirements can be obtained via the below links.

- Department of Technical Education and Training (DTET)- <http://dtet.gov.lk/en/>
- Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) – <https://www.tvec.gov.lk/>
- Vocational Training Authority (VTA) – <https://wenr.wes.org/2017/08/education-in-sri-lanka>
- National Apprentices and Industrial Training Authority (NAITA) – <http://www.naita.gov.lk/>
- Ceylon German Technical Training Institute (CGTTI) – <http://www.cgtti.lk/>
- The Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL) – <https://ou.ac.lk/>
- University of Vocational Technology (UoVT) – <http://univotec.ac.lk/>

Students over the age of 17 who have passed G.C.E O/L are eligible to be enrolled and many courses have an age limit of 29 for programs under DTET. The courses offered by VTA requires the trainees to have completed 9 years of schooling to pursue the courses and some course requirements will request for G.C.E. O/L or A/L. Many of the courses under NAITA require G.C.E. O/L for admission but there are also courses open to trainees who have completed grade 8. If the returnees plan to migrate for employment opportunities they should possess minimum NVQ .

2 LABOUR MARKET

Access for returnees

Eligibility and requirements: If the age limit and educational qualifications are met, the returnees can join technical and vocational education sector courses to obtain further trainings and qualifications to obtain a job in the trade, industry, manufacturing sectors or in entrepreneurship. There are six technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions that provide vocational/training courses on different subjects. Returnees can visit the websites of these institutes (mentioned under further education and training) and select a suitable vocational course. Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is a pathway to obtain NVQ certificate showcasing their skills and past work experience. Returnees with previous work experience do not require to follow a course to obtain NVQ certificates, instead they have to face a practical test related to their trade experience.

Depending on the expertise and skills, the NVQ level will be awarded, and the returnees have to bear an expense between LKR 7000-15000 depending on the trade. RPL can be obtained from NAITA, DTET, and VTA but NAITA is considered as the leading institute to obtain RPL certificate.

Registration procedure: There are no unemployment assistance programs to get registered for the returnees but they can check with the relevant 'Grama Sewaka' officer on the eligibility for 'Samurdhi Poverty Alleviation Program'. Sri Lanka Institute of Career Guidance can be contacted for advice on seeking employment opportunities, career planning and to select which employment opportunity would suit the best. This institute provide services only for youth between 13 to 25 years.

Required documents: When looking for employment, it is important to have identity documents, educational qualifications, letters to confirm work experience and resume.



Photo: IOM 2017

3 HOUSING

General information on housing

According to the housing needs assessment survey done in 2016³ by the Ministry of Housing and Construction, out of the six million families living in Sri Lanka, only 5.2 million have some form of housing. Providing adequate and affordable housing is a major issue in the housing sector of Sri Lanka. Those who face this issue the most are people from low-income families, communities in the Northern and Eastern provinces of Sri Lanka, people who live in disaster prone areas and middle-income groups who migrate to urban areas. Only 20 percent of the people have the potential to access housing loans due to

the financial constraints and irregular employment. 88.3 percent of urban households live in single houses and 30.6 percent of estate households live in single houses or line rooms, row houses and twin houses, which have many occupants. Share of single houses in the urban area is higher and many prefer to share accommodation due to the increasing rents and related expenses. The rent will be based on the number of rooms in a house, location and the facilities provided. However, the average rent of a 2-room house would be Rs. 35,000 in the urban area and Rs. 20,000 in rural areas. The utility bills would be based on the consumption and an average of Rs. 4000 should be allocated for water and electricity. Demand for housing and property rent in urban

³ Ministry of Housing and Construction . (2016). Housing Needs Assessment and Data Survey. Housing Development Authority.



Photo: Unsplash/ Chathura-Indika 2017

3 HOUSING

areas have increased as many of the employments are at urbanized areas. Since having an own house has become expensive, many people are looking to have houses for rent in both urban and rural areas.

Finding accommodation

The National Housing Development Authority supports communities that face housing problem in Sri Lanka. This authority supports the poor families who mainly live in estate line rooms, rural low-income families and urban low-income families who do not have a permanent house or permanent income source. The Urban Development Authority support middle income families to obtain housing assistance for an affordable price in Colombo, Colombo Metro region, Kandy, Rathnapura, Anuradhapura and other major urban areas where land is often limited and very expensive. Apartments and houses advertised for rent can be found in newspapers and in below mentioned websites.

- <https://ikman.lk/en/ads/sri-lanka/house-rentals>
- <https://www.patpat.lk/property/house>
- <https://www.lankapropertyweb.com/rentals/index.php>

Social grants for housing

There are no social grants for housing in Sri Lanka, but the National Housing Development Authority (NHDA) provides a housing loan of Rs. 500,000 to low and lower middle-income families as it is difficult to get housing

loans from banks. In order to receive the loan, the monthly income of the family should be less than Rs. 45,000, age should be below 55, should have genuine housing requirement and pre-preparation and have suitable land for housing. Application can be obtained by NHDA district office or housing officers attached to divisional secretariats. The documents to prove ownership of the land, income certificate, house plan approved by the local authority, and declaration of guarantors need to be provided. There might be other requirements mentioned in the application to be fulfilled. For more details <https://www.nhda.lk/index.php/en/about-usa/introduction>.

Access for returnees

Eligibility and requirements: Temporary accommodation and shelter facilities will be available to returnees who have registered with the Sri Lanka Bureau for Foreign Employment (SLBFE) and who are in vulnerable situations. "Sahana Piyasa" welfare centre is maintained by the SLBFE and is located in close proximity to the Katunayake airport. Shelters are mostly provided for people displaced due to conflict/natural disasters, victims of trafficking or victims of domestic violence and are usually run by different NGOs and the government.

Registration procedure: There are no social housing schemes available in Sri Lanka.

4 SOCIAL WELFARE

Social welfare system

There are few social welfare programmes initiated by the government. The Samurdhi programme implemented by the government provides food stamps to eligible households, savings and credit programs with loans destined for entrepreneurial and business development, provide rehabilitation and development of community infrastructure, relief programs that include cash transfers, social security fund and nutrition program. The assistance through Samurdhi program will only be given to eligible individuals. Sri Lanka provides free education from kindergarten level to university level following the constitutional policy where school textbooks, uniforms, and scholarships are given. In addition, Sri Lanka has a universal healthcare system that provides free healthcare to all citizens. There are various NGOs and religious institutes that provide social welfare services in Sri Lanka supporting children, low-income families, people with disabilities and elderly.

Access for returnees

Eligibility and requirements: The Samurdhi program only supports low-income families and eligibility has to be checked with the relevant 'Grama Sewaka' officer. More information can be obtained via <https://www.samurdhi.gov.lk/web/index.php?lang=en>

Registration procedure: The registration for the program will depend on the eligibility of the returnee which has to be determined by the authorities -Samurdhi program and the Grama Sewaka officer who will assess the financial background of the returnee.

Required documents: Documents confirming the income, certificate issued by the Grama Sewaka officer. The Sri Lanka Bureau for Foreign Employment (SLBFE) provides a welfare scheme to migrants who have registered with the SLBFE prior to their departure from Sri Lanka. Visit SLBFE website <http://www.slbfe.lk/page.php?LID=1&MID=39> or call SLBFE hotline 1989 for further information.

The Pension system

The pension scheme is applicable only for employees under public and private sectors. Employees of the public sector will receive a pension fund provided on a monthly basis for an interim benefit under the Employees Trust Fund (ETF) and retirement benefit under the Employees' Provident Fund (EPF). The employees of the private sector are eligible for ETF, EPF and Payment of Gratuity for those who have served continuously for five years and more under one employer. According to the Ministry of Public Services, the retirement age of a public servant in Sri Lanka is now 65 as of January 01, 2022. However, the workers have the freedom to retire at the age of 55 if they wish. The employee is entitled to receive a pension if the employment was held for 10 years. Employees who retire are eligible for pension benefits, relevant forms should be filled and sent to the Pensions Department. Upon the death of a pensioner the amount can requested to be given to the widow of the pensioner and unemployed unmarried children under 26 years. Those who are engaged as employees of co-operative societies, domestic workers, personal chauffeurs,

4 SOCIAL WELFARE

or any establishment employing less than 15 persons during the period of 12 months immediately preceding the termination of services of a worker are not entitled for the pension scheme. Further information can be obtained via https://www.pensions.gov.lk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=17&Itemid=149&lang=en#about-foreign-pension-division. The retirement age for employees in the private sector is based on the terms of agreement between the employee and employer.

Access for returnees

Eligibility and requirements: If the returnee is eligible to get an occupation either in public or private sector, the returnee will be eligible to receive pension, ETF or EPF upon retirement. This will be only applicable if the returnee meets the relevant conditions.

Registration procedure: The registration for pension scheme will be done by the employer.

Required documents: The required documents will be advised by the employer and can be obtained by Department of Pensions, Sri Lanka.

Vulnerable groups

There are many vulnerable communities in Sri Lanka; such as communities in rural areas, daily wage labourers, female headed households, people with disabilities, returned migrants and foreign migrant households where people have migrated as domestic workers. People who are residing and working in rural areas face many difficulties in Sri Lanka as they lack access to better infrastructure facilities,

transport, education, and healthcare as they have to travel long distances without using transportation methods. Since Sri Lanka follows a free healthcare system, it is accessible to all communities and people are eligible for pension if they have been employed under an occupation eligible for pension in public or private sector. There are many organizations in Sri Lanka that support vulnerable groups. The government has established Department of Social Services (DSS) to support marginalized and disadvantaged communities by enabling them to be self-reliant, making them active stakeholders of national development and addressing the problems faced by them. DSS conducts community-based rehabilitation programs, provides vocational training to people with disabilities, support early childhood development of children with disabilities, and offer care of mentally disabled children. For further information please refer <https://www.socialservices.gov.lk/web/index.php?lang=en>. The Department of Social Welfare, Probation and Child Care Services supports the elderly, persons with disabilities and children in the Central Province. IOM Sri Lanka supports the vulnerable migrants and migrant communities. In addition, other UN agencies in Sri Lanka, Humanity & Inclusion, USAID, World Vision, Habitat for Humanity are main organizations that support vulnerable groups through different projects such as livelihood support, reintegration assistance, psychosocial support, financial assistance etc.

4 SOCIAL WELFARE



Photo: Unsplash 2020, Jina

Access for returnees

Eligibility and requirements: Returnees who are extremely vulnerable and are below the poverty line are eligible to receive support from the Samurdhi Program implemented by the government. Department of Social Services (DSS) should be contacted if any assistance is required to improve any skills in order to become self-reliant and reintegrate to the society. To receive vocational training under DSS, the person has to be between 16 to 35. The vulnerable groups will also be identified and supported through different projects implemented by IOM Sri Lanka, ILO, USAID, and other organizations.

Registration procedure: The returnees should contact the relevant 'Grama Sewaka' officer assigned to their area of residence to check on the eligibility of receiving support.

Required documents:

- Proof of residence
- National Identification Card or Passport

5 EDUCATION

General information on education

Sri Lanka follows a free education policy where every child from the age of five until university level will receive free education. The British colonial period has influenced the country's education system. Hence the school examinations and curricular content is modeled on the British examinations as GCE O-Levels and A-Levels. Children in Sri Lanka start school at the age of 5 and it is mandatory to stay until the age of 16. The classes are taught in Sinhala, Tamil, and English. According to the Ministry of Education, there are 9931 government schools offering free education and 98 recognized private schools which are based on fees. There is high competition to get into public schools in urban areas and they face overcrowding. The private sector remains relatively small, and it is attended by wealthier people. There are schools in rural areas but there are large disparities in access to resources, facilities, and teachers. There is poor infrastructure, health and sanitary facilities remain major obstacles in getting enough teachers for such schools to provide better education for children in rural areas. Day care is not provided for elementary school children of government schools but there are private schools that provide this service.

Cost, loans, and stipends

The education from Grade 01 up to university level is free of charge. The free education policy adopted in Sri Lanka also covers the costs of textbooks and uniforms. Other school supplies such as books, notebooks and other stationary

have to be borne by the students. Most of the government schools provide elementary and secondary education and provide textbooks, uniforms, and other welfare benefits such as subsidized transportation and health services to support students from vulnerable communities. Students who pass the Grade 5 Scholarship Examination and GCE O-Level with high scores as set by the Ministry of Education will receive the opportunity to attend a government school in an urban area which is deemed better due to the availability of better facilities and resources. The students who score high marks at GCE A-Level will receive the opportunity to attend a state university where the education will be free. University bursary is provided for students with low-income families. Students who attend private universities have to pay semester fees and some students will receive scholarships or reduced tuition fees based on their academic performance. There are many educational loans given by banks to facilitate higher education in Sri Lanka.

Approval and verification of foreign diplomas

Approval and verification of foreign degrees/diplomas and certificates obtained abroad will be recognized in Sri Lanka based on letter of recognition provided by the University Grants Commission (UGC). Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, the requests for such verifications are accepted only online and the letters of recognition will be issued online as well. The application can be obtained online, and the

5 EDUCATION

payment too can be done online. If not, the request letter with the requested documents should be emailed to recog@ugc.ac.lk. Recognition of degrees/diplomas offered by foreign universities will be charged Rs. 2500 per certificate and if it is recognition for any other qualification, it will be Rs. 2000 per certificate. For further information, please refer https://www.ugc.ac.lk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1741%3Apayment-gateway&catid=144%3Apayment-gateway&Itemid=92&lang=en



Access for returnees

Eligibility and requirements: Returnees can enroll for any public or private school by coordinating with the relevant authorities. Returnees will be entitled for free education, if decided to attend a public school. If either Grade 5 scholarship examination or GCE OL are passed with high scores, the returnees will be eligible to attend a better public school with more facilities and recourses. In addition, the returnees will be eligible for a state university if GCE A-Level is passed with high scores. If preferred and sufficient funding available, the returnees could also attend private schools.

Registration procedure: Returnees should contact the relevant school authorities or private university to get registered/enrolled.

Required documents:

- Copy of valid identification document (NIC/Passport)
- Certificate issued by the 'Grama Sewaka' officer
- Transcript of grades for the education received
- Certificate of equivalence from the Ministry of Education
- Letter of recognition by UGC

6 CHILDREN

General situation of children and infants

Over the past years, Sri Lanka has made considerable progress in enhancing day-to-day lives of children and despite the effects of a prolonged war, natural disasters and political conflicts. Many families have been able to emerge from extreme poverty, many efforts have been taken to reduce under-five mortality and improve access to proper nutrition and antenatal care, improvement in quality and coverage of water and sanitation facilities and providing free education to children. Many children have benefited from free healthcare provided in Sri Lanka. However, still there is extreme poverty particularly in the North, East, Hill country and in rural areas. There are vulnerable communities who face challenges of infant and under-five mortality, undernutrition, and unequal access to preventative and curative health services. Sri Lanka ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1992 and since then the government has taken significant measures towards child protection. The National Child Protection Authority (NCPA), the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs, the Department of Probation and Child Care Services were established to protect the rights of the children. Sri Lanka also reports to CRC committee indicating the measures taken by the government towards protecting the rights of the children every five years. The Ministry of Health conducts several immunization programs for the betterment of children health.

(Non-) governmental actors dealing with children's well-being and rights

There are many non-governmental committed to the protection of the rights of the child such as Save the Children, Child Action Lanka, PEACE/ECPAT Sri Lanka, Friends Lanka Child Foundation and LEADS. In addition, UNICEF conducts many programs and takes betterment of the situation for children in Sri Lanka and for a better future. The objective of these organizations is to give a healthy life to children, the opportunity to learn and protection from harm. They are committed in building an environment enabling child survival, development, and protection.

Access for returnees

Eligibility and requirements: The children when returning should have their international birth certificate, vaccination record, education records and history of medication. These will be requested when the child has to be admitted to a school or for healthcare.

Registration procedure: The Ministry of Education sets deadlines for Grade 01. Admission to public schools which is advertised in the Ministry of Education website <https://moe.gov.lk/> and newspapers. Obtaining admission to a public school in the middle of the education process for instance like Grade 2 or Grade 6 will have to be coordinated with the relevant school authorities.

Required documents: Electoral list registration of the parents, birth certificate, Grama Niladhari Certificate confirming place of residence, previous education certificates.

7 CONTACTS

International Organization for Migration

UN Migration Agency

9th Floor, Institute of Bankers of Sri Lanka Building No.80A, Elvitigala Mawatha, Colombo 00800/ +94 11 5325 300 / +94 11 2112 600
iomcolombo@iom.int

UN WOMEN

UN Agency for gender equality and the empowerment of women

202-204 Bauddhaloka Mawatha, Colombo 7, Sri Lanka
+94 11 250 0015 Ext.3503
<https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/node/21477>

UNICEF

UN agency for child protection and children's rights

3, 1 Rajakeeya Mawatha, Colombo 00700
+94 11 250 0015 Ext.3503
colombo@unicef.org
<https://www.unicef.org/srilanka/>

Office of The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

No. 97 Rosmead Pl, Colombo 00700, Sri Lanka
+94 112 683 968
<https://www.unhcr.org/sri-lanka.html>

ILO Country Office for Sri Lanka and the Maldives

202-204 Bauddhaloka Mawatha, Colombo 00700, Sri Lanka
+94 112 592 525
<https://www.ilo.org/colombo/lang--en/index.htm>

Jaffna Social Action Center (JSAC)

Special protection to vulnerables
18/1 Kailasapilaiyar Veethy, Jaffna, Sri Lanka
+94 212 223 699
<http://jsacsrilanka.org/>

Department of Labour

Labour Market

Labour Secretariat, No 41, Kirula Road, Colombo 05, Sri Lanka
0112581142/ 0112581143/
0112581146/ 0112369373
contacts@labourdept.gov.lk
<http://www.labourdept.gov.lk/>

Ministry of Health

Health care services

SUWASIRIPAYA, No. 385, Rev. Baddegama Wimalawansa Thero Mawatha, Colombo 10
(94)112 694033, (94)112 675011, (94)112 675449
postmaster@health.gov.lk
<http://www.health.gov.lk/>

8 AT A GLANCE

Measures to be taken before return

- **Health:** Bring the vaccination records of each individual and if not in English it should be translated and certified. Obtain all medical reports from physicians if the returnee has been undergoing any medication or treatments. Check for the availability of medicines and treatments in Sri Lanka as currently there is a huge shortage of medicine in the country due to the ongoing economic crisis. If not fully vaccinated against COVID 19, kindly undertake a PCR Test 72 hours before departure.
- **Family:** Make sure that immediate family and friends are informed of the arrival so the necessary support and coordination can take place for a smooth return.
- **Transportation:** Coordinate onward transportation to place of residence in advance in order to book a taxi. Ensure you have Sri Lankan currency to pay for the transport and for refreshments on your way.
- **Employment:** If you have been working in the host country or undergone any trainings or apprenticeship, kindly obtain a letter confirming the experience.
- **Accommodation:** Arrange temporary accommodation in Sri Lanka in advance with the support of family or friends.
- **Education:** The educational qualifications in English language have to be sent to University Grants Commission of Sri Lanka requesting letter of recognition.

Measures to be taken upon arrival

- **ID Card:** If you do not possess a National Identification Card (NIC), apply for one and register with relevant authorities
- **Bank account:** Open a bank account in a preferred bank in Sri Lanka. Your NIC or passport will be required.
- **Reintegration:** Contact the relevant IOM office in Sri Lanka as soon as you arrive, within the given time period to obtain reintegration support if eligible. Call and make an appointment before you visit the office.

