

# EMN Policy Report 2014

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## Sweden



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>SAMMANFATTNING OCH ÖVERSIKT (SVENSKA) .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND OVERVIEW (ENGLISH) .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1 INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>2 OVERVIEW OF ASYLUM AND MIGRATION POLICY DEVELOPMENTS .....</b>	<b>14</b>
2.1 Organisational structure of asylum and migration policy .....	14
2.2 Political and institutional developments .....	15
2.3 Overall developments and debates concerning asylum and migration .....	16
<b>3 LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY .....</b>	<b>18</b>
3.1 Economic migration .....	18
3.2 Students and researchers .....	21
3.3 Family reunification.....	23
3.4 Information provision to potential migrants.....	25
3.5 Citizenship and naturalisation.....	26
3.6 Visa Policy and Schengen co-operation.....	26
<b>4 INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION INCLUDING ASYLUM .....</b>	<b>28</b>
4.1 Applications for international protection and asylum procedures .....	28
4.2 Reception of asylum applicants.....	32
4.3 Asylum decisions .....	33
4.4 Integration of persons who are granted protection.....	34
4.5 Resettlement.....	35
<b>5 UNACCOMPANIED MINORS .....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>6 TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS.....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>7 MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>8 IRREGULAR MIGRATION.....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>9 RETURN MIGRATION .....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>ANNEX A: METHODOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS .....</b>	<b>45</b>
A1. Methodology .....	45
A2. Terms and Definitions .....	45

## SAMMANFATTNING OCH ÖVERSIKT (SVENSKA)

Syftet med denna rapport är att sammanfatta de viktigaste utvecklingarna inom migration och asyl i Sverige under 2014, återge relevanta allmänna debatter inom området och sätta det i samband med utvecklingen på Europeisk nivå och dess betydelse för den nationella nivån.

### *Övergripande trender*

Under 2014 beviljades mer än 110 000 personer uppehålls- och/eller arbetstillstånd i Sverige för första gången. Detta är den tredje högsta årssiffran någonsin i Sverige. Bara under år 2012 och 2013 har antalet tillstånd varit något högre (ungefär 116 000 tillstånd). Det är dock viktigt att notera att jämförelsen över tiden 2012-2014 haltar eftersom medborgare i EU och EEA, som tidigare var tvungna att registrera sin uppehållsrätt hos Migrationsverket är inkluderade i siffrorna för 2013 men inte i siffrorna för 2014. Sedan maj 2014 behöver medborgare i EU- och EEA-länder inte längre registrera uppehållsrätt hos Migrationsverket. Denna registrering görs nu istället direkt hos Skatteverket som är ansvarig för folkbokföringen. Resultatet av detta blir att bara en liten del av medborgarna i EU-/EEA-länder är inkluderade i Migrationsverkets statistik för 2014, nämligen de som inte omfattas av den fria rörligheten och som ansökte om uppehållstillstånd för att kunna bosätta sig i Sverige. Om statistiken för 2014 hade inkluderat samma kategorier av migranter som inkluderades 2012 och 2013 så hade det totala antalet tillstånd varit betydligt högre för år 2014.

I tabell 1 (i absoluta tal) och i figur 1 (i procent) återfinns de huvudsakliga kategorierna av uppehållstillstånd som beviljades 2014. Precis som föregående år är den största gruppen (42 435) personer som immigrerat till Sverige för familjeåterförening eller av andra familjerelaterade orsaker. Upphållstillstånd baserat på behov av skydd och humanitära orsaker, såsom flyktingar, personer med behov av subsidiärt skydd eller personer med humanitära behov, utgjorde den nästa största gruppen av personer som fick uppehållstillstånd (35 020 personer). För denna grupp var det en signifikant ökning jämfört med 2013 (+23%). En av de huvudsakliga anledningarna till detta var det höga antal asylsökande som kom till Sverige under 2013, särskilt från Syrien och Eritrea. Arbetskraftsmigranter och internationella studenter från tredje land var de tredje och fjärde största kategorierna av personer som fick uppehållstillstånd 2014.

**Tabell 1: Övergripande invandringstrend: beviljade uppehållstillstånd för förstagångssökande 2012-2014**

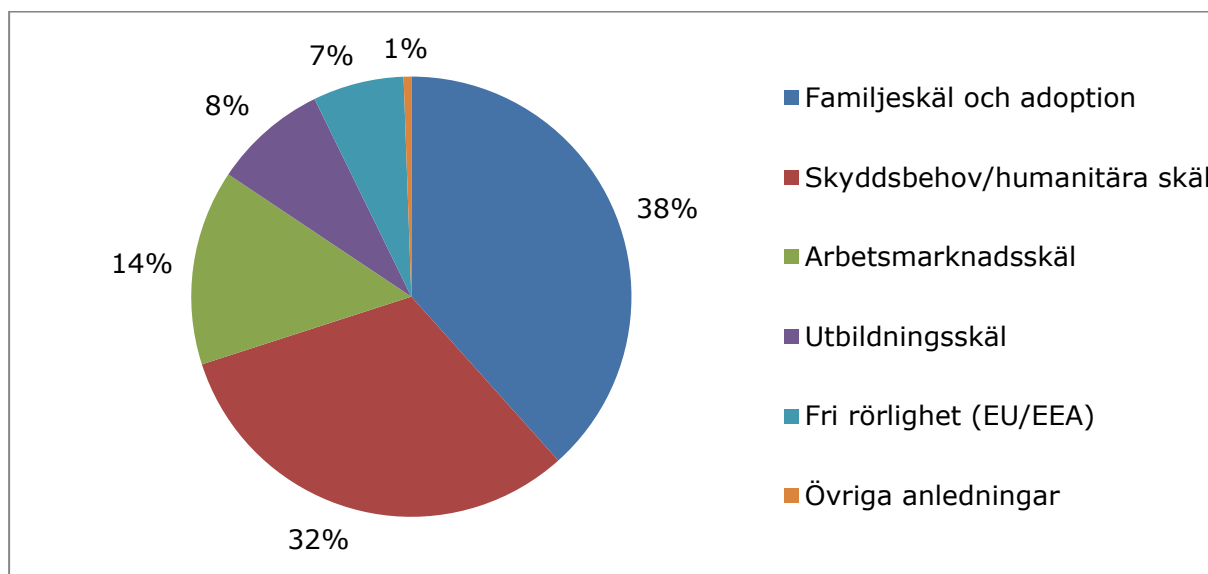
Anledning	2012	2013	2014
Familjeskäl och adoption	41 156	40 026	42 435
Skyddsbehov och humanitära skäl*	16 893	28 438	35 020
Arbetsmarknadsskäl	19 936	19 292	15 872
Utbildningsskäl	7 092	7 559	9 267
<i>Fri rörlighet (EU/EEA)**</i>	25 501	20 712	7 394
Övriga anledningar***	512	560	622
<b>Totalt</b>	<b>111 090</b>	<b>116 587</b>	<b>110 610</b>

\* Detta inkluderar flyktingar, vidarebosättning och uppehållstillstånd som beviljats på grund av särskilt ömmande omständigheter.

\*\* Observera att dessa siffror inte är jämförbara över tidsperioden, så som beskrivits i texten ovan.

\*\*\* Detta inkluderar personer som bedömts inte vara i behov av skydd men som inte kunnat återvändas.

**Källa:** Migrationsverket

**Figur 1: Övergripande invandring: beviljade uppehållstillstånd för förstagångssökande 2014**

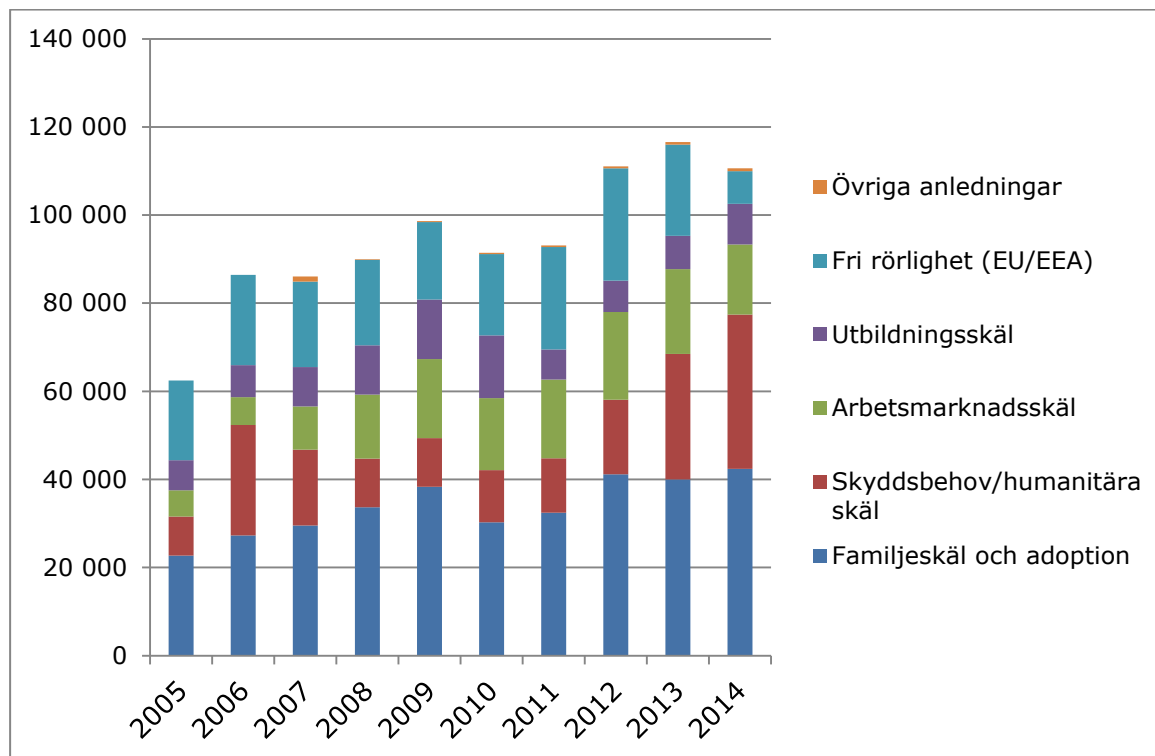
**Källa:** Migrationsverket

Figur 2 nedan visar beviljandet av uppehålls- och arbetstillstånd i ett längre tidsperspektiv. Det framgår då att antalet uppehållstillstånd av skyddsskäl eller humanitära orsaker har ökat kraftigt under 2013 och 2014. En toppnivå nåddes också 2006 men berodde framförallt på tillfälliga åtgärder för att ompröva ärenden för personer vars asylansökningar avslagits men som hade bott i Sverige i flera år trots att de fått beslut om avvisning.

För internationella studenter (migration för utbildningsändamål) var invandringen högst under 2010 och har sedan dess minskat. 2013 och 2014 finns det en tendens till en ökning igen.

Familjerelaterad invandring nådde relativt höga nivåer under 2012 och 2014. Arbetskraftsrelaterad migration har ökat sedan 2007 men minskade något under 2013 och den minskningen fortsatte under 2014.

**Figur 2: Beviljade förstagångstillstånd, 2005-2014**



**Källa:** Migrationsverket

### *Internationellt skydd*

I ett europeiskt perspektiv fortsatte Sverige att vara ett primärt destinations- och mottagningsland för asylsökande även under 2014. Totalt registrerade Migrationsverket cirka 81 300 asylsökande under 2014, 49,8% fler än året tidigare. Bland EU:s länder var det bara Tyskland som hade fler asylsökande (ungefär 202 800).<sup>1</sup> De fem största grupperna av asylsökande som kom till Sverige var Syrier (38% av alla asylsökande), Eritreaner (14%), statslösa (10%), medborgare från Somalia (6%) och Afghanistan (4%).

Vad gäller utfallet av asylprövningen avgjorde Migrationsverket under 2014 53 503 ärenden, cirka 7% fler än under 2013. Mer än 31 200 personer beviljades skydd.<sup>2</sup> Detta ger att den totala bifallsandelen var 58% under 2014. Om överföringar enligt Dublinkonventionen och andra ärenden som inte prövades materiellt, ex. avskrivna ärenden, inte räknas in var bifallsandelen 77%.

<sup>1</sup> Källa: Eurostat-Databas.

<sup>2</sup> Detta antal inkluderar även de personer (1 328) som beviljades uppehållstillstånd av humanitära skäl (särskilt ömmande omständigheter).

### *Fler ensamkommande barn*

Antalet ensamkommande barn (barn utan vårdnadshavare, BUV) som ansökte om skydd i Sverige fortsatte också att öka. Under 2014 ansökte lite fler än 7 000 BUV om asyl i Sverige, vilket kan jämföras med 3 800 under 2013. Afghanistan fortsatte att vara det vanligaste ursprungslandet för BUV som kom till Sverige (1 547 personer), följt av Eritrea (1 456), Syrien (1 233) och Somalia (1 118).

Till följd av den stora ökningen av antalet ensamkommande barn som kommit till Sverige under de senaste åren har systemet för mottagande, boende och omhändertagande förändrats. Sedan januari 2014 kan Migrationsverket fördela BUV till kommuner utan kommunens samtycke och utan att det finns särskilda anledningar. Tidigare var regelverket sådant att Migrationsverket placerade BUV i kommuner baserat på frivilliga överenskommelser mellan den enskilda kommunen och Migrationsverket. Då kunde verket inte placera ett barn utan vårdnadshavare i en kommun om en sådan överenskommelse inte fanns förutom om det fanns särskilda anledningar till detta, exempelvis om barnet hade en nära släkting som bodde i kommunen.

### *Ökad invandring av familjeskäl*

Som en konsekvens av det ökade antalet asylsökande som kommit till Sverige har också invandringen av familjeskäl ökat under 2014. Migrationsverket beviljade 40 026 ansökningar om familjeåterförening under 2013 och 42 435 under 2014.

2014 var handläggningstiden för förstagångsansökningar för uppehållstillstånd av familjeskäl ganska lång jämfört med tidigare år. Den genomsnittliga handläggningstiden har ökat till 244 dagar under 2014, jämfört med 152 dagar 2012 och 196 dagar 2013.

### *Minskad arbetskraftsinvandring*

Arbetskraftsinvandringen till Sverige har minskat 2014 jämfört med 2012 och 2013. Medan 19 292 arbetsrelaterade uppehållstillstånd utfärdades 2013 var antalet 2014 15 872. Säsongsarbetare, såsom bärplockare, utgör den största yrkesgruppen av alla arbetskraftsinvandrare (2 885 personer), följt av dataspecialister (2 525) och restaurangarbetare (1 400). Den huvudsakliga anledningen till minskningen av arbetskraftsinvandringen är ett mycket lägre antal bärplockare som kom till Sverige från Thailand. Säsongsbaserad bärplockning utförs i allt högre grad av EU-medborgare (framförallt från Bulgarien) som inte behöver uppehålls- och arbetstillstånd.

Det svenska systemet för arbetskraftsinvandring från tredje land och särskilt anklagelser om lönedumpning och utnyttjande av utländsk arbetskraft har varit ett ofta debatterat ämne under senare år. I augusti 2014 trädde nya regler i kraft som har till syfte att minska missbruk av reglerna kring

arbetskraftsinvandring av oseriösa arbetsgivare och förhindra att arbetare från länder utanför EU/EEA exploateras.

Nya regler infördes också för att underlätta internationell rörlighet och cirkulär migration till och från Sverige. För arbetskraftsinvandrare är det nu möjligt att beviljas tillfälliga uppehållstillstånd för en total tid av sex år (tidigare var det fyra år). Ett permanent uppehållstillstånd kan beviljas till en person som har arbetat i Sverige under minst fyra år under de senaste sju åren (tidigare var det för de som arbetat fyra år under de senaste fem åren). Detta möjliggör för migranter att ha längre bortavaro från landet.

### *Studenter*

Under 2014 fick totalt 9 267 studenter från tredje land uppehållstillstånd för studier i Sverige. Siffran inkluderar nästan 1 250 doktorander. Detta är en ökning jämfört med 2013 då 7 599 uppehållstillstånd för studier beviljades (inklusive 957 doktorander). Tendensen förefaller vara att svenska universitet gradvis ökar sin attraktivitet för utländska studenter igen. 2011 infördes i Sverige studieavgifter vilket resulterade i en dramatisk minskning av antalet studenter från länder utanför EU/EEA.

### *Förändringar i migrations- och asylpolitiken – lagstiftning och praxis*

Jämfört med 2013 skedde under år 2014 ganska många förändringar i Utlänningslagen, vilken är den huvudsakliga lagen för reglering av utlänningars ankomst och vistelse i landet. Avseende förändringar i lagstiftningen beslutade Riksdagen en proposition om cirkulär migration. Om en utländsk medborgare med permanent uppehållstillstånd lämnar Sverige för att bo i ett annat land kommer uppehållstillståndet inte att dras tillbaka automatiskt om personen har informerat Migrationsverket om att han/hon vill behålla sitt uppehållstillstånd. Uppehållstillståndet kan behållas i upp till två år. Detta för att ta bort ett väsentligt hinder för ökad rörlighet.

Lagstiftaren gjorde det också lättare för personer som fått avslag på sin asylansökan att kvalificera för "spårbyte" och få legal rätt att stanna som arbetskraftsinvandrare. Dessutom kan studenter från tredjeland som har studerat vid svenskt universitet/högskola i minst två terminer nu få uppehållstillstånd i högst sex månader för att söka arbete eller undersöka möjligheterna att starta eget företag. Om de får arbete eller lyckas etablera en verksamhet kan de få uppehållstillstånd för arbete eller företagande vilket i sin tur efter en tid kan leda till permanent uppehållstillstånd.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND OVERVIEW (ENGLISH)

This report aims to outline the most significant developments in the area of migration and asylum in Sweden in 2014 and to comment on relevant public debates, also in the context of European policy development and its impact on the national level.

### *Overall trend*

In 2014, more than 110 000 individuals were granted first-time work and/or residence permits in Sweden. This represents the third highest annual figure to date in Sweden. Only in 2012 and 2013, the number of permits granted was slightly higher (around 116 000 permits). It is however important to note that the comparison over the period 2012-2014 is misleading since citizens of the EU and EEA, who had been required to register their right to residence at the Swedish Migration Agency, were included in the figures for 2013 but not in those for 2014. Since May 2014, EU- and EEA-citizens do not need to register their right to residence with the Migration Agency any more. Instead, registration is directly done at the Swedish Tax Office, which is responsible for the population registry. As a result, statistically speaking, only a small number of EU-/EEA-citizens are included in the Migration Agency's statistics for 2014 – those who fell outside the scope of ordinary free-movement rights and applied for a residence permit in order to settle in Sweden. If the statistics for 2014 included all categories of foreigners that were included in 2013 and 2012, then the total number of permits granted in 2014 would have been considerably higher.

Table 1 (absolute numbers) and figure 1 (percentages) show the main categories of residence permits that were granted in 2014. As in the year before, persons who immigrated to Sweden on the basis of family reunification, or on other family-related grounds, constituted the largest category in 2014 (42 435 persons). Residence permits issued for protection and humanitarian reasons, such as to refugees, persons in need of subsidiary protection or with humanitarian needs, represented the second largest group (35 020). Regarding this category, a significant increase could be seen as compared to 2013 (+23%). One of the main reasons for this is the high number of asylum seekers coming to Sweden in 2013, especially from Syria and Eritrea. Labour immigrants (employment reasons) and international students from third countries constitute the third and fourth largest categories of immigrants.



**Table 1: Overall immigration trend: First-time residence permits granted in 2012-2014**

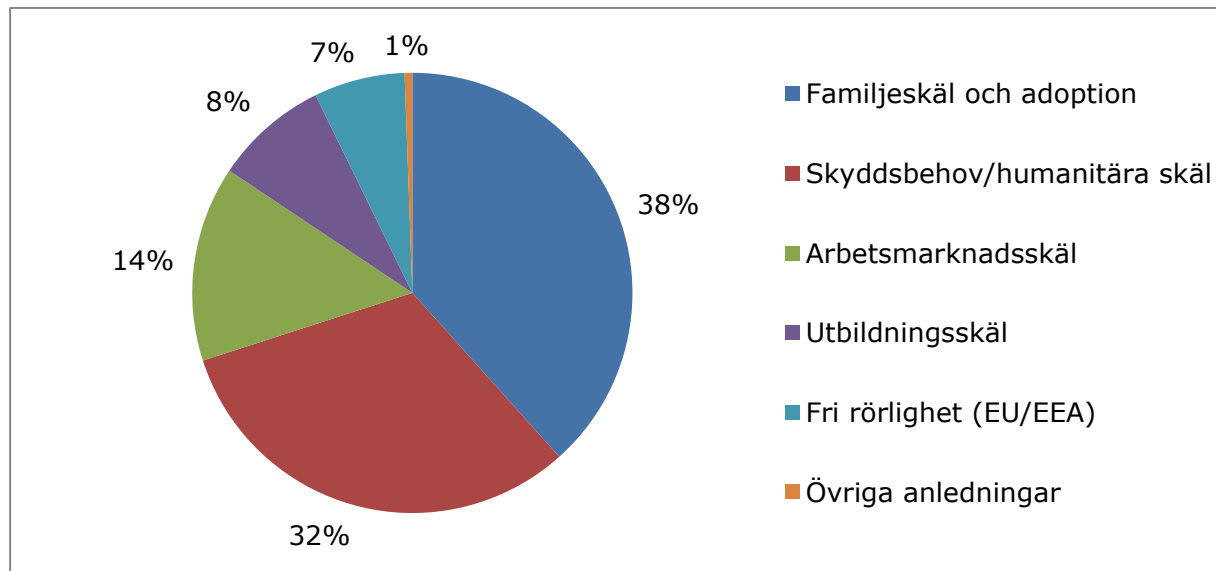
Reasons	2012	2013	2014
Family reasons and adoptions	41 156	40 026	42 435
Protection and humanitarian reasons*	16 893	28 438	35 020
Employment reasons	19 936	19 292	15 872
Education reasons	7 092	7 559	9 267
Free movement rights (EU/EEA)**	25 501	20 712	7 394
Other reasons***	512	560	622
<b>Total</b>	<b>111 090</b>	<b>116 587</b>	<b>110 610</b>

\* This includes protection for refugees, subsidiary protection, resettlement and residence permits granted due to exceptionally distressing circumstances.

\*\* Please note that, as described above, these numbers are not comparable over the period.

\*\*\* This includes persons who were found not to be in need of protection but who could not be returned.

**Source:** Swedish Migration Agency

**Figure 1: Overall immigration: First-time residence permits granted 2014**

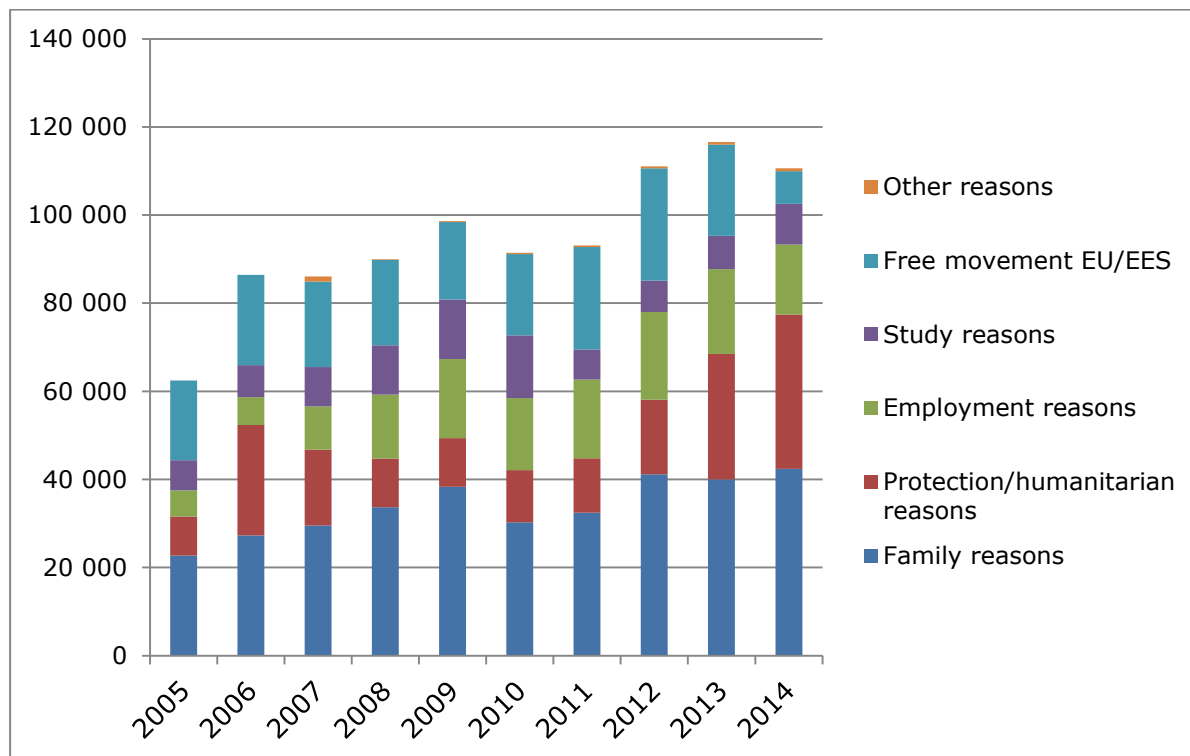
**Source:** Swedish Migration Agency

Figure 2 below shows the granting of residence and work permits in a longer-term perspective. It can be seen that residence permits granted for protection reasons have increased strongly in 2013 and 2014. A peak was also reached in 2006, but this was mainly due to a temporary measure to reassess cases of persons whose asylum applications had been rejected and who had lived in Sweden for several years in spite of the fact they had been ordered to leave.

As far as international students (immigration for education purposes) are concerned, their immigration was strongest in 2010 and then decreased. In 2013 and 2014, the number of students tended to grow again.

Family-related immigration reached comparatively high levels in 2012, and again in 2014. Work-related immigration increased after 2007, but decreased slightly in 2013 and continued to decrease in 2014.

**Figure 2: Timeline: All first-time residence permits granted, 2005-2014**



**Source:** Swedish Migration Agency

### *International protection*

In a European perspective, Sweden continued to be a primary destination and recipient country for asylum seekers in 2014. In total, the Swedish Migration Agency registered roughly 81 300 asylum applications, 49.8% more than during the year before. Among EU Member States, only Germany had a higher number of asylum applicants (roughly 202 800).<sup>3</sup> The five largest groups among asylum seekers coming to Sweden were Syrian (38% of all asylum seekers), Eritrean (14%), stateless persons (10%) as well as people from Somalia (6%) and Afghanistan (4%).

When it comes to outcomes of asylum procedures, the Migration Agency made a total of 53 503 decisions in 2014, about 7% more than in 2013. More than 31 200 individuals were granted protection.<sup>4</sup> Thus, the overall protection rate was 58% in 2014. If Dublin cases and other cases that Sweden did not examine materially, e.g. cases that were written off, are excluded from this calculation, the protection rate was 77%.

<sup>3</sup> Source: Eurostat-Database.

<sup>4</sup> This number also includes individuals (1 328) who were granted a residence permit on humanitarian grounds (particularly distressing circumstances).

*More unaccompanied minors*

The number of unaccompanied minors (UAM) applying for protection in Sweden also continued to increase. In 2014, slightly more than 7 000 UAMs applied for asylum in Sweden, as compared to approximately 3 800 in 2013. Afghanistan continued to be the most important country of origin of UAM coming to Sweden (22% of all UAM), followed by Eritrea (21%), Syria (17%) and Somalia (16%).

Due to the large increase of the number of UAMs coming to Sweden in recent years, the system for their reception, accommodation and care has been modified. Since January 2014, the Migration Agency has been able to assign a UAM to a municipality even without the municipality's consent and even without special reasons. Before this reform, the Migration Agency assigned UAMs to municipalities on the basis of voluntary agreements between individual municipalities and the Agency. The Agency could only assign a UAM to a municipality which did not have such an agreement when there were special reasons for this, e.g. if a UAM had a close relative residing there.

*Increased immigration for family reasons*

Mostly as a consequence of the rising number of asylum seekers coming to Sweden, also family-related immigration increased in 2014. The Swedish Migration Agency granted 40 026 residence permits for family reasons in 2013, and 42 435 in 2014.

In 2014, the processing times for first-time applications for residence permits for family reasons were rather long, as compared to earlier periods. While the average processing time was 152 days in 2012, it was 196 days in 2013 and 244 days in 2014.<sup>5</sup> A main reason behind this was the higher caseload regarding several categories of residence permits.

*Lower levels of labour-related immigration*

The dynamics of labour immigration to Sweden decreased in 2014, as compared to 2012 and 2013. While 19 292 residence permits for work reasons were granted in 2013, the number was 15 872 in 2014. Seasonal workers, such as berry-pickers, represented the largest professional group among all labour-related immigrants (2 885), followed by computing specialists (2 525) and workers in restaurants (1 400). The decrease of residence permits granted for work reasons is mainly due to a much lower number of berry-pickers coming to Sweden from Thailand. Seasonal berry-picking is increasingly carried out by EU-nationals (from e.g. Bulgaria), who do not need residence or work permits.

The Swedish system for labour immigration from third countries, and especially allegations of wage-dumping and exploitation of foreign workers, has been a topic of frequent debate for several years. In August 2014, new rules entered

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<sup>5</sup> Migrationsverket (2015), Årsredovisning 2014, p. 121.

into force aimed at addressing misuse of the labour migration system by untrustworthy employers and preventing workers from countries outside of the EU/EEA area from being exploited.

New rules were also introduced with the aim of facilitating international mobility and circular migration to and from Sweden. For labour migrants it is now possible to be granted a temporary work permit for a total time of six years (previously four years). A permanent residence permit can be granted a person who has been working in Sweden for at least four years in the past seven years (previously four years in the past five years). This makes it possible for migrants to have longer interruptions of residency.

### *Students*

In 2014, a total of 9 267 students from third countries were granted residence permits for the purpose of studying in Sweden. This number includes almost 1 250 doctoral students. The numbers represent an increase compared to the year before: In 2013, 7 559 residence permits were granted for study reasons (including 957 doctoral students). This suggests that Swedish universities gradually increase their attractiveness for foreign students again. In 2011, Sweden introduced tuition fees, which resulted in a sharp drop of the number of students from countries outside the EU/EEA.

### *Changes in migration and asylum policy, legislation and practice*

Compared to 2013, relatively many changes were made to the Swedish Aliens Act, which represents the centrepiece of legislation regarding the entry and stay of foreigners. Among other legal reforms, the *Riksdag* passed a bill on circular migration. If a foreign citizen with a permanent residence permit leaves Sweden to reside elsewhere, the residence permit is not automatically revoked if the person notifies the Migration Agency that he/she wishes to keep the permit. The permit can be kept for up to two years. This removes an important obstacle to mobility.

The legislator also made it easier for rejected asylum seekers to qualify for a “status change”, which means a legal right to stay as a labour immigrant, and students from third countries who have carried out studies at a Swedish higher education institution for at least two terms can now receive a residence permit for the purpose of looking for employment in Sweden or investigating opportunities to start a business. They may stay in Sweden for a maximum six months for this purpose. If they find work or manage to establish a business, they can receive a residence permit for work reasons, or as self-employed people, which can eventually result in a permanent right to stay.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

In accordance with Article 9(1) of Council Decision 2008/381/EC establishing the EMN, each National Contact Point of the EMN is required to provide every year a report describing the migration and asylum situation in the Member State, which shall include policy developments and statistical data. The report is structured so as to present relevant information on each aspect or dimension of migration and asylum.

As in 2013, the EMN Annual Policy Report for 2014 consists of two parts and a statistical annex. Part I was designed as a questionnaire and is primarily intended to inform policy-makers within the European Commission about national developments that are relevant to them when analysing and evaluating the impact of EU legislation and policies. The Swedish contribution to Part I was completed in December 2014 and sent to the Commission. Due to its rather technical nature and limited use for the general public, it remains unpublished but is available from the Swedish EMN NCP upon request.<sup>6</sup> The same is true for the statistical annex, which was sent to the Commission in March 2014.

This report represents Part II of the Swedish Annual Policy Report for 2014. It is primarily intended for audiences that are interested in an overview of the asylum and immigration situation in Sweden and specific national audiences, such as policy-makers, researchers, the media and the general public. It will be published on the national website of EMN Sweden.<sup>7</sup>

Section 1 introduces the report. Section 2 provides an overview of asylum and migration policy developments, to set a general context for the developments to be described in more detail further below. It includes an overview of the general political developments, as well as main policy and legislative debates, broader developments in asylum and migration, plus institutional developments. Sections 3-9 describe specific developments in the main areas of asylum and migration. Some sections are sub-divided into more specific, thematic sub-sections.

The Report covers the period 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014. It is the eleventh in a series of such EMN annual reports.

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<sup>6</sup> Please contact [emn@migrationsverket.se](mailto:emn@migrationsverket.se) to obtain the report.

<sup>7</sup> [www.emnsweden.se](http://www.emnsweden.se).

## 2 OVERVIEW OF ASYLUM AND MIGRATION POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

### 2.1 Organisational structure of asylum and migration policy

In Sweden, the Government sets out the general guidelines for migration policy by proposing bills. It is the responsibility of the *Riksdag* (Swedish Parliament) to pass or reject proposed bills and amendments. The Government can supplement laws with ordinances. The Ministry of Justice is the Government body responsible for migration policy. It is also responsible for certain aspects of integration policies, which are split between several other ministries but mainly lie within the responsibilities of the Ministry of Employment.

The Swedish Migration Agency and the Swedish Police report to the Ministry of Justice and there is considerable cooperation at various levels between the ministry and these authorities. However, the authorities are formally subordinated to the Government as a whole and not a single Ministry.<sup>8</sup>

Within the area of migration and asylum, the Swedish Migration Agency is the responsible administrative agency concerning residence permits, work permits, visas, the reception of asylum seekers, return, acquisition of citizenship and repatriation. Also active in the area of migration are the Migration Courts, the Migration Court of Appeal, the Police authorities, the Swedish Prison and Probation Service, the Swedish missions abroad and the Employment Agency *Arbetsförmedlingen*. In addition, the County Administrative Agencies negotiate with the municipalities on the reception of individuals in need of protection.

Legal provisions pertaining to the tasks of the Swedish Migration Agency are found primarily in the Aliens Act, the Aliens Ordinance and the Ordinance with Instructions for the Swedish Migration Agency. The Government also manages the Agency by means of annual budget appropriation directives that specify the operational budget and objectives.

The Migration Agency has the main responsibility for the reception of asylum seekers, from the date on which an application for asylum has been submitted until the person has been received by a municipality after being granted a residence permit or has left the country, if notified that the application has been rejected. The integration of recognised refugees or persons otherwise in need of protection is a responsibility of the Employment Service *Arbetsförmedlingen* and the Swedish municipalities.

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<sup>8</sup> The Swedish system is based on independent administrative authorities. No public authority or minister may determine how an administrative authority is to decide in a particular case involving the exercise of public authority vis-à-vis a private subject or a local authority, or the application of law.

While the Swedish Migration Agency has the responsibility for voluntary returns, the Police is the main responsible authority for border control and forced return. The Customs and the Coast Guard are required to assist the Police in the control of third country nationals' entry and exit and the Coast Guard shall control the vessel traffic at sea borders. According to the instruction for the Swedish National Police Agency, the Agency is the national contact point for the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (Frontex).

The legal system pertaining to migration in Sweden is governed by the Aliens Act (*Utlänningslagen*, Statute 2005:716), and emanating from that law, the Aliens' Ordinance (*Utlänningsföreläggningen*, Statute 2006:97). The current Aliens Act took effect on 31 March 2006 and has subsequently been amended many times. The Administrative Judicial Procedure Act (Statute 1971:291) governs with regard to appeals. The Administrative Procedure Act (Statute 1986:223) contains certain general statutes that govern all administrative agencies.

The Swedish migration system and asylum procedures are also regulated by the Reception of Asylum Seekers and Others Act (Statute 1994:137) and the Reception of Asylum Seekers and Others Ordinance (Statute 1994:361).

Border control is governed by the Regulation (EC) No 562/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2006 establishing a Community Code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders (Schengen Borders Code).

## **2.2 Political and institutional developments**

On 14 September 2014, general, regional and local elections were held in Sweden. As a result of the general election, the Government changed. While neither the Centre-right "Alliance for Sweden" nor the left-wing parties (Social Democrats, Green Party and Left Party) achieved a majority in Parliament, the Social Democrats (as the party with the largest share of the votes) managed to forge a coalition with the Green Party and established a minority government. Stefan Löfven, the leader of the Social Democratic Party, was elected Prime Minister by Parliament. An important outcome of the general election was also that the far-right party "Sweden Democrats" turned out as the third largest party, with almost 13% of the votes.

After the election, Mr. Morgan Johansson from the Social Democratic Party was appointed Minister for Justice and Migration. The institutional responsibility for policies regarding citizenship and naturalisation were transferred from the Employment Ministry to the Ministry of Justice. Sweden does not have a separate Minister for Integration anymore; the portfolio was transferred to several other

Ministers, also to show that integration is a cross-cutting topic which involves many different policy areas.

Other than that, the general organisation of political and administrative responsibilities regarding migration and integration, as described in the previous section, remained largely unchanged. The Swedish Police, however, carried out a major reorganization in 2014. The main change is that since 1 January 2015, the previous 21 regional policy authorities have been replaced by only one centralized agency.

The Swedish Migration Agency changed its internal structure in 2014. Among other changes, operational activities are now organised into six geographic regions, and a new quality department has been established. The Agency also changed its English name (previously “Swedish Migration Board”).

## **2.3 Overall developments and debates concerning asylum and migration**

### *Increasing numbers of asylum seekers*

In 2014, most public and political debates regarding immigration related to the increasing number of asylum seekers and family members of asylum seekers coming to Sweden that year. Some debates focused on intra-EU solidarity and the fact that Sweden, together with Germany, received most asylum applications among all EU Member States. It was argued that EU Member States with lower numbers should take a larger share of asylum applicants coming to Europe and engage in resettlement activities. Other debates, often at regional and local level, dealt with urgent needs and difficulties to find accommodation for asylum seekers in the Swedish municipalities. Since Sweden does not operate any obligatory mechanism to distribute asylum seekers across the country, some municipalities had accommodated many asylum seekers while others had received comparatively few. Due to a lack of ordinary housing, the Swedish Migration Agency also rented accommodation for asylum seekers on the free market (through public procurement). Where this happened, municipalities and local residents sometimes complained about not having been consulted beforehand. The Migration Agency worked for maintaining high standards of reception and providing all newly-arrived asylum seekers with accommodation.

### *Integration measures*

In a wider context, but also related to the increased number of asylum seekers, longer-term challenges regarding the permanent settlement and integration of recognised refugees and other people in need of protection were widely discussed as well, especially the lack of affordable housing and difficulties for newly-arrived migrants to find jobs. There was also an in-depth debate about certain settlement and integration measures for refugees and people otherwise in



need of protection, some of which were criticised for being ineffective or insufficient. As a result of criticism, for example, the Employment Agency, which is responsible for the settlement of beneficiaries of international protection, ended the contracting of “integration pilots”. These pilots, normally individuals or small companies, had been tasked with helping beneficiaries of international protection to find jobs. As an evaluation showed, however, they seldom succeeded.

To improve integration, the Government adopted several measures in 2014. In terms of education policy, more government funding was provided to improve educational performance among newly-arrived foreign-born youth. Among several other measures, amendments were also made to the regulatory framework for the subsidised labour-market scheme “Step-in jobs” to encourage employers to hire more newly-arrived people. For example, the time-limit has been extended from 6 to 12 months and the target group has been extended to include persons that had completed their introduction plan during the last 12 months. The Government also introduced an applied basic year for low educated new immigrants over the age of 30 that are eligible for the introduction program. The applied basic year shall contain training on the job, combined with vocational language courses, and is focused on the skill-demands at the workplace.

#### *Misuse of the Swedish labour immigration system*

The question whether the Swedish system for labour immigration was misused by untrustworthy employers to dump wages and exploit foreign workers also continued to be a matter of public concern. On 1 August 2014, new rules entered into force in Sweden aiming to address misuse of the labour migration system by untrustworthy employers and to prevent workers from countries outside of the EU/EEA area from being exploited. The new rules give the Swedish Migration Agency the mandate to conduct follow-up checks and revoke permits if the conditions of the work permit (e.g. the requirements concerning the terms of employment) are no longer met or if the employment does not begin within four months. An obligation carrying a penal sanction to provide written information, at the request of the Migration Agency, about terms of employment was introduced for employers of workers who have been granted a work permit.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Regeringskansliet, Justitiedepartementet (2013): [Åtgärder mot missbruk av reglerna för arbetskraftsinvandring](#), DS 2013:57.

### 3 LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

#### 3.1 Economic migration

##### *Labour immigration to Sweden*

The number of third-country nationals coming to Sweden as labour migrants decreased in 2014, mainly due to a reduction of incoming workers in the berry-picking industry. In Table 3, this occupation is included under the first category, agricultural, fishery and related labourers.

Table 3 shows the ten main occupational categories among incoming workers from third countries in 2014, as compared to 2013. It shows that, overall, the number of immigrating workers in occupations requiring a high level of skills has tended to increase modestly, while the number of third-countries coming to work in low-skill jobs (such as “helpers in restaurants” and “helpers and cleaners”) has decreased substantially. This can be seen as a result of the stricter requirements for employers who recruit workers for such occupations that were introduced in recent years.

**Table 3: Work permits granted to workers from abroad, 2013 and 2014 (largest occupational categories)**

Employment category	2013	2014
Agricultural, fishery and related labourers	5 915	2 885
Computing professionals	3 477	2525
IT architects, system analysts and test managers		903
Housekeeping and restaurant service workers	830	666
Architects, engineers and related professionals	415	424
Helpers in restaurants	470	364
Physical and engineering science technicians	267	335
Helpers and cleaners	397	208
Business professionals	190	199
Personal care and related workers	282	189
<b>Total (all occupations, excluding family members of labour migrants)</b>	<b>15 357</b>	<b>12 094</b>

**Source:** Swedish Migration Agency. Please note that before 2014, computing professionals and IT architects, system analysts and test managers were regarded as the same occupational category.

Since December 2008, Sweden has pursued a liberal and demand-driven approach to immigration of third country nationals for employment purposes. With the 2008 reform, the previous agency-based labour market test was phased out. Since then, the overall point of departure has been that it is the individual employer who best knows the recruitment needs of his or her business. The

possibility to recruit foreign workers has been significantly facilitated. Provided that the working conditions are in line with Swedish collective agreements or established practice and that certain additional conditions are met, the employer can now recruit anyone, regardless of nationality or profession. The rules also provide opportunities for migrants to get a permanent residence status after four years of stay with a work permit in Sweden.

Since these rules entered into force, the number of residence permits that were granted for employment purposes has gradually increased, from 14 259 residence permits in 2008 to 19 936 in 2012. In 2013, the number of permits granted for work reasons was almost the same as in 2012 (19 292). As mentioned, however, there was a downward trend in 2014.

The most common nationality groups engaging in labour market-related migration to Sweden in 2014 were India (3 193), Thailand (2 975), and China (933). While these three countries have been the most relevant ones in the context of labour immigration to Sweden, with Indian nationals often working in the IT sector and Thai nationals in the berry-picking business, Syria emerged as another important nationality group in 2013, with 657 residence permits for work reasons issued. Syria continued to be a relevant group in 2014, with 688 permits granted.

**Table 4: Work permits granted in 2013 and 2014, top-10 nationalities**

<b>Citizenship</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
India	3 031	3 193
Thailand	6 167	2 975
China	884	933
Syria	657	688
Turkey	346	394
Ukraine	373	370
USA	302	367
Iran	375	299
Russia	210	225
Iraq	257	223
Other nationalities	2 755	2 427
<b>Total</b>	<b>15 357</b>	<b>12 094</b>

**Source:** Swedish Migration Agency.

#### *Reinforced control and verification measures to prevent exploitation*

In order to address misuse of the system by untrustworthy employers and to prevent workers from countries outside of the EU/EEA area from being exploited, the Swedish Migration Agency has been applying stricter control measures for work permit applications within certain sectors since January 2012. Companies in the cleaning, hotel and restaurant, service, construction, staffing, commerce, agriculture and forestry and automobile repair sectors, as well as all new

enterprises, must be able to prove that they are able to actually pay salaries during the foreseen employment period. Similar requirements were previously introduced for the berry-picking sector.

In 2014, another measure to curb misuses was introduced. The Swedish Migration Agency was given a mandate to conduct follow-up checks and revoke residence permits if the conditions of the work permit (e.g. the requirements concerning the terms of employment) are no longer met or if the employment does not begin within four months after the issuing of the permit. An obligation to provide written information, at the request of the Swedish Migration Agency, about terms of employment was introduced for employers.

#### *Business owners*

The Aliens Act also provides that third-country nationals can be granted a residence permit if they want to start their own business in Sweden or acquire an already existing business. Regarding this group of people, it has been clarified in 2014 that they may be accompanied by family members, provided that they can support them. Previously, family accompaniment was possible for business owners in practice, but not regulated by law. Since 1 July 2014, family members of self-employed persons may also receive a work permit.

The number of residence permits issued to immigrating business-owners is comparatively small, however. In 2013, the Swedish Migration Agency issued 277 residence permits for this purpose. In 2014, 219 such permits were granted.

#### *The use of the EU Blue Card Directive in Sweden*

Amendments to the Swedish Aliens Act to implement the "EU Blue Card Directive"<sup>10</sup> into Swedish law entered into force on 1 August 2013.<sup>11</sup> The amendments introduced a new residence and work permit for highly-skilled labour immigrants, called "EU Blue Card". In terms of numbers, however, the implementation of the EU Blue Card Directive has so far had a limited effect in Sweden. In 2013, two Blue Cards were granted, and only one in 2014. This should be seen against the background that it is often easier for a third-country national to obtain a residence permit for work reasons in accordance with national law, than an EU Blue Card, and that the latter, for most applicants, does not offer many substantial advantages as compared to a national permit.

#### *Facilitated status changes for rejected asylum seekers*

The minimum time during which a rejected asylum seeker must have had employment in Sweden in order to be able to change his/her immigration status and receive a residence permit for work purposes was reduced in 2014. This means that when an asylum seeker receives a negative decision on his/her

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<sup>10</sup> Council Directive [2009/50/EC](#) of 25 May 2009 on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purpose of highly qualified employment.

<sup>11</sup> Regeringens proposition [2012/13:148](#), Genomförande av blåkortsdirektivet, Stockholm, 11 april 2013.

asylum application and has been working in Sweden for at least four months (previously six months), he/she can apply for a residence permit for work purposes. In 2014, 155 rejected asylum seekers qualified for a status change and were granted a residence permit for work reasons. This number was 141 in 2013.

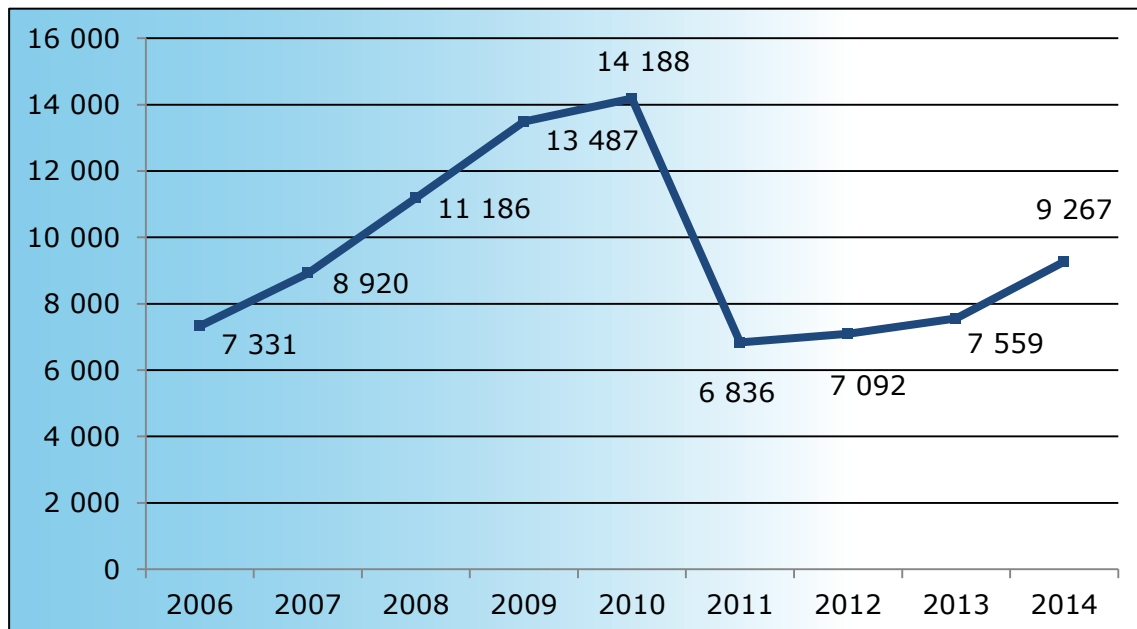
### 3.2 Students and researchers

#### *Third-country national students*

The entry and stay of international students from third countries has been an important channel of legal migration to Sweden. Migration for study reasons is seen very positively, not least because international students contribute to the internationalisation of the Swedish higher education system and help to make Sweden known abroad.

Between 2005 and 2010, study-related immigration increased strongly and steadily. In 2010, a total of 14 188 residence permits for study reasons were granted. In 2011 and 2012, however, the number of third-country nationals who were granted a residence permit for study reasons was at a much lower level, mainly due to the introduction of tuition fees. In 2011, only 6 836 permits were granted. Since that year, however, the numbers have been rising again. In 2013, 7 559 residence permits were granted, and 9 267 in 2014.<sup>12</sup>

**Figure 3: First-time residence permits granted for study reasons, 2006-2014**



**Source:** Swedish Migration Agency

<sup>12</sup> Figures do not include family members of international students.

As Table 2 shows, the by far most important nationality group among international students in Sweden were Chinese, both in 2014 and the two years before. The second and third largest nationalities in 2014 were India, the USA, Pakistan and Singapore.

**Table 2: First-time residence permits granted for study reasons, main nationality groups, 2012-2014**

Nationality	2012	2013	2014
China	1 602	1 679	1 882
India	355	574	814
USA	402	502	698
Pakistan	221	260	408
Singapore	316	350	384
Iran	338	308	378
Turkey	455	395	375
Canada	346	345	365
Australia	355	310	343
South Korea	284	268	323
<i>Other</i>	<i>2 418</i>	<i>2 568</i>	<i>3 297</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>7 092</b>	<b>7 559</b>	<b>9 267</b>

**Source:** Swedish Migration Agency

Following amendments to the Swedish Aliens Act and the Aliens Ordinance, which took effect in July 2014, doctoral students from third-countries can now receive a permanent residence permit if they have had a (temporary) residence permit for doctoral studies in Sweden for a total of four years within the past seven years. This makes it possible for them to interrupt their residency in Sweden to go abroad and study or work elsewhere for certain periods of time.

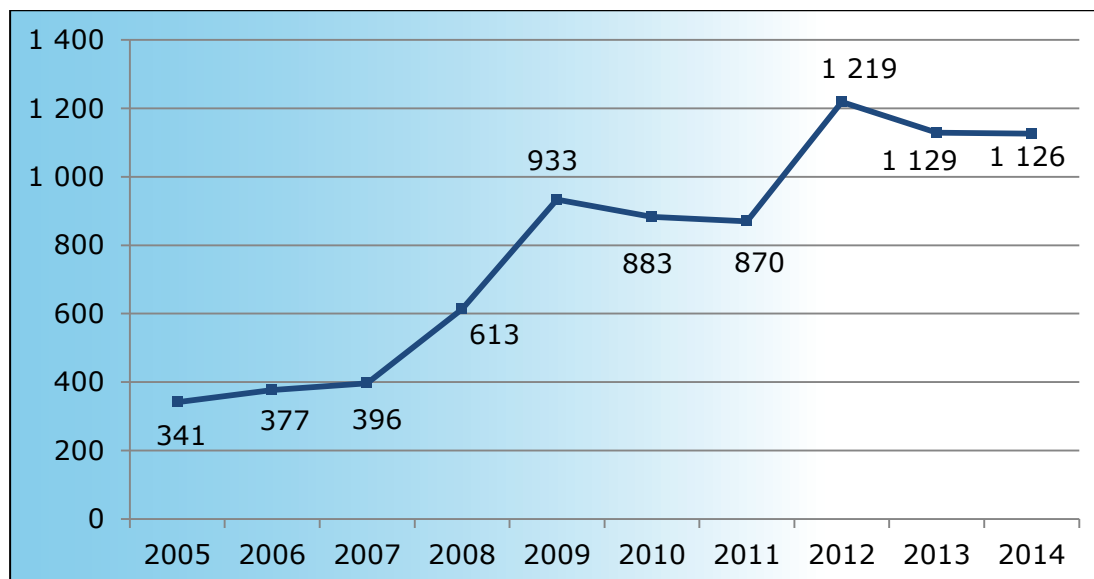
Another important change was introduced for incoming undergraduate students from third countries. Students who have carried out studies at a Swedish higher education institution for at least two terms can now receive a residence permit for the purpose of looking for employment or investigating opportunities to start a business. According to a provision in the Aliens Ordinance, this permit can be valid for a maximum of six months. Previously, international students were only allowed to stay in Sweden when they had found work already during their studies in the country and applied for a residence permit for work reasons before the study-related permit expired.<sup>13</sup> Since this amendment took effect, 223 students applied for a permit to look for work, and 119 were granted such a permit, in 2014.

<sup>13</sup> Regeringen (2014): Proposition 2013/14:213 - Cirkulär migration och utveckling, Stockholm, 27 mars 2014.

### Researchers

In addition to international students, Sweden also admits researchers under the EU Researchers' Directive.<sup>14</sup> Their number has increased substantially over the past ten years, but remained stable in 2014, compared to 2013. In 2014, 1 126 researchers from third countries were granted a residence permit. The main citizenships of researchers coming to Sweden that year were China (277), India (170), USA (109), Iran (80), and Brazil (39).

**Figure 4: First-time residence permits granted to researchers, 2005-2014**



**Source:** Swedish Migration Agency

### 3.3 Family reunification

In Sweden, as in many other EU member states, immigration on the basis of family ties accounts for a large share of the overall immigration flows. About 38% of all residence permits granted by Sweden in 2014 were granted for family reasons. This percentage was 34% in 2013.

#### *Financial support requirements*

The provisions governing the right to immigrate to Sweden on family grounds have not undergone any major changes in recent years, apart from the fact that Sweden introduced a financial support requirement in the Aliens Act as a condition for family reunification in 2010. According to this requirement, the sponsor has to show sufficient income to support himself/herself and suitable accommodation for the family members who want to settle in Sweden. There are several exemptions from this requirement, however, for instance when the sponsor is a refugee or a person eligible for subsidiary protection. Exemptions

<sup>14</sup> Council Directive [2005/71/EC](#) of 12 October 2005 on a specific procedure for admitting third-country nationals for the purposes of scientific research.

also apply when the sponsor has spent at least four years in Sweden with a permanent residence permit, or where there are other special reasons.

*Applications for residence permits from within Sweden*

As of 1 August 2014, a change has been introduced in the Aliens Act, regarding the granting of a residence permit for the parent who is the caregiver of a child with legal residence status in Sweden, and who lives together with this child. The aim of this change has been to clarify the Swedish rules applicable to such parents and to guarantee the best interest of the child. Previously, if there were no exceptional grounds at hand, these parents had to apply for a residence permit from abroad, i.e. before entry into Sweden, even when the child was already residing in Sweden. Now, a parent can lodge an application for a residence permit also from within Sweden if there is a strong relationship with the child and it is unreasonable to demand that the parent leaves Sweden before applying.

Another particular feature regarding family-related immigration to Sweden is that unmarried partners enjoy the same rights as married couples as far as the granting of a residence permit for family reunification is concerned. An unmarried partner who has co-habited with the sponsor in the home country, and can prove this, has the same right to family reunification as a spouse. Persons arriving for the purpose of family reunification have the right to receive language tuition (Swedish for Immigrants), and municipalities are obliged to offer social orientation and may also extend other introduction activities to this group.

It should also be noted that the Swedish regulations pertaining to third country national workers and international students are family-friendly. International students and labour migrants, for example, may enter the country with close relatives. In the case of labour immigration, there is no requirement for third-country nationals to financially support their family members.

*Statistical trends 2014*

In 2014, the Swedish Migration Agency and the Swedish missions abroad granted 18 300 first-time residence permits for family reunification.<sup>15</sup> This means a small decrease compared to the year 2013, when 18 784 such permits were granted. Table 5 below shows all residence permits that were granted for family reasons in 2014. In addition to the 18 300 permits that were granted for family reunification (shown in the left column), the table also displays the number of permits granted to dependents of newly-arrived refugees or persons otherwise in need of protection, of persons immigrating for employment reasons and of third-country national students.

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<sup>15</sup> This figure does not include family members of refugees, other persons in need of protection, workers or students who come to Sweden. It does include adopted children.



As compared to 2013, the number of persons that were granted residence permits as family members of refugees increased substantially, from 10 673 in 2013 to 13 100 in 2014. While the most prominent nationality groups among the persons immigrating for family reasons in 2013 were Somalia, Syria and India, the three main nationalities in 2014 were Syria, Somalia and stateless people. This clearly shows that family-related immigration largely follows immigration for protection reasons (asylum). When it comes to asylum seekers, Syria was the by far predominant nationality group in 2014.<sup>16</sup>

Table 5 also shows that immigration to Sweden for family reasons is rather different for different nationality groups. While most Syrian, Somali, stateless, Afghan and Eritrean family members came as dependents of refugees and persons otherwise in need of protection, most Indian and Chinese nationals came as family members of labour immigrants. Most Iraqi, Iranian and Thai nationals joined relatives already living in Sweden for various reasons, for example persons that had been granted protection in earlier years.

**Table 5: Residence permits granted for family reasons, 2014**

Nationality	Family reunification and adoptions	Family members of refugees	Family members of labour immigrants	Family members of international students	Total (all immigration for family reasons)
Syria	286	5 209	2 014	9	7 518
Somalia	323	2 359	0	0	2 682
Stateless	303	2 145	62	11	2 521
India	159	0	2 129	95	2 383
Iraq	1 297	185	470	15	1 967
Afghanistan	416	1 374	36	1	1 827
China	650	10	814	151	1 625
Thailand	1 515	2	29	1	1 547
Iran	595	101	298	248	1 242
Eritrea	491	714	0	4	1 209
Other	12 265	1 001	3 846	802	17 914
<b>Total</b>	<b>18 300</b>	<b>13 100</b>	<b>9 698</b>	<b>1 337</b>	<b>42 435</b>

Source: Swedish Migration Agency

### 3.4 Information provision to potential migrants

In 2014, information on the website of the Swedish Migration Agency about the Swedish system for labour immigration and guidance regarding how to apply for a residence and work permit, was updated, restructured and made available in

<sup>16</sup> Figures for Family reunification in the Table include both persons that have joined a family member living in Sweden in order to continue a relationship that had already existed in the country of origin or a third-country and persons who have established a new relationship with a person living in Sweden.

additional foreign languages. Information on how to apply for a permit is now provided on a step-by-step basis. In addition to Swedish and English, relevant guidance is now also provided in Arabic, French, Mandarin Chinese, Persian, Russian, Spanish and Thai.<sup>17</sup> The system for electronic applications via the Internet was also simplified.

### **3.5 Citizenship and naturalisation**

Regarding citizenship, the Parliament approved changes to the Swedish Citizenship Act in 2014. They will enter into force on 1 April 2015. The most important changes are:

- A preamble is introduced stating that Swedish citizenship stands for affinity with Sweden and links all citizens. Swedish citizenship consists of rights and responsibilities.
- All municipalities are obliged to hold annual citizenship ceremonies for new citizens in order to celebrate their new citizenship.
- Rules regarding the automatic acquisition of citizenship at birth change so that a child always acquires Swedish citizenship at birth if one of the child's parents is a Swedish citizen.
- Children and young people's opportunities to obtain Swedish citizenship are facilitated through shorter requirements for domicile and permanent residency in Sweden.
- The time-periods for notification of citizenship for stateless children and young people are extended.
- The possibility to recover Swedish citizenship for persons, who lost their citizenship in accordance with an earlier law that sought to limit dual citizenship, is introduced without time limitations.

As far as statistical trends pertaining to citizenship and naturalization are concerned, approximately 26 675 immigrants acquired Swedish citizenship through naturalization in 2014. This means a decrease by approximately 14% compared to 2013, when slightly more than 31 000 persons naturalized.

### **3.6 Visa Policy and Schengen co-operation**

Sweden implements the EU Visa Code and the Visa Information System (VIS) where the VIS has been rolled out. The VIS allows Schengen States to exchange visa data. It consists of a central IT system and of a communication infrastructure that links this central system to national systems. VIS connects

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<sup>17</sup> <http://www.migrationsverket.se/Privatpersoner/Arbeta-i-Sverige>.

consulates in non-EU countries and all external border crossing points of Schengen States. It processes data and decisions relating to applications for short-stay visas for visiting or transiting purposes.

In 2014, Sweden signed some new representation agreements with other Schengen countries. Representation is used, when a Schengen state does not operate an embassy or consulate in a third-country. Another Member State's mission abroad may in such cases represent this state. Since 2014, Italy represents Sweden in Eritrea (Asmara) and the Republic of the Congo (Brazzaville), Norway represents Sweden in the Philippines (Manila), Germany in Taiwan (Taipei), and France in the Central African Republic (Bangui). Sweden represents Denmark, Norway and Switzerland in Zambia (Lusaka) and Latvia in Nigeria (Abuja).

As far as statistical trends regarding the issuing of visas for visiting purposes are concerned, Sweden issued 162 724 Schengen visas (mainly type-C visas) in 2014, and 5 031 national visas (type-D). While the number of Schengen visas decreased as compared to 2013, when 174 457 such visas were granted, the number of D-visas increased (from 4 219 in 2013). Type-C visas allow the holder a stay of up to 90 days within a period of 6 months for purposes such as tourism, family visits or business. National visas are used, for example, when the reason for travelling to Sweden does not correspond to any of the purposes outlined in the EU Visa Code, or when a foreign national wishes to stay in Sweden for more than 90 days. Generally, Sweden issues visas for visiting purposes and residence permits for immigration purposes.

## 4 INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION INCLUDING ASYLUM

In 2014, the situation regarding asylum in Sweden was, compared to 2013, characterized by an even larger number of incoming applications. This situation required a high degree of flexibility to handle fluctuating pressures. The Government continued to increase the budgetary means to the Swedish Migration Agency, both to expand the Agency's asylum examination and application units, and for the provision of temporary accommodation for asylum seekers. The Agency also opened new units for Dublin cases and for unaccompanied minors.

### *Contingency planning and flexibility measures*

During the year, the Migration Agency developed a contingency plan and further developed its ability to better foresee future needs. The contingency plan defines certain measures to be taken in relation to five different levels of work load/number of asylum applicants: Up to 1 200 applicants per week is considered to be a "normal" level; 1 200 to 1 600 applicants is considered level 2; 1 600 to 2 000 level 3; 2 000 to 2 500 level 4; and 2 500 to 3 000 level 5. The overall purpose of the contingency plan is to enhance preparedness, to define responsibilities, to ensure co-ordination, capacity and burden sharing within the organisation. Measures include e.g. weekly co-ordination meetings, increased capacity at application units (e.g. by distributing applicants more evenly among these), the use of mobile solutions for the examination of asylum applications, and simplified procedures at application units. The Agency also aims at achieving a higher level of flexibility by developing steering principles for resource allocation and raising the competences among its staff so they can handle a broader variety of applications. Efforts have also been made to continuously improve the IT system, which makes the processing of applications possible regardless of geographical location.

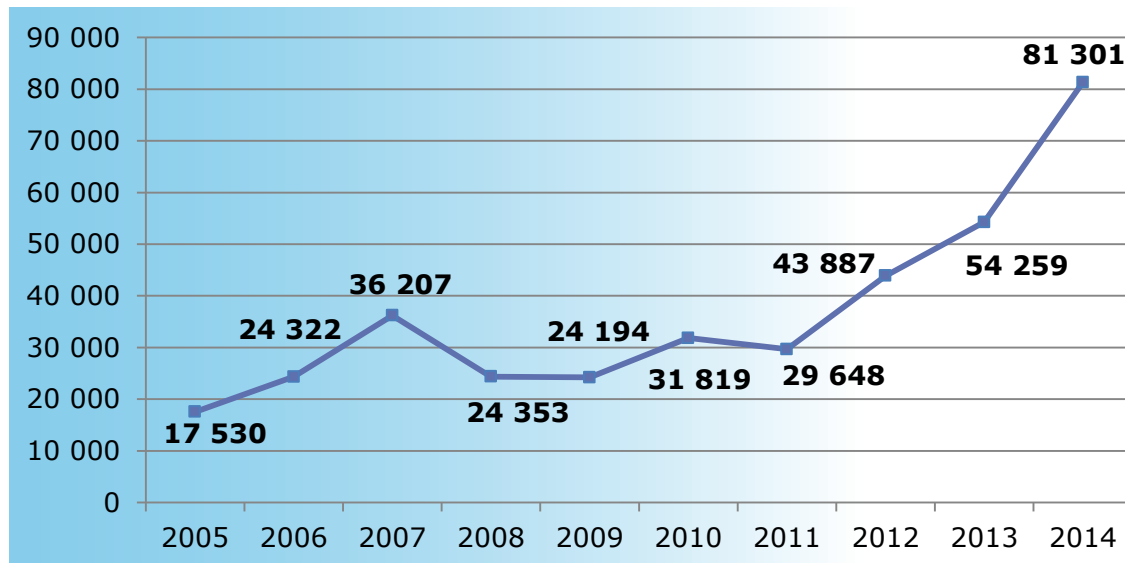
One of the main challenges within the Swedish asylum system is also to provide accommodation, both for applicants and for those who have been granted a residence permit. There is however a lack of suitable housing in Sweden. The Migration Agency aims at making the duration of the asylum procedure, during which asylum applicants are registered within the Migration Agency's reception system, as short as possible.

### **4.1 Applications for international protection and asylum procedures**

Throughout recent years, Sweden has been one of the principal destination countries for asylum seekers within the European Union. In 2014, roughly 81 300 applications were registered in Sweden, an increase by almost 50% compared to 2013, when 54 259 applications were received. This figure represents the highest

number since 1992, when 84 018 people applied for asylum in Sweden, mainly due to the war in former Yugoslavia.

**Figure 5: Asylum seekers, 2005-2014**



**Source:** Swedish Migration Agency

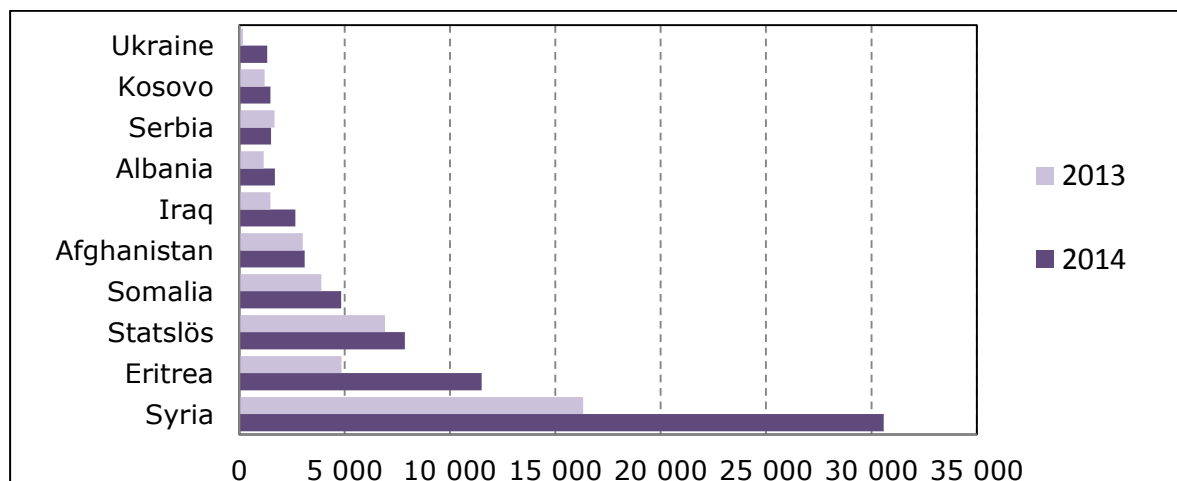
The big increase during 2014 was mainly due to the continued war in Syria and instability throughout the Middle East and North Africa. The human rights situation in countries at the horn of Africa also prompted high numbers of asylum seekers, mainly from Eritrea and Somalia, and the deteriorating situation in Syria resulted in an increase in the number of stateless asylum seekers as well.

Syria was the single largest country of origin of asylum seekers during the year (30 583), followed by Eritrean asylum seekers (11 499). The third biggest group were stateless people (7 863), followed by applicants from Somalia and Afghanistan. Table 6 and Figure 6 below display the main countries of origin of asylum seekers during 2013-2014. Table 5 shows that all top-10 nationalities increased from 2013 to 2014, except for asylum seekers from Serbia.

**Table 6: Asylum seekers, main nationality groups, 2013-2014**

Citizenship	2013	2014	Change %
Syria	16 317	30 583	87%
Eritrea	4 844	11 499	137%
Stateless	6 921	7 863	14%
Somalia	3 901	4 831	24%
Afghanistan	3 011	3 104	3%
Iraq	1 476	2 666	81%
Albania	1 156	1 699	47%
Serbia	1 669	1 513	-9%
Kosovo	1 209	1 474	22%
Ukraine	173	1 332	670%
<i>Other</i>	<i>13 582</i>	<i>14 737</i>	<i>9%</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>54 259</b>	<b>81 301</b>	<b>50%</b>

**Source:** Swedish Migration Agency

**Figure 6: Asylum seekers, main nationality groups, 2013-2014**

**Source:** Swedish Migration Agency

Several changes to the Swedish Aliens Act regarding asylum and protection entered into force in 2014. In July 2014, the Aliens Act was amended so that children may be granted a residence permit in cases of *particularly* distressing circumstances (instead of *exceptionally* distressing circumstances). The new wording ("particularly" instead of "exceptionally") 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.

The implementation of legislative acts within the Common European Asylum System (the Qualification Directive,<sup>18</sup> the Dublin Regulation,<sup>19</sup> the Eurodac Regulation,<sup>20</sup> the Asylum Procedures Directive<sup>21</sup> and the Reception Conditions Directive<sup>22</sup>) has started, and some amendments of the Swedish Aliens Act already entered into force.

Since 1 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, if they fulfil certain conditions.

Since 1 August 2014, an application for asylum may be dismissed if the applicant has been declared a person eligible for subsidiary protection in another EU Member State. Such applicants could earlier be transferred to that Member State on the basis of the Dublin Regulation.

Also since 1 August 2014, persons eligible for subsidiary protection and persons otherwise in need for protection have the right to be granted an alien's passport on basically the same conditions that give refugees a right to be granted a travel document.

On 1 January 2015, amendments came into force regarding actors that can offer protection against persecution. Exceptions from the rules on when a person should no longer be considered as in need of protection also came into force on 1 January 2015. Since the same date, the parents of an unmarried child who is in need of protection, and who do not qualify for protection themselves, are

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<sup>18</sup> Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection, and for the content of the protection granted ("Qualification Directive").

<sup>19</sup> Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national or a stateless person ("Dublin III").

<sup>20</sup> Regulation (EU) No 603/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 on the establishment of 'Eurodac' for the comparison of fingerprints for the effective application of Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national or a stateless person and on requests for the comparison with Eurodac data by Member States' law enforcement authorities and Europol for law enforcement purposes, and amending Regulation (EU) No 1077/2011 establishing a European Agency for the operational management of large-scale IT systems in the area of freedom, security and justice ("Eurodac Regulation").

<sup>21</sup> Directive 2013/32/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 on common procedures for granting and withdrawing international protection ("Asylum Procedures Directive").

<sup>22</sup> Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection ("Reception Conditions Directive").

entitled to a residence permit on the condition that they have come to Sweden at the same time as the child. The same applies for another adult responsible for the child in the absence of the parents.

Finally, also from 1 January 2015, there are amendments concerning the duration of residence permits after renewal of temporary residence permits for persons in need of protection and their families.

## **4.2 Reception of asylum applicants**

Sweden has a comprehensive reception and accommodation system, which during times of high numbers of asylum seekers is put under considerable pressure. The reception system for asylum seekers is mainly managed by the Migration Agency. While an asylum application is under consideration, the applicant is enrolled at a reception unit, which will help him/her with accommodation and expenses during the waiting period.

There are two different main types of accommodation:

- In many cases, accommodation is provided by the Migration Agency in an apartment in a normal housing area, rented by the Migration Agency anywhere in the country, or at a reception centre. The asylum applicants may apply for daily allowances if they cannot support themselves. Urgent medical care is provided to all applicants. Families stay together and usually do not share a flat with other asylum applicants.
- As an alternative to stay in accommodation provided by the Migration Agency, an asylum seeker also has the possibility to arrange his/her own accommodation. Since applicants usually do not have the financial means to pay the rent for a flat, they often stay with friends or relatives in such cases. Asylum seekers that choose to reside with friends or family members receive a financial allowance similar to the financial allowance of those staying in accommodation provided by the Migration Agency. An asylum seeker who chooses to stay with friends and relatives can at any time ask to be accommodated by the Swedish Migration Agency instead.

By the end of 2014, a total of 79 387 people were enrolled in the Swedish reception system for asylum seekers, which is an increase by 50% compared to 2013, when 52 775 persons were enrolled. 24 179 (30%) had arranged their own accommodation, and 52 674 (66%) relied on accommodation provided by the Migration Agency. The remaining 4% were accommodated in other, specialised facilities. The overall average time period that asylum seekers spent within the reception and accommodation system in 2014 was 334 days, which is an improvement compared to 2013, when asylum seekers on average spent 375 days within the system.



### 4.3 Asylum decisions

In 2014, the Swedish Migration Agency made decisions on 53 503 asylum applications, roughly 3 000 more than in 2013. In 31 220 cases (58%), the decision was positive. The protection rate was thus considerably higher than in 2013, when 49% of all decisions were positive. The strong positive share is mainly due to the fact that many asylum seekers came from Syria, where the intensity of the general situation of violence is sufficient for an applicant without any individual reasons for persecution to be regarded as in need of subsidiary protection. But also Eritrean asylum seekers were in most cases granted a residence permit.

In total, Sweden granted protection to 31 364 people in 2014.<sup>23</sup> In addition, 1 685 people were issued a residence permit due to humanitarian reasons (particularly distressing circumstances). Another 526 were given a residence permit because they could not be returned (despite the fact that no reason for protection was found), and 96 received a temporary residence permit. These figures also include cases in which positive decisions were made by Migration Courts or the Migration Court of Appeal after rejection by the Migration Agency.

Among all positive decisions, refugee status was granted in 34% of the cases and subsidiary protection in 59% of the cases. In another 5% of the cases, a residence permit was granted due to particularly distressing circumstances.

Table 7 below shows the distribution of positive decisions and negative decisions for the ten quantitatively most important citizenship groups in 2014. Among these ten nationalities, Syrian nationals had the highest proportion of positive decisions, 90%. If one excludes cases in which the Swedish Migration Agency did not consider the application materially, for example due to the responsibility of another European country for the examination of the application ("Dublin cases"), then almost 100% of all Syrian applicants were granted protection. Also Eritreans had a very high protection rate, roughly 100% in cases in which the application was examined materially in Sweden.

Other important nationality groups with high shares of positive decisions were stateless asylum seekers (80%) and Afghans (60%). By way of contrast, citizens of Albania and Serbia were in almost all cases not found to be in need of protection.

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<sup>23</sup> This figure also includes decisions by migration courts.

**Table 7: First-instance decisions in asylum cases, main nationality groups, 2014**

Citizenship	Total number of decisions	Positive	Negative (after material consideration)	Negative (Dublin) *	Negative (other) **	Proportion positive decisions of all decisions
<b>Syria</b>	18 204	16 386	27	1 259	477	90%
<b>Eritrea</b>	6 579	5 256	8	1 152	140	80%
<b>Stateless</b>	5 392	4 324	342	516	182	80%
<b>Somalia</b>	3 146	1 161	492	1 188	279	37%
<b>Afghanistan</b>	2 503	1 498	511	350	131	60%
<b>Albania</b>	1 399	19	1 062	64	243	1%
<b>Iraq</b>	1 382	438	406	299	211	32%
<b>Serbia</b>	1 350	27	760	169	384	2%
<b>Kosovo</b>	1 048	74	582	200	187	7%
<b>Russia</b>	841	226	334	144	135	27%
<b>Other</b>	11 659	1 811	4 877	2 557	2 303	16%
<b>Total</b>	<b>53 503</b>	<b>31 220</b>	<b>9 401</b>	<b>7 898</b>	<b>4 672</b>	<b>58%</b>

\* "Negative (Dublin)" means that the asylum examination is to be taken over by another State within the framework of the Dublin Regulation.

\*\* "Negative (other)" means that the Swedish Migration Agency has not considered the case materially because the application was written off. An application will be written off, among other reasons, when the applicant absconds or withdraws his/her application.

**Source:** Swedish Migration Agency

The number of asylum cases handled under the Dublin Regulation decreased by 13% in 2014, compared to 2013. In 7 898 cases, the Migration Agency decided that another Member State was responsible for an asylum application lodged in Sweden. In almost 3 500 cases, Italy was identified as the country responsible for an asylum seeker. In another 1 100 cases, Germany was regarded responsible.

#### **4.4 Integration of persons who are granted protection**

In 2014, more than 44 600 persons that had been granted a residence permit left the reception system for asylum seekers and were settled in a local municipality, almost one third more than in 2013. The figure includes persons that were granted protection, resettled persons and family members of beneficiaries of international and humanitarian protection.

Since the settlement process represents a challenge for many Swedish municipalities, the Government made several efforts to improve the integration process for refugees and other newly-arrived migrants. Among other things, the rules for reimbursement to municipalities that conclude arrangements on refugee reception have been changed to initiate more of a performance-based compensation system. The compensation for municipalities that receive

individuals from the Migration Agency's reception system for asylum seekers, or resettled refugees, was raised, and additional compensation is paid to municipalities that have received many newly-arrived migrants in relation to their population.

The Government also continues to closely monitor the Introduction Act of 2010 and to ensure its effective implementation. The following changes were made in 2014:

- The target group for introduction activities has been widened to cover more family members of refugees with a good start in Sweden.
- Newly arrived individuals with an introduction plan are now obliged to accept an appropriate job offer.
- The rules regarding the introduction allowance were changed in order to encourage newly arrived immigrants to combine introduction activities with employment. An individual covered by the Introduction Act can now have a salaried job as part of the introduction plan and still receive introduction benefits up to six months without incurring income loss.
- The starting point of the introduction period has been put forward so that it starts when the individual is settled in a municipality, rather than within two months after the individual has been granted a residence permit. The purpose is that individuals with residence permits, who are waiting in reception facilities, should not use up part of their introduction period before they are actually settled.

## **4.5 Resettlement**

Apart from being a major destination for persons seeking asylum, Sweden also engages in resettlement. Resettlement is considered to be a way of sharing responsibility with countries hosting large groups of refugees and to safeguard access to asylum for people in need of protection.

Resettlement is regulated by the Aliens Act in which specific criteria are mentioned. The Act serves as the legal basis for resettlement selection and procedures. An annual spending authorization from the Swedish Parliament and an annual Government decision for the responsible authority, the Swedish Migration Agency, regulates the operation of the program. The Migration Agency decides on the allocation of the places within the resettlement quota in consultation with UNHCR and after consultation with the Ministry of Justice. For the past years, the annual quota for resettlement has been set at 1 900 persons, out of which 350 persons may be processed with emergency or urgent priority (under a special "emergency" sub-quota). The Swedish resettlement programme consists of two streams: dossier processing and selection missions. Residence

permits are granted only to persons classified as refugees under the Aliens Act or as persons otherwise in need of protection.

#### *Resettlement to Sweden in 2014*

The annual resettlement quota for 2014 was set at 1 900 persons, as in previous years. At the end of the year, slightly more people, 1 971, had been transferred to Sweden. 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), see Table 8 below. To prepare quota refugees for settlement in Sweden, cultural orientation was carried out in the form of traditional programmes, lasting 1.5 days, and shorter information sessions.

**Table 8: Resettlement in 2014, main nationalities**

<b>Citizenship</b>	<b>Number of persons</b>
Syria	714
Afghanistan	328
Eritrea	229
DR Congo	226
Somalia	162
Colombia	115
Stateless	77
Ethiopia	20
Uganda	15
El Salvador	10
<i>Other</i>	75
<b>Total</b>	1 971

**Source:** Swedish Migration Agency

#### *Settlement of quota refugees in municipalities*

Within Sweden, the placement of resettled refugees is based on agreements between municipalities and the Migration Agency. Remoter regions of Sweden that are scarcely populated and often face depopulation, mainly in the north and northwest of the country, are especially active in providing housing for resettled refugees. In 2014, municipalities in the region of Gävleborg accepted the largest share among all resettled refugees (223 out of the total of 1 972 persons that were placed in municipalities during the year), followed by Jämtland (217) and Västerbotten (181).

#### *Core Group Syria*

A so-called "Core Group Syria" was established by UNHCR in autumn 2013 with the aim of improving the UNHCR's and individual countries' common response to the refugee crisis in Syria. The Core Group aims at providing protection to 30

000 refugees through resettlement during 2013 and 2014, and another 100 000 during 2015 and 2016. Upon request by the UNHCR and support from the Swedish Ministry of Justice, Sweden has been chairing the Core Group Syria in 2014. In total, 23 countries participate in the work of the Core Group and offer resettlement or other means of protection to Syrian refugees. Under Swedish chairmanship, the number of available places has been increased from roughly 7 000 in September 2013 to 42 000 in November 2014.

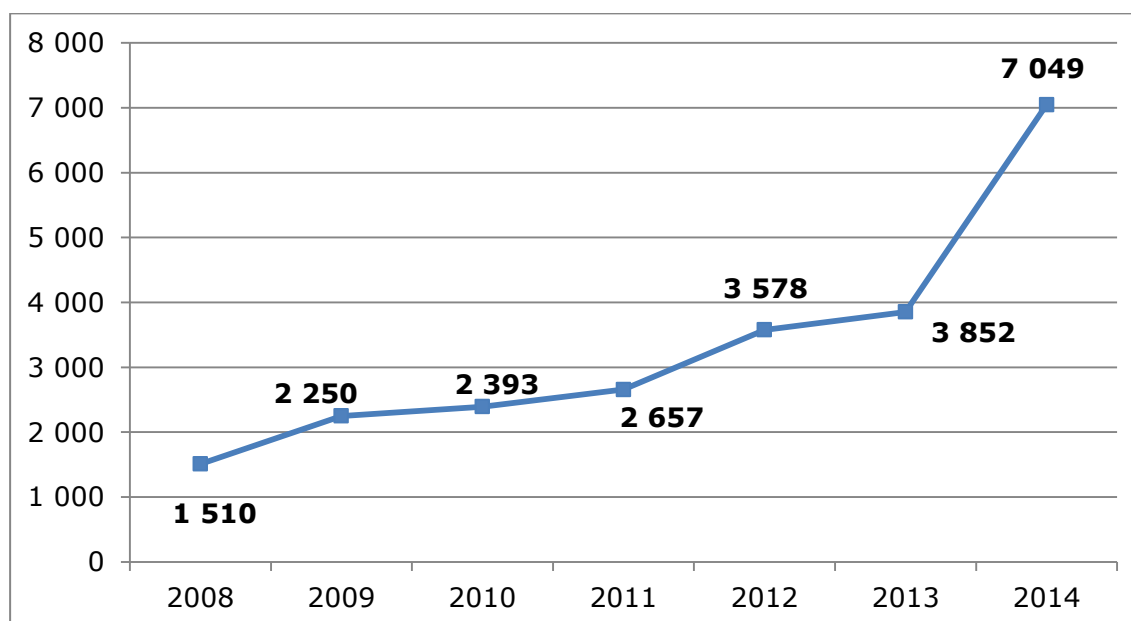
## 5 UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

### *Reception and accommodation of unaccompanied minors*

Until 1 January 2014, the Swedish Migration Agency assigned unaccompanied minors (UAM) to municipalities on the basis of voluntary agreements with municipalities. The Migration Agency could only assign an UAM to a municipality which did not have such an agreement when there were special reasons for this, i.e. if a UAM had a close relative residing in the municipality in question. Due to the large increase of the number of UAM coming to Sweden in recent years, this model has been revised. Since January 2014, the Migration Agency has been able to assign a UAM to a municipality without the municipality's consent and without special reasons.

The number of unaccompanied children seeking asylum in Sweden has increased steadily over recent years, see Figure 7 below. Their asylum cases are dealt with exclusively at selected units within the Swedish Migration Agency, where case officers have specialist skills. In 2014, 7 049 UAM applied for asylum. UAM accounted almost 9% of all asylum seekers in 2014 (7% in 2013).

**Figure 7: Unaccompanied minors applying for asylum in Sweden, 2008-2014**



**Source:** Swedish Migration Agency

In 2014, most UAM in Sweden came from Afghanistan (1 547), Eritrea (1 456), Syria (1 233) and Somalia (1 118). 448 were stateless.

#### *Asylum outcomes for UAM*

Overall, UAM are much more often granted protection than adults. Whereas the protection rate (at first instance) for all asylum seekers in 2014 was 58% (as compared to 49% in 2013), the protection rate for UAM was 75% (66% in 2013).

The majority of UAM in Sweden are boys (81% in 2014) who declare that they are between 13 and 17 years old, see Table 9 below for details. Establishing exactly how old they are remains a challenge due to the fact that many UAM arrive in Sweden without any identity documents that indicate their age. After the asylum interview, medical age assessment is offered to those applicants who have not made it probable that they are under 18. The result of the medical age assessment together with other relevant information obtained in the case provides a basis for a final age assessment.

**Table 9: Unaccompanied minors applying for asylum, age and gender, 2014**

Age ranges	Girls	Boys	Total
0-6 years	97	97	<b>194</b>
7-12 years	214	360	<b>574</b>
13-15 years	419	2 161	<b>2 580</b>
16-17 years	633	3 068	<b>3 701</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 363</b>	<b>5 686</b>	<b>7 049</b>

**Source:** Swedish Migration Agency

## **6 TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS**

There is no formally laid down mechanism for the identification of victims of trafficking in human beings (THB) in Sweden. Depending on the situation, the local Police services, the Social services, the Swedish Migration Agency or an NGO that offers crime-victim support can identify or suspect that a person is a victim of trafficking.

As regards the Police, identification can be made by any officer that comes across a suspicion of THB. It is therefore important that there in general is a high level of knowledge and awareness on how trafficking manifests itself. There are examples of identification of trafficking victims taking place both on the basis of intelligence gathering operations evolving into criminal investigations and on the basis of observations made by patrolling, front-line officers. Another starting point for identification of victims is surveillance of the Internet.

Officials at the Migration Agency are encouraged to report suspicions regarding THB to the Police. It is an important role for the Agency to be a good and

effective detector of victims of THB and to make sure that crime-fighting and supporting authorities, such as the Police and the Social services, are notified as soon as possible when suspicion about THB arises. The Migration Agency has prepared internal routines for the situations when suspicions about THB arise. In 2014, case-workers of the Migration Agency detected 111 cases of suspected trafficking. In most cases, trafficking for sexual purposes was suspected. In 12 cases, labour exploitation was seen as the underlying purpose. 13 out of the 111 reported cases involved children. The suspected victims came from Nigeria (24), Mongolia (10), Uganda (9), Sierra Leone (6) and Kazakhstan (6), as well as many other countries.

In 64 cases, the Swedish Migration Agency granted temporary residence permits to persons involved in preliminary criminal investigations. 48 out of these 64 were granted because there were suspicions of THB, and 16 were granted to witnesses in other criminal proceedings.

In February 2014, an Action Plan against Trafficking, Exploitation and Sexual Abuse of Children for 2014 and 2015 was presented to Parliament. The Government's objective 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.

Within its coordinating role regarding the combatting of all forms of trafficking in human beings and prostitution, the County Administrative Board in Stockholm has been working with ICMPD (International Centre for Migration Policy Development) in Vienna with a view to develop a National Referral Mechanism (NRM) involving both public services and NGOs.

The working group on trafficking in human beings within the Swedish Migration Agency has been re-organised and widened in 2014. Increased focus was placed on trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation. The Migration Agency also intensified the provision of targeted training on the detection and identification of potential victims of trafficking to its staff.

## **7 MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

The relationship between international migration and development is a topical issue in Sweden, and the Swedish Government has devoted much attention to it.

### *Global Forum on Migration and Development*

As a measure of Sweden's interest in furthering policy coherence on migration and development at the global level, Sweden chaired the Global Forum on Migration and Development in 2013-2014 (GFMD). The theme of the Swedish Chairmanship of the GFMD was 'Migration – Unlocking the Potential of Migration for Inclusive Development'. During its Chairmanship of the GFMD, 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. Sweden also considered the contribution of migration to inclusive social development by strengthening migrants' empowerment and by facilitating knowledge transfer. Another area addressed was the use of financial remittances for investments in health and education.<sup>24</sup>

#### *Migrants' remittances*

There are high transaction costs for remitting money back to countries of origin. As a result the Swedish Government commissioned the Swedish Consumer Agency to establish the web-based platform called "Money from Sweden", which was launched on 1 December 2014. The web page allows a cost comparison between different money transfer institutions to countries outside of Sweden. This is an effort to increase transparency and ultimately to lower remittance costs through competition.<sup>25</sup>

#### *Circular migration*

In 2009, the Swedish Government had appointed an independent Parliamentary Committee to examine the connection between circular migration and development. The final report of the Committee, published in 2011, included several proposals, including allowing longer periods of absence from Sweden without the loss of residency status, providing support to diaspora groups and their development-related projects, establishing a web site enabling migrants to compare transfer fees for remittances, and achieving better coherence between migration and development policy. Following the final report of the Committee, a Government bill on circular migration and development was adopted by the Swedish Parliament and legislative changes went into force on 1 July 2014. Their aim is to remove obstacles to circular migration and enhance the positive development effects of migration on development. The main changes to the Swedish Aliens Act were the following:

- If a foreign citizen with a permanent residence permit leaves Sweden to reside elsewhere, the residence permit is not automatically revoked if the person notifies the Swedish Migration Agency that he/she wishes to keep the permanent residence permit. The permit can be kept for up to two years. This removes an important obstacle to mobility.
- For labour migrants it is now possible to be granted a temporary work permit for a total time of six years (previously four years). In addition, a permanent residence permit can be granted a person who has been working in Sweden for at least four years in the past seven years (previously four years in the

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<sup>24</sup> <http://www.gfmd.org/docs/sweden-2013-2014>.

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.moneyfromsweden.se/en>.



past five years). This makes it possible to have longer or shorter interruptions of residency.

Other legislative measures within the bill for circular migration and development were targeted at immigration status changes for rejected asylum seekers or concerned international students and doctoral students. There were described above under the respective headings of this report.

#### *Working with diasporas*

During Sweden's chairmanship of the GFMD, the secretariat together with civil society partners provided support to a youth group (with diverse ethnicities) to engage in the GFMD Common Space in order to include the voice of youth on migration and development. As a result the group, renamed One Third (to represent the fact that one third of migrants globally are youth) is now an NGO in its own right. It hopes to engage Swedish youth nationally on migration and development-related issues and plans to work with Turkish youth to help them prepare for participation in the next GFMD Common Space.

Born out of the GFMD, with support from the Swedish Government, the Nordic Working Group on Migration and Development was formed to bring together African diaspora actors in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland with the aim of becoming agenda-setting on policies and issues of interest that are discussed in the Nordics but that affect their homelands.

Apart from the financial remittances, knowledge, social and financial skills are also transferred across borders. In the past few years Sweden has been supporting capacity building of the large Somali diaspora in Sweden who wish to run social development projects in their community of origin. Typically, the projects have focused on knowledge transfer in areas of health and education. There are plans to expand this type of support to other ethnic groups in Sweden.

#### *Returning migrants*

The Swedish Migration Board has a mandate to assist refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection who wish to return voluntarily to their countries of origin. It can also support projects aiming at facilitating voluntary return migration. Such projects are often carried out in co-operation with civil society organisations. Migrants who return voluntarily can contribute to the development of their home countries with competencies acquired in Sweden and by acting as a cultural bridge between countries of origin and countries of destination, thus facilitating trade, investments and knowledge transfer.

## 8 IRREGULAR MIGRATION

The Swedish Government's objective is to secure long-term, sustainable migration policies that maintain the right of asylum and that, within the framework of regulated migration, facilitate mobility across borders. An efficient regime aimed at combatting illegal entry or stay is seen as a precondition to achieve this objective.

One basic element in tackling irregular immigration is to ensure a well-developed, efficient and reliable system of checks on persons in order to prevent foreign nationals travelling into or staying in Sweden in contravention of the relevant regulations. Checks on persons are carried out both at the EU external borders and within the Swedish territory. Sweden's geographical position, however, means that there are no external land borders. Most irregular migrants who arrive in Sweden have travelled via another EU Member State or by air.<sup>26</sup>

In 2013, according to Eurostat, 180 persons travelling irregularly were refused entry into Sweden at the external borders. Compared to other EU Member States, this represents a small figure. It was, however, higher than in previous years. During the years 2008-2012, between 35 and 155 persons were refused entry each year. A total of 24 400 persons were considered to be illegally present in Sweden in 2013.<sup>27</sup>

A national strategic paper on border control has been developed within the Central Border Management Division, and adopted by the Swedish Police involved in border control issues, and the Coast Guard. The purpose of the strategy is to set up aims and guidelines for the Swedish border control in order to create a nationally unified activity for the Swedish Police and the Coast Guard. The aim is to ensure an effective flow for travelers and to detect and prevent irregular migration. The strategic paper is accompanied by a national action plan for measures within the area of border control, and regional action plans relating to the national goals are to be developed.

As of 1 December 2014, Sweden joined the European Border Surveillance System (Eurosur). Eurosur is an information-exchange framework designed to improve the management of Europe's external borders. It aims to support Member States by increasing their situational awareness and reaction capability in combating cross-border crime, tackling irregular migration and preventing loss of migrant lives at sea. In Sweden, a National Coordination Centre has been established in order to share the National Situational Picture and the European Situational Picture.

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<sup>26</sup> Cf. Swedish Migration Agency/EMN (2012): [Practical responses to irregular migration into Sweden](#), a study produced by the European Migration Network (EMN).

<sup>27</sup> Source: Eurostat. Figures for the year 2014 for refusals of entry at external borders and the number of persons found to be illegally present were not yet available at the timing of producing this report.

Also in 2014, the Swedish Government has commissioned an investigator to consider measures to discourage the abuse of Swedish passports. The task includes analysing the extent and causes of the abuses, to make an international comparison and to propose effective measures to tackle the problem.

## **9 RETURN MIGRATION**

In order to ensure the sustainability of the Swedish asylum system, those who, following an examination, are found not to be in need of protection must return to their countries of origin. A rejection of an application for a residence permit is usually accompanied by a refusal-of-entry or expulsion order. The persons concerned should ideally return on a voluntary basis, with the support of the Swedish Migration Agency. In cases where the obligation to return to one's country of origin is not respected, the police is responsible for implementing the refusal-of-entry or expulsion order. People must always be returned under humane and dignified conditions.

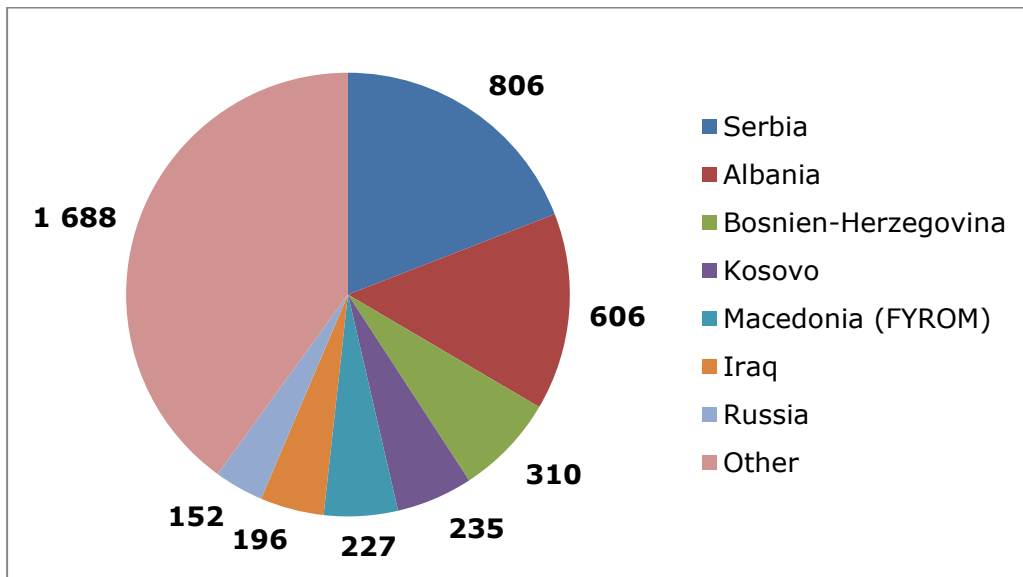
In order to facilitate return and to strengthen the incentives for voluntary return, economic re-establishment support can be granted to persons who have received a final decision or withdrawn their application and choose to return voluntarily to a country with very limited opportunities for re-establishment. In 2014, 8 006 persons returned voluntarily to their home countries (4 220), other countries (717), a state responsible under the Dublin Regulation (3 018) or an unknown destination (51), with the support of the Swedish Migration Agency. This represents a decrease, compared to the year before, when 10 611 persons left the country with assistance by the Migration Agency.

The police carried out 2 766 forced returns in 2014 (3 400 persons in 2013). 1 572 people were returned to their home countries, 955 were transferred under the Dublin Regulation, 197 to other countries and 42 to unknown destinations.

The most important nationality groups among those who returned voluntarily to their home countries were nationals of Serbia (806), Albania (606) and Bosnia and Herzegovina (310). Among those who were returned by force, most were Albanian nationals (192), Serbians (127) and people from Afghanistan (99).

216 persons were granted a reintegration allowance in 2014 (433 in 2012). 72 of them were Iraqi nationals, and 67 were Afghan nationals. One precondition for a reintegration allowance is that a person whose asylum application is rejected, or who has withdrawn his/her application returns voluntarily. Reintegration allowance is 30 000 SEK per adult. The maximum amount for a family with children is 75 000 SEK.

Figure 8: Voluntary return to home countries, main citizenship groups, 2014



Source: Swedish Migration Agency

## **ANNEX A: METHODOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS**

### **A1. Methodology**

This policy report has been drawn up in a process of close collaboration between the Swedish Migration Agency and the Ministry of Justice. Information was also provided by the Ministry of Employment and the Swedish Policy, via the Ministry of Justice. Within the Migration Agency, different divisions have contributed expertise relating to their respective area. The report is based on internally produced administrative statistics, reports and other data, and also on the fund of knowledge represented by the other organisations involved. The editor has also reviewed official documents, such as Government enquiries and reports, and followed media reporting on migration issues in order to identify relevant debates that should be mentioned in this report.

### **A2. Terms and Definitions**

As far as possible, the terminology and definitions used in this report correspond to the EMN Glossary.<sup>28</sup> Abbreviations and terms that cannot be expected to be commonly known are explained, either in the main text body or in footnotes.

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<sup>28</sup> European Commission Directorate-General for Home Affairs (2014): [Asylum and Migration Glossary 3.0](#), Brussels.