

The Changing Influx of Asylum Seekers – Swedish responses to the refugee situation in 2014-2016

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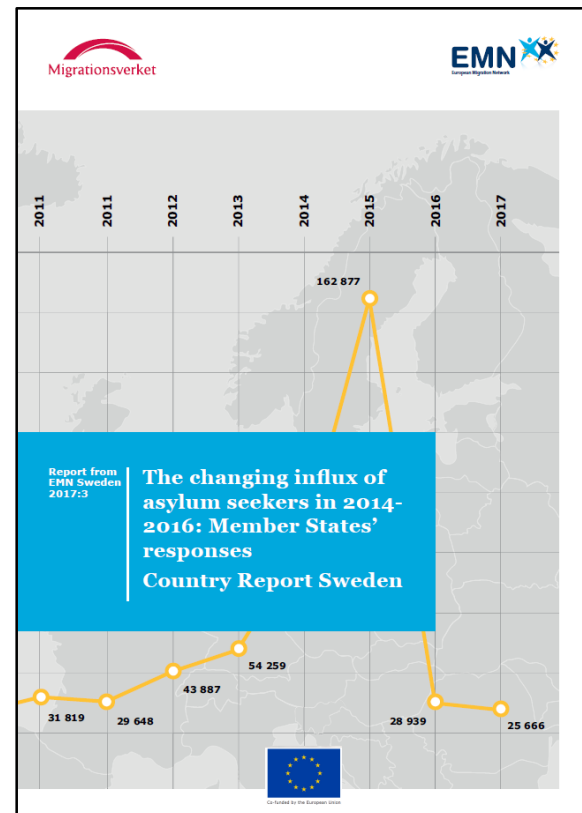
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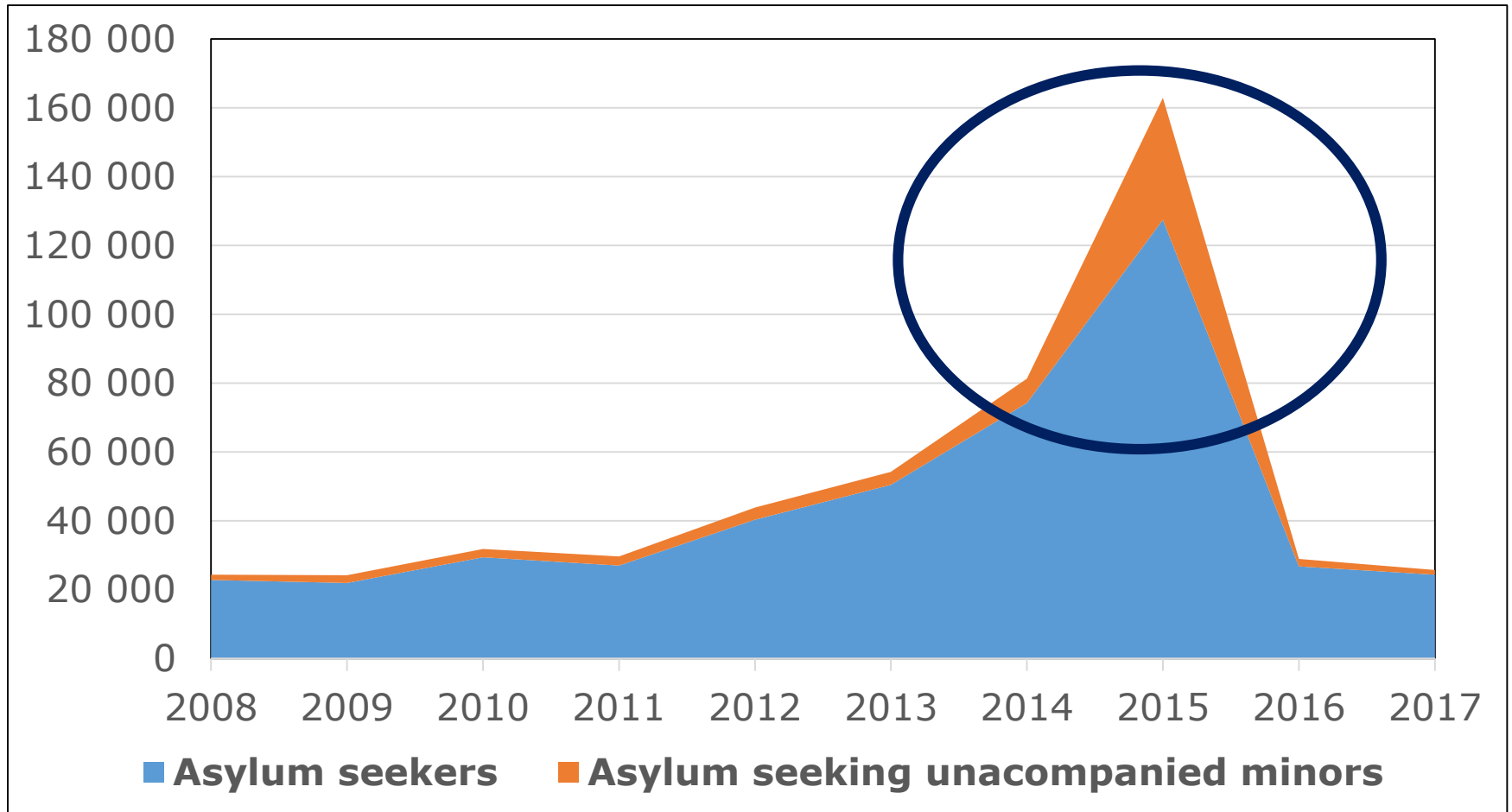
How has Sweden reacted to the refugee situation in 2015?

3 main types of practical and political measures:

1. Measures to increase administrative capacity
2. **Measures to reduce the number of asylum seekers coming to Sweden**
3. **Other, related measures (integration, resettlement, returns)**

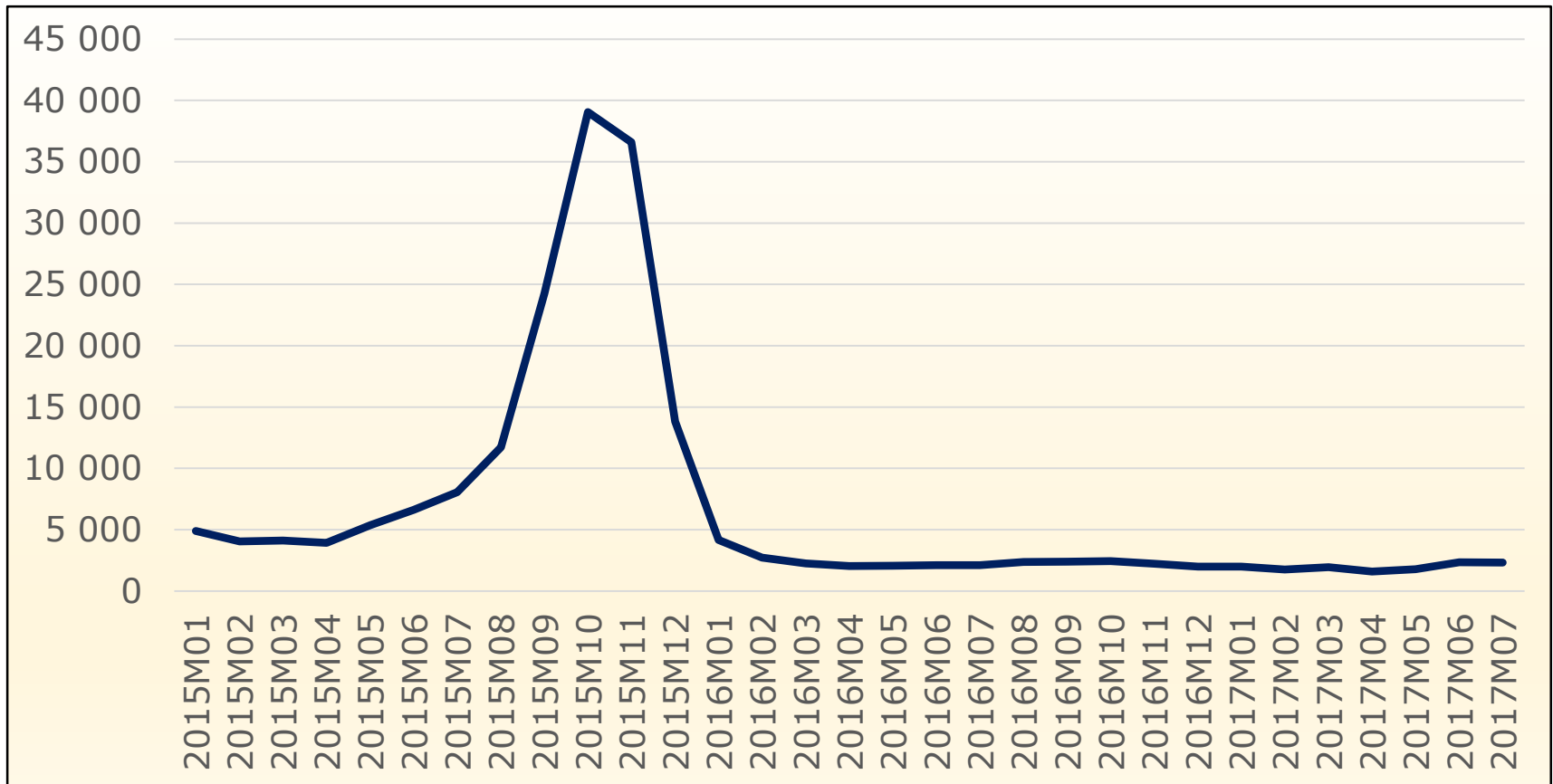


Asylum applications in Sweden 2008-2017



Source: Swedish Migration Agency

Asylum applications in Sweden, monthly 2015-2017



Source: Swedish Migration Agency

Policy changes in Sweden (1)

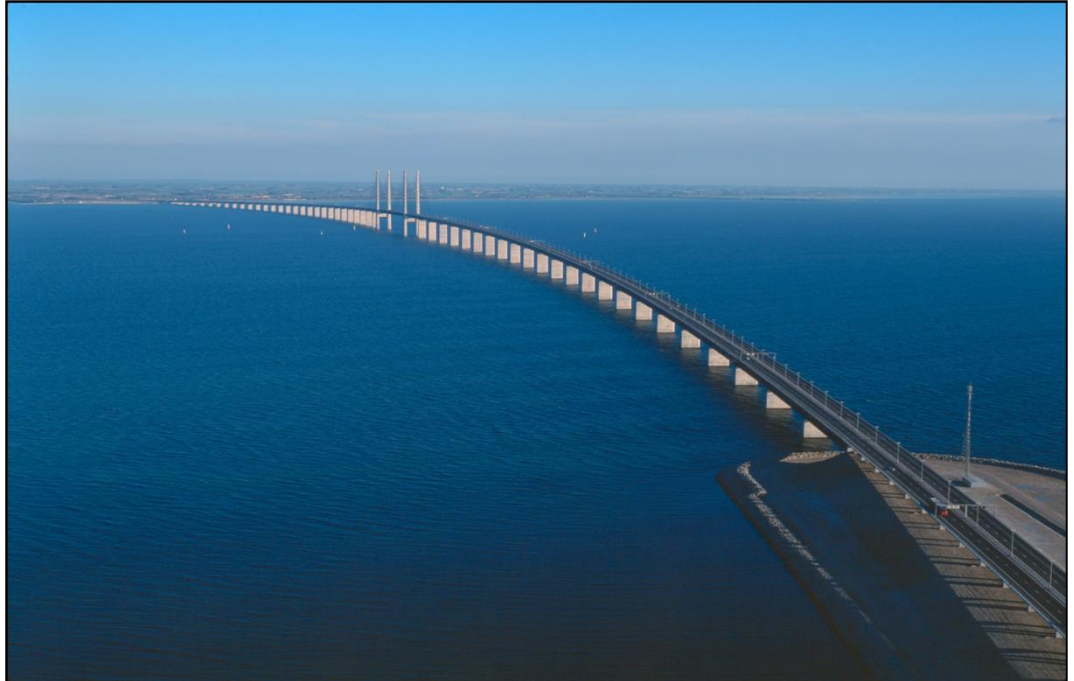
Overall goal of the government (end of 2015): “Dramatic reduction in the number of people who seek asylum and are granted a residence permit in Sweden” – create “**breathing space**” for Swedish asylum reception system

Swedish asylum rules temporarily reduced to EU minimum standards (“Temporary Act”, in force July 2016 - July 2019):

- **Temporary residence permits** (instead of permanent) for all beneficiaries of protection (except resettled refugees)
 - Refugees: 3 years
 - Subsidiary protection beneficiaries: 13 months
- **Restricted family reunification**
- Granting of residence permits on **humanitarian grounds restricted**

Policy changes in Sweden (2)

- Temporary **border controls at intra-Schengen borders** (since November 2015 – currently prolonged until 11 February 2019)
- Extraterritorial **ID checks** on public transport to Sweden (Jan 2016 - May 2017)



Main entry route to Sweden in 2015: Öresund bridge, links Copenhagen (DK) and Malmö (SE). Most asylum applicants arrived in Sweden irregularly across the bridge or by ferry from Denmark and/or Germany

Policy changes in Sweden (3)

- New **dispersal** system for recognised beneficiaries of protection in Sweden: All municipalities must accommodate beneficiaries of protection (since March 2016)
- Measures to improve integration, facilitate access to jobs, for example:
 - **"Fast-tracks"** into the labour market for new arrivals with qualifications for shortage occupations, e.g. *chefs, doctors, nurses, pharmacists, dentists, butchers, lorry-drivers, social workers, school and pre-school teachers, researchers*, etc. (More than 6,700 participants since start in 2016.)
 - **State-subsidized jobs** for new arrivals and long-term unemployed in private and public sectors
 - More state funding for diverse local and civil society initiatives

Policy changes in Sweden (4)

- Gradually increased **resettlement** quota (1,900 in 2016 → 3,400 in 2017 → 5,000 in 2018)
- Intra-EU **relocation**: Sweden's obligation to receive asylum seekers from IT and GR suspended until June 2017. Sweden then received 1,657 asylum seekers from Greece, and 1,161 from Italy (second half of 2017)
- More focus on **return** of those denied asylum:
 - No right to accommodation by the Migration Agency, no right to daily allowance for those not complying with return order (since June 2016 – except families with children)
 - Increased **detention** capacity
- **Age assessments** for asylum seekers claiming to be minors now earlier in the asylum process (since 2017)

What now? What next?

- **Temporary act** → to be prolonged?
- Internal border controls → to be prolonged further?
- **Status regularisation for those arrived before 24 November 2015 as unaccompanied minors** via "upper secondary school act" I + II (*gymnasielag I + II*)
- Tension between **restrictive admission policies** and **integration** goals?
- Public and political debate: Number of asylum seekers and family members still too high?
- Search for **EU-wide solutions** (solidarity, responsibility-sharing, legal pathways)

Lessons learned

- Sweden had a **positive view of migration** and granting protection, but it did **not have full capacity** to absorb a rapidly growing number of protection seekers, both in the short run (e.g. **accommodation** of asylum seekers, **processing** applications, providing **social services** for vulnerable groups) and in the longer run (e.g. **shortage of housing**, lack of „simple“ jobs, shortage of teachers and medical staff)
- Number of asylum seekers decreased strongly since the beginning of 2016, but **why?**
 - Policy changes in Sweden (restrictive measures)?
 - Closure of the Balkan route?
 - EU-Turkey agreement? Support to Libyan Coast Guard?
 - Border controls by other EU Member States?

Want to know more?

EMN "Changing Influx" study:

- National report Sweden
- EU synthesis report
- Short summary EMN Inform

www.emnsweden.se

→ Publikationer

→ → 2017



Thank you!



For more information:

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