

Sweden's migration and asylum policy

The Government's objective is to ensure a sustainable migration policy that safeguards the right of asylum and, within the framework of managed immigration, facilitates mobility across borders, promotes demand-driven labour migration, harnesses and takes account of the development impact of migration, and deepens European and international cooperation. This fact sheet outlines the Government's current work in this area.

The Government's handling of the refugee situation

Sweden has shouldered a great deal of responsibility in the ongoing global refugee situation. The Government took a series of temporary measures to significantly reduce the number of people seeking asylum in Sweden when the EU Member States were unable to share the responsibility that came with the large number of asylum seekers.

- The Government decided to introduce temporary border controls at internal borders. The decision has been extended several times and currently applies until 11 May 2018. The temporary ID checks introduced in early 2016 ceased to apply in May 2017.
- On 20 July 2016, a temporary act was introduced bringing Sweden's asylum rules in line

with minimum standards under EU law. Under this act, persons eligible for subsidiary protection are granted temporary residence permits and opportunities for family reunification are limited. The limitations do not apply to quota refugees. The restrictions on obtaining a residence permit in Sweden are considered necessary for at most three years. Since 1 June 2017, under an amendment to the temporary act, newly arrived young people are entitled to a residence permit to enable them to complete their upper secondary school education. The amendment will continue to apply after July 2019.

- In 2017, approximately 2 800 people who applied for asylum in Greece or Italy were relocated to Sweden under a 2015 EU decision.

Unaccompanied minors

In the second half of 2015, a large number of unaccompanied minors came to Sweden. Most unaccompanied minors seeking asylum in Sweden are granted a residence permit. If the authorities conclude that the minor has no grounds for protection or other grounds for staying in Sweden, the basic premise is that the minor should return to their country of origin. This return is conditional on proper reception being in place. The Government has announced changes to the legislation to enable a limited group of young people who arrived in Sweden at the latest on 24 November 2015, and who have been negatively affected by lengthy processing times, to obtain a residence permit to enable them to finish their upper secondary school education if they meet certain criteria.

Better conditions for returns

To maintain a sustainable asylum and migration policy, it is crucial that people who have received a final and non-appealable refusal-of-entry or expulsion order following a legally certain examination of their grounds for asylum return to their country of origin as quickly as possible. The Government has implemented many measures to increase returns. For example, the right to accommodation and financial assistance no longer applies to adults who are not living with a child when a refusal-of-entry or expulsion order has become final and non-appealable. Also, a clearer allocation of responsibilities between the authorities has been introduced regarding enforcement of refusal-of-entry and expulsion orders. Sweden has several readmission agreements with third countries. The EU also plays a major role in cooperation on readmission, as Member States can collectively demand that third countries readmit their nationals.

Common European Asylum System

Enhanced and constructive cooperation both in the EU and globally is a cornerstone of a sustainable migration policy. Sweden is actively involved in the EU's ongoing negotiations on a revised common asylum system consisting of seven legal instruments. Solidarity and greater harmonisation are priority issues for Sweden. The EU's future asylum system

must provide legal certainty and be sustainable, protect the right of asylum and at the same time achieve a more equal distribution of asylum seekers between Member States. Sweden will continue to be a strong and important voice in Europe to protect the right of asylum and vulnerable groups.

Resettlement as a safe and legal route into the EU for people in need of protection

Sweden will also continue to promote realistic proposals for more legal channels into the EU for asylum seekers, and for all EU Member States to enhance resettlement of people in need of protection. Resettlement is currently a tried and tested system and the safest way for people needing protection to enter the EU. The government-appointed inquiry on legal channels proposes, among other things, that the European Commission examine the possibility of proposing admission rules for people seeking asylum in the EU. The number of people resettled in Sweden has increased from 1 900 in 2016 to 3 400 in 2017; as of 2018 the number will be 5 000.

International cooperation and global responsibility-sharing

Global cooperation needs to be strengthened to find sustainable and joint solutions to better manage the movement of migrants and people in need of protection. Two global frameworks, one on migration

and the other on refugee situations, are to be adopted by the United Nations in 2018. Sweden, together with other countries, will stress the need for greater global responsibility-sharing and collaboration, and enhanced governance. The Government will also work to ensure that states implement the migration-related commitments of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This involves facilitating safe, orderly, managed and responsible migration.

Sweden is the sixth largest humanitarian aid donor in the world and among the largest donors to both the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which are doing outstanding work for migrants and refugees, including in North Africa and the Mediterranean.

Facts about migration policy

Sweden's migration policy comprises refugee and immigration policy, return policy, support for repatriation and the link between migration and development. It also includes global cooperation on these issues. This area also covers issues related to Swedish citizenship.

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