

Sweden

February 2026

Asylum system: Sweden has made strong contributions to refugee protection through a well-established asylum system, policy support and funding to UNHCR. The current asylum system will be reformed in light of the EU Pact

Contributor of unearmarked funding: Sweden is UNHCR's largest contributor of unearmarked funding. Sweden's total contribution to UNHCR in 2025 amounted to \$159.4 million.

Stable and secure status: UNHCR advocates for Sweden to grant all beneficiaries of international protection a secure and stable status to facilitate integration.

UNHCR POPULATION STATISTICS (as of mid-2025)*

Refugees **155,223**
Asylum-seekers **4,971**
Stateless people **6,427****

***Figures include both displaced & non-displaced stateless people*

Top three countries of origin*

Refugees		Asylum-seekers	
Ukraine	44,075	Syrian Arab Rep.	868
Afghanistan	23,895	Iran	497
Syrian Arab Republic	23,241	Afghanistan	359

*UNHCR Refugee Data Finder

Protecting forcibly displaced and stateless people in Sweden

Community support program

Proven successful in several Swedish municipalities, community support programmes are expected to strengthen integration efforts for newly arrived refugees and foster a more inclusive reception process by engaging local communities, with volunteers acting as entry-points into society.

Implementation of EU Pact

Sweden's implementation plan for the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum has resulted in several legislative proposals to align to EU Pact minimum standards. UNHCR engages with legislative proposals through observations that become publicly available.

Route-based approach

Sweden is engaged in a dialogue with UNHCR and EU Member States on the route-based approach, a holistic, cross-border framework to strengthen protection and solutions for refugees and migrants along key migration routes. The focus is on equitable responsibility-sharing for refugee protection, working towards a more fair and humane asylum system to address mixed and onward movements.

HIGHLIGHTS

Fewer asylum applications and more returns

The Swedish Government announced that asylum applications fell to 6,735 in 2025, a 30 per cent decrease compared to 2024. This is the lowest number recorded since 1984. At the same time returns have increased by nearly 60 per cent since 2022.

Increase in grant for voluntary repatriation

From January 2026, it is possible for refugees to be granted SEK 350,000 (close to \$40,000) if they voluntarily decide to return to their home country. In UNHCR's view, it is important that the decision to voluntarily return is based on a free and informed decision with access to updated and clear information about the situation in the home country and the return process, taking into account the underlying reasons for flight.



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MAKING SURE REFUGEE VOICES ARE HEARD

UNHCR's Refugee Speakers Programme, supported by TEDx, helps people with refugee backgrounds develop storytelling and public speaking skills through workshops and one-on-one coaching.

The programme ends with **Pass the Mic event**, where the speakers take the stage. This year, we heard from Judy (Syria), Adam (Sudan), Hamida (Afghanistan), Faridah (DR Congo), and Galyna (Ukraine).

Key Priorities

- **Law and policy:** UNHCR supports Sweden to comply with international and European standards relating to international protection of refugees. UNHCR supports the Government in developing and strengthening national laws and policies in international protection, while reinforcing positive public perception towards people seeking asylum.
- **Asylum procedures:** UNHCR promotes fair and efficient asylum procedures and supports the authorities in strengthening the asylum system. UNHCR considers the Swedish Migration Agency's track system for channelling asylum applications into specific procedures a "best practice", while noting that some of these systems will be changing during the EU Pact implementation process.
- **Resettlement and complementary pathways:** Sweden has reduced its resettlement quota from 5,000 to 900 refugees per year in line with the national government programme.. Since 2023, pilot community support programmes have been launched in several municipalities to strengthen the reception and integration of resettled refugees, as well as offering help to refugees who arrive spontaneously.
- **Inclusion:** According to the Government, protection is and should initially be offered on a temporary basis. UNHCR recommends that Sweden grant all beneficiaries of international protection a secure and stable status to facilitate inclusion and integration.
- **Family reunification:** UNHCR engages with civil society partners and is in dialogue with the Ministry of Justice and the Swedish Migration Agency to identify ways of reducing and removing practical, legal, and financial obstacles to family reunification.

Working with Partners

- UNHCR works with Swedish authorities to support legal and policy development.
- UNHCR works with research institutions and civil society actors, including refugee-led organisations, to foster successful local integration of refugees in Sweden.
- External engagement: UNHCR works with partners to raise awareness on asylum and statelessness issues. UNHCR promotes the inclusion of refugee voices in the public discourse, including during key events, such as the World Refugee Day and Opinion Festivals.

Statelessness

- Sweden is a state party to both the 1954 and 1961 UN Conventions on Statelessness.
- UNHCR recommends that Sweden establish a dedicated statelessness determination procedure, and incorporate the definition of a stateless person pursuant to Article 1 of the 1954 Convention in all relevant legislation to ensure consistent identification, determination and registration.
- Sweden announced its intention to join the Global Alliance to End Statelessness at the meeting of UNHCR's Executive Committee in October 2024.

UNHCR Presence in Nordic and Baltic Countries

Staff:

18 National Staff
 7 International Staff

Offices:

1 Regional Office in Stockholm
 1 Office in Vilnius, Lithuania
 1 Office in Riga, Latvia
 1 Office in Tallinn, Estonia

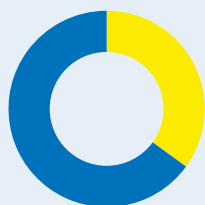
Financial information (as of 28 February 2026)

**Information relates to the Representation for the Nordic and Baltic countries, which includes Representation for Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden*

Financial requirements for 2026:

\$ 7.6 M

Funding gap 65%
\$ 4.9 M



Funded 35%
\$ 2.7 M

UNHCR is grateful for the support from our top government donors in 2026:

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UNHCR is also grateful for the generous contributions from the private sector and individuals.