

Entry visas

A visa is a permit which is required in order to enter and remain in Sweden and the other Schengen states (see the Board's fact sheet about the Schengen agreement) for a short period of time, e.g. to visit relatives or friends, as a tourist, on business, to attend a conference or simply to pass through (transit). A person who wishes to reside in Sweden, to be reunited with relatives for example, must apply for and be granted a residence permit before entering the country.

The visa should be in order and be entered in your passport before entry into the Schengen area.

The right to enter the Schengen area is examined every time you pass the outer border of the area. At the border control everyone who enters the area must be able to show that they have money for their keep during their visit and for their return journey home and that they have medical travel insurance and documents showing the purpose of their visit.

Who needs a visa?

Nationals in the majority of countries outside the EU require a visa to visit Sweden and the other Schengen countries. This is a decision reached by Sweden together with the other EU countries.

A list of the countries whose nationals require a visa to visit Sweden can be found on the Internet: www.migrationsverket.se under the heading Visa.

Visitors who arrive from countries that are not on the list can enter Sweden and the other Schengen countries and remain there without a visa for three months.

A visa is valid for the whole of the Schengen area

In Sweden it is the Schengen Agreement visa rules that apply. The Schengen Agreement means, among other things, that the Schengen states have

abolished border controls for persons travelling between these countries. A visa granted by any one of these countries is also valid for visits to the other countries. In exceptional cases the visa could be valid only for entry into the issuing country or only for certain countries if the holder's passport is not approved by all the Schengen countries.

What is required to be granted a visa?

Particular requirements

If you wish to visit Sweden and the other Schengen states you have to fulfil some requirements which are the same for all countries. In addition, there are requirements which vary from country to country. Each Swedish mission abroad (embassy or consulate) is an independent authority and together with the other Schengen states represented at the same place it can require additional documents and make other demands.

These requirements may change depending on the existing circumstances. It is therefore important that you check which requirements you have to fulfil in order to be granted a visa. If you can check on the Internet, enter www.swedenabroad.com and browse to the mission you are going to visit. If you cannot do this, please contact the embassy or consulate in another way.

Common requirements

Everyone who wishes to visit Sweden and the other Schengen states will need a **passport** valid for at least three months after the final date stated in the visa.

You must also have **money** for your keep and for the journey home. The Swedish authorities have estimated that a person needs €40 (approximately SEK 370) for each day spent in Sweden. This amount could in certain instances be lower,

such as in the case of a young child, if the cost of food and accommodation is paid in advance or if the applicant intends to stay with relatives or friends. You can prove that you have sufficient money for your keep by, for example, producing an account statement from your bank or a document showing that the person inviting you to Sweden promises to cover all expenses during your visit.

It is also necessary to have individual **medical travel insurance** which covers any costs that could arise in conjunction with

- emergency medical assistance
- emergency hospital care
- transport to your home country for medical reasons.

The insurance should cover costs of at least €30,000 and be valid in all the Schengen countries.

Special agreement

Specific rules apply for citizens of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Russia, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia and Ukraine due to the Agreement on the facilitation of issuance of short-stay visas between these countries and the EU. You can find more information about this at the EU embassies and consulates in these eight countries. If you have access to the Internet you can for example visit www.swedenabroad.se and browse to the Swedish mission abroad you are interested in.

The consideration of the application

You will be granted a visa if the authority that makes the decision – a Swedish mission abroad or the Swedish Migration Board – considers that you will leave the Schengen area after your visit and that the purpose of your visit is the one you have stated in your application. If it is considered that you have other intentions with your visit or that your true intention is to reside in the Schengen area your application will be rejected. The same applies if you are registered in the computer system SIS (Schengen Information System), where the member countries register persons who are not permitted to enter the Schengen area. These rules apply in all countries that have ratified the Schengen Agreement.

Where should the application be handed in?

You should hand in your visa application to a Swedish mission abroad. In certain countries Sweden is represented by another Schengen country. There are, however, countries where Sweden does not have a mission abroad and is not represented by another country. If that is the case and you wish to submit a visa application you must travel to the nearest country where there is a Swedish mission or where another country represents Sweden.

If you intend to hand in your application at another Schengen state's mission abroad, you are advised to call the mission before you go there. In that case it is this country's documentary requirements that apply. Documents should also be translated into the language of that country.

Forms

To apply for a visa you should fill in the form "Application for Schengen Visa".

You can download or order forms via the Internet: www.migrationsverket.se.

You can also order by e-mail: distributionen@migrationsverket.se or by writing to the Migration Board, Distributionen, SE-601 70 Norrköping.

Forms are also available at Swedish missions abroad.

Information that must be included in the application

To enable the authorities to process your application you must state clearly:

- why you are visiting Sweden
- how long you intend to stay in Sweden
- how you will support yourself during your time in Sweden
- the type of passport you hold and for how long it is valid
- where you intend to travel following your visit to Sweden
- that you have a permit to travel to the country you intend to travel to after your time in Sweden.

You must enclose two passport photographs, taken with you looking straight ahead and which are not older than six months.

Apart from the application, all applicants must submit an Appendix D form (family appendix).

Visit to relatives and friends

If the purpose of your visit to the Schengen area is to visit relatives and friends, the reference person (the person you intend to visit) must fill in a special form – the referee appendix (invitation), Appendix E. The form is available in Swedish and English. You can order the form or download it in the same way as other forms, see under “Forms” above.

The reference person in Sweden should enclose his/her civic registration certificate (personbevis). This can be ordered from the nearest tax office or downloaded from the Swedish Tax Agency website www.skatteverket.se. There are civic registration certificates for different purposes, choose the one with the heading “Inbjudan” (invitation). The reference person should send the completed form – Appendix E – and his/her civic registration certificate to you so that you can hand it in together with your application.

Business and conference visits

If you intend to travel to Sweden on business or to attend a conference you should submit an invitation – a letter – from the company or the person arranging the conference together with your application.

The invitation should contain information about you, such as:

- your personal details
- your reason for visiting Sweden
- how long you will be in Sweden
- who is responsible for your keep during the time you are in Sweden.

Visit for medical treatment

If the purpose of your trip to Sweden is to receive medical treatment you should fill in a special form, Appendix C, and enclose it with your application. You should also enclose a medical certificate from Sweden indicating when you will receive your treatment and what this entails. You should also send a medical certificate from the country in which you reside which shows that you cannot receive treatment there. Finally, you must also be able to show that you have money deposited in Sweden for the treatment as planned and for any possible aftercare.

What does it cost to apply for a visa?

For most applicants it costs €60 (approximately SEK 550) to submit a visa application at a Swedish mission abroad. The fee is not refunded if you are not granted a visa. Certain groups are exempted entirely or partly from this stipulation.

No fee

The following are exempted from paying a fee:

- Children under the age of six years
- Schoolchildren, students in higher education, research students and their accompanying teachers – on condition that the purpose of the trip is for studies or education
- Researchers – on condition that the purpose of the trip is for scientific research.

Relatives of EEA nationals (citizens of the EU, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein) or Swiss nationals do not need to pay a fee for their visa applications if they are going to travel together with that relative or meet in connection with the journey. The applicant must present a certificate which confirms marriage or relationship. The following persons are classified as relatives:

- husband, wife, co-habitee*
- registered partner
- a child under the age of 21 years or an older child who is dependent on his/her parents for his/her keep
- parents who are financially dependent on children in Sweden.

** Does not apply to persons co-habiting with Swiss nationals.*

Relatives of Swedish nationals must, however, pay a fee to apply for a visa.

Who makes the decision on visa applications?

In the vast majority of cases the mission abroad can reach a decision after making certain checks with the other Schengen countries.

If the mission abroad is uncertain about how to assess your application, it could pass the application on to the Migration Board in Sweden, which then makes the decision.

How long will it take?

Normally, a decision is made within two weeks although processing times at the missions abroad vary. If you need accurate information about this, please contact the mission abroad which will process your application. In cases where the Migration Board is to make a decision it could take longer as the mission abroad must then send the application by mail to the Migration Board. To be certain that you will receive your visa in time you should submit your application at least two months before you are due to travel to Sweden. During the holiday period June-August it could take longer.

How long is a visa valid?

A visa is time-limited and is valid for a maximum of three months in any six-month period. This means that if you have spent three months in the Schengen area you must leave the area for three months in order to be granted a new Schengen visa. If you have particular reasons you can be granted a visa for a longer period – up to a maximum of one year – although in that case the visa will only be valid for entry into Sweden and for a stay in Sweden. Particular reasons could, for example, be that you need to travel to Sweden several times during the year on business or to visit your children.

It is stated in the permit how many days you can use your visa during the permit period. This is often slightly longer than the period of validity of the visa. The reason for this is that the authorities expect that you could need a little time to arrange the trip – to book tickets and take out medical insurance for example.

It should be noted that you are not permitted to stay in Sweden or another Schengen country longer than the number of days stated on the permit sticker. The time is calculated from the date of entry on the first trip.

A Schengen visa can also be granted if you need to travel through Sweden and the Schengen area. It is stated on the permit sticker how many times you may travel through the Schengen area during the period of validity.

Is it possible to extend a visa while in Sweden?

It is not possible to extend a visa. However, you can apply for a residence permit for a visit at one of the Migration Board permit units if you wish to stay longer than the time covered by a visa. However, this carries an extra cost of SEK 1,000 per adult and SEK 500 for children under the age of 18 years. If the decision regarding this residence permit for a longer visit is sent to you by post, you have to visit one of the Migration Board permit units in order to have a permit sticker entered into your passport.

If you know in advance that you want to remain in Sweden for more than three months you should apply at the mission abroad for a residence permit for a visit or, if you have particular reasons, a visa that is valid for a longer period of time (see above). By doing so, you avoid paying fees twice. The mission abroad sends applications for a residence permit for the purpose of a visit to the Migration Board, which then makes a decision.

Appeal

Only relatives of EEA nationals may appeal against the rejection of a visa application and it is only decisions reached by the Migration Board that can be appealed against. These applications are heard by a migration court. The following persons are classified as relatives:

- husband, wife, co-habitee
- registered partner
- a child under the age of 21 years or an older child who is dependent on his/her parents for his/her keep
- parents who are financially dependent on children in Sweden.

Other persons are not permitted to appeal against the rejection of a visa application. However, you could ask the mission/authority (the embassy, consulate or the Migration Board) that rejected your application to review its decision, that is to say that it examines whether there are reasons for changing the decision. A review does not necessarily mean that the decision will be changed.

You request a review by writing a letter to the mission/authority that reached the decision in which you state new reasons you wish the mission/authority to take into account when re-assessing your application. You can always make a new application for a visa.

For further information, please contact the Public Contact Unit at the Migration Board. For information by e-mail write to: upplysningen@migrationsverket.se. For information by telephone call +46 (0)771 19 44 00. You can also contact a Swedish mission abroad.