Forms of protection - Sweden

Overview

Content updated and validated on: 29/08/2025

Relevant EU legislation

Sweden is bound by the recast Qualification Directive (Standards Qualification Regulation) and has transposed its provisions through the Utlänningslag (2005:716) [Aliens Act (2005:716)].

National legislation

Refugee status	On the basis of the Geneva Convention, Protocol of 1967 and recast Qualification Directive of 2011. Chapter 4 of the Aliens Act (2005:716) of 29 September 2005.
Subsidiary protection	On the basis of the recast Qualification Directive of 2011. Chapter 4 of the Aliens Act (2005:716) of 29 September 2005.
Temporary protection	On the basis of the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) of 2001. Sweden transposed the TPD in 2005 in the Aliens Act (2005:716) of 29 September 2005, Chapter 21 (Sections 1-9). The provisions were automatically activated with the Implementing Decision of the Council of the EU for displaced persons from Ukraine.

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National forms of protection	There are three types of national protection statuses that can be granted: 1. **Protection due to exceptionally distressing circumstances** *(uppehållstillstånd på grund av synnerligen ömmande omständigheter)* can be granted to protect foreigners suffering from life-threatening physical or mental illness, with a particularly serious disability or with special ties in Sweden. For example: foreigners with fatal illnesses or severe disabilities whose condition may be improved in Sweden if adequate care is unavailable in the country of origin; foreigners who risk social exclusion or traumatisation if forced to return to their country of origin (i.e. victims of torture or victims of trafficking who are no longer at risk of persecution or abuse in the country of origin); and children whose development will be gravely endangered after a removal order. 2. **Temporary or permanent residence permit due to an impediment to a removal**. It can be granted under the following circumstances: - there are obstacles to enforce a return decision linked to fact that a foreigner would be at risk of suffering the death penalty; subjected to corporal punishment, torture or other inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in the country to which he/she is sent; or if the foreigner is not protected in this country from being sent on to a country in which the foreigner would be at such risk; - there is reason to assume that the intended recipient country will not be willing to receive the foreigner; or - there are medical barriers or any other particular reason why the return decision should not be enforced. 3. **Temporary residence permit for tribunal witnesses and their families**. It is the only protection-based residence permit that can be

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Competent authority and stakeholders

Refugee status	Swedish Migration Agency | Migrationsverket
Subsidiary protection	Swedish Migration Agency | Migrationsverket
Temporary protection	Swedish Migration Agency | Migrationsverket
National forms of protection	Swedish Migration Agency | Migrationsverket

Renewal and withdrawal of international protection and national forms of protection

Refugee status

Refugee protection is regulated by Chapter 4 of the Aliens Act (2005:716) of 29 September 2005.

The status granted is unlimited, however, residence permits are issued with a specific validity and are renewable. The first residence permit is issued for 3 years. Before the expiration of the current permit and not earlier than 2 months before, the beneficiary may renew the residence permit provided that there is still a need for protection. Subsequent residence permits are valid for 2 years. This does not apply to resettled refugees who receive a permanent residence permit (residence cards are valid for 3 years).

The Swedish Migration Agency (SMA) can review protection status at any time. This can be triggered if, for example, a new element emerges or the SMA receives new information about the beneficiary of refugee status or their statements. Individual reviews are also undertaken when an application for a renewal of a residence permit is submitted. The SMA sends a letter to all beneficiaries of international protection who have a temporary residence permit 2 months before the residence permit expires in order to inform them about the importance of applying for an extension. The person should state in the application if the same reasons for protection persist or if there are new reasons, e.g. something happened after he/she applied for asylum, something that he/she

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has not told the SMA or the court. Failure to apply in time and the subsequent expiration of the permit could result in discontinued support from the municipality and the employment office, among other measures. A period of stay without a permit may also, in some cases, affect a person’s renewal conditions because the stay is then considered to be illegal.

The extension or renewal of a residence permit by virtue of a protection status declaration starts with an application for an extension of the residence permit by the applicant/beneficiary, which is submitted online using the e-service or at an application unit. All case files are digital, thus the process is digitalised and uses digital 'locations' to keep track of the case through the workflow.

The unit responsible for the application ensures that the application is complete through screening of the application, which is then handed over to an extension unit. If the application needs further investigation, it is sorted accordingly in the case handling system for further processing. If a decision can be made more or less based on the application, it is sorted accordingly in the case handling system and placed in a digital location in the appointed workflow. If the decision is to grant an extension, the applicant continues his/her stay in Sweden. If the decision is negative, the applicant can appeal to the Migration Court.

There is no systematic review of all decisions to grant refugee status to trigger a revocation. There is also no review that takes place for beneficiaries from certain countries of origin.

The procedure to revoke the status is initiated by the SMA *ex officio*. The agency can also receive information from different authorities and actors, such as the police, social services, tax office and the public. The SMA then decides if an investigation should be opened and a decision on a revocation should be made. Recently new units that focus on analysing such information were established. They specialise in determining whether the information should lead to opening an investigation or not.

The Swedish Security Service, the police, the Swedish Tax Agency and National Social Insurance Board may all be involved in the revocation process. The Swedish Tax Agency can also be contacted by the SMA when it is discovered that the claimed identity of a person is not accurate. If the SMA has reason to suspect that a person is wrongfully receiving allowances or grants, the SMA must inform the Swedish Social Insurance Agency, the Swedish Pensions Agency, the National Board of Student Aid (CSN), the Swedish Public Employment Service, municipalities and the unemployment benefit funds office.

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The SMA has a separate process to revoke protection status or residence permits, and specific staff allocated for handling cases within this process. A residence permit that is revoked on the ground that the person no longer resides in Sweden is handled by specific units. The SMA issues a notification/summons that includes the reasons for the reconsideration of the person's status or residence permit.

A personal interview always takes place when a protection status may be revoked (the applicant is summoned for an interview). During the procedure, foreigners may offer new elements in their case. They can also present their written statements explaining why they are still in need of a protection status.

State-funded legal aid is provided when revocation may lead to an expulsion. Public counsels are appointed by the SMA to be present during the interview and in the appeal procedure.

The protection **ceases** in the following circumstances: (The SMA must still actively open a case regarding revocation and make a formal decision before the protection is considered revoked).

- the person voluntarily reavailed of the protection of the country of origin (e.g. when applying for a new national passport, requesting the national authorities to return the old passport, or travelling to the country of origin);
- the person acquired citizenship in a new country and receives the protection of that country;
- the person has voluntarily re-established in the country which he/she had left due to a fear of persecution;
- the circumstances in connection with which he/she was recognised as a refugee have ceased to exist or have changed to such a degree that protection is no longer required (when assessing the situation, only significant and lasting changes should be considered; this is also not applicable if the person in question has weighty reasons for not wanting to use the country's protection where he/she is a citizen or where he/she as a stateless person previously had his/her residence).

Residence permits (same as visas and work permits, in general) may be **revoked** :

- if a person has deliberately provided false information or has deliberately withheld circumstances that have been of importance for obtaining the permit (when provided with indication/sufficient proof that the person concerned acted in this way);

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- if the person no longer resides in Sweden;
- a person can be also expelled on security grounds, according to the Act concerning Special Controls in Respect of Aliens (*Lagen (1991:572 om särskild utlänningskontroll)*. This would require that the Security Police asks the Swedish Migration Agency to make a decision on expulsion, which can be appealed to the government. Before making a decision, the government must obtain a statement/opinion from the Migration Court of Appeal, which will consider the principle of *non-refoulement*.

The residence permit is refused to be renewed, if the grounds for granting the permit have ceased to exist and no other grounds apply.

The decision on revoking international protection is issued by the SMA together with the decision on ending the residence title. The decision on revocation or cessation contains an obligation to leave the country within 4 weeks from the date the decision acquires legal force. The person can choose to accept the decision (if so, a foreigner should leave Sweden) or appeal it (within 3 weeks to the regional Migration Court with a possibility to file an onward appeal, see also: Second instance determination). An appeal has an automatic suspensive effect.

Once the decision becomes final and can no longer be appealed, the individual has 4 weeks to voluntarily leave the territory of Sweden. After the refugee status was ceased, former refugees can also apply for a residence permit on legal migration grounds and can be still granted subsidiary protection or a national protection status.

The decision on the revocation of international protection does entail consequences for the dependents of a person whose protection has been revoked. Dependants can stay in Sweden as long as they have sufficient protection grounds.

Subsidiary protection status

Subsidiary protection status is regulated by Chapter 4 of the Aliens Act (2005:716) of 29 September 2005. It is an unlimited status for the time the protection is needed. A first residence permit is issued for 13 months. Before the expiration of the permit and not earlier than 2 months before, the beneficiary may renew the residence permit for 2 years if protection is still needed.

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The application for the renewal of the residence permit and case processing are the same as mentioned for refugee status. The SMA sends a letter with a code 2 months before the residence permit expires that the applicant must apply for an extension if he/she wishes to stay in Sweden.

The procedure to review the status is the same as for refugees. The SMA can review the protection status at any time. This can be triggered if, for example, a new element appears or if the SMA receives new information about the beneficiary of refugee status or subsidiary status or their statements. An individual review is also undertaken upon the application for a renewal of a residence permit.

There is no systematic review of all decisions to grant refugee status to trigger withdrawal. There is also no review that take place for beneficiaries from a certain country of origin.

The procedure for revocation of status is the same as for refugees. The procedure is initiated by the SMA *ex officio*. Responsibility for the revocation of international protection lies with a units dedicated to handle revocations. A revocation of a permanent residence permit, based on the ground that a person no longer resides in Sweden, is handled by separate units dedicated to terminated settlement cases. The SMA issues a notification/summons that includes the reasons for the reconsideration of the person’s status. The agency can also receive information from different authorities and actors, such as the police, social services, tax office and the public. The agency then decides if an investigation and decision on revocation should be made.

The Swedish Security Service, the police, the Swedish Tax Agency and National Social Insurance Board may all be involved in the revocation process. The Swedish Tax Agency can also be contacted by the SMA when it is discovered that the claimed identity of a person is not accurate. If the SMA has reason to suspect that a person is wrongfully receiving allowances or grants, the SMA must inform the Swedish Social Insurance Agency, the Swedish Pensions Agency, the National Board of Student Aid (CSN), the Swedish Public Employment Service, municipalities and the unemployment benefit funds office.

A personal interview may take place if deemed necessary and the person is facing revocation of protection status and deportation. During the interview, foreigners may offer new elements in their case. They also have the possibility to present a written statement after the interview claiming why their status or residence permit should not be revoked.

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State-funded legal aid is provided when a revocation may lead to an expulsion. Public counsels are appointed by the SMA to be present during the interview and in the appeal procedure.

The subsidiary protection **ceases** if the circumstances for recognition as a beneficiary of subsidiary protection have ceased to exist or have changed to such a degree that protection is no longer required (when assessing the situation, only significant and lasting changes should be considered; this is also not applicable if the person has sufficient reasons for not wanting to use the protection of the country where they are a citizen or where they had residence as a stateless person).

Residence permits (same as visas and work permits, in general) may be **revoked** , as in the case of refugee protection, in the following circumstances:

- if a person has deliberately provided false information or has deliberately withheld circumstances that would have been of importance for obtaining the permit (when provided with sufficient proof that the person acted in this way);
- if the person no longer resides in Sweden;
- based on security grounds, according to the Act concerning Special Controls in Respect of Aliens (*Lagen (1991:572 om särskild utlänningskontroll*). This would require that the Security Police asks the Swedish Migration Agency to make a decision on expulsion, which can be appealed to the government. Before deciding, the government must obtain a statement/opinion from the Migration Court of Appeal, which will consider the principle of *non-refoulement*.

The withdrawal of the subsidiary protection status has the same consequences as the withdrawal of refugee status. The decision on the withdrawal of international protection is issued by the SMA, together with the decision on ending the residence title. The decision on revocation or cessation contains an obligation to leave the country within 4 weeks from the date the decision acquires legal force. The person can choose to accept the decision (in which case they should leave Sweden) or appeal it within 3 weeks to the regional Migration Court with a possibility to file an onward appeal (see also Second instance determination). An appeal has an automatic suspensive effect.

Once the decision becomes final and can no longer be appealed, the person has 4 weeks to voluntarily leave the territory of Sweden. After refugee status has ceased, a former refugee can also apply for a residence permit on legal migration

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grounds or can still be granted subsidiary protection or a national protection status.

The decision on the withdrawal of international protection does entail consequences for the dependents of a person whose protection has been withdrawn/revoked. Dependents can stay in Sweden as long as they have sufficient protection grounds

National forms of protection

Protection due to an exceptionally distressing situation

Protection due to an exceptionally distressing situation is regulated by the Aliens Act (2005:716) of 29 September 2005, Chapter 5, Section 6.

Residence permits have the same length as ones received by beneficiaries of subsidiary protection. The status is unlimited, provided that the protection is still needed. A residence permit is issued for 13 months and is renewable for 2 more years.

The procedure to review, renew or withdraw the status (including grounds and consequences) is the same as for beneficiaries of subsidiary protection.

Residence permits due to an impediment to a removal

Residence permits granted due to an impediment to a removal is regulated by the Aliens Act (2005:716) of 29 September 2005, Chapter 12, Section 18.

It is a temporary protection while protection is needed. The first residence permit is for 12 months. Subsequent permits are issued for 2 years (if the permit is granted as a result of having submitted a subsequent application, then the prolongation period is 1 year at a time).

The procedure to review, renew or withdraw the status (including grounds and consequences) is the same as for beneficiaries of subsidiary protection.

Residence permits for tribunal witnesses

Residence permits granted to tribunal witnesses are regulated by the Aliens Act (2005:716) of 29 September 2005, Chapter 22.

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It is a temporary protection while the protection is needed. The first residence permit is for at least 12 months. Subsequent permits are issued for at least 12 months or a permanent residence permit is issued.

The procedure to review, renew or withdraw the status (including grounds and consequences) is the same as for beneficiaries of subsidiary protection.

Content of protection

Overview

Aliens Act (2005:716), 29 September 2005 and the Aliens Act Ordinance, 2006:97, 23 February 2023.

Chapter 4 of the Aliens Act (2005:716), 29 September 2005 and Chapter 4 of the Aliens Act Ordinance, 2006:97, 23 February 2023.

Chapter 4 of the Aliens Act (2005:716), 29 September 2005 and Chapter 4 of the Aliens Act Ordinance, 2006:97, 23 February 2023.

Provision of information on the content of protection

Information is provided by the SMA when the decision is given to the applicant orally, in writing and it is also available online.

It covers information on the residence permit for those with refugee or subsidiary status, the possibility of family reunification, the possibility of appealing the status decision, in what instances a status can be withdrawn, information on travel documents and how to apply for an extension of your residence permit. Information is also provided on integration activities.

The county agencies and the Swedish Public Employment Service also provide information, for instance about the introductory programme (Etableringsprogrammet - Arbetsförmedlingen), employment, training available to build or develop skills, internships, support in job search, support to start a company, validation of competencies, etc.

Residence permits

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Refugees

The Swedish Migration Agency | Migrationsverket is the authority responsible for delivering the residence permit.

According to the last amendments of the Aliens Act in July 2021, a temporary residence permit is issued for 3 years and a renewable residence permit card is valid for 3 years (except for resettled refugees who receive a permanent residence permit). Subsequent permits have a validity of 2 years (upon online application through e-service and if additional requirements are met: still in need of protection and application submitted before the expiry of the current permit and not earlier than 2 months before).

To receive a residence permit, a person must be photographed and fingerprinted. Children younger than 6 years old do not fingerprints to be taken. The exemption includes people who cannot be fingerprinted for physical reasons, such as permanent finger injuries. The residence permit is issued when the decision is made, but no earlier than 6 weeks before the validity of the residence permit begins. The card is sent to the home address within 1-2 weeks.

Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection

The Swedish Migration Agency | Migrationsverket is the authority responsible for delivering the residence permit.

The temporary residence permit is valid for 13 months and a renewable residence permit card is valid for 2 years. Subsequent permits are issued for 2 years (a minimum of 1 year) upon an online application through e-service, if additional requirements are met such as still in need of protection and application submitted before the expiry of the current permit and not earlier than 2 months before).

The procedure for delivering the residence permit for beneficiaries of subsidiary protection is the same as for refugees. To receive a residence permit card, the person must be photographed. Children younger than 6 years old do not need to have fingerprints taken. The exemption includes people who cannot be fingerprinted for physical reasons, such as permanent finger injuries. The residence permit card is issued when the decision is made, but no earlier than 6 weeks before the validity of the residence permit begins. The card is sent to the home address within 1-2 weeks.

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Travel documents

Refugees

The Swedish Migration Agency | Migrationsverket is the authority responsible for delivering the travel documents.

A Geneva Convention document is issued for refugees which is valid for 2 years and renewable; valid for all countries except for the holder’s country of origin (and only valid for travel as long as the refugee has a valid residence permit).

The document fee is SEK 350 (approximately EUR 31). If the person obtains Swedish nationality during that period, a new travel document is issued.

If a refugee has been unable to fully substantiate their identity, then the refugee travel document is stamped with the phrase “The holder has not proven his/her identity”. This means that there can be difficulties travelling between EU countries and even greater difficulties visiting other countries (e.g. some countries request to apply for a visa). The note can be removed once the person provides substantial proof of identity.

Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection

The Swedish Migration Agency | Migrationsverket is the authority responsible for delivering the travel documents.

A foreigner’s passport has a validity of the same time as the validity of the residence permit, but at most 3 years renewable. Validity can be restricted to certain countries after an individual assessment by the SMA.

If a beneficiary of subsidiary protection cannot acquire or renew their national passport, they have the right to apply for an Alien’s Passport. If a beneficiary cannot obtain a regular Alien's Passport or does not have time to wait for one, they can apply for an Emergency Alien's Passport (which is valid for a maximum of 7 months and can be limited to a single journey to and from Sweden or a return journey). The passport has a fee of SEK 750 (approximately EUR 67) for delivering the travel document (including the necessity to pay any fees).

Freedom of movement

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Holders of a valid residence permit are allowed to move freely within Swedish territory.

Travelling within the Schengen Area is allowed for 90 days within a 180-day period without the need to have a visa. This presupposes a residence permit issued by Sweden or another EU Member State.

Access to employment and employment-related education

There are no restrictions for beneficiaries of international protection to access the labour market, including self-employment and work in regulated professions (under the same conditions as Swedish citizens). However, they do not have access to employment in core administration.

Beneficiaries are allowed to access the labour market as soon as they receive a certificate of their status proving their right to residence and register with the Swedish Tax Authorities.

Beneficiaries are entitled to an “Introduction Plan” to plan their educational and professional development and receive language training, courses on Swedish society, vocational training and work experience. The Public Employment Services (*Arbetsförmedlingen*) is responsible for this support for people aged 18-64. Since January 2018, a beneficiary must take part in any education that the Public Employment Service assesses as necessary for the person to be able to access the labour market. If the person does not attend the courses, he/she can lose the introduction benefit.

Refugees have access to vocational training under the same conditions as Swedish citizens. The employment service and adult education institutions (organised by the municipalities) offer different educational tracks and vocational training programmes that are tailored to the specific needs of refugees.

Employment services also regularly cooperate with non-profit educational organisations on activities that might help refugees to access the labour market. There are also many partnerships with adult education centres (folk high schools), non-profit interest organisations for liberal professions and non-profit adult education institutes.

Early integration efforts are stressed and refugees are provided with Swedish language courses from the onset.

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Access to education

Minor beneficiaries of international protection have the right to access education in the same conditions as Swedish citizens, in particular:

- pre-school education for children between 1 and 5 years old and pre-school class;
- primary/lower secondary education;
- upper secondary education;
- post-secondary and tertiary education (higher education is financed by student loans with partial grants; some universities offer fast-track courses for those with a higher education degree, see here);
- adult education, including municipal adult education *(komvux)* and special education for adults *(Anpassad utbildning för vuxna)*.

More about the education system in Sweden here.

Children who do not speak Swedish generally receive special introductory classes during the first weeks in the school system. Primary and secondary students with a mother tongue other than Swedish are also entitled to special tuition. Pupils also receive language support to learn Swedish based on an individual assessment and until proficiency is attained.

Swedish for Immigrants (SFI) programme is voluntary and free of charge and intended for adults who reside in Sweden and lack basic knowledge of Swedish (it is therefore available for all non-native speakers, including refugees).

Access to procedures for recognition of qualifications and validation of skills

Beneficiaries of international protection have the same access as nationals seeking recognition of qualifications and validation of skills. Additionally, alternative assessment procedures are available if original documentation is unavailable.

If original documentation is unavailable, the person can go through courses within the adult education system to prove the qualifications they have and have their knowledge and skills validated. The procedure is carried out by the Swedish Council for Higher Education.

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Social security and social assistance

Refugees who do not have an income have the same conditions and levels of social security and social assistance benefits as Swedish citizens. Support is provided by the municipality where the refugee is registered. To be granted social assistance from the municipalities, refugees need to be registered in the Swedish Population Register, managed by the Swedish Tax Agency. See more about social assistance benefits in Sweden here.

Refugees have the right to access part of the Swedish pension system (general pension).

Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection who do not have an income have access to social assistance under the same conditions and levels of benefits as Swedish citizens. Support is provided by the municipality where the person is registered. To be granted social assistance from the municipalities, the person needs to be registered in the Swedish Population Register, managed by the Swedish Tax Agency. See more about social assistance benefits in Sweden here.

Access to social security under the same conditions and levels of benefits as Swedish citizens (insurance-based system; a Swedish personal identity number is required) plus targeted benefits. Persons granted subsidiary protection have the right to access part of the Swedish pension system (general pension) and are treated in the qualification process as if they had been gainfully employed in Sweden since their late teens. See more about social security rights in Sweden here.

Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection have the same conditions to social assistance and levels of benefits as Swedish citizens.

Healthcare

Beneficiaries of international protection have access to public healthcare under the same conditions as Swedish citizens (insurance and residence-based system; a Swedish personal identity number is required) and the same extent of health coverage as nationals. Read more here.

Additional support to those with special needs: There are specialist clinics for beneficiaries of international protection and other persons with special needs due

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to their condition as migrants, such as primary care facilities for refugees and centres that focus on culturally-specific needs (Transkulturellt centrum) and a special primary healthcare centre for refugee children in Gothenburg *(Flyktingbarnteamet).*

The Swedish Red Cross runs five treatment centres across the country for refugees who have suffered trauma because of war, persecution and torture. The support is also available within general health services provided to the population as a whole, for instance, paediatric care for minors, care for minors who have been victims of abuse or trauma, care relating to pregnancy and childbirth, care for persons with disabilities, nursing care for elderly persons and psychiatric care for victims of violence.

Access to accommodation

Refugees

Refugees have more favourable conditions to access accommodation than those applicable to legally residing, third-country nationals, in particular assistance by public services in finding accommodation (referred to as “settlement” *(Bosättning)*). The government also aids NGOs at the local level to help beneficiaries to find housing, but this varies across the country.

There is a national dispersal mechanism for refugees. If a refugee requests assistance in finding an accommodation, the Migration Board assigns them a municipality (for more details on the procedure in place, please see here). The government decides annually on the number of beneficiaries to be assigned to each of the 21 counties. The County Administrative Boards decide how to distribute the beneficiaries among the municipalities within their jurisdictions. The number of beneficiaries of protection depends on a municipality's local labour market, its population and the overall number of newly arrived immigrants, unaccompanied minors and asylum seekers already living in the municipality.

Specific schemes to support access to accommodation are available. All municipalities can be required to receive newly arrived beneficiaries of international protection and their family members.

The municipalities have an obligation to offer housing to beneficiaries (or the right to stay on other grounds) within 2 months of being designated by the

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Migration Agency as a reception municipality. This obligation lasts for 2 years, after which there is no guaranteed housing and a person can be evicted. A beneficiary receives only one offer of accommodation. If it is not accepted, accommodation must be arranged without help from the authorities. This support is available to anyone who cannot arrange his/her own accommodation (for more details on the procedure in place, please go here).

Targeted housing support for vulnerable people (e.g. unaccompanied minors) is available.

Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection

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beneficiary receives only one offer of accommodation. If it is not accepted, accommodation must be arranged without help from the authorities. This support is available to anyone who cannot arrange his/her own accommodation (for more details on the procedure in place, please go here).

Targeted housing support for vulnerable people (e.g. unaccompanied minors) is available.

Access to integration measures

Refugees

Refugees have rights to access to mainstream support, for example labour market programmes and subsidised jobs (available to both Swedish nationals and legally residing, third-country nationals).

There is an education and training obligation imposed by law. This means that all newly arrived immigrants involved in the programme who are considered to be in need of education and training can be instructed to apply for and undertake education and training.

Sweden incentivises employers to employ newly arrived migrants and beneficiaries of international protection through subsidies or grants. In 2018, the government established ‘introductory jobs’, a uniform, supportive measure that targets those with the greatest needs, both long-term unemployed and newly arrived immigrants. In addition, ‘extra jobs’ is a type of subsidised employment (sometimes up to 100%) for long-term unemployed and newly arrived immigrants. It can mainly be granted to employers in the public sector, authorities and some non-profit sport associations, religious communities and cultural employers. Since 2018, municipalities and county councils can receive extra funding (government grants) for offering extra jobs, which contributed to a rapid growth of the number of extra jobs in municipalities.

The government and social partners have also agreed on an entry agreement scheme to stimulate employment among newly arrived immigrants and long-term unemployed. The scheme is based on a proposal from the social partners and allows these profiles to acquire experience and skills to match labour market demand. A beneficiary must have a housing contract to enrol in this programme and receive additional financial allowance for 2 years, amounting to SEK 308/day, approximately EUR 30 for 5 days/week. Different supplements are also available,

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e.g. introduction supplement for people with children and rent supplement for people living alone. If after 2 years a beneficiary is unable to support himself/herself, he/she has access to social welfare on the same basis as nationals.

The Nordic Council of Ministers launched a call for projects in May 2023 in Denmark, Iceland, Finland, Norway and Sweden to promote the integration of refugees and migrants. Projects that are eligible must support ongoing initiatives, share Nordic knowledge and bring together multiple stakeholders, including official agencies and civil society organisations programmes and vocational training:

Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection

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There is an education and training obligation imposed by law. This means that all newly arrived immigrants involved in the programme who are considered in need of education and training can be instructed to apply for and undertake education and training.

Sweden incentivises employers to employ newly arrived migrants and beneficiaries of international protection through subsidies or grants. In 2018, the government established ‘introductory jobs’, a uniform, supportive measure that targets those with the greatest needs, both long-term unemployed and newly arrived immigrants. In addition, ‘extra jobs’ is a type of subsidised employment (sometimes up to 100%) for long-term unemployed and newly arrived immigrants. It can mainly be granted to employers in the public sector, authorities and some non-profit sport associations, religious communities and cultural employers. Since 2018, municipalities and county councils can receive extra funding (government grants) for offering extra jobs, which contributed to a rapid growth of the number of extra jobs in municipalities.

The government and social partners have also agreed on an entry agreement scheme to stimulate employment among newly arrived immigrants and long-term unemployed. The scheme is based on a proposal from the social partners and allows these profiles to acquire experience and skills to match labour market demand. A beneficiary must have a housing contract to enrol in this programme and receive additional financial allowance for 2 years, amounting to SEK 308/day, approximately EUR 30 for 5 days/week. Different supplements are also available,

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e.g. introduction supplement for people with children and rent supplement for people living alone. If after 2 years a beneficiary is unable to support himself/herself, he/she has access to social welfare on the same basis as nationals

Family reunification for beneficiaries of international protection

Refugees have the right to reunify their family members, under the same conditions as persons who are resettled in Sweden.

There is a grace period of 3 months for people granted refugee status before the accommodation and maintenance requirements are applied. In practice, this means that, to be exempted from the material requirement, an application for family reunification needs to be made within 3 months from the date on which the sponsor received a residence permit. This grace period cannot be extended.

If more time has passed and there is a reason why it has taken so long, the exception for special reasons in the Aliens Act is applied. If the person has been granted a residence permit as a refugee or alternatively in need of protection or has been declared a refugee, the requirements apply if the application for a residence permit is made later than 3 months after the related person has been granted a residence permit as a refugee or declared to be.

The maintenance requirements are also applied if family reunification is possible in a country outside of the EU to which the family has a special connection or the foreigner and the connected person have not lived together abroad for a longer period of time, and it is not clear in any other way that the relationship is well established.

When applying the first paragraph 3, a relationship is well-established if the foreigner is the spouse or common-law partner of the connected person and the marriage was entered into, or the cohabiting relationship existed before the connected person's entry into Sweden.

Family reunification is possible for the nuclear family of a recognised refugee, which includes:

- Sponsor’s spouse but only if the applicant and the sponsor is at least 21-years old (an exemption can be made from the age requirement, if they have children in common);

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- Unmarried partner in a stable relationship, but only if the applicant and the sponsor is at least 21-years old (an exemption can be made from the age requirement, if they have children in common);
- Minor children (including adopted) of the sponsor or his/her spouse or unmarried partner (it is the time of the application for family reunification or asylum which determines whether a child should be considered a minor in the sense of the right of family reunification);
- Parents but only if a sponsor is an unaccompanied minor who has been granted a protection status (Chapter 5, Section 3(1), 4 UtlL). Parents can also be granted permission to stay (Chapter 5, Section 3a (1), 2 UtlL).

Only in exceptional cases is it possible to get a residence permit for other family members, such as children over 18 years.

If the person granted refugee status holds a permanent residence permit, the person he/she is planning to marry or move in with can also apply for a residence permit. People other than immediate family may also have a right to move to Sweden. Dependent persons of the sponsor or his/her spouse: the possibility of family reunification of extended family members rests primarily on the concept of a ‘joint household’ (*hushållsgemenskap*). The circle of relatives (dependent persons) who may be granted a residence permit on these grounds is not specified in the Aliens Act or national case law, but the premise is that they lived in a joint household in the country of origin. An additional condition is that the sponsor and the close relative have a particular dependency upon each other (*särskilt beroendeförhållande*), which existed already in the country of origin.

The sponsor must meet the following requirements:

- sufficient financial resources to support themselves and their family members (unless the sponsor is a child). The assessment of the sponsor’s self-support consists of two parts: sufficient resources and the ability to support is deemed to be permanent. There must always be an individual assessment in each case to determine whether the ability to support is sufficient. This means, that the person's overall ability to support must be the basis for the assessment. Income, such as wages, earnings-related unemployment benefits, other similar work-related benefits, income from sole proprietorship and wealth, can be included in the assessment. As a starting point, it is the salary after deductions on the wages that is included in the ability to support. Any debts owed by the sponsor do not affect the calculation of the maintenance requirement.

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- appropriate housing that can accommodate the family members.

No healthcare, language and integration requirements apply for family reunification.

There are exemptions to the documents required from the country of origin. DNA testing is offered by the Migration Agency when a biological relationship has not been sufficiently established. The costs for test-taking, transport and analysis of tests are covered by the state. If it is evident that such a relationship does not exist or if the application will be rejected on other grounds, DNA testing is not offered. If DNA testing is not offered by the Migration Agency, the applicant may pay for and present a DNA analysis. The applicant may be reimbursed if the DNA analysis confirms the biological relationship and the residence permit is granted.

Families are exempted from paying any fees for the family reunification process.

Applicants have the right to have a decision within 6 months after the application is submitted (which is a general rule for administrative procedures). However, for family reunification, the statutory time is 9 months.

Family members are issued a temporary residence permit based on family reunification. The permit is issued for a period of 2 years and can be extended for 2 more years but shall not be longer than the residence permits of the sponsor.

Reunified family members have equal access as sponsors to integration programmes, language courses, education, vocational training, employment and self-employment and social security. They also have equal access to health care as nationals.

If the family member applies for international protection once in Sweden, the application will be assessed according to the regular procedure.

Relevant jurisprudence

The ECtHR found that the Swedish authorities struck a fair balance between the applicant's and the state's interests when they rejected a refugee's request to be reunited with his first wife and children from that marriage. The applicant was under an exemption for 3 months from recognition to fulfil the requirement to have enough funds to maintain the reunited family members, but he submitted his request afterwards.

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The ECtHR found that Sweden did not violate article 8 ECHR by rejecting family reunification based on income requirements.

Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection

Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection have the same right to family reunification as refugees, but there are no exemptions from the maintenance requirement for this group.

Brief description of the procedure to follow (documents from country of origin, fees and costs, procedure):

In most family reunion cases, it is possible to make an online application. It is also possible to fill out a paper form, which can be submitted to the Swedish Migration Agency or a Swedish mission abroad (embassy or consulate general). The applicant makes the application but it is possible for the applicant to issue a power of attorney to, for example, the sponsor so that he/she can submit the application.

The applicant must pay an application fee for a residence permit in Sweden. The application fee for a residence permit in Sweden is 2000 SEK for adults and 1000 SEK for children.

Exempt from application fees are:

- family members of EU/EEA citizens. Swedes are not considered EU citizens in this context
- EU/EEA citizens applying for a residence permit
- citizens of Switzerland and their family members
- citizens of Japan
- spouse, cohabitant, registered partner and unmarried children under 18 years of age applying for a residence permit to live with a family member who has been granted a residence permit in Sweden as a refugee, alternative protection recipient, other protection recipient, particularly difficult circumstances or due to particularly difficult circumstances.

To prove their identity, all applicants must attach a copy of their home country passport showing personal details, validity period, country of issue, signature and permission to live in other countries.

- Spouses must prove their relationship with a marriage certificate or marriage certificate and possibly a document showing that the marriage is

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registered in the home country.
- If the couple has lived together in their home country or another country with the sponsor in Sweden, they must also attach
- a population registration certificate, a rental contract or proof of purchase for a home or other documents showing that you have a shared home
- documents showing that they lived together, such as a rental contract where both are listed or bills from the past with their name and address.
- If the couple is expecting a child, they must also attach a pregnancy certificate
- If children under the age of 18 are applying for a residence permit, they must attach
- copies of the child's passport showing personal information, photo, any signature, passport number, country of issue, validity period and whether the child has permission to live in countries other than their home country
- birth certificate or birth certificate where the parents' names appear
- consent that the child may move to Sweden from the other guardian if it does not accompany them to Sweden
- court decision if one parent has sole custody or death certificate if the other parent is deceased
- adoption documents if the child is adopted.

When the Migration Agency received the application, it is screened, and the process starts. The Migration Board control if the sponsor has the right of family reunification and if he/she is required to fulfil the maintenance requirement. If the sponsor doesn’t fulfil the maintenance requirement or doesn’t have the right of family reunification the application is rejected.

If the application isn’t rejected it is sent to a Swedish mission abroad for further processing.

In all family reunification cases, an oral interview is conducted with the applicant at a Swedish mission abroad. The applicant must visit a Swedish mission abroad for document verification, an oral interview and to provide fingerprints and be photographed for a residence permit card. In cases where there is no Swedish mission abroad in the applicant's home country, the applicant must travel to a neighbouring country where Sweden has an embassy or consulate general that handles migration matters.

When the applicant has to visit a Swedish mission abroad the case is sent back to the Migrations Agency.

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The Migration Agency checks all documents in the case and assesses whether the family relationship can form the basis for a residence permit. In some cases, an oral interview is conducted with the sponsor in Sweden.

If the application is approved, the applicant will receive a temporary residence permit valid for two years. In cases where the sponsor has a temporary residence permit, the applicant will be granted a permit for the same duration as the sponsor.

Reunified family members' rights (in particular, length of first and subsequent residence permits, access to integration programmes/measures):

- Family members can be granted a permanent residence permit in Sweden after they have had a temporary residence permit for three years. They must then meet the requirements for obtaining a new residence permit, a maintenance requirement and not have committed a crime. If they cannot be granted a permanent residence permit, they can receive a new temporary residence permit.
- When family members who have been granted a residence permit come to Sweden, they must register with the Swedish Tax Agency.
- Family members then have the right to study in the same way as Swedish citizens.
- Children must attend compulsory school in Sweden and have the right to upper secondary education.
- Adult immigrants have the right to free education in Swedish.
- Family members to refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection have the right to take part in integration program with education in Swedish and support for getting a job.

Jurisprudence: In May 2023, the ECtHR upheld its previous jurisprudence and ruled that the temporary suspension of family reunification requests by beneficiaries of subsidiary protection in Sweden was not a violation of the ECHR, Article 8.

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