UNHCR publishes recommendations to Denmark on strengthening refugee protection

UNHCR published recommendations to Denmark to reinforce refugee protection standards at the national level, contribute to a rights-based European asylum framework and maintain its leadership role in global responsibility-sharing. While acknowledging Denmark's well-established asylum and reception system and resettlement contribution, UNHCR expressed concern about policies emphasising temporariness, deterrence, returns and restrictive family reunification. Key recommendations included:

Strengthen asylum procedure and appeals mechanisms: UNHCR urged Denmark to preserve the independence of its asylum system, particularly the role of the Refugee Appeals Board. Any institutional reforms should maintain independent and impartial appeal mechanisms as a core safeguard for refugees and asylum seekers. Denmark is also encouraged to build on positive elements of its response to displacement from Ukraine, including efficient and protection-oriented procedures.

Limit frequent reviews of temporary residence permits and protection status: UNHCR remained concerned about Denmark's frequent review of residence permits and protection status, which create uncertainty and impede integration. It recommended the following: "Discontinue the regular mandatory review of continued international protection needs upon extension of residence permits and ensures that reviewing or ending international protection is limited to situations where the criteria and standards established in the 1951 Convention are clearly present, to reduce legal uncertainty and support integration. Ensure that any application of cessation, withdrawal or non-renewal of international protection status is subject to strict safeguards, a holistic assessment and rigorous scrutiny of the applicable criteria and standards established in the 1951 Convention".

Facilitate family reunification: Recognising family unity as a key element of refugee protection and integration, UNHCR recommended to remove waiting periods for family reunification for all beneficiaries of international protection; provide guarantees for reunification for all children, including those aged 15-18; apply a broader interpretation of family dependency; and improve access to

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consular services and documentation procedures for family members abroad.

Reduce and prevent statelessness: UNHCR welcomed Denmark's commitment to addressing statelessness but recommended "amendments to the Nationality Act to ensure that all children born stateless in Denmark acquire Danish nationality automatically at birth, or at a minimum upon application; Establish a dedicated statelessness determination procedure; Replace the requirement of “lawful residence” with “habitual residence” for the acquisition of nationality by stateless children, to bring national practice into conformity with Article 1(2) of the 1961 Convention; Introduce provisions or alternative pathways for facilitation of naturalization for stateless persons with specific vulnerabilities, such as illiteracy or age-related limitations".

Ensure rights-based migration governance: In the context of EU migration and asylum reforms, Denmark should ensure implementation of asylum and migration measures remains fully consistent with international refugee and human rights law while upholding the principle of *non-refoulement* and access to asylum as well as ensure strong protection safeguards in any cooperation with third countries, including return arrangements and safe-third-country frameworks.

UNHCR encouraged Denmark to **increase its annual refugee resettlement quota**, expand complementary pathways such as work and study opportunities for refugees, continue providing predictable and flexible humanitarian funding and renew its humanitarian partnership framework with UNHCR.

Source(s)

- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (4 June, 2026), [UNHCR recommendations to Denmark on strengthening refugee protection in Denmark, Europe and globally], https://www.unhcr.org/nordic-and-baltic/sites/neu/files/2026-06/DEN%20UNHCR%20Recommendations%20to%20Denmark_June%202026_FINAL.pdf

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