

COUNTRY FACTSHEET: SWEDEN 2014

EUROPEAN MIGRATION NETWORK

1. Introduction

This EMN Country Factsheet provides a factual overview of the main policy developments in migration and international protection in Sweden during 2014, including latest statistics.

2. Common European Asylum System

The transposition of the recast Common European Asylum System (i.e. the recast Qualification Directive, the recast Asylum Procedures Directive and the recast Reception Conditions Directive) as well as the implementation of the Dublin III Regulation and the Eurodac Regulation, started in 2014.

The **Aliens Act was amended** in July 2014 to allow children to be granted a residence permit in cases of 'particularly' distressing circumstances (instead of 'exceptionally' distressing circumstances). The new wording widens the scope of the provision. Protection due to such circumstances is a national form of protection on humanitarian grounds; under this provision, the state of health, the level of integration, and the situation in the country of origin of a child are taken into consideration.

Furthermore, since 1st May 2014, refugees and persons eligible for subsidiary protection may be granted a long-term resident status in Sweden if they apply for and fulfil the conditions for such status. This also gives them the right to free movement within the European Union.

In 2014 **a sharp increase in the number of asylum applications was registered**. This situation required a high degree of flexibility to handle fluctuating pressures. As a response, the Government continued to raise the budgetary means to the Swedish Migration Agency¹, both to expand the Migration Agency's asylum examination and application units and the provision of accommodation for asylum seekers.

¹ In March 2015 the 'Swedish Migration Board' [officially changed its English name](#) into Swedish Migration Agency.

A contingency plan was also developed to enhance preparedness and staff competencies, to define responsibilities, to ensure co-ordination, capacity and burden sharing within the Migration Agency. However, challenges remain regarding available accommodation both for applicants and for those who have been granted a resident permit.

In addition, **a new "Centre for operational coordination"** has been established within the Swedish Migration Agency. Its main aim is to develop the coordination of different operational functions affected by the higher numbers of asylum seekers.

Regarding **resettlement** activities in 2014, as in previous years, the Swedish resettlement quota for 2014 was set to 1,900 persons. Refugees were mainly resettled from Iran, Egypt, Kenya, Uganda, Sudan, Lebanon, Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Israel and Turkey. The largest nationality groups were Syrians (714), Afghans (328) and Eritreans (229).

Sweden continued to participate in EASO's activities and to deploy experts, mainly to support the development of best practices among the EU Member States. Sweden also supported the emergency missions EASO developed in Bulgaria, Greece and Italy.

3. Unaccompanied Minors and other Vulnerable Groups

In 2014, due to an increasing caseload regarding unaccompanied minors as well as Dublin cases, the Migration Agency opened new units particularly for Dublin cases and for unaccompanied minors. Up to January 2014, the Swedish Migration Agency was able to assign unaccompanied minors (UAMs) to municipalities on the basis of voluntary agreements between individual municipalities and the Migration Agency. However, due to the high increase in the number of UAMs, the Migration Agency is now able to assign a UAM to a municipality even when there is no

agreement. As of October 2014, such approach was applied in about 1,400 cases.

Overall, there were challenges regarding the handling of cases of UAMs in Sweden. In many cases, a Dublin procedure is initiated, but due to different interpretations in the relevant Member States regarding the ECJ ruling [C-648/11](#) UAMs, the asylum claim is examined in Sweden, even when the UAM's application has already been rejected in another Member State.

4. European Policy on Legal migration and Integration

4.1. PROMOTING LEGAL MIGRATION CHANNELS

The [Swedish Migration Agency website](#) provides up to date information about the Swedish system for labour immigration, as well as guidance on how to apply for a residence and work permit. In 2014 the website was restructured into a user friendly step-by-step guide and it is now available in additional foreign languages. In addition, the electronic system for internet applications for residence permits was also simplified.

4.2. ECONOMIC MIGRATION

New rules were introduced on July 2014 **to remove obstacles to circular migration and enhance the positive effects of migration on development.** The changes included, amongst others: the possibility for third-country nationals (TCNs) with a permanent resident permit in Sweden, to keep the permit for two years after moving out from Sweden (provided TCNs inform the authorities of their willingness to keep the permit); labour migrants and doctoral students may now interrupt their residency in Sweden for shorter or longer periods of time while retaining their right to be granted a permanent residence permit. Such permits can be now granted if a TCN has had a residence permit for a total of four years in the last seven years; labour migrants have now the possibility to be granted a temporary work permit for a total time of six years (previously four years); and TCNs students that have studied at a Swedish higher education institution for at least two terms, can now receive a residence permit for a maximum period of six months to look for employment in Sweden or investigate opportunities to start a business. In addition, a rejected asylum seeker can apply for a residence permit for work purposes, if the person has been working in Sweden for at least four months (previously six months) before rejection, on the condition that the employer agrees to continued employment.

New control measures to prevent abuse of the labour immigration system were also introduced on 1st August 2014. These aimed at addressing the misuse of the labour migration system by untrustworthy employers and preventing workers from

countries outside of the EU/EEA area from being exploited. Under the new rules, the Swedish Migration Agency can undertake follow-up checks on employers who have recruited from third-countries and to revoke work permits, whenever the agreed working conditions are not met or the third-country national has not started working. Furthermore, employers have now the obligation to provide written information at the request of the Migration Agency.

4.3. FAMILY REUNIFICATION

A new provision introduced in the Aliens Act on August 2014 aims at guaranteeing the best interest of the child and clarifies the Swedish rules applicable to parents that are the caregivers of a child with legal residence status in Sweden and that live together with the child. As a result, a parent can now lodge an application for a residence permit while in Sweden, if there is a strong relationship with the child and it is unreasonable to demand that the parent leaves Sweden before applying. (Normally, residence permits have to be applied for from abroad.)

Also, in 2014 it was clarified that immigrant business-owners (self-employed persons) may be accompanied by family members, provided that they can support them. Since 1st July 2014, family members of self-employed persons may also receive a work permit.

4.4. INTEGRATION

In 2014, additional funding to support apprenticeships for newly-arrived immigrants and to improve educational performance among foreign-born youth was provided. Education resources were mainly allocated to support language courses, training of teachers and dissemination activities on educational services. In addition, individual introduction plans for newly-arrived migrants can now be prolonged for parents who participate in introduction activities on a part-time basis, while caring for children (with parental benefit).

The target group of the various activities to integrate immigrants into Swedish society has also been widened to include the family members of refugees. The time limit within which a family member needs to apply for a residence permit to be covered by the Introduction Act has also been extended from two to six years.

"Step-in jobs", a labour market subsidies scheme for newly-arrived migrants, was also amended in order to encourage employers to hire more people from this group. The Government also continued to provide financial support to municipalities and organisations that support newly-arrived refugees in Sweden.

Changes to the Swedish Citizenship Act entered into force in April 2015. Amongst others, some of these changes facilitate the acquisition of Swedish citizenship for children and youngsters.

4.5. MANAGING MIGRATION AND MOBILITY²

Preparations for the continued roll-out of the **Visa Information System (VIS)** were made in accordance with the time plan. In addition, in order to comply with the new Schengen evaluation mechanism, Sweden has established a pool of experts in various fields relevant to the evaluation missions. The National Bureau of Investigation is also developing new procedures in order to prepare for the evaluation of Swedish actions, comprising both planned and unannounced evaluation visits.

4.6. EXTERNAL DIMENSION OF EU MIGRATION POLICY

The **Government Committee on Migration Studies –DELMI** – which was launched in 2013 as an independent body charged with commissioning research and analysis on migration to inform future policies in the field of migration, organised its first Committee meetings in 2014 and also launched its own [website](#). One thematic field of activity for DELMI is Migration and development.

Sweden also chaired the **Global Forum on Migration and Development** in 2013-2014 (GFMD), during this period Sweden highlighted the contribution of migration to inclusive economic development through labour migration, circular migration and labour market matching, and the contribution of diaspora groups to trade and investment, among other issues.

During 2014, Sweden also continued to fund and support international development assistance for the health sector in Zimbabwe and Somalia, particularly to enable health workers to return to their country of origin and in Zambia, to develop national policy on human resources in the health sector.

Regarding **remittances**, in order to increase transparency and lower remittances costs, Sweden introduced for the first time its own [website](#). The website allows a cost comparison between different money transfer institutions to countries outside of Sweden.

5. Irregular Migration and Return

5.1. THE FIGHT AGAINST FACILITATION OF IRREGULAR MIGRATION

A **Migration Intelligence Unit was established by the Migration Agency**. The main task of the new unit is to coordinate and ensure high quality of the Agency's' intelligence work. The unit monitors relevant world circumstances and changes, and analyses their possible consequences for migration to Sweden.

² "Managing migration and mobility" refers to the following themes: visa policy, Schengen governance and border monitoring.

A **national strategic paper on border control was developed** within the Central Border Management Division and adopted by the Swedish Police involved in border control issues and the Coast Guard. The plan aims to ensure an effective flow of travellers and to detect and prevent irregular migration.

Regarding the use of false travel documents, the Swedish Government has commissioned an investigator to consider measures to discourage the **abuse of Swedish passports**. The purpose is to analyse the extent and causes of the abuses and to make an international comparison, and to propose effective measures to tackle the problem.

On 1st December 2014 Sweden joined the **European Border Surveillance System (Eurosur)** and a National Coordination Centre has also been established.

6. Actions against Trafficking in Human Beings

An **Action Plan against Trafficking, Exploitation and Sexual Abuse of Children** for the period 2014 - 2015 was presented to the Parliament in February 2014. The aim of the plan is to ensure that no child becomes a victim of trafficking, exploitation or sexual abuse. The Action Plan also aims to improve the protection of children in particularly vulnerable situations.

In August 2014, the Swedish Migration Agency's "Manual for migration cases" was updated to improve the detection of potential victims of trafficking within asylum and legal migration procedures.

In September 2014, an Inquiry to evaluate the application of the penal provision on trafficking in human beings and to examine how law enforcement authorities investigate and handle human trafficking matters was initiated. The Inquiry will also aim to review the scale of penalties for the purchase of a sexual act from a child and to ensure that it fully corresponds to the seriousness of the crime. The Inquiry will also aim to evaluate the effect of the raise of the maximum penalty for purchase of a sexual service that was implemented in 2011. The results of the inquiry are expected by 9th March 2016.

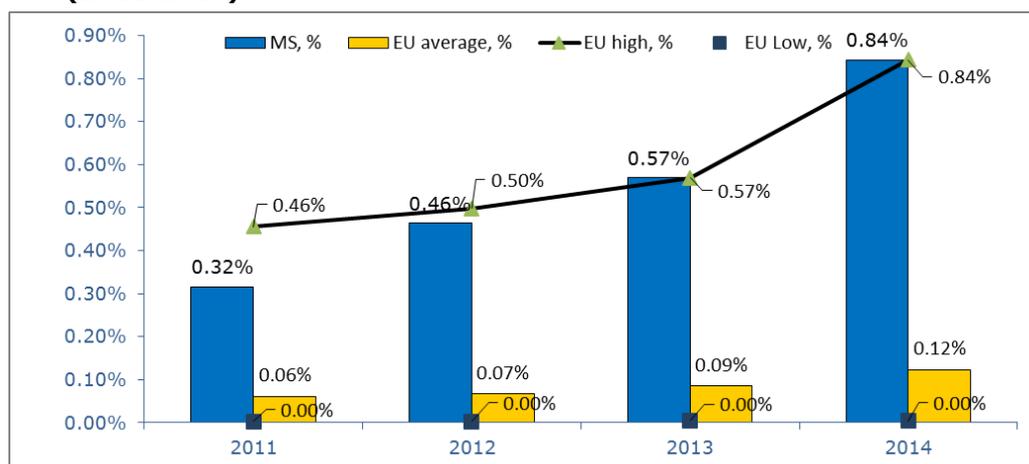
STATISTICAL ANNEX

The Statistical Annex provides an overview of the latest available statistics for Sweden on aspects of migration and asylum (2011-2014), including residence, asylum, unaccompanied minors, irregular migration, return and visas. Where statistics are not yet available, this is indicated in the Annex as "**N/I**" and when statistics are not applicable, this is indicated as "**N/A**".

Statistical Annex: Immigration and Asylum in Sweden (2011-2014)

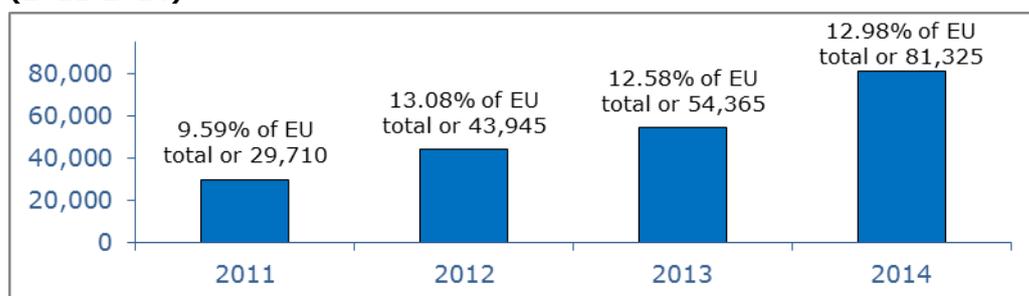
1. COMMON EUROPEAN ASYLUM SYSTEM

Figure 1: Asylum applications as a share of the total population in Sweden, EU average and EU high and low (2011-2014)



Source: Eurostat asylum statistics (migr_asyappctza), data extracted 20/07/2015

Figure 2: Number of asylum applications and as a share of the total number of applications in the EU (2011-2014)



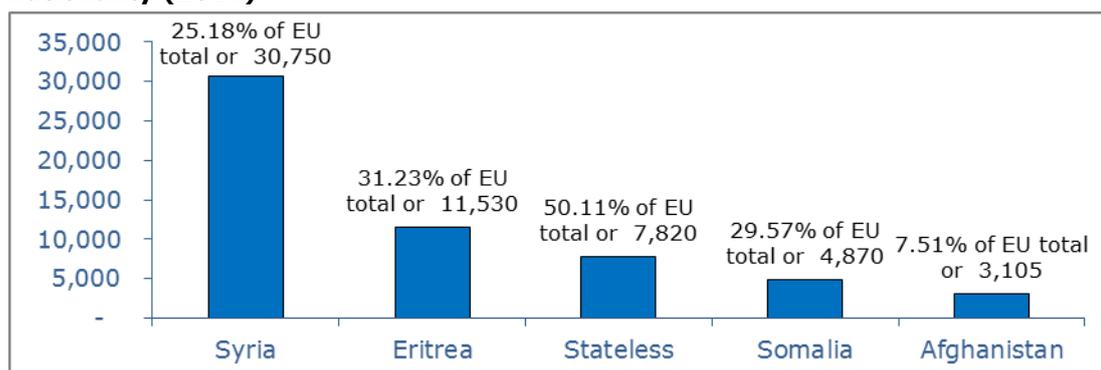
Source: Eurostat asylum statistics (migr_asyappctza), data extracted 21/07/2015

Table 1: Asylum applications: Top five third-country nationalities (2011-2014)

2011			2012			2013			2014		
Nationality	Nr	% of total	Nationality	Nr	% of total	Nationality	Nr	% of total	Nationality	Nr	% of total
Afghanistan	4,130	14%	Syria	7,920	18%	Syria	16,540	30%	Syria	30,750	38%
Somalia	4,045	14%	Somalia	5,695	13%	Stateless	6,885	13%	Eritrea	11,530	14%
Serbia	2,645	9%	Afghanistan	4,760	11%	Eritrea	4,880	9%	Stateless	7,820	10%
Eritrea	1,705	6%	Serbia	2,670	6%	Somalia	3,940	7%	Somalia	4,870	6%
Iraq	1,640	6%	Eritrea	2,405	5%	Afghanistan	3,025	6%	Afghanistan	3,105	4%

Source: Eurostat asylum statistics (migr_asyappctza), data extracted 21/07/2015

Figure 3: Asylum applications: Top five third-country nationalities as a share of EU total per given nationality (2014)



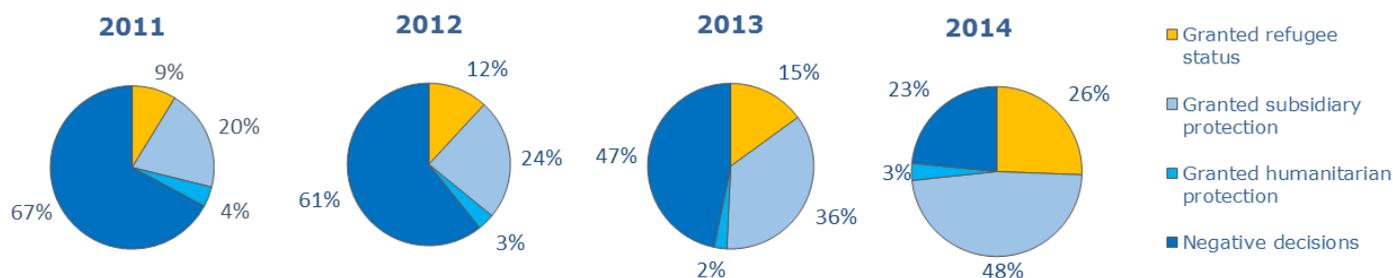
Source: Eurostat asylum statistics (migr_asyappctza), data extracted 21/07/2015

Table 2: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2011-2014)

	Total decisions	Positive decisions	Of which:		Humanitarian reasons	Negative decisions
			Refugee status	Subsidiary protection		
2011	26,760	8,805	2,335	5,390	1,075	17,960
2012	31,570	12,400	3,745	7,595	1,060	19,170
2013	45,120	24,020	6,750	16,145	1,125	21,100
2014	40,015	30,650	10,245	19,095	1,310	9,365

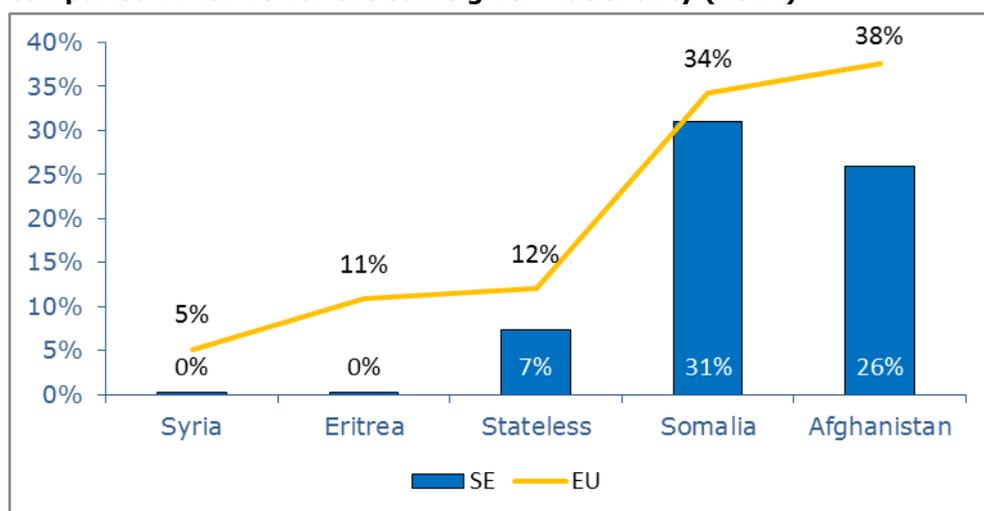
Source: Eurostat asylum statistics (migr_asydcfsta), data extracted 22/07/2015.

Figures 4-7: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2011-2014)



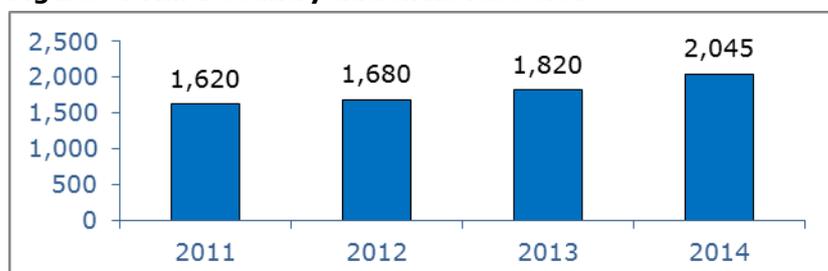
Source: Eurostat asylum statistics (migr_asydcfsta), data extracted 22/07/2015

Figure 8: Negative decision rate for the top five nationalities of applicants at the first instance in comparison with EU for the same given nationality (2014)



Source: Eurostat asylum statistics (migr_asydcfsta), data extracted 23/07/2015

Figure 9: Third-country nationals resettled



Source: Eurostat asylum statistics (migr_asyresa), data extracted 23/07/2015

2. UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

Figure 10: Unaccompanied minors applying for asylum (2011-2014)

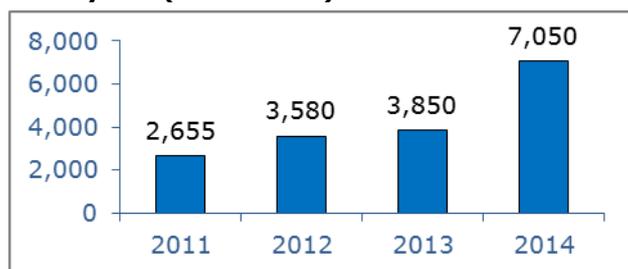


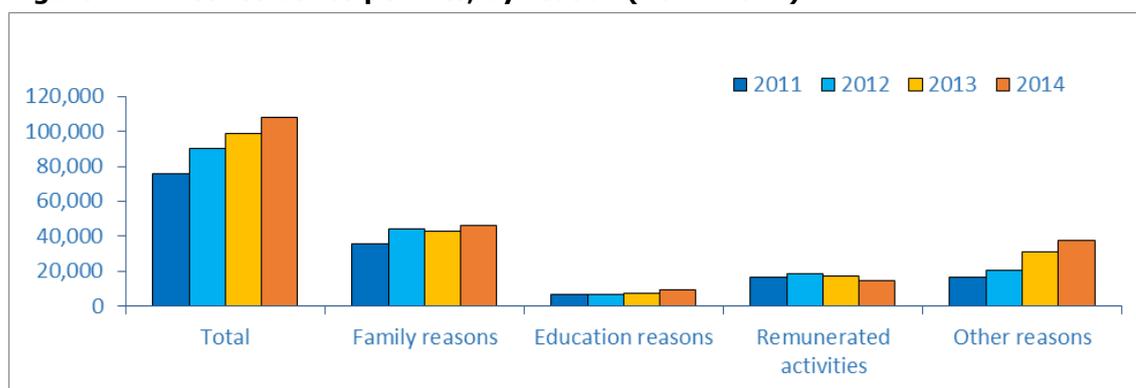
Table 3: Unaccompanied minors (2011-2014)

	2011	2012	2013	2014
Unaccompanied minors (total)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Unaccompanied minor asylum applicants	2,655	3,580	3,850	7,050

Source: Eurostat Asylum applicants considered to be unaccompanied minors by citizenship, age and sex Annual data (rounded) [migr_asyunaa], data extracted 23/07/2015

3. EUROPEAN POLICY ON LEGAL MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION

Figure 11: First residence permits, by reason (2011-2014)



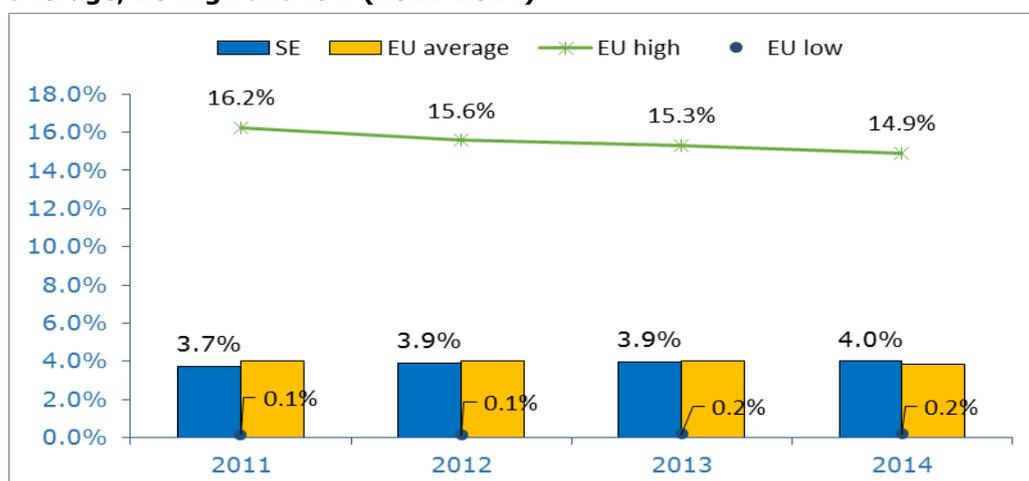
Source: Eurostat (migr_resfirst), data extracted 24/08/2015

Table 4: First residence permits: Top five third-country nationalities (2011 – 2014)

2011	2012	2013	2014
1. Iraq – 6,457	1. Thailand – 8,162	1. Syria - 16,291	1. Syria – 26,428
2. Thailand – 5,849	2. Somalia – 8,134	2. Somalia – 10,112	2. Stateless – 8,115
3. China – 4,859	3. Syria – 7,265	3. Thailand- 7,618	3. Eritrea - 7,080
4. India – 4,375	4. India – 5,296	4. Stateless- 6,107	4. India – 6,589
5. Afghanistan –4,346	5. Afghanistan –5,009	5. India - 5,947	5. China – 4,922

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_resfirst), data extracted 24/08/2015

Figure 12: Resident population of third-country nationals as a share of total population in Sweden, EU average, EU high and low (2011-2014)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_pop1ctz), data extracted 23/07/2015

4. IRREGULAR MIGRATION AND RETURN

Table 5: Number of third-country nationals refused entry at external borders (2011 – 2014)

Third country nationals:	2011	2012	2013	2014
Refused entry at external borders	155	155	185	345
Found to be illegally present	20,765	23,205	24,400	72,835
Ordered to leave	17,600	19,905	14,695	14,280
Returned following an order to leave	13,470	16,140	14,315	6,630

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_eirfs)(migr_eipre)(migr_eiord)(migr_eirtn) , data extracted 24/07/2015

Table 6: Third-country nationals returned (2011-2014)

	Returned as part of forced return measures	Returned voluntarily	Returned through an Assisted Voluntary Return Programme
2011	2,495	9,740	1,415
2012	2,893	12,988	614
2013	3,400	10,611	433
2014	2,766	8,006	216

Source: EMN Country Factsheet 2013 and *EMN Annual Policy Report on Immigration and Asylum 2014, Statistic Annex

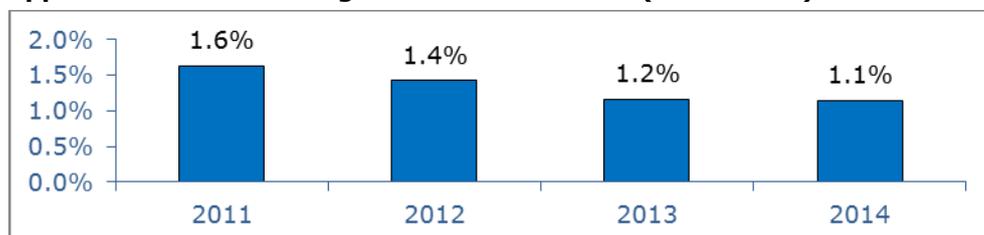
5. SECURING EUROPE'S EXTERNAL BORDERS

Table 7: Number of Schengen visas applications (2011 – 2014)

	2011	2012	2013	2014
Uniform visas (short-stay visas)	220,567	215,763	200,543	191,009

Source: DG Migration and Home – Complete statistics on short-stay visas issued by the Schengen States

Figure 13: Uniform visa applications received in Sweden as a share of the total number of uniform visa applications in all Schengen states consulates (2011-2014)



Source: DG Migration and Home affairs – Complete statistics on short-stay visas issued by the Schengen States

Table 8: Top five countries in which the highest number of visa applications for Sweden was lodged

2011		2012		2013		2014	
Country	Number	Country	Number	Country	Number	Country	Number
Russia	64,464	Russia	62,858	Russia	56,860	Russia	39,944
China	31,832	China	31,162	China	31,440	China	36,885
Iran	24,079	Iran	20,722	Thailand	17,864	Iran	15,941
Thailand	12,964	Thailand	17,132	Iran	12,525	India	12,770
India	12,871	India	14,055	India	12,232	Thailand	11,185

Source: DG Migration and Home affairs

6. ACTIONS AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

Table 9: Number of traffickers arrested as suspects and traffickers convicted

	2011	2012	2013	2014*
Convictions	N/I	N/I	N/I	1
Arrested / otherwise involved in a criminal proceeding	N/I	N/I	N/I	2

Source: *EMN Annual Policy Report on Immigration and Asylum 2014, Statistic Annex

7. ASYLUM AND MIGRATION EU FUNDING SOURCES (2007-2013 AND 2014-2020)

Table 9: Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) allocation to Sweden in euro per area

Areas	AMIF 2014-2020
Asylum	50,910,000
Legal Migration and Integration	51,517,349
Return	13,054,000
Technical Assistance	7,519,528
Special cases (resettlement/transfer)	31,200,000
TOTAL	154,200,877

Source: DG Migration and Home affairs

Table 10: Internal Security Fund (ISF) allocation to Sweden in euro per area

Areas	ISF 2014-2020
ISF Borders	11,518,706
ISF SA Frontex	-
ISF SA Consular cooperation	-
ISF Borders Emergency Assistance	-
ISF Police	21,057,201
TOTAL	32,575,907

Source: DG Migration and Home affairs

Table 11: SOLID funds allocation in euro and share of total funds allocated to Sweden (2007-2013)

SOLID FUNDS	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	TOTAL
European Refugee Fund (ERF)	N/A	11,873,311 (16.1%)	15,027,846 (15.2%)	17,196,880 (18.2%)	16,054,966 (16.3%)	17,015,699 (16.2%)	17,173,400 (15.1%)	94,342,105 (16.13%)
European Return Fund (RF)	N/A	1,819,156 (3.3%)	1,485,592 (2.4%)	1,503,728 (1.8%)	2,559,854 (2.3%)	5,080,126 (3.4%)	7,273,730 (4.1%)	19,722,185 (3.1%)
European Fund for the Integration of TCN (EIF)	1,161,803 (1.8%)	1,408,302 (1.8%)	606,327 (0.6%)	2,297,641 (2.1%)	2,825,959 (2.1%)	3,424,985 (2.1%)	4,199,605 (2.3%)	15,924,622 (1.9%)
External Borders Fund (EBF)	1,325,160 (0.9%)	1,291,344 (1%)	1,428,837 (0.9%)	1,290,490 (0.7%)	1,320,946 (0.6%)	1,945,364 (0.6%)	2,285,522 (0.5%)	10,887,663 (0.7%)

Source: DG Migration and Home affairs