In a judgment published on 2 July 2026, the Swiss Federal Administrative Court revised its approach to residence rights of recognised refugees by limiting their freedom to influence the choice of canton to which they are assigned.

The Swiss Refugee Council (OSAR) expressed concerns over the decision, arguing that it reflects an excessively restrictive interpretation of Article 26 of the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, which guarantees refugees freedom of movement and residence. OSAR stressed that recognised refugees should continue to have residence mobility rights comparable to those granted to holders of permanent residence permits (Permit C), rather than being treated like holders of temporary residence permits (Permit B), who are subject to stricter conditions for changing cantons. According to OSAR, the ruling may hinder integration by restricting access to family networks, educational opportunities and employment prospects, thereby creating unnecessary obstacles for refugees seeking to establish themselves successfully in Switzerland.

Source(s)

- Swiss Refugee Council | Schweizerische Flüchtlingshilfe | Organisation suisse d'aide aux réfugiés (3 August, 2026), L'OSAR critique la restriction du choix du lieu de résidence [The OSAR criticises the restriction of choice of place of residence], https://www.osar.ch/communique-de-presse/losar-critique-la-restriction-du-choix-du-lieu-de-residence

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