



Information on the application procedure for humanitarian visas

1. Humanitarian visas: definition and criteria

The SEM states that foreign nationals wishing to leave their native country for compelling reasons may apply at any time to a Swiss representation abroad to obtain information on whether they would be granted a visa for Switzerland on the basis of their personal circumstances. A humanitarian visa according to art. 4 para. 2 VEV (visa regulation) can be issued in individual cases for humanitarian reasons if **it is evident that the applicant's life or physical integrity are directly, seriously and tangibly endangered**. As a rule the Swiss authorities presume that individuals who are already in a third-party State are no longer in any danger.

[https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/de/home/publiservice/weisungen-](https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/de/home/publiservice/weisungen-kreisschreiben/auslaenderbereich/einreise_in_die_schweiz.html)

[kreisschreiben/auslaenderbereich/einreise_in_die_schweiz.html](https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/de/home/publiservice/weisungen-kreisschreiben/auslaenderbereich/einreise_in_die_schweiz.html) „Weisung: Humanitäres Visum gemäss Art. 4 Abs. 2 VEV“.

The applicant must therefore be able to prove or show credibly **individual persecution or particularly serious individual humanitarian circumstances**, otherwise the application will be refused. A general situation of crisis or conflict at the place of residence is not sufficient for a humanitarian visa to be granted if the applicant is not individually affected. In practice the applicant usually needs to show a link to Switzerland (e.g. family members).

Applicants have the option of obtaining an **informal assessment of the chances** from the Swiss representation or the SEM. This is a provisional assessment by the relevant authorities as to whether an application would be approved or not. **A formal application can still be submitted to a Swiss representation at a later stage, irrespective of the response from the authorities.**

2. Procedure for booking an appointment

To officially apply for a humanitarian visa the applicants must **directly** contact a Swiss representation abroad and book an appointment. The application must be submitted **in person** at a Swiss representation.

It is best to request an appointment per e-mail. You may find the Swiss representation address on the following link:

<https://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/home/representations-and-travel-advice.html>

The appointment request should include the following information:

- The application is for a **humanitarian visa** (not a visitor visa!)
- Surname, first name, date of birth of all those applying for a humanitarian visa
- Surnames, first names, dates of birth and addresses of any family members resident in Switzerland (if applicable)



3. During the appointment

The embassy does not charge for humanitarian visas!

The appointment is very short, so you must be **very well prepared** and have to bring all the **relevant information in writing** with you.

You must bring the following **documents** with you:

- Copy of the e-mail confirming the appointment
- One (1) visa application form, duly completed (in German, French, Italian, or English), using a typewriter, online or in block capitals (in blue or black ink), and signed by you. You will find the form at:
<https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/en/home/themen/einreise/visumantragsformular.html>
„National (type D) visa application form“
- Travel document (passport or identity card)
- Copy of the travel document
- Two (2) recent, identical biometric passport photos
- Detailed excerpt from the family register

All documents that are not in **German, French or Italian** have to be translated to **one of those languages or English** by a sworn translator.

4. Letter of application

Please bring together with the application the answers in German, Italian, French or English to the following questions. The situation of the persons must be explained very precisely **in writing** so that the Embassy has all the necessary information to take its decision. **Information that is only given orally will not be taken into account:**

- Describe your specific personal problems in your home country.
- Are you registered with the authorities in your current country of residence and/or with the UNHCR? If no, why not? If yes, what is the status of your procedure with UNHCR?
- Have you sought protection in a refugee camp? If no, why not?
- Under what conditions (accommodation, family members, financial circumstances) are you living in your current country of residence?
- Why is it not possible for you to remain in your current country of residence?

If you **only left your country of origin in order to apply for a humanitarian visa**, it is very important to mention this **in writing** in your application.

If required, we can provide you with a template for such a letter in German, English, French or Italian.

5. Security verifications

In the Swiss representation in Beirut, Cairo or Amman, it is possible that an additional security verification is conducted. It may lead to an additional waiting time of several weeks.



If you have any questions or need any more information, you may contact us at this address:

mig@redcross.ch The best way to contact us is by e-mail.

058 400 42 00 (Tue + Thu 14:00-16:00)

By appointment only

Swiss Red Cross

Humanitarian visa advisory service

Social Integration and Migration Service

Werkstrasse 18

P.O. Box

CH-3084 Wabern

All services of the SRC Humanitarian Visa Advisory Service are free of charge.

The SRC Humanitarian Visa Advisory Service has no employees in the countries of origin or third countries.

The SRC Humanitarian Visa Advisory Service has no influence on the decision of the State Secretariat for Migration to issue a visa or not.