



[www.rotarystudent.se](http://www.rotarystudent.se)

# SUMMER EXCHANGE

Information for the  
Latvian applicants for  
a summer exchange  
2024

Rotary Youth Exchange in  
Sweden & Latvia

2023-09-22

# **1. ABOUT ROTARY AND THE FOUNDATION ROTARY YOUTH EXCHANGE**

## **1.1 What is Rotary International?**

Rotary International, which we simplify by just saying Rotary, was founded on February 23, 1905 in Chicago by Paul Harris, through the formation of the first Rotary club, Rotary One. Further clubs were formed and in 1910 a national organization was formed. Rotary came to Sweden in 1926 when the Stockholm Rotary Club was formed.

In Sweden, there are currently around 450 clubs with approximately 19,000 members, spread over ten districts. Worldwide, there are approximately 36,000 clubs with approximately 1.2 million members, spread over 518 districts. In 1976, the Rotary International Board of Directors adopted the following definition: "Rotary is an organization of leading people in business and professional life united throughout the world, offering humanitarian service, encouraging high ethical standards in all professions, and helping to create goodwill and peace in the world. " The main motto is "Service Above Self". For more information about Rotary, check out these websites, [rotary.org](http://rotary.org) or [rotary.se](http://rotary.se).

## **1.2 Rotary Youth Exchange**

Rotary Youth Exchange is open to everyone to apply for Rotary Summer Exchange and the foundation's other youth activities. Your parents do not have to be members of a Rotary club.

Exchange activities within Rotary started as early as 1964, on a modest scale. Over the years, roughly 8,000 Swedish young people, and roughly the same number of foreigners, have participated in various forms of exchange between Sweden and other countries. In 1981, the Rotary Youth Exchange was established.

The foundation runs summer exchanges, camp activities, and a one-year exchange programs. The exchange activity is basically an exchange based on voluntary non-profit work between Rotary clubs in different countries. Administratively, however, it has been chosen to gather the clubs in different districts, with a district chairman (DC=District Chair) who is responsible for the district's youth activities.

In some districts and countries, including in Sweden, there are offices set up with employed staff who help with the administrative work. In Sweden, the office is called the RU office. Sweden is a multi-district that includes ten Rotary districts 2320–2410.

This means that the Swedish districts have agreed to work together to facilitate administration. The exchange programs are administered by the office, for example for insurance and visa issues. The responsibility for processing application documents is carried out by a specially appointed administrator.

However, the responsibility for interviewing applicants for camps and other exchanges, as well as for any preparations before the camp, lies at a club and district level.

The rotary club where you go will be the host club for you. We call the Swedish club a sponsor club. The Swedish sponsor club will also be hosting the foreign exchange

student that will join you after your exchange period in the other country.

## **2. WHAT IS A SUMMER EXCHANGE?**

### **2.1 Purpose**

The purpose with Rotary Summer Exchange is to give the participants a possibility to get to know other participants in other countries, to get to know their culture, language and way of living. Through this experience the participants will get and hopefully spread a better understanding for other cultures and in the end, we hope this will contribute to piece.

### **2.2 How?**

A summer exchange is an exchange family to family and differs from a one-year youth exchange or a camp.

The participants will be matched with a similar profile approximately in the same age. The participant is called an exchange student. The exchange students will spend three to four weeks together in each other's families/homes/countries. Many countries will demand that a foreign exchange student have a minimum stay of three weeks in Latvia.

The total length of the exchanges and who travels first will be decided by the exchange students and their families. The most common period for the exchange is during the summer, but in some cases the foreign exchange student will arrive between four to six weeks during December to January. The total exchange can in these cases become up to eight to twelve weeks. It's up to the families to agree when will be the most suitable period for all parties.

The application is made in the database YEAH after the registration and the payment of the registration has been made you will receive login details to the database and can start the application process.

### **2.3 Requirements**

#### **Age**

You have to be in a Latvian high school or a upper secondary school when applying.

#### **Motivation**

You must want to participate in a camp yourself, and not because someone else wants you to. It rarely turns out well then.

**What is expected of the participants:**

- Since the exchanges are short, please make sure to get to know the members of your exchange families and adjust to the family's routines as soon as possible.
- Be open and give as much of you to your host family as you would expect them to give back to you.
- Remember to be a good ambassador for your country no matter the situation. And be open and accept the differences between Latvia and your host country.

**What is expected from the hosts families:**

- The family of the applying exchange student must commit to welcome a foreign exchange student.
- Be prepared that the foreign exchange student will arrive during the period of June to August or December to January.
- Engage in the exchange and make sure that the foreign exchange student feels welcome in the family (see section 3).

**Language requirements**

You need to have good English skills, and above all, you must feel quite confident speaking English. Regardless of which country the summer exchange takes place in, you need to be able to communicate in English.

**Health**

You must be in good health and be in good physical and mental condition, which you and your parents or guardian certify on the application form.

If you are allergic to something, you must also state this in the application documents.

If you are using any medications, please state that as well in the application. We will have to share that with the host family to make sure they get all information needed.

**Special dietary**

If you are a vegetarian, state this in the application documents (Dietary Restrictions). Note that many families that are not used to a cook vegetarian food find it challenging to secure that they can provide good food for the exchange student, therefore it can sometimes be more challenging to find a good match. Please make sure to provide a separate paper with a more detailed list of what you can and cannot eat.

**Consent**

Your parents or guardians must give written permission on the application and registration form for you to attend a summer exchange, certify that they cover the costs, that you are insured, and that they give permission for you to be treated medically if anything should happen to you abroad. And that they agree and commit to be a host family to another exchange student.

## **Rules**

As an exchange student in a Rotary program of a Rotary club and district, you must follow the rules in the application document. Individual districts or camp organizers may have rules that deviate slightly from these rules or have added additional rules such as applies in their district.

The same rules apply to foreign exchange students as for the Swedish ones. All applicants must accept and sign the rules Rotary sets as conditions, in the application. The commitments and rules which you and your parents undertake to follow are printed in the application form.

These rules are set out of concern for the participants in Rotary's exchange program, that they should be secure to participate in our programs, and that you yourself will get as much as possible out of your time during an exchange.

Make sure to read through the rules in English.

### **2.4 Selection of candidates**

Young people who are outgoing are prioritized for this exchange program, i.e. young people who can easily make contact with both peers and older people.

### **2.5 Placement abroad**

For a summer exchange to be successful, it is important that, as far as possible "match" the Latvian girl or boy and his family, with a girl or boy with a family abroad.

However, such a match does not mean that it must necessarily be the same gender, the same age, the exact same interests, and your first choice of country. You should be aware that not everyone has equally good language skills in, for example English as in Latvia. If it is important for you to be able to communicate in a particular language, you and your parents must consider the language skills of a foreign host family before accepting the placement.

It is therefore the entire situation that must match. The week does not promise placement in a certain country, area or place, the opportunity to practice certain sports, hobbies, etc. On the registration form, you enter your wishes according to the instructions. Keep in mind that the fewer restrictions, the greater the chance of getting an exchange.

## **3. BEING A HOST FAMILY**

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The participating family commits to being a host family for a foreign exchange student. It takes place either the same summer (before or after) that the own girl or boy leaves, or the following December to January. It can sometimes happen that it will be summer next year. The commitment remains until the full exchange has taken place.

The family that hosts a foreign exchange student undertakes to devote himself to the foreign exchange student during that time, so that he or she gets the greatest possible experience from his or her time in Latvia, both culturally and socially. The commitment applies both during the day and evening. This means that the participating Latvian exchange student cannot work in the

summer during this time or have other commitments that make stops them from spending time with the foreign girl or boy.

Both the host family and the exchange student must of course adapt for the exchange to be successful.

Additional costs associated with receiving an exchange student on a summer exchange must be handled by the host family, for example food and accommodation, not clothing, and other minor expenses. The host family must also cover costs for travel and excursions. The Latvian exchange student gets the same thing from his host family abroad. However, the exchange student you host must have enough pocket money with them for their stay.

#### **4. THE ROTARY CLUB'S COMMITMENTS**

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The Rotary club that sponsors a Latvian applicant undertakes to:

- interview the family and the applicant in connection with the application
- invite him/her to some Rotary meetings, so that the members can get to know the person they are sponsoring
- to take care of the foreign exchange student together with the host family
- to invite the foreign exchange student to a Rotary lunch if possible
- to be available if problems should arise during/with the exchange
- provide each exchange student with a list of current local contact addresses for the club president, contact persons, doctors, police, other local authorities etc.
- appoint at least one club member as contact person for each exchange student. A member of the host family cannot be the contact person.

#### **5. EXCHANGE COUNTRIES**

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##### **5.1 Countries outside of Europe**

The countries we usually exchange with outside Europe are Brazil, India, Canada, Mexico and the USA. You can also specify your own wish for an exchange country. Exchanges can take place with countries in the southern hemisphere, for example Australia, differs a little from the countries in the northern hemisphere as their school year is reversed from Latvia's. This may mean that the exchange takes place during the period December to January instead of during the summer. It is not always possible to arrange exchanges with all countries.

##### **5.2 Countries in Europe**

The countries with which we have the best possible to exchange within Europe are Belgium, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Switzerland, Spain, Germany, and Austria. See the registration form for how you can wish for a specific country. It may happen that you who participate in a summer exchange within Europe also get to go to school for a couple of days, because the semesters usually end later in the rest of Europe than in Latvia. It is not certain that we can always arrange exchanges with all countries.

##### **5.3 Departures**

You plan the trip to your exchange country together with your exchange partner and his family and wishes regarding time, who leaves first and any airlines. This is done after you have accepted the

exchange offer. We recommend thinking through what kind of flight ticket you book. It can be good to take a ticket that can be rebooked, should there be any unexpected changes in plans.

For questions about the ticket booking, we can recommend (not a requirement) our travel agency, Tranås travel agency, which can be reached by phone: 0140-37 50 00 or e-mail: [info@tranas-resebyra.se](mailto:info@tranas-resebyra.se)

## **6. COSTS AND PAYMENT**

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### **6.1 Registration fee**

The registration fee to apply for the summer exchange is **SEK 300**. It must be paid to our bankgiro or swish, at the same time you submit the registration form. Make sure to state your name, address and that the payment is for summer exchange.

The registration fee is not refunded if you regret it, or the exchange is not made for any reason. The application process will not start before the registration fee has been paid.

### **6.2 Program fee**

For your participation in summer exchange, you pay a program fee of **SEK 6 000**. The fee includes insurance, administration, a polo shirt, etc.

### **6.3 Payment**

A binding agreement between the participant and Rotary's youth exchange is only concluded when the participant has paid the program fee. For the summer exchange, an invoice for the program fee is sent at the same time as the placement notice is sent out. This fee must be paid for your place in the exchange to become definitive.

### **6.4 Costs in addition to the program fee**

In addition to the program fee, there are additional costs for:

- travel back and forth to the exchange country
- any visa fees
- pocket money
- possible fee for an information meeting in Sweden, if applicable
- any vaccinations.
- purchase of material about Sweden and possible gifts for host families

### **6.5 Other**

Any complaints are submitted to the General Complaints Board (Allmänna Reklamationsnämnden).

## **7. RULES**

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The same rules apply to foreign exchange students as for the Latvian ones. All applicants must accept and sign the rules Rotary sets as conditions, in the application.

The commitments and rules which you and your parents undertake to follow are printed in the application form.

Important rules, "The six D's"

It is not allowed to:

Drive: no driving motor vehicles.

Drinking: no alcohol allowed

Drugs: no use of drugs

Dating: no dating

Decoration: no piercing or tattooing

Downloading: no downloading of inappropriate files.

These rules are set out of concern for the participants in Rotary's exchange program, that it should be secure to participate in our programs, and that you yourself will get as much as possible out of your time during an exchange.

## **8. YOUR STAY ABROAD**

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### **Knowledge of Latvia**

The people you meet during your exchange abroad will be very curious about you and your country, so you need to prepare by reading about Latvia, for example history, school system, et cetera.

### **Knowledge of the country you are going to**

You need to read about the country you are going to, the corresponding information you read about Latvia. Try to learn a bit of the country's language, if you don't already have prior knowledge.

### **Visa**

To visit other countries, even for a short time, a tourist visa may be required. It is your own responsibility to find out whether you need to apply for a visa.

### **Passport**

You must in any case have a passport or national ID card if you are traveling within the Schengen area. Check your passport today. For visits to certain countries, the passport is required to be valid for at least three months after the estimated return home from the country, so count on that when checking the validity of your passport. Check with the country's embassy.

### **Vaccination**

Check already now if your vaccination coverage is sufficient, or if you need to supplement it. For more information, contact the nearest vaccination center.

Many countries require, for example, that both youth and host family are vaccinated against Covid.

### **Insurance**

According to Rotary's regulations, the exchange organization must ensure that the participants have insurance with adequate protection upon departure.

Adequate protection means:

- I. Liability and Property Insurance
- II. compensation for medical and dental care without deductible, or amount limitation
- III. compensation for transport costs, without deductible or amount limitation, in the event of illness or death, and compensation close relatives of a seriously ill or deceased person.

For this purpose, Rotary's Youth Exchange has taken out insurance with CISI Bolduc. The insurance is mandatory and is included in the program fee regardless of which country you are in going to on your summer exchange.

It also covers baggage, legal assistance, and personal injury caused by assault. More detailed information will be sent to you when your placement is complete. The insurance is valid from and including departure from Sweden even the journey home from abroad. Therefore, you must inform us of your travel dates.

## **9. AFTER THE EXCHANGE**

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Once your exchange is complete, we want to know how the exchange went. Therefore, it is mandatory to write a report on one to two A4 pages. You send one copy to Rotary's Youth Exchange and one copy to the contact person in your sponsorship Rotary club in Latvia. This should be done by September 1. It is very important for us to know how your exchange was for future exchanges with your host country and district.

## **10. THE CERTIFICATION**

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As of January 1, 2007, Rotary International has introduced a standard, a so-called certification for the work with the youth exchange. Every Rotary district that wants to participate in youth activities has committed to work according to certain established rules, which Rotary has summarized in the code of conduct below.

### **Code of conduct for work with Youth Exchanges**

Rotary International strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all youth who participate in Rotary activities. To the best of their ability, Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses and partners, and other volunteers must safeguard the children and young people with whom they come into contact and protect them from physical, sexual, and psychological abuse.

Adopted by the Board of Directors of Rotary International in November 2002

All persons who in any way work with youth exchanges within Rotary or participate in any exchange program as a host family, must certify in writing that they have read and understood the meaning of this code of conduct.

## **11. GDPR – European Data Protection Directive (processing of personal data).**

The information that all applicants submit in their applications is data recorded, so that we can handle them in a rational way. The only people who have access to the data are those who work with the youth exchange on our behalf, for example Rotary clubs, district chairmen and the insurance company. However, they only receive the information they need. We can also give your name and phone number to others who are applying at the same time, who will, for example, be going to the same place as you. Some applicants want to get in touch with others who previously participated in a summer exchange, and then we can also mediate that contact. If you do not want us to disclose your personal data, you must notify us. For the processing of your personal data, we refer to our personal data policy.

## **12. APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

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### **12.1 How do you fill in the registration and application documents?**

If you have decided to apply, and have your parents' permission, it is time to fill in the application documents.

You must register for the summer exchange, use the form Registration for Rotary's summer exchange 2024. You contact the district chairman (DC) of your district and then a Rotary club in your place of residence, which will contact you for a meeting, an interview at home and your family. This is an opportunity for you and your family to ask questions about what it means being a host family, going abroad as an exchange student, and discussing the rules. This is also when any additions to the application documents must be made. After this meeting, the Rotary club, or the district president, will let you know if the Rotary club wants to sponsor you to participate in a summer exchange, and host a foreign exchange student, or not.

The District Chair and the Rotary Club will provide you with the information you need from club, which must then be filled in the application.

1. The applicant sends the registration form to the RU office and pays the registration fee. Stiftelsen Rotarys Ungdomsutbyte [info@rotarystudent.se](mailto:info@rotarystudent.se)
2. The RU office confirms to the applicant with a link to the database <https://yehub.net/SWE-stapp>
3. Applicants complete the application in the database. When the application is complete, the applicant confirms by pressing "submit" no later than **February 15, 2024**. Do you want to go to countries that require a visa, it is recommended that the application be completed earlier
4. The applicant receives an e-mail with a link to supplementary documents and a Guarantee Form (GF).
5. The Rotary Club visits you and your family for an interview and to sign the application in blue ink with the supplementary documents and GF.

6. The applicant uploads all documents in the database no later than February 15 and sends the supplementary documents and GF to:  
Gunilla Marklund k.gun.mark@gmail.com
7. The correspondent for summer exchanges approves the documents.
8. Your application is sent to our exchange partners in the receiving country
9. You are offered placement
10. Acceptance must be communicated within 10 days (yes or no)
11. After acceptance, the program fee of SEK 6 000 is paid, which is invoiced. Please note that the application must be completed in English. Follow the instructions. It says how to do it. Have them in front of you at all times when you fill out the form. Follow the instructions, and you won't need to make any additions later.

## **12.2 Admission and placement notice**

If you are accepted, you will receive a written offer to participate in the Rotary's summer exchange program, with placement in country and district normally during the month of April 2024. At the same time as this notification, you will receive more information about the summer exchange, insurance, visa, how to pay, and more. In some cases, admission and placement notification may take longer than the month of April.

## **12.3 Practical information**

### **Timeline (preliminary)**

**Nov – Dec** The applicant himself arranges contact with a local Rotary club which will be the host club for the exchange in Latvia. If you do not have contact with Rotary or any Rotary club, contact your district chairperson (DC) in the Rotary district where you live. See Appendix A.

The Rotary Club interviews the applicant and his family. The interview is mandatory and must take place in the applicant's home. The Rotary Club notifies the applicant whether the Rotary Club intends to sponsor him or not.

**Before Dec 31** Registration at the RU office. Confirmation of receipt is sent to applicants.

**March 15** Absolute latest date for completing the application documents in the database.

**Feb-Apr** Exchange families abroad are arranged. Contacts are taken as soon as the application is complete.

**Apr** Written offer of participation with insurance information, visa instructions, etc. are sent out.

- May 15** Last day for payment of the program fee.
- Jun 1** Dispatch of insurance cards, flight PM, and equipment, etc.
- Sep 1** Report to the RU office for exchanges or part of exchanges during the summer.

**Office**

The RU office in Sweden is open Monday-Friday at 9.00-17.00.

**Correspondent for summer exchanges**

Gunilla Marklund, Rotarys Ungdomsutbyte, Phone: 070 - 659 6893,  
email: [k.gun.mark@gmail.com](mailto:k.gun.mark@gmail.com)

**The registration fee is paid to** Swish 123 628 33 94 or Bankgiro 754–2624.

As the receiver of the payment, write "Stiftelsen Rotarys Ungdomsutbyte". Don't forget your own name and address. State that the payment is for summer exchange 2024.

**Please send the registration for the summer exchange directly to**  
[info@rotarystudent.se](mailto:info@rotarystudent.se)

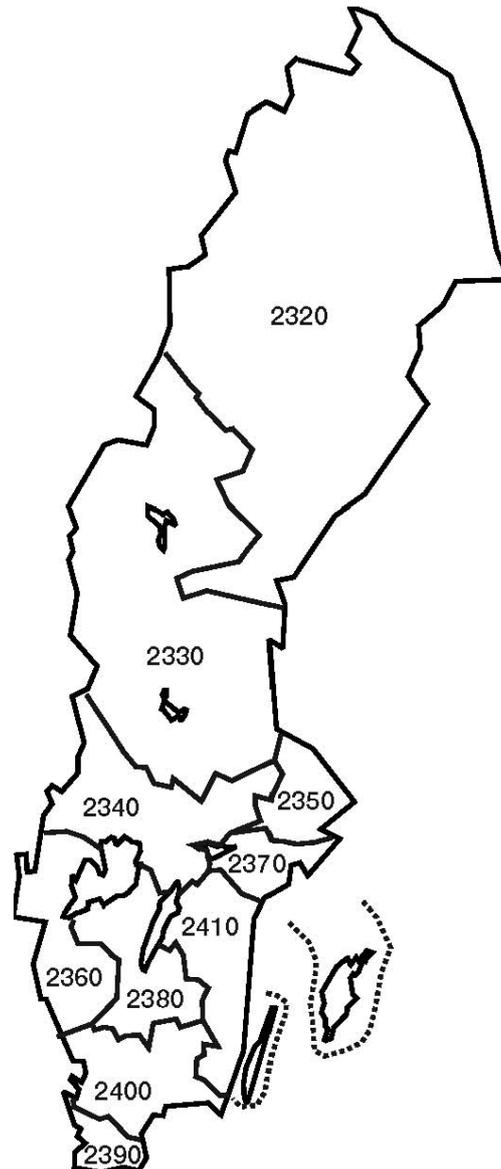
You send the registration form to the RU office at the same time as you pay the registration fee. If you move, remember to report your new address and phone number to us as well! For a temporary change of address, for example during the summer, remember to arrange for the mail to be forwarded!

**Rotary Youth Exchange  
Sweden & Latvia  
District Chairmen (DC)  
2023–2024**

**DC 2410**

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## Rotary International Distriktsindelning i Sverige



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