



LOOKING FOR WORK IN ANOTHER EU/EEA COUNTRY

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EU countries

- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- Cyprus
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland (Åland)
- France (Guadeloupe, Martinique, Reunion)
- Greece
- Ireland
- Italy
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Malta
- the Netherlands
- Poland
- Portugal (Azores, Madeira)
- Romania
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Spain (Canary Islands)
- UK
- Sweden
- the Czech Republic
- Germany
- Hungary
- Austria

EEA countries

- Iceland
- Liechtenstein
- Norway

Updated July 2009

The law of the country where you are working applies

When you work in EU/EEA countries the first rule is that you are covered by the legislation and unemployment insurance of these countries.

So that you will not lose rights and benefits that you have earned earlier, you can in certain circumstances combine periods of insurance and employment from different EU/EEA countries. This principle of combination does not apply to employers.

If you have arranged work in another EU/EEA country, no work permit is required. However a residence permit is necessary if you stay for more than three months. If you have been sent from Sweden to work in an EU/EEA country, Swedish law applies. Contact your social insurance office for information.

If you have obtained work in another EU/EEA country you must yourself make sure that you are covered by insurance in the country where you are working. Do not ask to leave your Swedish unemployment insurance fund until you are certain that you are covered by insurance in the new country of employment. This is because you must have unemployment insurance in the country where you are working. You do not need to take any documents with you from your Swedish unemployment insurance fund as long as you do not apply for unemployment benefit in the country of employment.

The EC regulations on Social Security apply to citizens of the EU/EEA countries, refugees under the Geneva Convention and stateless individuals. The EC regulations on social security also apply to those who are not citizens of an EU/EEA-country but who legally are staying there. These special regulations for citizens in a so called "third country" does not concern Denmark. The special agreement with Switzerland includes citizens in Switzerland and in the EU/EEA-countries Sweden, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Great Britain, Germany, Austria, Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, the Czech Republic and Hungary.

Unemployment insurance in Sweden

Unemployment insurance has two components: a basic insurance and a voluntary income-related insurance. To be covered by the income-related insurance, membership* of an unemployment insurance fund for one year is necessary. In order to be a member you must work in Sweden or if you don't work at the moment, your latest employment must have been in Sweden.

* Membership of the Alfa unemployment insurance fund is also included.

The basic insurance is for those who are not members of an unemployment insurance fund or who have not been members for long enough. Everybody working in Sweden is covered by the basic insurance.

Benefit in Sweden

To obtain benefit from the income-related insurance in Sweden, you must among other things fulfil a membership condition and a work requirement. To obtain benefit from the basic insurance you must fulfil a work requirement, but you don't need to fulfil a membership condition.

The membership condition involves 12 months' continuous membership of an unemployment insurance fund. During 2009 every membership-month (calendar month) is counted twice. It means that you can get income-related benefit after 6 months.

The work requirement is a requirement that during the most recent 12-month period you must have been gainfully employed for at least 6 calendar months, at least 80 hours per month. If you do not fulfil this, you are required to have worked for 480 hours during a continuous period of 6 calendar months. At least 50 hours' work per month is required. In some cases two months' parental allowance from the social insurance fund or service in the Swedish defence forces is counted as work for the purposes of the work requirement.

As a jobseeker you must be available to the labour market and be registered with a public employment service. Contact your unemployment insurance fund for further information.

Unemployed in Sweden after work in the EU/EEA area

If you move or return to Sweden after work in another EU/EEA country and want to join a Swedish unemployment insurance fund, you must apply for admission. If you have moved you must satisfy the entry condition (you work in Sweden, or your latest employment was in Sweden) in order to become a member of a Swedish unemployment insurance fund. If you become unemployed it is possible for you to credit yourself with periods of insurance and employment from the country where you have worked.

Periods of insurance and employment fulfilled in another EU/EES-country must be confirmed by certificate E 301. The certificate will be issued by the labour market authorities in respectively country.

Make sure to keep all documents you get from working in the other EU/EEA-country. This makes it easier to obtain the certificate.

Exemptions from the work requirement

If you work in another EU/EEA country but retain your place of residence in Sweden while you are abroad, you are considered a frontier worker or "employed person other than a frontier worker". As long as you are working you must be covered by the unemployment insurance of the country of employment. If you stop working and become fully unemployed you have the right to join a Swedish unemployment insurance fund without first needing to work here in Sweden.

Frontier worker

If you work in one EU/EEA country but live in another and return to the country of residence at least once a week, you are regarded as a frontier worker and must be insured in the country of employment.

A frontier worker who becomes partially or periodically unemployed must apply for benefit in the country where he or she is working. A frontier worker who becomes fully unemployed must register with the employment service in the country of residence and apply for benefit from the unemployment insurance there. As a fully unemployed frontier worker you have the right to join a Swedish unemployment insurance fund without first needing to work here in Sweden.

For the period of insurance to be continuous when you choose to look for employment in Sweden you must apply to join a Swedish unemployment insurance fund immediately after having become unemployed.

"Employed person other than a frontier worker"

If, like a frontier worker, you live in one EU/EEA country and work in another but return to the country of residence less frequently than once a week, you may be treated as what is known as an "employed person other than a frontier worker". This can apply for example, if your family has stayed here in Sweden or if you have had seasonal employment.

As an employed person other than a frontier worker you must, like the frontier worker, be insured in the country of employment. But in the case of total unemployment you may choose either to apply for employment in the country of residence (Sweden) and obtain admission to a Swedish unemployment insurance fund, or apply for work in the country of employment. In that case the right to benefit will be considered there.

For the period of insurance to be continuous when you choose to look for employment in Sweden you must apply to join a Swedish unemployment insurance fund immediately after having become unemployed.

"The five-year rule" - a Nordic agreement

The five-year rule applies if you have been insured in Sweden earlier, either because you have worked in Sweden (basic insurance) or because you have been a member of a Swedish unemployment insurance fund (income-related insurance). After you have left the Swedish

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insurance system you must have worked in another Nordic country. You must return to Sweden within five years. If you wish to join a Swedish unemployment insurance fund again you must apply to do so within eight weeks of leaving the insurance system of the other Nordic country. If you had basic insurance earlier and are unemployed when you return to Sweden you must apply for benefit within eight weeks from the date when you left the insurance system of the other Nordic country.

Unemployed in another EU/EEA country

If you become totally or partially unemployed in an EU/EEA country and belong to that country's unemployment insurance you are covered by the law there and may apply for unemployment benefit. Special rules apply to frontier workers.

If you do not fulfil the conditions for obtaining benefit you may credit yourself with periods of insurance and employment from Sweden. The periods must be confirmed by a special certificate, E 301.

Contact your unemployment insurance fund and find out what information they need in order to be able to issue the certificate. As an alternative, it's possible for the foreign labour market authority to ask the Swedish unemployment insurance fund for the certificate.

Certificate E 301 is needed only if you are applying for benefit in an EU/EEA country and do not satisfy that country's benefit conditions.

Three-month job-seeking visit to another country

When unemployed you have the possibility of making a three-month visit to another EU/EEA country in search of employment while retaining unemployment benefit.

Preparation for a three-month job-seeking visit to another country

- Plan the journey in detail: destination, accommodation and date of departure. Make your application on a special form. "Application for certificate E 303", which is available at the job centre.
- Make sure that the application is complete. It has to be filled in by the employment service and the unemployment insurance fund as well.
- As the IAF decides on certificate E 303 you must make sure that the application is sent to the IAF in time.
- Pay the membership fee to the unemployment insurance fund before you travel, at least for the three months.
- Contact the social insurance office for a form on sickness insurance.
- It may be a good idea to obtain information about the country where you are seeking work, for example through the country's embassy or consulate in Sweden. You can also contact special European Employment Services [EURES] advisers. (See under "Job-centre services".)

If you are entitled to a three-month job-seeking visit to another country, certificate E 303 will be sent to you by the IAF. A three-month job-seeking visit may involve visits to more than one country. The IAF issues a separate E 303 certificate for each country.

Read carefully all the information provided with the E 303 certificate. To obtain your unemployment benefit in another EU/EEA country you must show this certificate to the job centre in the country where employment is being sought. Note that it is the payment procedures of the country where you are looking for work that apply. If you change your mind and do not travel, you must send the certificate back to the IAF and ask for it to be cancelled.

Read all the information that you receive with certificate E 303.

Note that application for a three-month job-seeker's visit cannot be made retroactively. Nor should you travel before the certificate has been granted. For further details of what is required, contact your unemployment insurance fund or the IAF.

Certificate E 303 can be granted more than once. The requirement for a new certificate is that you are gainfully employed again to such an extent that you satisfy a new work requirement. (See under "Benefit in Sweden".)

On arrival in the country where you are looking for work

Report without delay to the public employment service in the country where you are looking for employment. The foreign employment service decides on the conditions for seeking employment. The employment service in the foreign country will pay benefit from Sweden in the currency of the country concerned.

If you find work you should inform both the foreign employment service and your Swedish unemployment insurance fund.

If you find a work in the country where you are looking for it you must also make sure that you are covered by the insurance of that country, so that you will be able to obtain benefit in the event of unemployment. If you do this you have the right to credit yourself with periods of insurance and employment from Sweden. The unemployment benefit paid abroad is settled up between the authorities. You are liable for tax on the benefit in Sweden.

Home again

In order to retain your right to benefit in Sweden, you are required to return to Sweden within three months of the date of departure stated on the certificate E 303. The final date for arrival home is also stated on the certificate. If you are going to get unemployment benefit from the date of returning home, you must report immediately to your nearest job center.

Before returning home you must make sure that the job centre abroad fills in the last page of certificate E 303 (E 303/5). Take the certificate home and hand it in to the unemployment insurance fund office.

If you return to Sweden after the three-month period that has been granted without having worked in the country where you were seeking employment, you must fulfil a new work requirement in order to obtain unemployment benefit again. (See under "Benefit in Sweden".) If you have income-related benefit you are required to have maintained membership of the unemployment insurance fund in order to obtain such benefit again.

If you return to Sweden after the three-month period that has been granted and have worked in the country where you were seeking employment, you must apply to join an unemployment insurance fund on arriving back home, as you have belonged to another country's insurance system while you were working. The fund will then examine whether you have a right to join without first needing to work in Sweden. (See under "Exemptions from the work requirement".)

Citizen of a third country

By citizen of a third country is meant a person who is not a citizen of an EU/EEA country. Citizens of third countries are covered by the EC rules provided that they are legally staying in an EE/EEA country (except Denmark). The possibility to make a three-month job-seeking visit to another country only applies to citizens of third countries who have the right to register as job-seekers at the employment service in the country they are going to. These citizens must also have a legal right to work in that country.

Citizens of a third country who live and work in the Nordic countries are however covered by the Nordic agreement. This means that the EC regulations on the possibility of crediting yourself with periods of insurance and employment in the Nordic countries also applies to citizens of third countries.

In addition Sweden has special agreements with the following countries on transfer of periods of insurance and employment for citizens of third countries: Great Britain, Northern Ireland, Italy, Germany, Greece, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Portugal and Spain.

The agreements imply that you as a citizen of a third country must have worked in Sweden for at least four weeks in order to be allowed to transfer periods of insurance and employment from the other country. To obtain benefit from the income-related insurance in Sweden you must also be a member of an unemployment insurance fund.

Special agreement with Israel

Sweden has an agreement with Israel (which is not an EU/EEA country) on the right to transfer periods of insurance and employment between the countries. To transfer such periods from Israel to Sweden it is necessary to have worked in Sweden for at least 100 days.

EU countries' agreement with Switzerland

The agreement covers the EU countries who were members of the EU before first of January 2007, and their citizens, stateless people and refugees in accordance with the Geneva Convention and citizens of Switzerland. The agreement does not cover the EEA-countries: Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway and the EU countries: Romania and Bulgaria.

A residence permit is required for the right to work in Switzerland. Under the agreement Switzerland has a right to place a quota on residence permits.

The EC rules apply to employees who have residence permits to Switzerland which are valid for one year or longer. There are separate rules for employees who have residence permits which are valid for periods shorter than one year.

As far as Sweden is concerned the separate rules mean that periods of employment and insurance completed in Switzerland can be regarded as completed in Sweden. Contact your unemployment insurance fund for further information.

Tax rules

For general questions on tax rules, contact the Swedish national tax board, Skatteverket. (See also www.skatteverket.se). If you apply for job in another EU/EEA country or Schweiz and make a so called three-month job-seeking visit to a such country, you are taxable in Sweden.

Social insurance

For questions on helthcare, parents allowance, child allowance, during the stay abroad, contact the regional social insurance office, Försäkringskassan.

(See also www.forsakringskassan.se).

Job-centre services

All Swedish job centres can give information on vacant positions abroad. At certain job centres there are special European Employment Services [EURES] advisers. They can help you with arranging work and with information on practical work experience and holiday work and on working and living conditions in different countries.

(See www.arbetsformedlingen.se)

This information is of a summarized nature and cannot therefore provide answers to every question which you may wish to ask as an applicant for work in another EU/EEA country. Keep informed of any changes which are made to unemployment insurance. Contact the unemployment insurance fund if you have questions concerning your right to benefit.