

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 management 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 EU Member States in the second half of 2015 could not share the responsibility involved in managing 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 November 2019.
- 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, refugees and persons eligible

for subsidiary protection, but not quota refugees, are granted temporary residence permits, and opportunities for family reunification are limited. 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 also continue to apply after July 2019.

Unaccompanied minors

A large number of unaccompanied minors and young people came to Sweden in the second half of 2015. Most unaccompanied minors seeking asylum in Sweden are granted a residence permit. If the authorities conclude that the minor has no grounds for international 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.

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 a range of measures to increase returns. For example, the number of detention centre places has increased and liaison officers to reinforce the returns procedure have been placed at missions abroad. In addition, the Swedish Police Authority is now able to carry out workplace spot checks to ensure that employers have not employed people who

do not have the right to stay or work in Sweden. Sweden has several readmission agreements with third countries. The EU also plays a major role in cooperation on readmission; all Member States together can demand that other 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 sustainability, 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

Resettlement is – and has long been – an important part of Sweden's refugee policy. Resettlement is a tried and tested system and the safest most humane way for people in need of international protection to enter the EU. There is also a need for more legal pathways to Europe for those seeking asylum. The number of people resettled in Sweden increased from 1 900 in 2016 to 3 400 in 2017. In 2018 the number had reached 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 in-

ternational protection. As a follow-up to the 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, two UN global compacts were negotiated and adopted in 2018, one on migration and one on refugees. Sweden supports both these compacts and took active part in their development. The Government will also work to ensure that states implement the migration-related commitments of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This involves, among other things, 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 Sweden's 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 policy area also covers issues related to Swedish citizenship.

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