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RIGHT TO WORK IN SPAIN – GUIDE FOR REFUGEES



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| RIGHT TO WORK IN SPAIN – GUIDE FOR REFUGEES

Introduction

This guide explains who can work in Spain, which documents are required, how to confirm your rights, and what steps you should take before beginning a job. It is written for refugees, people with subsidiary protection, asylum seekers, and anyone who has recently arrived in Spain and needs reliable information to start working legally and safely.

Spain offers several legal pathways that allow people fleeing conflict, persecution or crisis to enter the labour market. Many forms of protection include automatic access to work, and in most cases the administrative process is straightforward once you understand your status. However, the rules differ depending on whether you are recognised as a refugee, hold subsidiary protection, have temporary or exceptional protection, or are still waiting for a decision on your asylum application.

Having the right documents is essential. Employers must check your identity and confirm that you are authorised to work. Knowing which card or certificate applies to your situation will help you avoid delays, prepare for job applications with confidence and ensure you are employed legally. This guide provides clear explanations for each stage, so you know exactly what to expect when starting work in Spain.

01

Understanding the different types of legal protection in Spain



| Understanding the different types of legal protection in Spain

To work legally in Spain, it is important to understand which protection status you hold. Each status gives different rights, different documents and different time frames for accessing the labour market. Spain recognises several forms of international and national protection for people fleeing conflict, persecution or humanitarian crises.

Recognised refugee status

If the Spanish authorities grant you refugee status, you receive strong protection under international law and full access to the labour market. Once recognised, you are issued a **tarjeta de identidad de extranjero (TIE)** that confirms your refugee status and includes your right to work. Employers do not need to apply for a work permit on your behalf, and you can work in any sector as long as you meet the job requirements. Official information on refugee status (Spanish Ministry of the Interior): <https://www.interior.gob.es/opencms/es/inicio/>

Subsidiary Protection

If you do not meet the requirements for refugee status but still face a risk of serious harm in your home country, you may receive **subsidiary protection**. This status also provides the right to live and work in Spain without any need for a separate work permit. Your TIE confirms your status and your right to work. You have the same labour rights as Spanish citizens, including social security registration and access to employment services. More details on subsidiary protection: <https://www.interior.gob.es/opencms/es/servicios-al-ciudadano/proteccion-internacional/>

Temporary or exceptional protection

Spain applies temporary protection for large groups of people fleeing war or major humanitarian emergencies. This includes protection activated through the **EU Temporary Protection Directive**, which Spain implements fully. People with temporary protection receive immediate access to the labour market and are issued a TIE that authorises them to work. You do not need any additional permits or employer applications.

Official guidance on temporary protection (Ministry of Inclusion and Migration): <https://www.inclusion.gob.es/es/proteccioninternacional/proteccion-temporal/index.htm>

Asylum seekers waiting for a decision

If you apply for asylum in Spain, you first receive a **white asylum application document (resguardo blanco)** confirming your request. During the first six months of your asylum process, you do not have the right to work. After six months, if you have not received a decision, you may receive the **red card (tarjeta roja)**, which grants work authorisation while your case continues. The red card is valid for six months at a time and must be renewed. Once issued, it allows you to work legally without an additional permit.

Guidance on documents for asylum seekers (Ministry of the Interior): <https://www.interior.gob.es/opencms/es/servicios-al-ciudadano/proteccion-internacional/documentacion/>

Summary

- Refugee status → full right to work

- Subsidiary protection → full right to work
- Temporary protection → automatic right to work
- Asylum seeker (first 6 months) → no right to work
- Asylum seeker (after 6 months with red card) → authorised to work

If you are unsure which status applies to you, you can ask at your local **Oficina de Extranjería**. The full list of offices is available at: <https://www.interior.gob.es/opencms/es/servicios-al-ciudadano/tramites-y-gestiones/oficinas-de-extranjeria/>

| The documents needed to work legally

If you are a recognised refugee or have subsidiary protection

People with refugee status or subsidiary protection are issued a **tarjeta de identidad de extranjero (TIE)**. This card serves as both your residence permit and your work authorisation. It normally includes a printed statement such as “*autoriza a trabajar*”. You do not need any extra documents or work permits, and employers do not need to complete additional immigration procedures. You can work in any profession for which you are qualified. More information on the TIE for protected persons: <https://www.interior.gob.es/opencms/es/servicios-al-ciudadano/proteccion-internacional/documentacion/>

If you have temporary or exceptional protection

People covered by temporary protection (including those protected under EU-wide measures) receive a **TIE that includes immediate work authorisation**. This card clearly confirms both your legal residence and your right to work. You do not need to apply separately for a work permit, and your employer does not need to request one.

Official guidance on temporary protection documents:

<https://www.inclusion.gob.es/es/proteccioninternacional/proteccion-temporal/index.htm>

If you are an asylum seeker

Asylum seekers receive different documents depending on the stage of the asylum process:

- **White asylum application document (resguardo blanco):**
This confirms your asylum request but does not allow you to work. It is only valid for identification and legal stay.
- **Red card (tarjeta roja):**
After six months without a decision, you may be issued this card. Once you hold the red card, you are authorised to work. The card includes your photograph, personal details and a clear statement confirming work authorisation. It is usually valid for six months at a time and must be renewed.

Employers must check the expiry date on your red card. If it is close to expiring, you should begin the renewal process early.

Further information on asylum documents: <https://www.interior.gob.es/opencms/es/servicios-al-ciudadano/proteccion-internacional/documentacion/>

General identification requirements

In all situations, you must also provide proof of identity. This can include:

- your passport
- your national identity document (if accepted)
- your travel document
- your TIE or red card

Employers must verify your identity and ensure that you are eligible to work under Spanish law. Failure to present valid identification or an up-to-date residence card may delay your hiring.

Social Security number (Número de la Seguridad Social)

To work legally, everyone must have a **Spanish Social Security number**, which your employer uses to register you for employment. If you do not yet have a number, you can apply for one at the Social Security office or online. Many people obtain it on the same day. Information on applying for a Social Security number: <https://www.seg-social.es/wps/portal/wss/internet/Trabajadores/AltasAfiliacionCotizacionTrabajadores/28768>

| How to check if you have the right to work

Many people are unsure whether their documents already give them access to the labour market. The rules in Spain depend on the type of protection you hold, the documents you have been issued, and how long you have been in the asylum procedure. The steps below explain how to confirm your situation.

Check your TIE (tarjeta de identidad de extranjero)

If you hold a TIE, the card itself will tell you whether you have the right to work. Look for a statement such as “*autoriza a trabajar*” or a similar phrase confirming work authorisation.

This applies to the following groups:

- recognised refugees
- people with subsidiary protection
- people with temporary or exceptional protection

If your TIE includes work authorisation, you can work legally without extra permits. If the wording is unclear or damaged, you can ask the **Oficina de Extranjería** to confirm it. Official guidance on the TIE: https://www.policia.es/es/extranjeria_tie.php

Check whether you have temporary protection

People with temporary protection receive a TIE that includes automatic work authorisation. If you are under EU temporary protection arrangements, your document should clearly show this. If you are unsure, you can check the Ministry of Inclusion and Migration’s information here: <https://www.inclusion.gob.es/es/proteccioninternacional/proteccion-temporal/index.htm>

Check your asylum documents

Asylum seekers have different rights depending on the stage of the process:

- **White asylum document (resguardo blanco):**
Does *not* give the right to work.
- **Red card (tarjeta roja):**
Gives the right to work. The card includes an expiry date and must be renewed every six months while your case is ongoing.

If you are unsure when you should receive the red card, count **six months from the date you submitted your asylum application**. After this period, you may be eligible for work authorisation. Details on asylum documents and timelines: <https://www.interior.gob.es/opencms/es/servicios-al-ciudadano/proteccion-internacional/documentacion/>

Check the validity of your documents

Your right to work is only valid if your TIE or red card is in date. If your document has expired, your work authorisation is paused until renewal. Begin renewal procedures early, as appointments for fingerprinting or card collection can take several weeks.

Visit your local Oficina de Extranjería

If you cannot confirm your status yourself, you can visit or contact your nearest **Foreigners’ Office**. Officers there can check your file, clarify whether you are authorised to work, and guide you on renewing documents. List of all Oficinas de Extranjería: <https://www.interior.gob.es/opencms/es/servicios-al-ciudadano/tramites-y-gestiones/oficinas-de->

Ask a trusted organisation to check your documents

Several organisations can help you understand your rights, including UNHCR Spain, CEAR, Red Cross Spain and local migrant support organisations. UNHCR Spain information: <https://help.unhcr.org/spain/en/>

| What employers in Spain must do

When an employer hires someone with refugee status, subsidiary protection, temporary protection or the right to work as an asylum seeker, the process is straightforward. However, employers have specific responsibilities under Spanish law. Understanding what they must do can help you avoid confusion during recruitment.

If you have refugee status or subsidiary protection

Employers do not need to apply for a separate work permit. Your **TIE** already confirms your right to work.

They must:

- check your identity and your valid TIE
- issue a lawful employment contract
- register you with the **Social Security system** before you start work
- follow Spanish labour law, including minimum wage, working hours and health and safety rules

Guidance on employment rights in Spain (Ministry of Labour):

<https://www.mites.gob.es/>

If you have temporary or exceptional protection

Your temporary protection TIE includes automatic work authorisation. Employers only need to follow standard hiring procedures, the same as for Spanish workers.

They must:

- verify your temporary protection TIE
- register your contract through the usual social security system
- ensure all conditions comply with Spanish labour regulations

No additional immigration permits are required.

Information on temporary protection:

<https://www.inclusion.gob.es/es/proteccioninternacional/proteccion-temporal/index.htm>

If you are an asylum seeker with the red card

If you hold the **red card**, employers must:

- check the red card is valid and includes the work authorisation section
- keep a copy of the card for their records
- register your employment with Social Security

They do **not** need to apply for a work permit.

If your red card is close to expiry, they may ask you to provide proof that you have requested renewal.

More information on asylum documents:

<https://www.interior.gob.es/opencms/es/servicios-al-ciudadano/proteccion-internacional/documentacion/>

If you are still in the first six months of the asylum process

If you only have the **white asylum application document**, employers cannot legally hire you. Only after six months, once you receive the red card, can you work.

Employment registration and social security

All employers in Spain must register employees in the **Social Security system (Seguridad Social)** before work begins. This gives you:

- access to healthcare
- coverage for workplace accidents

- pension contributions
- unemployment rights

Information on social security registration:

<https://www.seg-social.es/>

Respecting labour rights

Employers must follow Spanish labour legislation for all workers, including those under protection. This includes:

- a written contract
- payment of at least the legal minimum wage
- holiday rights
- regulated working hours
- safe working conditions
- access to complaint procedures

The Labour Inspectorate provides guidance, including in several languages:

<https://www.mites.gob.es/itss/index.html>

Information from the Construction Workers project provides information on working conditions across Europe, including Spain: <https://www.constructionworkers.eu/en/es/check-wages-and-working-conditions/spain>

Trade Unions in Spain provide direct counselling and information support. The most representative for the construction sector are:

1. UGT-FICA

Website: <https://www.ugt.es/ugt-fica>

Phone: 915 89 73 50

2. CCOO Hábitat

Website: <https://habitat.ccoo.es/>

Phone: 915 368 796

If an employer is unsure of the process

Some employers may not be familiar with the rules for hiring people under protection. You can direct them to:

- local employment offices (SEPE)
- the Ministry of Inclusion and Migration
- the Ministry of Labour
- trusted NGOs such as CEAR or Red Cross Spain

These organisations can confirm your rights and explain the hiring process to employers.

02

**Step-by-step
guide to start
working in
Spain**



| Step-by-step guide to start working in Spain

Starting work in Spain is usually straightforward once you understand your documents and the responsibilities of your employer. The steps below explain what you should do before applying for jobs and before your employment begins.

Step 1 – Confirm your status

Check whether you are a recognised refugee, have subsidiary or temporary protection, or are an asylum seeker. Only asylum seekers with the **red card** have the right to work.

List of Oficinas de Extranjería:

<https://www.interior.gob.es/opencms/es/servicios-al-ciudadano/tramites-y-gestiones/oficinas-de-extranjeria/>

Step 2 – Prepare your documents

Gather your TIE (or red card), passport or travel document, and any other identity papers. These show who you are and whether you are authorised to work.

Step 3 – Check expiry dates

Your TIE or red card must be valid. If anything is close to expiring, begin renewal early.

Renewal information:

<https://www.interior.gob.es/opencms/es/servicios-al-ciudadano/proteccion-internacional/documentacion/>

Step 4 – Get a Social Security number

Everyone working in Spain needs a **Número de la Seguridad Social**. You can apply online or at a Social Security office.

Guidance:

<https://www.seg-social.es/>

Step 5 – Make copies of your documents

Keep digital or paper copies of your identity documents and your work authorisation. Employers often request these.

Step 6 – Provide your documents to your employer

Show your TIE or red card and your proof of identity. No separate work permit is required for refugees, people with subsidiary or temporary protection, or asylum seekers with the red card.

Step 7 – Employer completes the registration

Before you begin work, your employer must register you with Social Security and issue a contract. This step is the employer's responsibility.

Step 8 – Start work

Once registered and contracted, you can begin working legally with full employment rights.

| Keeping your status valid

Your right to work in Spain depends entirely on your immigration and protection documents staying valid. If your TIE, red card or temporary protection card expires, your work authorisation may pause until the renewal is processed. Because renewal appointments can take time, it is important to check your documents regularly, plan ahead and understand what you must do to keep your status active.

Check expiry dates well in advance

Look at the expiry date printed on your TIE, red card or temporary protection card. Many cards are issued for short periods, especially for asylum seekers. It is best to check these dates every month and begin the renewal process early. Delays in renewing your card can lead to interruptions in your employment, as employers cannot keep you on contract if your documents are out of date. Information on renewing protection documents:

<https://www.interior.gob.es/opencms/es/servicios-al-ciudadano/proteccion-internacional/documentacion/>

Renewal rules for refugees, subsidiary protection holders and temporary protection holders

If you have been granted refugee status, subsidiary protection or temporary protection, your TIE will need to be renewed every time it expires. The renewal process confirms that your protection continues and ensures your work authorisation remains active.

Although your protection status normally remains valid during renewal, you must apply before your card expires. Employers may ask for proof that you have submitted the renewal request if the physical card is not yet issued.

Renewal rules for asylum seekers (red card holders)

Asylum seekers with a red card must renew it every six months while their asylum case is being assessed. If you fail to renew it on time, your right to work may stop until the renewal is processed.

During each renewal, the authorities may ask for updated information or proof that your asylum procedure is still ongoing. It is common to receive a temporary renewal receipt, which you should keep with you until your new card is issued.

What to do if your documents are lost, stolen or damaged

If your TIE or red card is lost or stolen, you must report it to the police and apply for a replacement as soon as possible. A replacement request confirms that you remain legally in Spain and prevents difficulties if an employer needs to verify your identity or work authorisation. While waiting for the replacement, the authorities might issue a temporary document confirming your status. Guidance on applying for a replacement card: https://www.policia.es/es/extranjeria_tie.php

Keep digital and paper copies for emergencies

It is helpful to keep clear photographs or scanned copies of your TIE, red card and passport stored safely on your phone or email. These copies cannot replace your original card, but they can be useful when reporting a loss, booking a renewal appointment or explaining your situation to an employer.

Update your address when you move

If you change your address, you may need to inform the authorities. Many notifications about renewals, appointments or decisions are sent by post. Updating your address helps ensure you do not miss important letters linked to your legal or work status.

Seek help early if you face delays

If you cannot find an appointment or are unsure how to renew your documents, several organisations can help, including UNHCR Spain, CEAR and Red Cross Spain. They can guide you through the renewal process and support you if delays affect your work situation.

| What to do if you change jobs

Changing jobs in Spain is straightforward for people with refugee status, subsidiary protection, temporary protection and most asylum seekers. Your right to work is linked to your legal status, not to a specific employer, so you are free to move to a new job whenever you choose. The key is to ensure your documents remain valid and that your new employer completes the required steps.

People with refugee status or subsidiary protection

If you hold refugee status or subsidiary protection, you can change employers freely. Your **TIE** acts as both your residence permit and work authorisation, so you do not need to apply for new permission when taking a different job. Your only responsibility is to show your new employer your valid TIE and identity documents.

People with temporary protection

If you are under temporary protection, you also have full freedom to change jobs. Your temporary protection TIE authorises you to work for any employer in Spain. When you start a new job, provide your new employer with your TIE and your Social Security number. They will complete the required registration with the Social Security system.

Asylum seekers with the red card

If you have the **red card**, you may change employers as long as your card includes work authorisation and is still valid. You do not need to request new permission. However, employers will check the expiry date, so renew your card on time to avoid any interruption to your employment.

Asylum seekers with the white document

If you only have the **white asylum application document**, you cannot work yet and therefore cannot move into employment until you have received the red card after six months.

What your new employer must do

When you change jobs, your new employer is responsible for:

- checking your TIE or red card
- verifying your identity document
- registering your employment with Social Security
- issuing a valid employment contract

No immigration application or work permit is required for protected persons or red card holders.

If you change jobs frequently

Frequent job changes are allowed. Each time you move into a new role, your employer must complete a new Social Security registration. This process is simple and does not affect your legal status or your right to work.

Keeping your information up to date

If you change your address when moving for a new job, you may need to update your details with the authorities. This helps

ensure you receive letters about renewals, appointments or decisions.

If you face problems when changing jobs

If an employer is unsure about hiring someone under protection, you can direct them to official guidance from the Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration: <https://www.mites.gob.es/>

You can also ask for support from organisations such as UNHCR Spain, CEAR or Red Cross Spain.

| Common situations and how to handle them

Many people under protection in Spain face similar questions or challenges when starting work. The situations below explain what you may experience and how to resolve issues quickly and safely.

If an employer asks you for a work permit

People with refugee status, subsidiary protection, temporary protection and asylum seekers with the red card do not need a separate work permit. If an employer mistakenly asks for one, you can explain that your **TIE** or **red card** already authorises you to work. The card itself is the equivalent of a work permit. You can also direct employers to official information from the Ministry of Inclusion and Migration: <https://www.mites.gob.es/>

If an employer is unsure whether they can hire you

Some employers are unfamiliar with the rules about hiring refugees or asylum seekers. If they are unsure, you may show them:

- your TIE or red card
- your passport or travel document
- your Social Security number
- official guidance on work authorisation

If they still have questions, they can contact their local employment office (SEPE) or the **Oficina de Extranjería** for confirmation.

If your documents expire during employment

If your TIE or red card expires, your employer may temporarily suspend your contract until you present a renewed card or a renewal receipt. To avoid disruption, always begin renewal early. If you receive a temporary renewal receipt, show it to your employer as proof that your status remains valid.

If you move to a different city or region

If you move within Spain, your right to work does not change. Your TIE or red card remains valid nationwide. However, you may need to update your address with the authorities so you receive appointment letters or renewal instructions. Address update guidance: https://www.policia.es/es/extranjeria_domicilio.php

If your employer does not register you with Social Security

Registration with Social Security is essential. Without it, you may lose access to healthcare, accident insurance and other employment protections. If you suspect you are not registered, you can check your status through the Social Security website or by visiting a Social Security office. Social Security portal: <https://www.seg-social.es/>

If your employer refuses to register you, you should seek advice from trusted organisations such as CEAR or Red Cross Spain.

If you previously worked before receiving protection

If you began working before receiving refugee status, subsidiary protection, temporary protection or the red card, you may need to update your employer with your new documents. This ensures they have the correct information and can comply with the law.

If you lose your job

Losing your job does not affect your protection status or your right to work. Your documents remain valid. You can apply for another job immediately. You may also be able to access public employment services and job-seeking support through SEPE: <https://www.sepe.es/>

If you experience discrimination or unfair treatment

All workers in Spain, including refugees and people under protection, are protected by Spanish labour laws. If you face discrimination, unpaid wages or unsafe working conditions, you can contact:

- UGT-FICA: <https://www.ugt.es/ugt-fica>
- CCOO Hábitat: <https://habitat.ccoo.es/>
- The Labour Inspectorate: <https://www.mites.gob.es/itss/index.html>
- **Anti-racism support & discrimination line: 021**
Free nationwide telephone service to assist people who have experienced or witnessed **racial or ethnic discrimination or racist hate crimes**.

These organisations can explain your rights and help you resolve problems safely.

| Where to get help or more information

Spain has a wide network of organisations and public services that provide free information, legal advice and practical support to refugees, people with subsidiary protection, temporary protection holders and asylum seekers. These organisations can help you understand your documents, confirm your right to work, assist with renewals, and guide you if you face difficulties at work.

UNHCR Spain (Acnur)

UNHCR provides guidance on asylum procedures, work rights, documents and access to services. Their website includes information in several languages, as well as contact options for personalised support. Website: <https://help.unhcr.org/spain/en/>

Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration

This ministry oversees issues related to international protection, temporary protection and access to the labour market. Their website offers official rules, updates and instructions for people under protection. Website: <https://www.inclusion.gob.es/>

Ministry of the Interior

Responsible for asylum procedures and documentation such as the white document, red card and TIE for people under protection. They publish detailed explanations about appointments, renewals and required documents. Website: <https://www.interior.gob.es/opencms/es/servicios-al-ciudadano/proteccion-internacional/>

Spanish Public Employment Service (SEPE)

SEPE provides job listings, training opportunities and support for job seekers. They can guide employers and workers on hiring procedures and labour rights. Website: <https://www.sepe.es/>

CCOO del Hábitat

CCOO del Hábitat is a trade union that supports workers in construction, housing, cleaning, and related sectors. They can provide advice on labour rights, working conditions, training, and skills recognition, including support for migrant and refugee workers. Help is available in several languages, and personalised support can be requested.

Address: Calle de Albasanz, 3 (Bajo), 28037 Madrid

Website: <https://habitat.ccoo.es/>

Email: estatal@habitat.ccoo.es

Languages: English, French, Spanish

Contact person: Ángeles Romero

Phone: +34 915 40 92 33

UGT FICA

UGT FICA is the industrial federation of the UGT trade union, covering industry, construction, and agriculture. They offer information and support on employment rights, union representation, training opportunities, and integration into the labour market for migrants and refugees.

Address: Avenida de América, 25 (5ª planta), 28002 Madrid

Website: <http://www.ugt-fica.org>

Email: internacional@fica.ugt.org

Languages: Spanish, French, English

Contact persons: Gracia de Juana / Juan Carlos Barrero

Phone: +34 915 89 75 07

Email: internacional@fica.ugt.org

CEAR – Spanish Commission for Refugee Aid

CEAR offers legal advice, support with asylum cases, employment guidance and social services for people under international protection. They have offices across Spain. Website: <https://www.cear.es/>

Red Cross Spain (Cruz Roja)

Red Cross provides support with documentation, job training, social integration and emergency assistance. They also help people understand their work rights and access local services. Website: <https://www.cruzroja.es/>

Local NGOs and migrant support centres

Many cities and regions have organisations that help with legal advice, job-seeking assistance and document renewals. These include local migrant centres, social services and community organisations. Your municipality (ayuntamiento) can tell you which services are available in your area.

Labour Inspectorate (Inspección de Trabajo y Seguridad Social)

If you face problems in the workplace such as discrimination, unpaid wages or unsafe working conditions, the Labour Inspectorate can provide guidance and receive complaints. Website: <https://www.mites.gob.es/itss/index.html>

Oficinas de Extranjería

The Foreigners' Offices provide official information about your immigration status, renewals, work authorisation and documentation. List of all offices: <https://www.interior.gob.es/opencms/es/servicios-al-ciudadano/tramites-y-gestiones/oficinas-de-extranjeria/>

Frequently asked questions

These are some of the most common questions asked by refugees, people with protection and asylum seekers who want to work in Spain.

1. Do I need a work permit if I have refugee status or subsidiary protection?

No. If you hold refugee status or subsidiary protection, your TIE already includes your right to work. No separate work permit is needed.

2. Can I work with temporary protection?

Yes. Temporary protection gives you immediate access to the labour market. Your temporary protection TIE confirms this and no additional permit is required.

3. When can asylum seekers work?

Asylum seekers can work after **six months**, once they receive the **red card**. The white asylum document does not allow you to work.

4. Can I change employers freely?

Yes. People with refugee status, subsidiary protection, temporary protection and asylum seekers with the red card are free to change employers at any time. You simply need to show your valid documents to the new employer.

5. Do I need a new permit if I switch jobs?

No. Your right to work does not depend on a specific employer. Your TIE or red card is enough.

6. What happens if my documents expire?

If your TIE or red card expires, your right to work may pause until you renew it. Start the renewal process early to avoid problems.

7. What should I do if I lose my card?

You must report the loss or theft to the police and request a replacement card. A temporary document may be issued to confirm your status.

8. Can I work part-time, full-time or in any type of job?

Yes. You can work part-time, full-time or in any sector, as long as you meet the requirements of the role.

9. Do I need a Social Security number?

Yes. All workers in Spain must have a **Número de la Seguridad Social**. You can apply online or at a Social Security office.

10. Will I have access to healthcare if I work?

Yes. Once you are registered with Social Security by your employer, you receive access to healthcare and other employment-related rights.

11. What if my employer is unsure about hiring me?

You can show your documents and direct them to official guidance from the Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration: <https://www.inclusion.gob.es/>

12. Can I look for work while waiting for a renewal?

Yes, but you must show proof that you have requested the renewal. Some employers may ask for a renewal receipt.

| Practical checklist for refugees preparing to work

This checklist summarises the key steps to help you prepare for legal employment in Spain. It can be used before applying for jobs or when starting a new role.

✓ Confirm your legal status

Know whether you are a recognised refugee, have subsidiary protection, have temporary protection or are an asylum seeker with the red card. Only the red card gives asylum seekers the right to work.

✓ Check that your documents are valid

Look at the expiry date on your TIE or red card. Begin renewal early to avoid gaps in your right to work.

✓ Gather your identity documents

Prepare your passport, travel document or national ID if accepted. Employers must verify your identity before hiring you.

✓ Prepare your work authorisation documents

Ensure you have your TIE (for protected persons or those with temporary protection) or your red card (for asylum seekers with work rights). Keep both the original and a copy.

✓ Apply for a Social Security number

If you do not already have one, apply for your **Número de la Seguridad Social** online or at a Social Security office. This number is required for employment.

✓ **Make copies of all your documents**

Keep digital and paper copies of your passport, TIE or red card, and any renewal receipts. These copies are useful when applying for jobs or replacing lost documents.

✓ **Update your address if you move**

If you change your address, inform the authorities. This helps you receive letters about renewals or appointments.

✓ **Understand the employer's responsibilities**

Your employer must register you with Social Security and issue a lawful contract. You do not need a separate work permit.

✓ **Know where to get help**

Keep useful links and contact details for organisations such as UNHCR Spain, CEAR, Red Cross Spain and Oficinas de Extranjería. They can help with document issues, renewals and workplace problems.

✓ **Prepare for job applications**

Have a CV ready, along with your identification and work authorisation. Employers may ask to see your documents before offering a contract.