

Policies to attract and retain international students in Sweden: Insights from a new EMN study

EMN Sweden National Conference
8 May 2019

Bernd Parusel

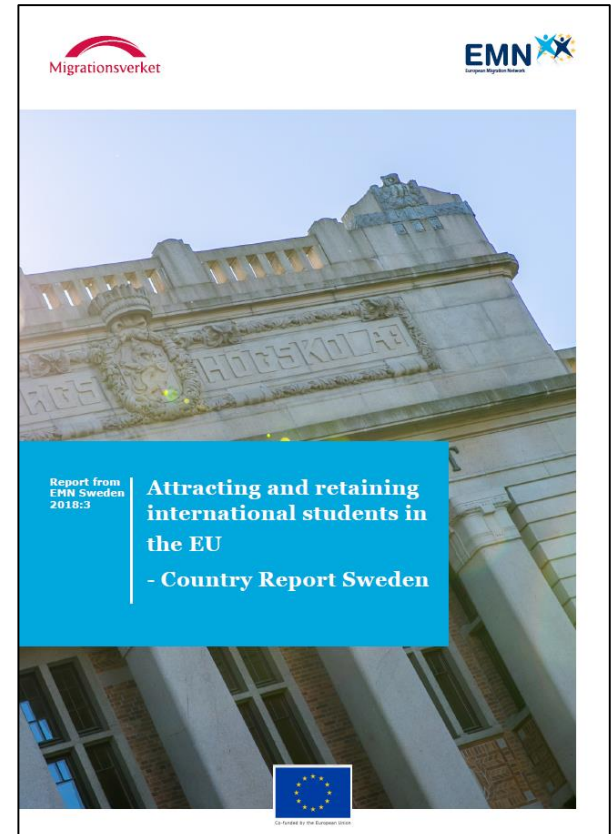
EMN National Contact Point Sweden
bernd.parusel@migrationsverket.se

Attracting and retaining international students in Sweden

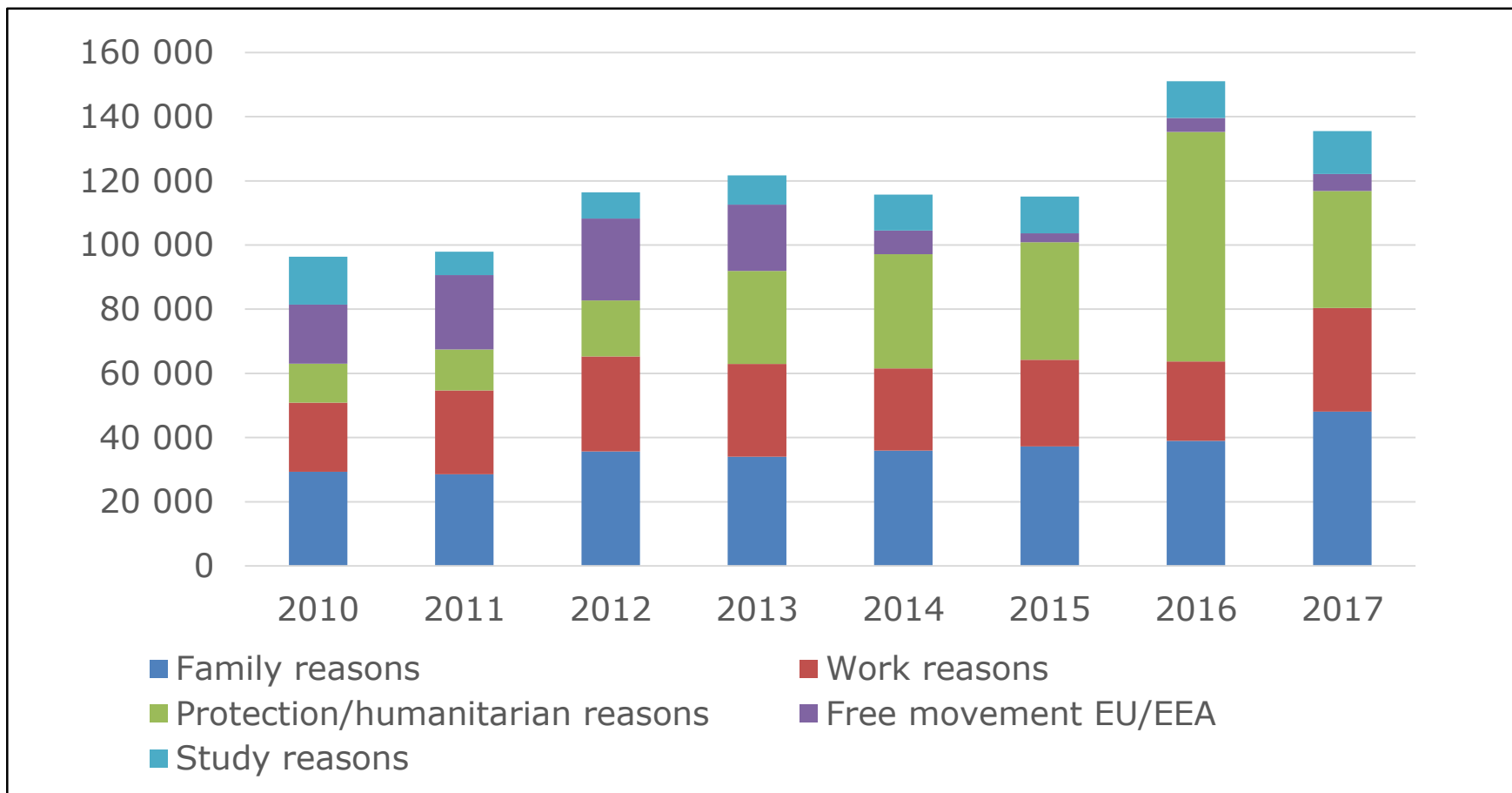
“The immigration of visiting students is generally seen positively in Sweden, not least as it is considered a valuable contribution to the internationalisation of the higher education system and Swedish research environments.”

Admission is possible for:

- **Studies at master’s and bachelor’s level**
- **Doctoral studies**
- Family members
- “Other studies”

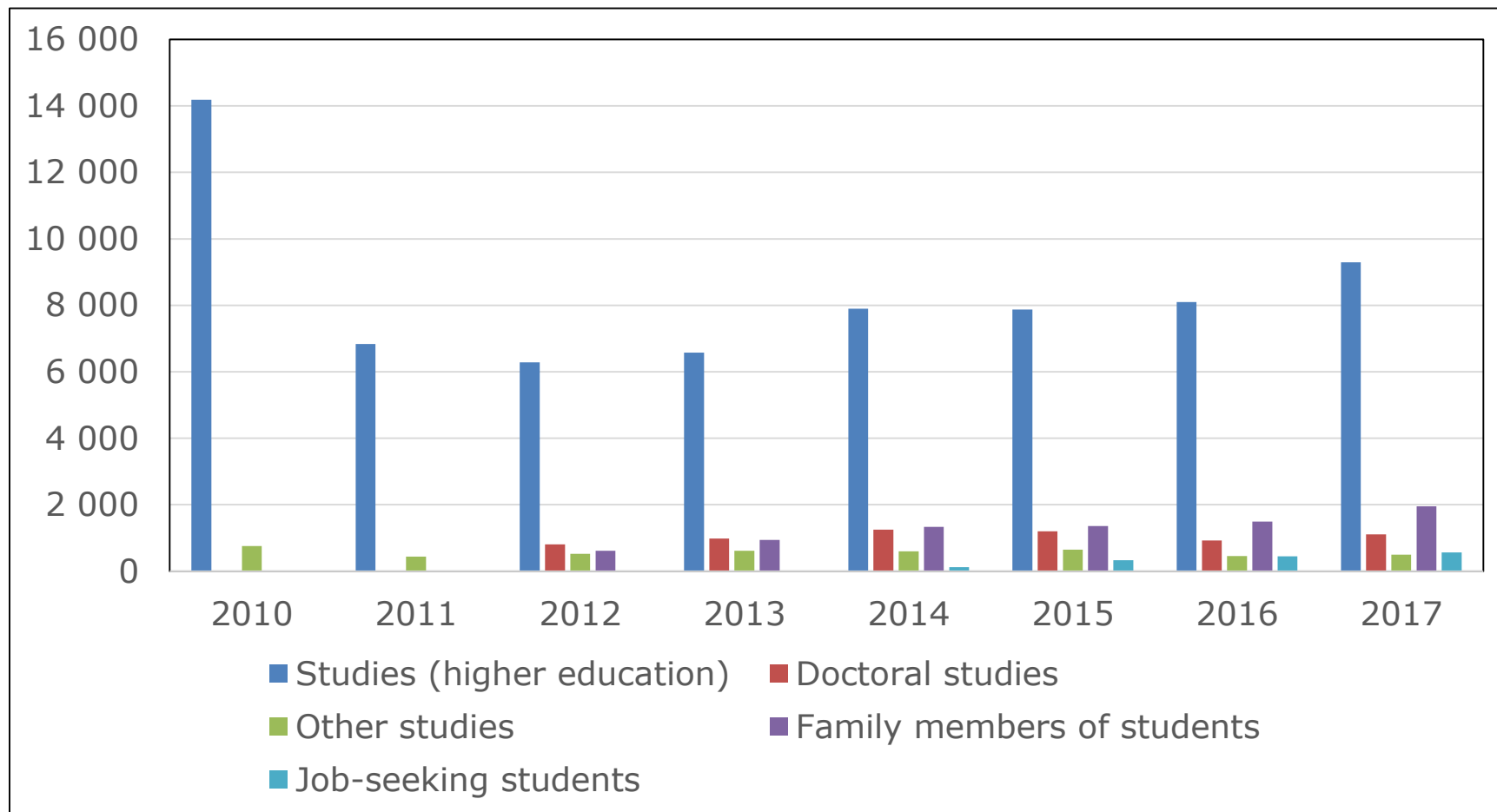


Immigration of students from non-EU countries as part of overall immigration to Sweden



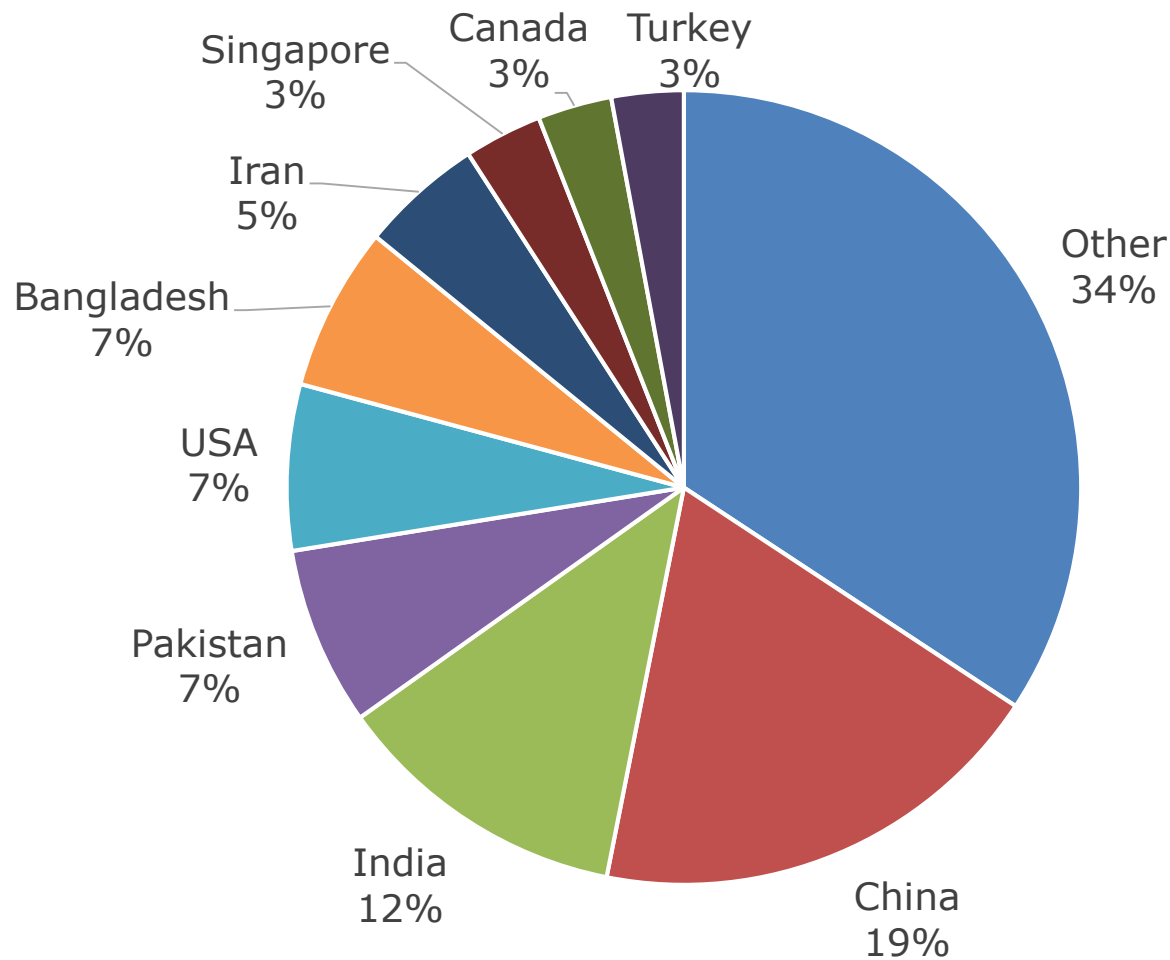
Source: Swedish Migration Agency

Residence permits issued for study purposes, Sweden 2010-2017



Source: Swedish Migration Agency

Where are international students coming from? (2017)



Source: Swedish Migration Agency

How attractive is Sweden?

- **State agencies and universities work actively to attract foreign students**
- **Many courses and programmes in English + language and preparatory courses**
- **Ambition to further improve procedures for residence permits**
- **Free access to labour market, possibility to stay and look for work after studies**
- **Scholarships + exchange programmes**

But:

- **Tuition fees (since 2011) reduced the number of non-EU students**
- **Other countries offer longer post-study permits to look for work**
- **Retention strategies less developed than attraction strategies**

Conditions for residence permit

Prospective students from third countries must:

- hold a valid passport
- be accepted on a course of full-time study at a university or university college (incl. paid tuition fee, if required)
- be able to support themselves during the foreseen study period in Sweden
- have comprehensive health insurance

Application generally to be made from abroad

Migration Agency has to assess if applicant really intends to study

For extension of permit:

- Must have made progress in studies

Obstacles to attraction and retention

Attraction:

- Considerable financial resources needed for tuition fees and maintenance during studies
- Difficulties regarding residence permit application?
- Sufficient scholarships and exchange programs?

Retention:

Difficult to find work?

Difficult to find affordable housing?

Too little support? (Career counseling)

New EU students and researchers directive

Directive (EU) 2016/801 of 11 May 2016 on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of **research, studies, training, voluntary service, pupil exchange** schemes or educational projects and **au pairing**

Not yet implemented in Sweden at this point

Expected impact when implemented:

- Longer period of stay for exchange students
- Longer validity of “job-seekers” permits after studies
- Relaxation regarding financial support requirement
- Improved intra-EU mobility

Want to know more?

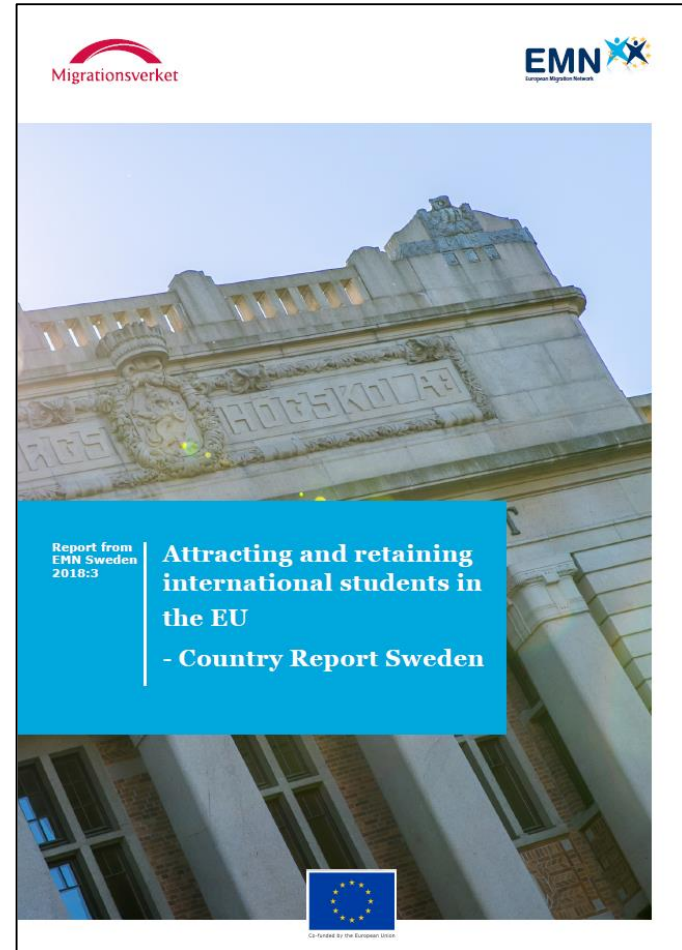
EMN study “Attracting and retaining international students in the EU”

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

www.emnsweden.se

→ **Publikationer**

→ → **2018**



Thank you!



For more information:

Bernd Parusel

bernd.parusel@migrationsverket.se