



COUNTRY FACTSHEET: Sweden 2015

EUROPEAN MIGRATION NETWORK

1. Introduction

This EMN Country Factsheet provides a factual overview of the main policy developments in migration and international protection in Sweden during 2015, including latest statistics.

2. Common European Asylum System

On 12th November 2015, **Sweden reintroduced border controls** at its internal borders. This decision was made due to the risk for public order and internal security posed by the very high inflow of irregular migrants seeking asylum experienced during the year, especially during the months of October and November. However, asylum seekers were allowed to apply for international protection at the border. In addition, new legislation (effective since 4 January 2016) was prepared, according to which identity controls are carried out of all persons crossing the Swedish border by bus, train or boat. This means that persons without any ID-documents have not been able to travel to Sweden by such means of transport since early January 2016.

The government also announced a **temporary law** restricting the grounds to issue a residence permit for international protection and the rights derived from the status of beneficiaries of international protection. The proposal aims to temporarily adapt the Swedish asylum regulations to the minimum standards required by international law and the EU-acquis on asylum. The law was prepared in early 2016 and entered into force on 20th July 2016. Among the introduced changes, refugees and persons eligible for subsidiary protection are now granted temporary, instead of permanent, residence permits. Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection will receive residence permits for 13 months at a time, and refugees for three years. Beneficiaries of protection that are resettled to Sweden under the Swedish resettlement scheme will still receive permanent permits. In order to handle the high number of asylum seekers, the Swedish Migration Agency introduced **several changes to the asylum procedure** in 2015.

First, it applied **temporary simplified operation modes** during the last quarter of 2015, primarily to Syrians, stateless persons from Syria and Eritreans. This meant that no initial interviews were held with adult asylum seekers or families. However, the asylum seekers had to leave their fingerprints and had their photographs taken. Moreover, appointments for asylum interviews were not scheduled at the time of registration but at a later stage. The aim of these measures was to speed up the registration of asylum applicants and to quickly include them into the reception system.

The Swedish Migration Agency also started to develop a new process for asylum cases. At the time of the application, each case will be categorized into one of six different tracks. The aim of the categorization is to be able to adjust the handling of an asylum application according to the needs of the particular case.

The Swedish Migration Agency has also developed a standard for dealing with asylum applications where chances of leading to exclusion from international protection are higher, such as those lodged by persons who represent a risk for security. A **national coordinator dealing with exclusion cases** and several trained decision-makers in each region have been appointed.

During 2015 Sweden also made efforts to offer asylum seekers organised activities to spend their time meaningfully while awaiting a decision on their asylum claims. These organised activities consist of courses in Swedish, apprenticeships, community information and organised venues where asylum seekers engage together with the local community. The aims of such activities are to prepare **quicker access to the job market and to enable asylum seekers to integrate more easily into the host society as soon as they are granted protection**. The government further proposed a new act for an effective and solidarity-based reception system for refugees.

According to the proposal, all 290 municipalities can be required to receive newly arrived beneficiaries of protection for settlement, based on the municipalities' respective conditions and capacity, the situation of local labour market, characteristics of the population and reception services provided. This new act entered into force on 1st March 2016.

In the framework of EU operations to manage the high inflow of asylum seekers, Sweden contributed to Asylum Support Teams within the frameworks of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) Special Support Plans for Bulgaria, Cyprus and Italy, and the Hotspots Operating Plan for Greece. In addition, **39 asylum seekers were relocated from Italy** with the support of EASO. As in previous years, Sweden also allocated 1,900 places for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) resettlement operations from Kenya, Iran, Sudan, Uganda, Somalia, Yemen, and other countries.

3. Unaccompanied Minors and other Vulnerable Groups

The number of unaccompanied minors (UAM) applying for asylum in Sweden reached an unprecedented high in 2015, with more than 35,000 new cases. During 2015, the Migration Agency developed new standards in relation to UAM. A new standard on registration of age at the time of application foresees that the age that a child states should generally be registered in the system. However, if it is obvious that the person is not a child, the Agency can register the person as above 18 years. Another standard, on medical age assessment, means that the Migration Agency no longer initiates any medical age assessments, but is obliged to inform the UAM about the option to undergo a medical age assessment and hand it in to the Migration Agency as evidence to support the stated age.

4. European Policy on Legal migration and Integration

4.1. PROMOTING LEGAL MIGRATION CHANNELS

In October 2015, as part of a number of measures to tackle the high migratory influx, the government announced its intention to appoint **an inquiry on legal routes for seeking asylum in the EU**. According to the Government, humanitarian visas are one example of a matter to be investigated by the inquiry which is expected to present its results by the end of 2017.

The Swedish Migration Studies Delegation (DELMI)¹ published a number of research studies and knowledge overviews in 2015. In 2015, DELMI launched a **platform for migration statistics, "Migration by numbers"** which aims to improving knowledge of migration and asylum in Sweden.

4.2. ECONOMIC MIGRATION

In the framework of actions against social dumping, the Swedish Government has appointed a **Committee on labour migration**. The committee will investigate the extent of exploitation of labour migrants in Sweden and suggest measures to counteract such phenomenon.

4.3. FAMILY REUNIFICATION

The temporary law announced in November 2015 will **restrict the access to family reunification for third-country nationals granted international protection**. Those granted subsidiary protection will not have a right to family reunification if their asylum application was submitted after the 24th November 2015. Refugees will still have access to family reunification with their spouse, cohabitant or minor children. Furthermore, there will be tougher maintenance requirements, also for Swedish nationals and EU citizens that want to be joined by family members from third countries.

4.4. INTEGRATION

In 2015 the government **raised the funding for integration activities** to civil society and local authorities aimed at creating better conditions for insertion in society. Funded activities include study circles, support to language learning, mentorship and sports associations. The government also adopted a number of measures and initiatives to support municipalities in their work of supporting and integrating unaccompanied minors. Among other measures, it introduced a new form of accommodation for children and young people, called 'supported accommodation' which can be provided from 1st January 2016. The level of supervision and care provided in 'supported accommodation' is somewhat lower than in other types of facilities for UAMs.

In addition, the government made amendments and implemented supplementary measures to the 'Introduction Act', which is the cornerstone of the Swedish integration policy for newly arrived beneficiaries of protection and their family members.

¹ DELMI is an independent committee, appointed by the Government. It initiates studies and supplies research results as a basis for future migration policy decisions and to contribute to public debate.

The aim is to create more opportunities in terms of access to work and education. For instance, following talks with social partners, the Public Employment Service and other agencies, 'fast tracks' into the labour market were opened for shortage professions such as: cooks, butchers, teachers and health care sector workers such as doctors, nurses and dentists. Furthermore, the Government has established the '100 club', an initiative offering special package solutions to major companies wanting to contribute to the labour integration of refugees, while also managing their labour demand. The purpose is to create jobs for at least 100 new arrivals per company within three years.

With an increased number of new arrivals in 2015, the need for collaboration on integration measures between national, regional and local authorities and civil society organisations has increased. In relation to this, the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society was charged with developing concrete **guidelines to collect best practices on cooperation between civil society and authorities** in the area of integration. The guidelines will be published in April 2016. In August 2015, the Government also introduced the new scheme 'Swedish from day one'. The scheme funds study circles run by civil society organisation to provide, for instance, courses in Swedish to asylum seekers and people who have been granted a residence permit but still live in temporary accommodation.

4.5. MANAGING MIGRATION AND MOBILITY²

As mentioned in Section 2, Sweden reintroduced internal border controls in November 2015 as a consequence of the mass migratory influx experienced during 2015. In addition, a new legislation in force since 4th January 2016 requires identity controls to be performed on all persons crossing the Swedish border by bus, train or boat. After the introduction of these measures, the **migratory influx decreased significantly**.

Since 2015, blocked documents issued by the Swedish Migration Agency, such as residence permit cards and visas, are registered in the Schengen Information System II (SIS II). It is therefore now possible to check such documents at border crossing points. In addition, starting in 2016, new e-passport readers will be installed at border crossing points.

4.6. EXTERNAL DIMENSION OF EU MIGRATION POLICY

During the period 2015-2017, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) is providing funding for approximately SEK 20 million (corresponding to over €2.1 million) per year to the

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

Swedish NGO *Forum Syd* for a programme concerning the Somalian diaspora. The aim is to enable the Somali Diaspora to contribute with knowledge and expertise to sustainable development in Somalia.

5. Irregular Migration and Return

5.1. COUNTERING IRREGULAR MIGRATION CHANNELS

Data for 2014 and part of 2015, showed that between 5% and 6% of all ID-documents that the Swedish Migration Agency examined, as part of an asylum procedure or other procedures, were forged or manipulated. In total, in 2015, the Swedish Migration Agency received ID-documents from 63,000 asylum cases for examination. As a response to this, the **examination of ID-documents will be decentralised** in 2016.

5.2. RETURN OF IRREGULAR MIGRANTS

The Swedish Migration Agency has prioritised manifestly unfounded asylum applications in order to reduce the processing times for these applicants and accelerate returns. According to the Agency, the return cooperation with the embassies of the Western Balkan countries functioned smoothly during 2015 and returns have been carried out as swiftly as possible.

6. Actions against Trafficking in Human Beings

In 2015, the number of reports on trafficking in human beings for the purpose of begging continued to increase. In total, 55 cases were reported during the year, as compared to 23 in 2014 and 9 in 2013. In response to this, the Government has been preparing an updated and renewed action plan against trafficking, exploitation and sexual abuse of children for 2016-2018.

During 2015, the Swedish Civil Society Platform has developed a **National Support Program for victims of trafficking**. In 2016, additional actors will be certified and support measures will be quality-assured through common procedures and structured assessment of the need for support. As of 30th October 2015, the Swedish Police is continuously monitoring and producing nation-wide situation pictures on trafficking and related crimes.

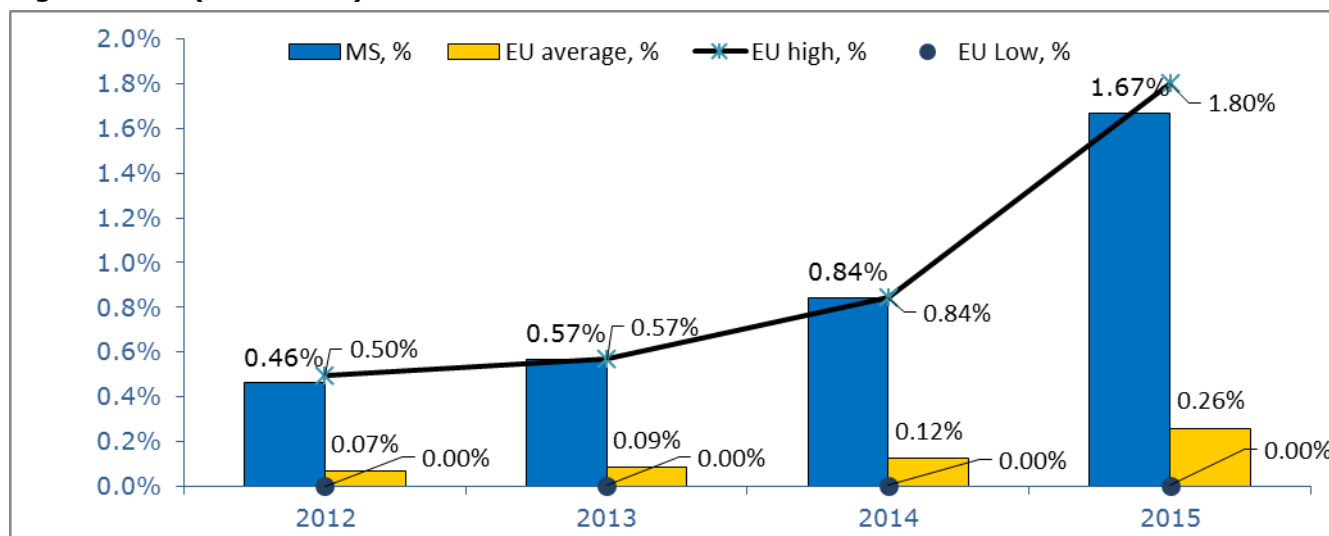
Statistical Annex

The Statistical Annex provides an overview of the latest available statistics for Sweden on aspects of migration and asylum (2013-2015), including residence, asylum, unaccompanied minors, irregular migration, return and visas. Where statistics are not yet available, this is indicated in the Annex as "N/A".

Statistical Annex: Immigration and Asylum in Sweden (2012-2015)

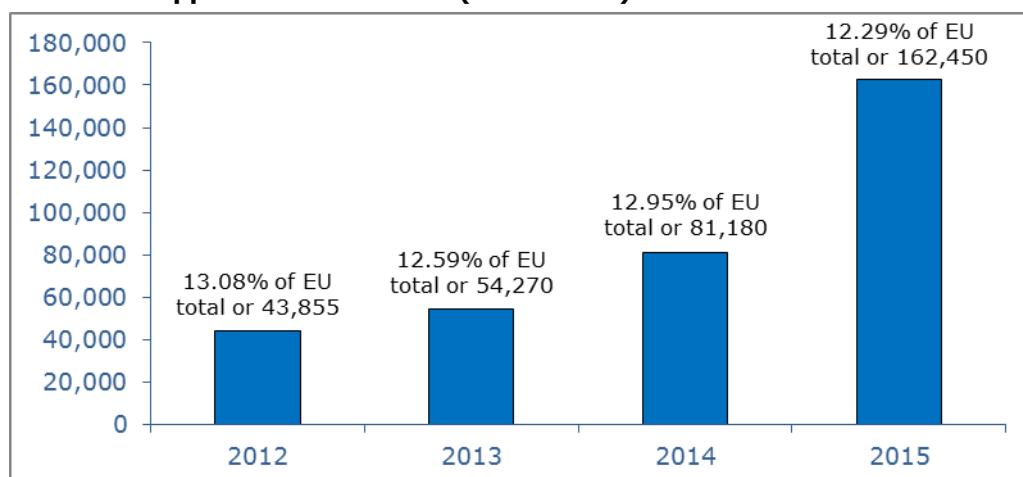
1. COMMON EUROPEAN ASYLUM SYSTEM

Figure 1: Asylum applications as a share of the total population in Sweden, EU average and EU high and low (2012-2015)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyappctza), data extracted 04/07/2016

Figure 2: Number of asylum applications and as a share of the total number of applications in the EU (2012-2015)



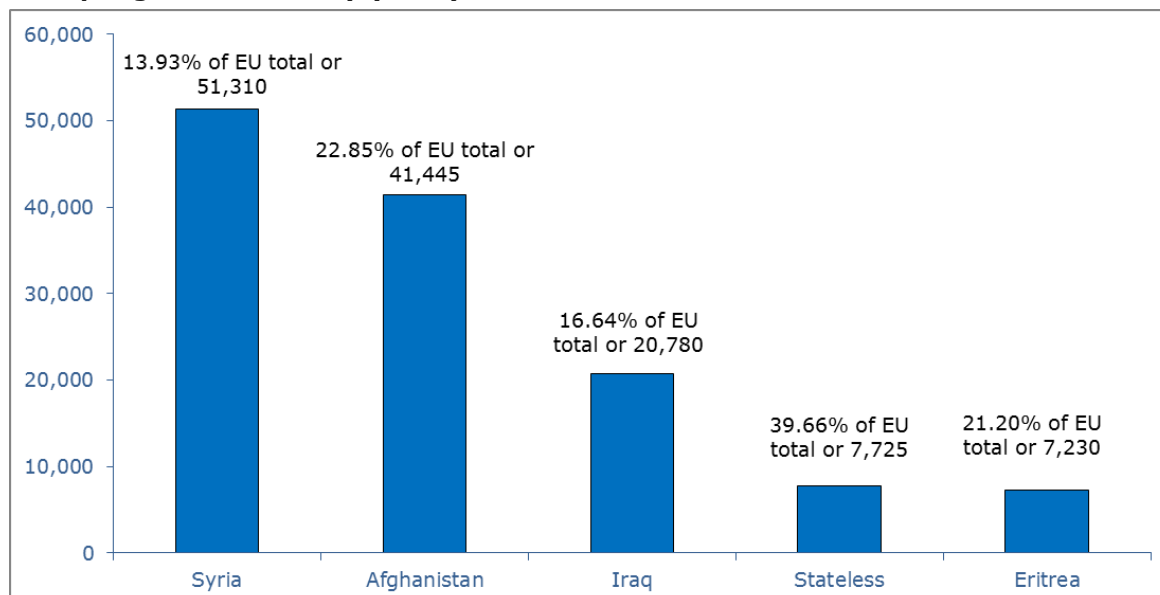
Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyappctza), data extracted 04/07/2016

Table 1: Asylum applications: Top five third-country nationalities (2012-2015)

2012			2013			2014			2015		
Nationality	Nr	% of total	Nationality	Nr	% of total	Nationality	Nr	% of total	Nationality	Nr	% of total
Syria	7,920	18%	Syria	16,540	30%	Syria	30,750	38%	Syria	51,310	32%
Somalia	5,695	13%	Stateless	6,885	13%	Eritrea	11,530	14%	Afghanistan	41,445	26%
Afghanistan	4,760	11%	Eritrea	4,880	9%	Stateless	7,820	10%	Iraq	20,780	13%
Serbia	2,670	6%	Somalia	3,940	7%	Somalia	4,870	6%	Stateless	7,725	5%
Eritrea	2,405	5%	Afghanistan	3,025	6%	Afghanistan	3,105	4%	Eritrea	7,230	4%

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyappctza), data extracted 04/07/2016

Figure 3: Asylum applications: Top five third-country nationalities as a share of EU total per given nationality (2015)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyappctza), data extracted 04/07/2016

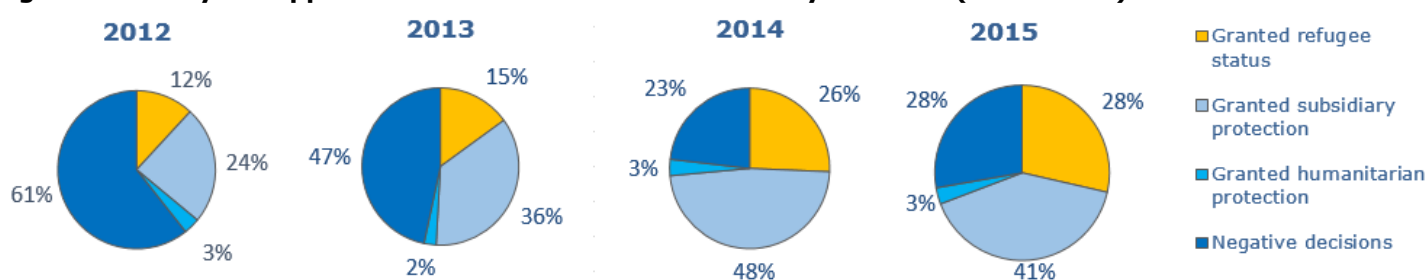
Note: the figure reads as: Sweden received 51,310 asylum applications from Syrians or 13.93% of all asylum applications lodged by Syrians in EU in 2015

Table 2: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2012-2015)

	Total decisions	Positive decisions	Of which:		Humanitarian reasons	Negative decisions
			Refugee status	Subsidiary protection		
2012	31,515	12,400	3,745	7,595	1,060	19,115
2013	45,005	24,015	6,750	16,145	1,120	20,990
2014	39,905	30,650	10,245	19,095	1,310	9,255
2015	44,590	32,215	12,740	18,125	1,350	12,375

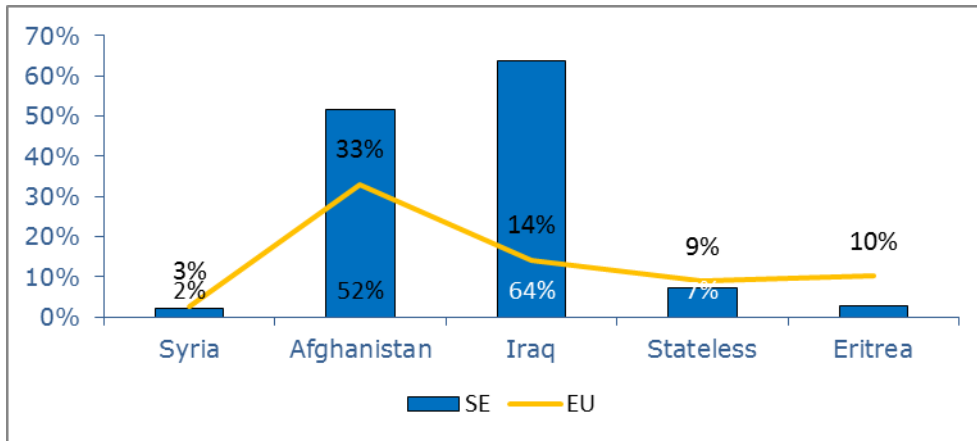
Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asydcfsta), data extracted 04/07/2016

Figures 4-7: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2012-2015)



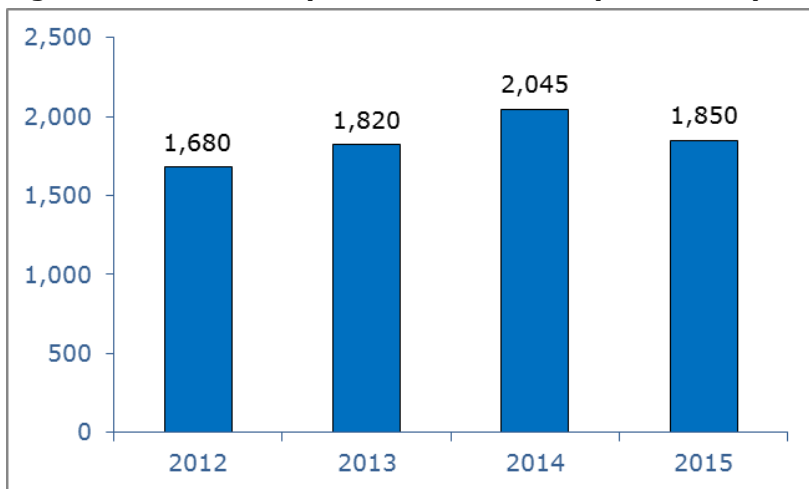
Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asydcfsta), data extracted 04/07/2016

Figure 8: Negative decision rate for the top five nationalities of applicants at the first instance in comparison with EU for the same given nationality (2015)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asydcfsta), data extracted 04/07/2016

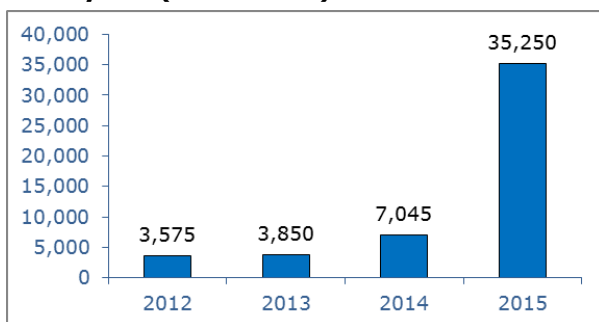
Figure 9: Third-country nationals resettled (2012-2015)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyresa), data extracted 04/07/2016

2. UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

Figure 10: Unaccompanied minors applying for asylum (2012-2015)



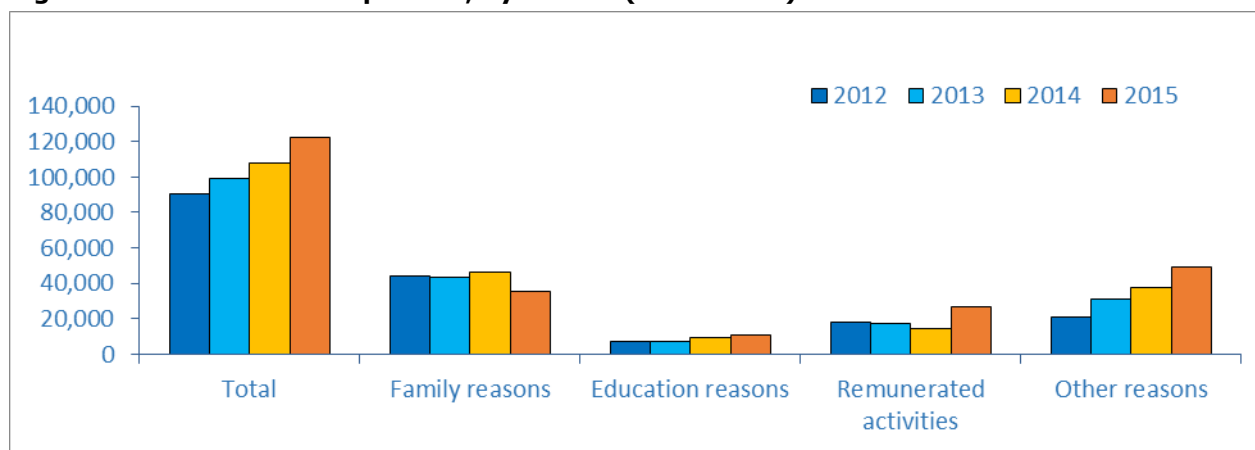
Source: Eurostat Asylum applicants considered to be unaccompanied minors by citizenship, age and sex Annual data (rounded) [migr_asyunaa], data extracted 04/07/2016; EMN NCPs

Table 3: Unaccompanied minors (2012-2015)

	2012	2013	2014	2015
Unaccompanied minors (total)	NA	NA	NA	NA
Unaccompanied minor asylum applicants	3,575	3,850	7,045	35,250

3. EUROPEAN POLICY ON LEGAL MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION

Figure 11: First residence permits, by reason (2012-2015)



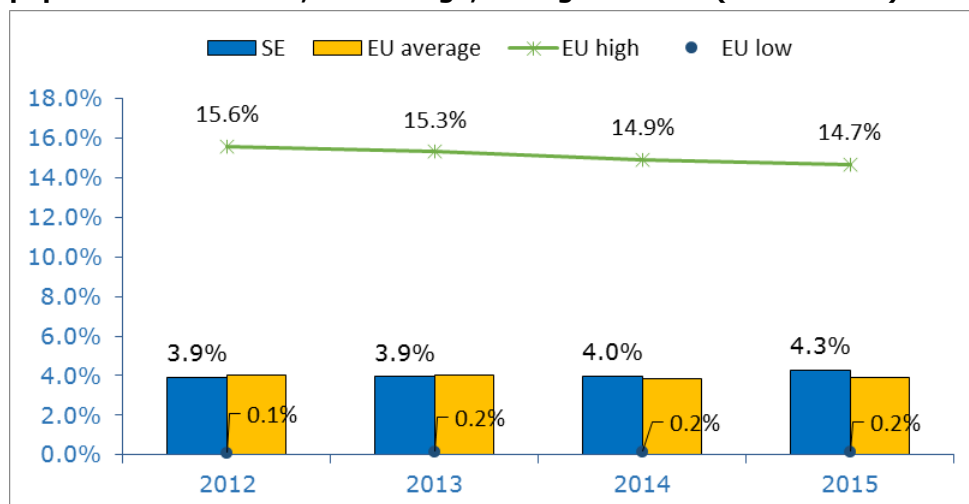
Source: Eurostat (migr_resfirst), data extracted 04/07/2016

Table 4: First residence permits: Top five third-country nationalities (2012-2014)

2012		2013		2014		2015	
Nationality	Number	Nationality	Number	Nationality	Number	Nationality	Number
Thailand	8,162	Syria	16,291	Syria	26,428	Syria	29,316
Somalia	8,134	Somalia	10,112	Stateless	8,115	Eritrea	8,299
Syria	7,265	Thailand	7,618	Eritrea	7,080	Thailand	6,594
India	5,296	Stateless	6,107	India	6,589	India	6,508
Afghanistan	5,009	India	5,947	China (including Hong Kong)	4,922	Stateless	6,389

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_resfirst), data extracted 04/07/2016

Figure 12: Resident population of third-country nationals as a share of total population in Sweden, EU average, EU high and low (2012-2015³)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_pop1ctz), data extracted 04/07/2016

³ Please note the following: In Sweden, compared to other MS, third-country nationals can rather quickly become Swedish citizens. Thus, the share of TNCs among the population is always rather low. In Sweden, rather a distinction is made between "Sweden-born" and "foreign-born" people to show the degree of immigration, not citizenship.

4. IRREGULAR MIGRATION AND RETURN

Table 5: Number of third-country nationals refused entry at external borders (2012–2015)

Third country nationals:	2012	2013	2014	2015
Refused entry at external borders	155	185	345	615
Found to be illegally present ⁴	23,205	24,400	72,835	1,445
Ordered to leave	19,905	14,695	14,280	18,150
Returned following an order to leave	16,140	14,315	6,630	9,830

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_eirfs)(migr_eipre)(migr_eiord), data extracted 04/07/2016

Table 6: Third-country nationals returned (2012–2015)

	Returned as part of forced return measures	Returned voluntarily	Returned through an Assisted Voluntary Return Programme
2012	2,893	12,988	614
2013	3,400	10,611	433
2014	2,766	8,006	216
2015	2,545	7,285	NA

Source: EMN NCPs

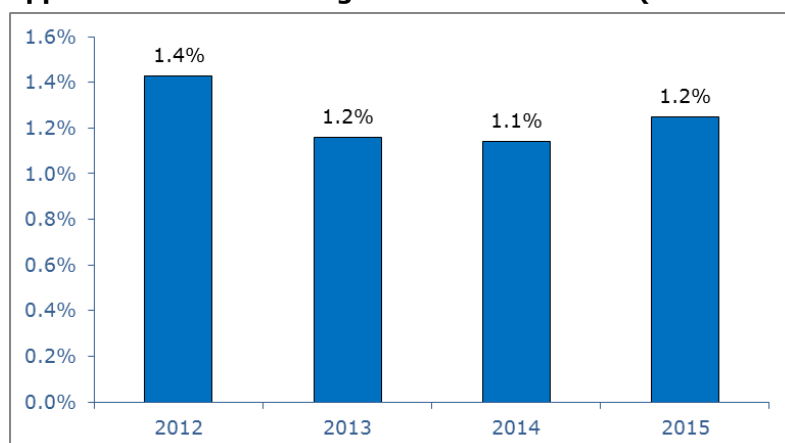
5. SECURING EUROPE'S EXTERNAL BORDERS

Table 7: Number of Schengen visas applications (2012–2015)

	2012	2013	2014	2015
Uniform visas (short-stay visas)	215,763	200,543	191,009	192,852

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

Figure 13: Uniform visa applications received in Sweden as a share of the total number of uniform visa applications in all Schengen states consulates (2012–2015)



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

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

2012		2013		2014		2015	
Country	Number	Country	Number	Country	Number	Country	Number
Russia	62,858	Russia	56,860	Russia	39,944	Morocco	165,924
China	31,162	China	31,440	China	36,885	China	142,890
Iran	20,722	Thailand	17,864	Iran	15,941	Algeria	119,805
Thailand	17,132	Iran	12,525	India	12,770	Ukraine	82,289
India	14,055	India	12,232	Thailand	11,185	Russia	48,284

Source: DG Migration and Home affairs

⁴ Please note that there is a break in the series regarding this category. 2015 cannot be compared to 2014, as a different methodology was used for gathering these data.

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

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

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

Source: DG Migration and Home affairs

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

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

Source: DG Migration and Home affairs

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

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

Source: DG Migration and Home affairs

7. INSPECTIONS CARRIED OUT TO DETECT EMPLOYMENT OF IRREGULAR MIGRANTS

Table 12: Number of Inspections carried out to detect employment of irregular migrants and share of inspections as a percentage of the employers in sector (in %)

Risk sector	2014		2015	
	No.	%	No.	%
Manufacturing	3	0%	3	0.0009480
Construction	7	0%	6	0.0009140
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	134	0%	87	0.00126000
Accommodation and food service activities	383	0%	234	0.01050000
Administrative and support service activities	NA	NA	2	0.00010100
Arts, entertainment and recreation	NA	NA	1	0.00004170
Other service activities	NA	NA	33	0.00088200

Source: DG Migration and Home affairs

Table 13: Number of inspections in which irregular migrant workers were detected (I) and number of irregular migrant workers detected (IWD) – 2015

Risk sector	2014		2015	
	Number of inspections in which irregular migrant workers were detected	Number of inspections in which irregular migrant workers were detected	Number of inspections in which irregular migrant workers were detected	Number of irregular migrant workers detected
Manufacturing	2	2	1	2
Construction	2	3	3	4
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	34	42	21	23
Accommodation and food service activities	68	76	41	49
Administrative and support service activities	NA	NA	1	1
Arts, entertainment and recreation	NA	NA	1	8
Other service activities	NA	NA	7	7

Source: DG Migration and Home affairs