



Report from
EMN Sweden
2020

EMN Annual Report on Migration and Asylum 2019 – Sweden



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Contact: emn@migrationsverket.se

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Content

1	Svensk sammanfattning	5
1.1	Övergripande trender	5
1.2	Internationellt skydd	8
1.3	Vidarebosättning	9
1.4	Ensamkommande barn	10
1.5	Invandring av familjeskäl	10
1.6	Arbetsmarknadsinvandring	11
1.7	Internationella studenter	12
1.8	Återvändande	12
2	Executive summary	14
2.1	Overall trend	14
2.2	International protection	17
2.3	Resettlement	18
2.4	Unaccompanied minors	19
2.5	Immigration for family reasons	19
2.6	Work-related immigration	20
2.7	International students	21
2.8	Return	21
3	Introduction	23
4	Context for asylum and migration policy developments	24
4.1	Organisational structure of asylum and migration policy	24
4.2	Overarching changes to the national migration and asylum system 2019	25
5	Legal migration	27
5.1	Legal and practical changes to the Swedish work immigration system	27
5.2	International students and visiting researchers	28
6	International protection including asylum	30
6.1	Legislative developments	30
6.2	Reception of asylum applicants	31
6.3	New developments about the asylum procedures in 2019	32
6.4	Rights/obligations of beneficiaries of international protection	33

6.6	Institutional changes in the national asylum system	33
6.7	Efficiency and quality in the national asylum system	33
6.8	Asylum decisions 2019	34
7	Unaccompanied minors and other vulnerable groups	35
7.1	Unaccompanied minors applying for asylum	35
7.2	Unaccompanied minors recorded within the childprotection system.	37
7.3	Other vulnerable groups applying for asylum	38
8	Integration	39
8.1	Integration of third-country nationals	39
8.2	Measures to enhance language skills	40
8.3	Integration into the labour market	41
8.4	Integration through active participation and social inclusion	42
8.5	Non-discrimination	42
9	Citizenship and statelessness	43
9.1	Statistical trends.	43
9.2	Acquisition of citizenship	43
9.3	Statelessness	43
10	Borders, schengen and visas.	44
10.1	Activities to improve the effectiveness of controls at external borders	44
10.2	Visa policy	44
11	Irregular migration and migrant smuggling	45
12	Trafficking in human beings	45
12.1	Trends regarding trafficking in human beings	45
12.2	Policy developments regarding trafficking	46
13	Return and readmissions.	46
13.1	Voluntary and forced returns	47
13.2	Assisted voluntary return	47
13.3	Use of (alternatives for) detention in return procedures.	48
13.4	Reintegration measures	48
13.5	Involvement of third countries in return measures	49

1 Svensk sammanfattning

Denna rapport syftar till att beskriva de viktigaste utvecklingarna inom migration och asyl under 2019 i Sverige och redogöra för relevanta nationella offentliga debatter i ljuset av policyutvecklingen på europeisk nivå och dess betydelse för den nationella nivån.

1.1 Övergripande trender

Ett trendbrott har skett rörande migrationen till Sverige under de senaste åren. Antalet asylsökande är nu på stabila, relativt låga nivåer medan antalet personer som ansöker om uppehållstillstånd för arbete, studier eller av familjeskäl ökar. Arbetskraftsinvandring är nu den vanligaste anledningen att flytta till Sverige.

Den stabila nivån av asylsökande under 2019 berodde framförallt på svårigheter att resa genom Europa, i första hand p.g.a. gränskontroller. Den tillfälliga lagstiftningen i Sverige som innebär tillfälliga uppehållstillstånd hade också en begränsande effekt. Bilden av Sverige som mottagarland har också ändrats p.g.a. dessa begränsningar.

Syrien är den överlägset vanligaste nationaliteten för asylsökande (ungefär 12 procent av alla asylsökande under 2019). Det har dock varit ett betydande trendbrott i asylinvandringen de sista åren. De vanligaste ursprungsländerna historiskt för asylsökande i Sverige (huvudsakligen från Mellanöstern och Nordafrika (MENA-regionen), Afghanistan och Afrika söder om Sahara) har minskat eller är på stabila nivåer.

Samtidigt har det varit en klar ökning från nya länder, inklusive länder inom Oberoende staters samväld (OSS)¹, framförallt Uzbekistan och Ukraina. Det har också varit en fortsatt hög andel medborgare från Georgien som har sökt asyl i Sverige under 2019. Under vissa månader 2019 var medborgare från OSS-länder och Georgien bland de största ursprungsländerna för asylsökande. Det har också varit en ökning av ansökningar från personer från Latinamerika, framförallt Colombia, men på relativt låga nivåer.

En gemensam nämnare för flera av dessa nya länder är att de är viseringsfria och att dess medborgare kan resa till Sverige legalt. En majoritet av asylsökningarna avslås också och personerna ska återvändas. För OSS-länderna och Georgien har många personer varit i andra EU-länder med arbetstillstånd (ex. i Polen). I dessa grupper är det inte ovanligt att arbetstillstånd är en starkare drivkraft än asyl. Då det i Sverige är möjligt att ansöka om arbetstillstånd efter avslag på en asylansökan kan detta vara en drivkraft för att komma till Sverige. Utvecklingen av asylansökningar från nya (ofta viseringsfria) länder är en trend som också kan ses i utvecklingen inom EU där till exempel Venezuela och Colombia var bland de fem vanligaste ursprungsländerna under 2019.

1 Oberoende staters samväld (förkortat OSS) är ett samväld bestående av de tidigare sovjetrepublikerna, förutom baltstaterna. Det grundades i början av december 1991, då presidenterna i Ryssland, Ukraina och Vitryssland samlades och beslöt i Belavezjaavtalet att bilda en lösare sammanslutning, samt att därigenom upplösa Sovjetunionen. Georgien deltog inte från början, men beslöt 1993 att gå med. Den 12 augusti 2008 meddelade Georgiens president att landet lämnade OSS, som en direkt följd av kriget i Sydossetien i augusti 2008. 2005 drog sig Turkmenistan ur som permanent medlem, men fortsatte att vara associerad medlem.

Vad gäller migrationen till Sverige karakteriserades 2019 av en liten ökning i antalet som sökte asyl. Totalt registrerades 21 958 asylansökningar under 2019, ungefär 2 procent mer än 2018 när 21 502 asylansökningar registrerades. Särskilt om detta jämförs med den rekordstora inströmningen av asylsökande till Sverige under 2015 (nästan 163 000) får detta anses utgöra en låg nivå. Antalet asylsökande under 2018 och 2019 var på de lägsta nivåerna sedan 2005.

Det totala antalet uppehållstillstånd för förstagångssökande som utfärdades under 2019, för alla typer av anledningar (asyl, familjeskäl, arbete, studier och andra anledningar) var 119 577. Detta är en minskning jämfört med 2018 (135 552 utfärdade tillstånd) och ett betydligt mindre antal än 2016 när 151 031 tillstånd utfärdades – den högsta siffran för Sverige under modern tid.

Tabell 1 (i absoluta tal) och Figur 1 (i procent) visar huvudkategorierna av uppehållstillstånd för förstagångsansökningar under 2019. Personer som invandrade till Sverige av arbetsmarknadsskäl var den största kategorin av immigranter (43 242 beviljade uppehållstillstånd), detta var första gången på fyra år som arbetsmarknadsskäl var vanligare än familjeskäl. Invandring för familjeåterförening, familjebildning eller annan familjeledning (31 785 uppehållstillstånd) var den näst vanligaste anledningen följt av skyddsbehövande, personer som fått uppehållstillstånd för skydd eller av humanitära skäl efter en asylprocess eller efter vidarebosättning till Sverige, som var den tredje största gruppen, med 19 201 utfärdade tillstånd. Internationella studenter från tredjeland var den fjärde största gruppen av immigranter under 2019 med 15 669 tillstånd.

Ytterligare 9 680 personer beviljades uppehållstillstånd enligt EU:s regler om fri rörlighet för personer, såsom tredjelandsmedborgare som har status som varaktigt bosatta i en annan medlemsstat eller tredjelandsmedborgare som är familjemedlemmar till en EU-medborgare som flyttar till Sverige.²

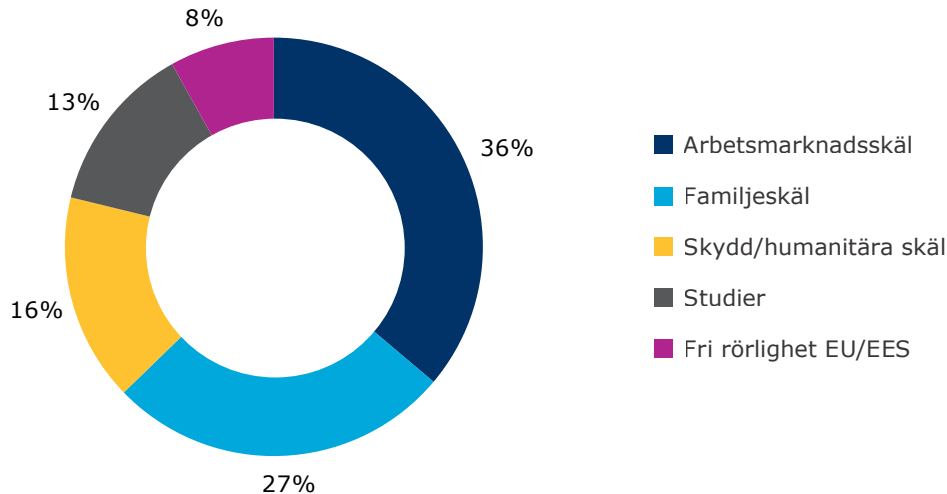
Tabell 1: Övergripande immigrationstrender: Beviljade förstagångsansökningar om uppehållstillstånd 2016-2019

Anledning	2016	2017	2018	2019
Familjeskäl	39 007	48 046	44 861	31 785
Arbetsmarknadsskäl*	24 710	32 294	41 048	43 242
Skyddsskäl/humanitära skäl**	71 562	36 531	24 935	19 201
Studier***	11 423	13 416	14 105	15 669
Fri rörlighet EU/EES	4 329	5 242	7 603	9 680
Totalt	151 031	135 529	132 552	119 577

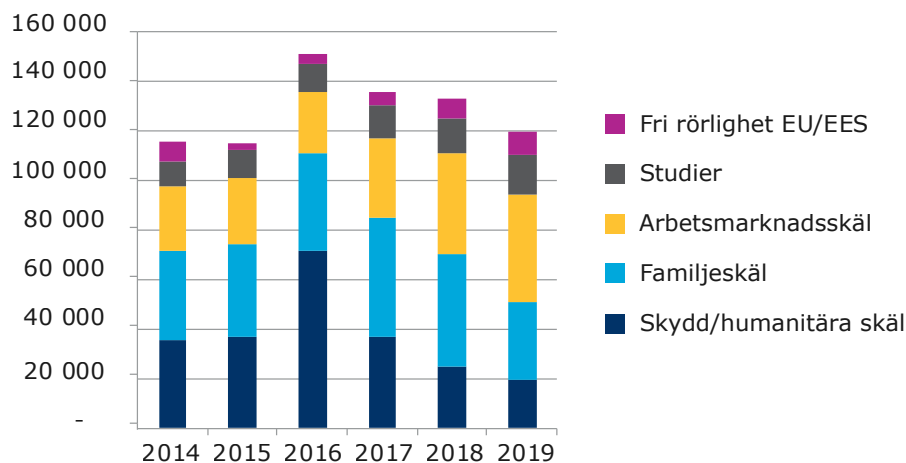
Noter: * Inkluderar familjemedlemmar till arbetskraftsinvandrare. ** Detta inkluderar skydd för flyktingar, subsidiärt skydd, vidarebosättning och uppehållstillstånd beviljade p.g.a. särskilt försvårande omständigheter eller för att en person inte kan återvändas. Här inkluderas också uppehållstillstånd som har beviljats med stöd av "gymnasielagen" för unga asylsökande. *** Inkluderar familjemedlemmar till internationella studenter.

Källa: Migrationsverket

² Sedan maj 2014 behöver EU- och EEA-medborgare inte registrera sin uppehållsrätt hos Migrationsverket längre, vilket är förklaringen till att antalet tillstånd eller uppehållsrätter beviljade enligt reglerna om EU:s regler om fri rörlighet förefaller vara mycket mindre för 2015 och 2016 jämfört med tidigare år.

Figur 1: Övergripande immigrationstrender: *Beviljade försttagångsansökningar om uppehållstillstånd 2019**Källa: Migrationsverket*

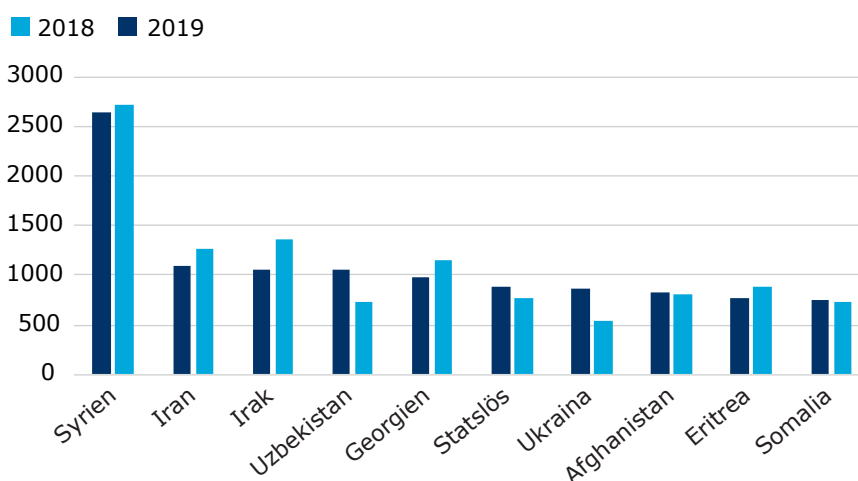
Figur 2 visar beviljade uppehålls- och arbetstillstånd i ett längre tidsperspektiv. Upphållstillstånd beviljade av skyddsskäl och humanitära skäl ökade under perioden 2013-2016 och minskade 2017 och 2018, för att 2019 minska ännu mer. I jämförelse ökade familjerelaterad immigration långsamt fram till 2016 och sedan väsentligt under 2017. Under 2018 minskade antalet tillstånd beviljade för familjeskäl, en minskning som fortsatte under 2019. För arbetskraftinvandringen är trenden en kraftig ökning under 2017 och sedan ännu mer under 2019. Under 2019 nådde arbetskraftsinvandringen den högsta nivån på tio år. Vad gäller internationella studenter (invandring med anledning av studier) är trenden svagt växande under hela perioden.

Figur 2: Tidslinje – beviljade uppehållstillstånd 2014-2019*Källa: Migrationsverket*

1.2 Internationellt skydd

Antalet asylsökande som kom till Sverige under 2019 ökade med 2 procent till 21 958 jämfört med året innan då 21 502 personer ansökte om asyl. De flesta asylsökande 2019 kom från Syrien (2 649), Iran (1 090), Irak (1 054), Uzbekistan (1 052) och Georgien (975). Afghanistan som har varit ett viktigt ursprungsland tidigare år var inte längre bland topp fem av nationaliteter för asylsökande i Sverige under 2019.

Figur 3: Medborgarskap för asylsökande 2018-2019



Källa: Migrationsverket

I ett europeiskt perspektiv fortsatte Sverige vara ett viktigt destinationsland och mottagningsland för asylsökande men inte i samma utsträckning som under "den europeiska flyktingkrisen" 2015 och innan dess. Under 2019 var Sverige det åttonde största mottagarlandet inom EU vad avser antal asylsökande (efter Tyskland, Frankrike, Spanien, Grekland, Storbritannien, Italien, och Belgien)³.

När det gäller asylprocessen fattade Migrationsverket 24 569 beslut i första instans rörande asylsökningar under 2019. Detta är ungefär 31 procent färre beslut jämfört med 2018 när 35 512 beslut fattades. Detta kan jämföras med de 66 301 beslut som fattades under 2017.

Totalt 6 540 personer beviljades skydd under 2019 jämfört med 11 217 under 2018. Den totala bifallsandelen för beslut i första instans var 27 procent. Bifallsandelen har konstant sjunkit under de senaste åren, från 60 procent 2016, till 41 procent 2017 och 32 procent under 2018. Den lägre bifallsandelen är främst ett resultat av ändrad sammansättning av de grupper av asylsökande som kommit till Sverige.

Det lägre antalet asylsökningar under 2019, 2018, 2017 och 2016, jämfört med 2015, förklaras till stor del av policyutvecklingen på annat håll i Europa, såsom överenskommelsen från 2016 mellan EU och Turkiet för att stoppa irreguljära migranternas resor till de grekiska öarna, gränskontrollåtgärder längs "Balkan-rutten" i centrala och södra Europa men också i Danmark. Trots att antalet migranter i Grekland ökade

³ Eurostat

under 2019 finns det många hinder längs Balkan-rutten vilket har gjort det svårare för migranterna att resa vidare inom Europa. Det har också blivit farligare och svårare för migranter att korsa Medelhavet från Libyen till Italien eller Malta, vilket i sin tur beror på, bland annat, färre räddningsoperationer i Medelhavet, EU-stöd till den libyska kustbevakningen och försök från Italien att hindra fartyg med migranter ombord att lägga till i italienska hamnar.

Till viss del kan lagstiftningsändringar i Sverige och den svenska gränskontrollen också ha bidragit till denna utveckling. Riksdagen beslutade om en tillfällig lag 2016, som sedan under 2019 förlängdes fram till 2021. Den tillfälliga lagen introducerade tillfälliga uppehållstillstånd för skyddsbehövande (istället för permanenta uppehållstillstånd) och begränsade rätten till familjeåterförening, samtidigt som möjligheterna för asylsökande att få uppehållstillstånd av humanitära skäl begränsades. Under hela 2019 hade Sverige också tillfälliga gränskontroller vid vissa gränser inom Schengen.

1.3 Vidarebosättning

Förutom att Sverige är ett destinationsland för asylsökande så har Sverige också engagerat sig i globala insatser för vidarebosättning. Vidarebosättning ses som ett sätt att dela på ansvaret med länder som är värdar för stora grupper av flyktingar och försäkra att personer som behöver skydd har möjlighet att söka asyl. Efter en uppgörelse mellan partierna 2015 har Sverige gradvis ökat antalet platser i vidarebosättningsprogrammet. Fram till 2016 fanns det ungefär 1 900 platser vilket ökades till en årlig kvot på 3 400 platser under 2017 och till 5 000 under 2018 och 2019. Till skillnad från skyddsbehövande som kommer till Sverige som asylsökande beviljas vidarebosatta flyktingar permanenta uppehållstillstånd. Under 2018 vidarebosatte Sverige 5 219 personer och 2019 var det totala antalet 5 253. Tabell 2 visar de 10 vanligaste nationaliteterna för vidarebosatta de senaste två åren.

Tabell 2: Vidarebosättning top-10 2018-2019

Medborgarskap	2018	2019
Syrien	2 392	2 161
Somalia	76	768
DR Kongo	628	471
Eritrea	668	453
Etiopien	390	374
Sudan	232	363
Syd-Sudan	92	223
Afghanistan	347	131
Burundi	46	70
Centralafrikanska republiken	85	42
Övriga	263	197
Totalt	5 219	5 253

Källa: Migrationsverket

1.4 Ensamkommande barn

Medan antalet ensamkommande barn ökade drastiskt under 2015 var det en kraftigt minskning 2016 och 2017 och en fortsatt minskning under 2018 och 2019. Medan 35 369 ansökningar från ensamkommande barn registrerades 2015 var antalet 2 199 år 2016, 1 336 år 2017, 944 år 2018 och 902 år 2019.

Under 2019 kom de flesta ensamkommande barn från Syrien (151), Marocko (125) och Somalia (124). Detta är en förändring av mönstret från tidigare år då Afghanistan under lång tid varit den avsevärt största nationaliteten bland ensamkommande barn som kommit till Sverige. Denna grupp spelar nu bara en liten roll. Majoriteten av de ensamkommande barnen var pojkar, 645 av 902 var pojkar och 257 var flickor. De flesta ensamkommande barnen var i åldern 13-17 år.

Tabell 3: Ensamkommande barn top-10 Medborgarskap 2014-2019

Medborgarskap	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Summa
Afghanistan	1 547	23 480	665	222	99	121	26 134
Syrien	1 233	3 777	180	159	136	151	5 636
Somalia	1 118	2 058	421	159	106	124	3 986
Eritrea	1 456	1 939	74	52	100	38	3 659
Marocko	381	403	144	235	126	125	1 414
Irak	84	1 097	93	52	31	37	1 394
Etiopien	114	891	133	53	34	14	1 239
Statslösa	448	530	45	39	29	37	1 128
Albanien	82	208	104	78	37	20	529
Algeriet	126	102	47	39	24	18	356
Övriga	460	884	293	248	222	217	2 324
Totalt	7 049	35 369	2 199	1 336	944	902	47 799

Källa: Migrationsverket

1.5 Invandring av familjerskäl

Framförallt som en konsekvens av det höga antalet asylsökande som kom till Sverige under 2015 har familjerelaterad invandring ökat 2016 och 2017 för att sedan minska något under 2018 och ytterligare under 2019. Migrationsverket beviljade 39 077 tillstånd 2016, 48 046 under 2017 och 44 861 under 2018. Motsvarande siffra för 2019 var 31 785.

Den tillfälliga lagen som beslutades 2016 introducerade hårdare försörjningskrav som ett villkor för familjeåterförening genom att utöka försörjningskraven till att inkludera både anknytningspersonen själv och försörjning för familjemedlemmen. Detta var en betydande ändring jämfört med hur det var tidigare då personen i landet bara behövde kunna försörja sig själv.

Den tillfälliga lagen stadgar också att flyktingar och personer med skyddsbehov i Sverige kommer att beviljas tillfälliga uppehållstillstånd istället för permanenta uppehållstillstånd (som är huvudregel enligt utlänningslagen). Flyktingar som beviljas

tillfälliga uppehållstillstånd enligt den tillfälliga lagen och som bedöms ha välgrundade utsikter att få permanent uppehållstillstånd har rätt till familjeåterförening med sin make/maka, sambo och/eller minderåriga barn. Barn som är flyktingar har rätt till återförening med sina föräldrar. Dock hade alternativt skyddsbehövande som lämnat in sin ansökan efter den 24 november 2015 inte rätt till familjeåterförening fram till den 20 juli 2019 när denna begränsning togs bort. Alternativt skyddsbehövande har nu återigen rätt till familjeåterförening på samma villkor som flyktingar.

Inom gruppen personer som beviljades uppehållstillstånd av familjeskäl (31 785 personer) var 7 350 familjemedlemmar till flyktingar och andra skyddsbehövande. Övriga var personer som flyttade till andra personer som bor i Sverige, inklusive svenska medborgare, EU-medborgare och tredjelandsmedborgare med permanent uppehållstillstånd i landet. Siffrorna inkluderar också utländska adoptioner och barn som föddes i Sverige med föräldrar som är utländska medborgare (8 796).

1.6 Arbetsmarknadsinvandring

Antalet personer som kom till Sverige av arbetsmarknadsrelaterade skäl har de senaste åren haft en stark ökande trend; 24 710 personer beviljades uppehållstillstånd p.g.a. arbete i Sverige under 2016. Denna siffra ökade till 32 294 personer 2017, 41 048 personer 2018 och till 43 242 under 2019. I denna grupp inkluderas medföljande familjemedlemmar till arbetskraftsinvandrare.

Bärplockare och trädplanterare (6 162), IT-arkitekter, systemanalytiker och testledare (4 347) samt anställda inom kategorin snabbmat och matlagingsassistenter (1 141) var de tre största yrkesgrupperna bland de som kom till Sverige för att jobba under 2019. Systemet för arbetskraftsinvandring till Sverige ger tillgång till arbetsmarknaden för både högkvalificerade personer och arbetare i yrken med inga eller låga kvalifikationer. Migrationsverkets fortsatta utveckling av ett "certifieringssystem" för betrodda arbetsgivare har bidragit till kortare handläggningstider för arbetsmarknadsinvandrare för att få uppehållstillstånd för arbete för certifierade arbetsgivare.

De vanligaste nationaliteterna för arbetskraftsinvandrare kan ses i tabell 4.

Tabell 4: Medborgarskap för arbetskraftsinvandrare

Medborgarskap	2019
Thailand	6 489
Indien	4 975
Ukraina	1 119
Turkiet	878
Kina	875
Irak	639
U.S.A	487
Iran	413
Brasilien	383
Pakistan	338
Övriga	5 354
Totalt	21 950

Källa: Migrationsverket

1.7 Internationella studenter

Antalet personer som flyttat till Sverige för att studera ökade också under 2019, från 14 105 under 2018 till 15 669 under 2019. Bland dessa personer som beviljades tillstånd under 2019 var en majoritet (9 833) antagna som studenter på universitet och högskolor och 923 som doktorander. Ytterligare 3 396 var familjemedlemmar till internationella studenter och 663 kom för andra studier. De återstående 854 personerna fick uppehållstillstånd för att söka arbete efter sina studier i Sverige. Möjligheten att ansöka om denna typ av "jobsökartillstånd" introducerades 2014 och antalet tillstånd som har beviljats av denna anledning har konstant ökat sedan dess.

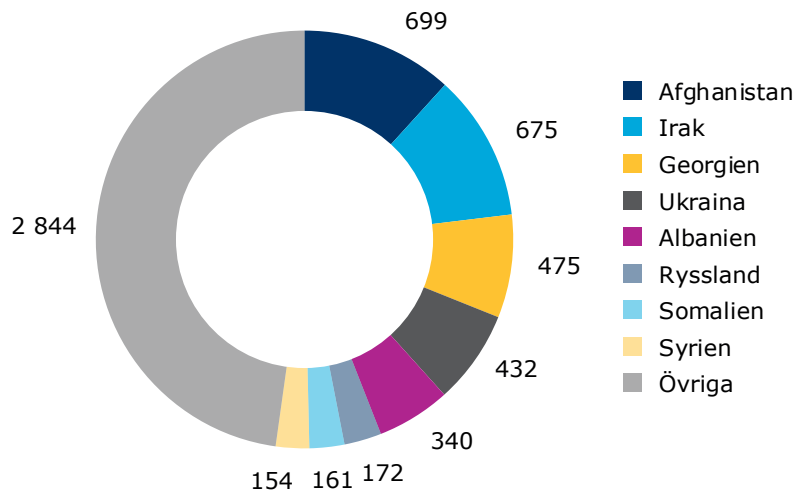
De huvudsakliga ursprungsländerna för personer som fick uppehållstillstånd för studier var: Kina (2 433), Indien (1 922), Pakistan (1 340) och Bangladesh (1 258).

1.8 Återvändande

Under 2019 återvände 9 244 personer från Sverige. Av det totala antalet återvände 5 687 till sina hemländer och 3 007 till medlemsländer inom EU eller EEA samt 352 till andra länder. Ett mindre antal, 178, återvände till okänd destination. Av 9 244 personer återvände 5 952 frivilligt och återvändandet ombesörjdes av Migrationsverket. Resterande 3 262 var återvändande med tvång vilka utförs av polisen.

Bland dem som återvände frivilligt (5 952) var de vanligaste nationaliteterna Afghanistan (699), Irak (645), Georgien (475), Ukraina (432) och Albanien (340), (se figur 4). De huvudsakliga destinationsländerna var Tyskland, Ukraina, Georgien, Frankrike och Irak. De flesta från Afghanistan återvändes till andra länder i Europa. Av de 1 113 afghaner som återvändes var det bara 427 som återvände till sitt hemland (104 genom Migrationsverkets försorg och 323 återvända av polisen). Detta kan jämföras med irakiska medborgare (792) där ungefär lika många återvände till hemlandet (394) som till andra EU-länder (387) en majoritet av dessa med stöd från Migrationsverket (677).

Figur 4: Frivilligt återvändande, vanligaste nationaliteterna, 2019



Källa: Migrationsverket

2 Executive summary

2.1 Overall trend

Migration to Sweden has undergone clear trend changes in recent years. The number of asylum seekers is now at stable, relatively low levels, while there is an increase in people applying for residence permits for work, studies or as a relative, so called legal migration. Work migration is now the biggest cause for choosing to migrate to Sweden.

The stable level of asylum seekers during 2019 was mainly due to difficulties in transiting through Europe, mainly due to border controls. The temporary legislation that applies in Sweden with, inter alia, temporary residence permits has also had a limiting effect. The image of Sweden as a recipient country has also changed due to these limitations. Syria is by far the largest group (around 12 percent) of all asylum cases last year. However, there has been some significant trends in asylum migration last year. The major countries of origin that have historically moved to Sweden (mainly from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, Afghanistan, Sub-Saharan Africa) have decreased or are at stable levels.

At the same time, there has been a clear increase from new countries, including Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries⁴, primarily Uzbekistan and Ukraine. However, there has been a continued high proportion of nationals from Georgia claiming asylum in Sweden in 2019. Nationals from CIS countries and Georgia have been among the largest countries of origin in Sweden during certain months in 2019. There has also been an increase in applicants from Latin America, primarily Colombia, but at relatively low levels.

A common denominator for several of these new countries is that they are visa-free and can travel to Sweden legally. A majority receive negative decisions and become return cases. For the CIS countries and Georgia, many have found themselves in other EU countries on labour visas (e.g. in Poland). In these groups it is not uncommon that work permits can be a greater driver than asylum. In Sweden, it is possible to apply for a work permit after refusal of asylum, which can be a driving force. The development of new (often visa-free) countries is also a trend reflected in the development of asylum seekers in the EU, where, for example, applicants from Venezuela and Colombia were among the five largest countries of origin in EU last year.

As regards migration to Sweden, the year 2019 was characterised by a small increase in the number of people seeking asylum. In total, Sweden registered 21 958 asylum requests in 2019, roughly 2 percent more than in 2018, when 21 502 applications for asylum were lodged. Especially when compared to the record influx of asylum seekers to Sweden in 2015 (almost 163 000), the figure for 2019 represents a low level. In fact, the numbers of new asylum seekers in 2018 and 2019 were the lowest since 2005. The total number of first-time residence permits that were issued during the year

⁴ **Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)** was created in December 1991. In the adopted Declaration the participants of the Commonwealth declared their interaction on the basis of sovereign equality. At present the CIS unites: Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Ukraine.

2019 for all purposes of stay (asylum, family reasons, employment, studies, and other purposes) was 119 577. This represents a decline compared to 2018 (135 552 permits issued), but a significantly lower number than in 2016, when 151 031 first-time residence permits were issued – the highest figure recorded in Sweden in modern times.

Table 5 (absolute numbers) and Figure 5 (percentages) show the main categories of first-time residence permits that were granted in 2019. Persons who immigrated to Sweden for work reasons represented the largest broad category of immigrants (43 242 permits issued); this was the first time in four years that work reasons outnumbered family reasons. The purposes of family reunification, family formation or other family-related purposes (31 785 permits) were followed by beneficiaries of protection, i.e. individuals who received a residence permit for protection or humanitarian purposes after an asylum procedure or after resettlement to Sweden, with 19 201 permits issued.

International students from third countries constituted the fourth largest category of immigrants in 2019, with 15 669 permits. Another 9 680 people were granted residence permits under EU rules regarding the free movement of persons, such as third-country nationals who had a long-term resident status in another Member State or third-country nationals who were family members of an EU citizen moving to Sweden.⁵

Table 5: Overall immigration trend: First-time residence permits granted in 2016-2019

Reasons	2016	2017	2018	2019
Family reasons	39 007	48 046	44 861	31 785
Work reasons*	24 710	32 294	41 048	43 242
Protection/ humanitarian reasons**	71 562	36 531	24 935	19 201
Study reasons***	11 423	13 416	14 105	15 669
Free movement EU/EES	4 329	5 242	7 603	9 680
Total	151 031	135 529	132 552	119 577

Notes:

* Includes family members of labour immigrants.

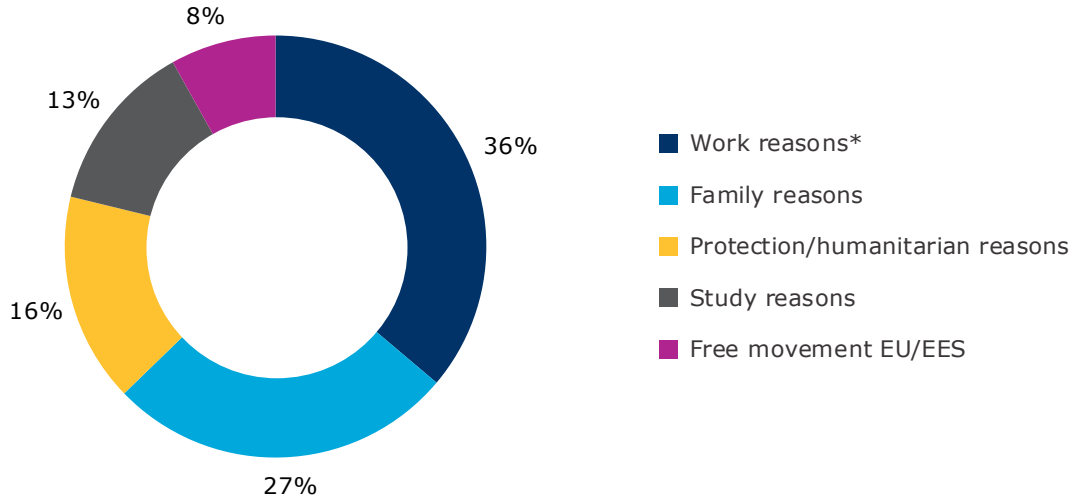
** This includes protection for refugees, subsidiary protection, resettlement and residence permits granted due to exceptionally distressing circumstances or because a person could not be returned. Also includes residence permits granted under the "Upper secondary school Act" for young asylum seekers.

*** Includes family members of international students.

Source: Swedish Migration Agency

⁵ Since May 2014, EU- and EEA-citizens do not need to register their right of residence at the Migration Agency any more, which is why the number of permits or residence rights granted under EU free movement rules appears much smaller for 2015 and 2016 compared to previous years.

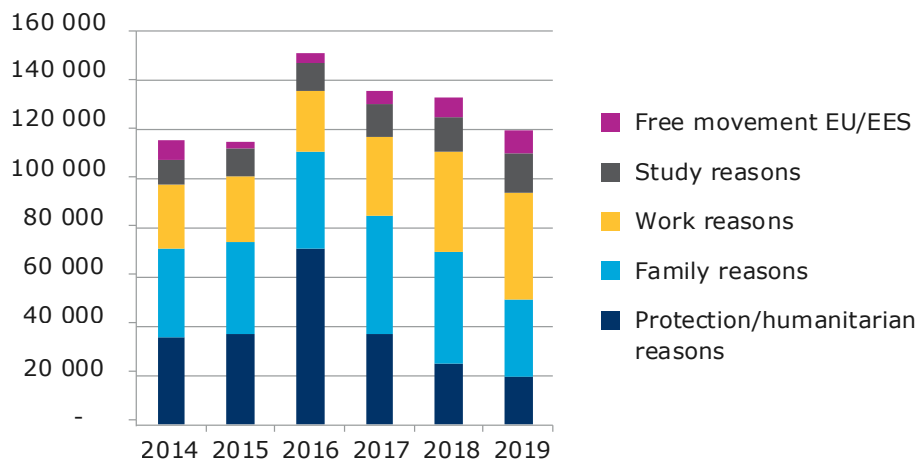
Figure 5: Overall immigration: First-time residence permits granted 2019



Source: Swedish Migration Agency

Figure 6 shows the granting of residence and work permits in a longer-term perspective. Residence permits granted for protection and humanitarian reasons have increased over the period 2013-2016, and then declined in 2017 – 2018, and in 2019, the number declined even further. In comparison, family-related immigration grew modestly until 2016, and then increased substantially in 2017. In 2018, the number of permits granted for family reasons decreased and this decline continued in 2019. For work-related immigration, the trend shows a strong growth in 2017, and particularly in 2019. In fact, over the past ten years, work migration was never stronger than in 2019. As far as international students (immigration for education purposes) are concerned, a slowly increasing trend is visible over the entire period.

Figure 6: Timeline - all first-time residence permits granted, 2014-2019

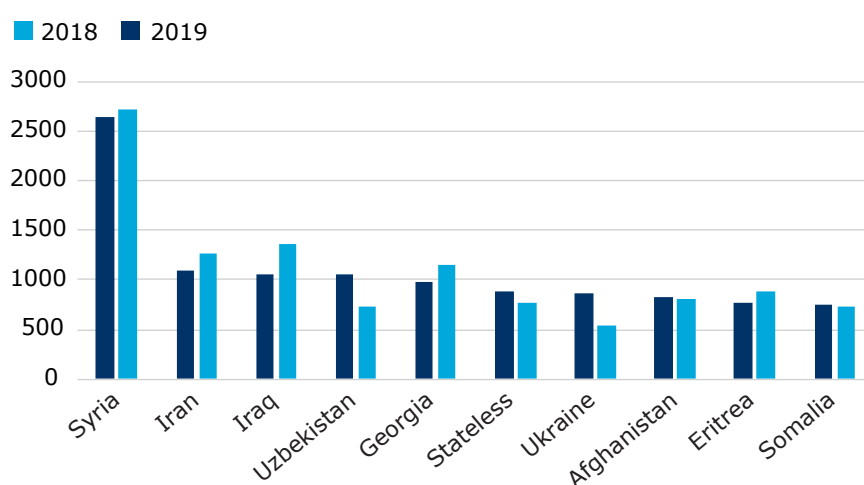


Source: Swedish Migration Agency

2.2 International protection

The number of asylum seekers coming to Sweden in 2019 increased by 2 percent to 21 958 compared to the year before when 21 502 people applied for asylum. Most asylum seekers in 2019 came from Syria (2 649), Iran (1 090), Iraq (1 054), Uzbekistan (1 052) and Georgia (975). Afghanistan, which had been an important country of origin in previous years, was no longer among the top five nationalities of asylum seekers in Sweden in 2019.

Figure 7: Asylum Citizenships 2018-2019



Source: Swedish Migration Agency

In 2019, Sweden was the eighth largest recipient country within the EU in absolute numbers (after Germany, France, Spain, Greece, the United Kingdom, Italy and Belgium).⁶

When it comes to outcomes of asylum procedures, the Swedish Migration Agency made 24 569 first-instance decisions on asylum cases in 2019. This means roughly 31 percent fewer decisions than in 2018, when 35 512 decisions were taken. This can be compared to 66 301 decisions taken in 2017.

A total of 6 540 individuals were granted protection in 2019 compared to 11 217 in 2018. The overall protection rate at first instance level was therefore 27 percent. The protection rate has continuously fallen over recent years, from 60 percent in 2016 to 41 percent in 2017 and 32 percent in 2018. The lower protection rate is mainly a result of a changed composition of asylum seekers population coming to Sweden.

The lower level of asylum applicants in 2019, 2018, 2017 and 2016, compared to 2015, is to a large degree considered a result of policy developments elsewhere in Europe, such as the 2016 agreement between the EU and Turkey to stop irregular migrant

⁶ Source: Eurostat-Database.

crossings to the Greek islands, border control measures along the “Balkan route”, in Central and Southern Europe, as well as in Denmark. Even though the numbers of migrants increased in Greece during 2019, the many obstacles along the Balkan route has made onward travel more problematic. It has also become more dangerous and difficult for migrants to cross the Mediterranean from Libya to Italy or Malta, which is – among other factors – related to fewer search and rescue operations in the Mediterranean, EU support to the Libyan Coastguard, and attempts in Italy to prevent vessels carrying migrants from disembarking them in Italian ports.

To a certain extent, legislative changes in Sweden as well as Swedish border controls may also have contributed to this development. The Swedish Parliament had passed a temporary law in 2016, which was prolonged until 2021 in 2019, introducing temporary residence permits for beneficiaries of international protection (instead of permanent ones) and restricting the right to family reunification as well as possibilities for asylum seekers to be granted residence permits on humanitarian grounds. Throughout 2019, Sweden also had temporary controls at certain intra-Schengen borders in place.

2.3 Resettlement

Apart from being a major destination for persons seeking asylum, Sweden also engages in global resettlement efforts. Resettlement is considered a way of sharing responsibility with countries hosting large groups of refugees and to safeguard access to asylum for people in need of protection. Following a cross-party agreement of 2015, Sweden has gradually increased the number of places in its resettlement programme. While approximately 1 900 spots were available in 2016 and earlier, the annual quota was raised to 3 400 for 2017, and to 5 000 persons in 2018 and 2019. Contrary to beneficiaries of protection that have come to Sweden as asylum seekers, resettled refugees are granted permanent residence permits. In 2018 Sweden resettled 5 219 persons and in 2019 the total number was 5 253. Table 6 shows the top 10 nationalities in regards to resettlement in the past two years.

Table 6: Resettlement top-10 2018-2019

Citizenship	2018	2019
Syria	2 392	2 161
Somalia	76	768
DR Congo	628	471
Eritrea	668	453
Ethiopia	390	374
Sudan	232	363
South Sudan	92	223
Afghanistan	347	131
Burundi	46	70
Central African Republic	85	42
Other	263	197
Total	5 219	5 253

Source: Swedish Migration Agency

2.4 Unaccompanied minors

While the number of unaccompanied minors (UAM) had escalated drastically in 2015, it strongly declined in 2016 and 2017, and continued to decrease in 2018 and 2019. While 35 369 applications by UAM had been registered in 2015, their number was 2 199 in 2016, 1 336 in 2017, 944 in 2018 and 902 in 2019.

In 2019, most UAM came from Syria (151), Morocco (125) and Somalia (124). This represents a change of pattern when compared to previous years. Afghanistan had for a long time been the by far largest nationality group among UAM coming to Sweden. This group now only plays a minor role. The majority of UAM were boys 645 out of 902, and the age range was mainly between 13-17 years.

Table 7: UAM top-10 Citizenships 2014-2019

Citizenship	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Summa
Afghanistan	1 547	23 480	665	222	99	121	26 134
Syria	1 233	3 777	180	159	136	151	5 636
Somalia	1 118	2 058	421	159	106	124	3 986
Eritrea	1 456	1 939	74	52	100	38	3 659
Morocco	381	403	144	235	126	125	1 414
Iraq	84	1 097	93	52	31	37	1 394
Ethiopia	114	891	133	53	34	14	1 239
Stateless	448	530	45	39	29	37	1 128
Albania	82	208	104	78	37	20	529
Algeria	126	102	47	39	24	18	356
Other	460	884	293	248	222	217	2 324
Total	7 049	35 369	2 199	1 336	944	902	47 799

Source: Swedish Migration Agency

2.5 Immigration for family reasons

Mostly because of the high number of asylum seekers coming to Sweden in 2015, family-related immigration increased in 2016 and 2017 but then decreased somewhat in 2018 and 2019 showed a further decline. The Migration Agency granted 39 007 permits in 2016, 48 046 in 2017 and then 44 861 in 2018. The total for 2019 was 31 785.

In 2016, Parliament adopted a temporary law restricting the possibility of being granted a residence permit for protection purposes in Sweden, and the right to family reunification. It was planned to be valid until 19 July 2019, but in 2019 it was extended until July 2021. Regarding financial support requirements, the temporary law demands that the sponsor in Sweden (who wants to be reunited or joined by family members)

must not only be able to support him-/herself but also his or her family members.⁷ This was a significant change as before, sponsors only needed to prove that they could support themselves.

The same law also states that refugees and persons eligible for subsidiary protection in Sweden will be granted temporary residence permits instead of permanent permits (which is the main rule under the Aliens Act). Refugees who are granted temporary residence permits under the temporary law and who are deemed to have well-grounded prospects of obtaining a permanent residence permit will continue to have a right to family reunification with their spouse, cohabitant and/or minor children, and children who are refugees will have a right to reunification with their parents. By contrast, a beneficiary of subsidiary protection who submitted his/her asylum application after 24 November 2015 had no right to family reunification until 20 July 2019, when this restriction was to be lifted again. Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection now have a right to family reunification again in the same way as refugees.

Within the overall group of persons who were granted residence permits for family reasons (31 785), 7 350 include family members of refugees and other beneficiaries of protection. The others are persons that joined other people living in Sweden, including Swedish nationals, EU nationals and third country nationals with permanent residence in the country. The number also includes adoptions abroad and children that were born in Sweden to parents with foreign nationality (8 796).

2.6 Work-related immigration

The number of immigrants coming to Sweden for employment purposes has seen a strongly increasing trend recently. A total of 24 710 individuals were granted a residence permit on the basis of work in Sweden in 2016. This figure increased to 32 294 persons in 2017, 41 048 in 2018 and to 43 242 in 2019. This group also includes accompanying family members of labour immigrants.

Berry pickers and planters (6 162), IT architects, systems analysts, and test managers (4 347), and fast-food workers, food preparation assistants (1 141) represented the three largest occupational groups among those who came to Sweden for work in 2019. The labour immigration system thus provides access to Sweden for both highly qualified people and workers in professions with no, or lower, qualification requirements. The Swedish Migration Agency's further development of the "certification system" for trusted employers has contributed to shorter processing times for labour migrants to obtain a residence permit for work with certified employers.

The main nationalities coming to Sweden in work-related immigration are listed in table 8.

⁷ The maintenance requirement will not apply, however, if the sponsor is a child. In addition, family members of beneficiaries of international protection are also exempt from the maintenance requirement if the family member applies for family reunification within three months of the date when the beneficiary of protection obtained his/her residence permit.

Table 8: Citizenship work-related immigration

Citizenship	2019
Thailand	6 489
India	4 975
Ukraine	1 119
Turkey	878
China	875
Iraq	639
United States	487
Iran	413
Brazil	383
Pakistan	338
Others	5 354
Total	21 950

Source: Swedish Migration Agency

2.7 International students

The number of people moving to Sweden for study purposes also increased in 2019, from 14 105 in 2018 to 15 669 in 2019. Among those individuals that were granted a permit in 2019, a majority (9 833) were admitted as students at universities and university colleges and 923 as doctoral students. Another 3 396 were admitted as family members of international students, and 663 for other educational purposes. The remaining 854 persons received a residence permit to look for work after their studies in Sweden. The possibility of applying for this type of "job-seeker permit" was introduced in 2014, and the number of permits granted for this purpose has increased ever since.

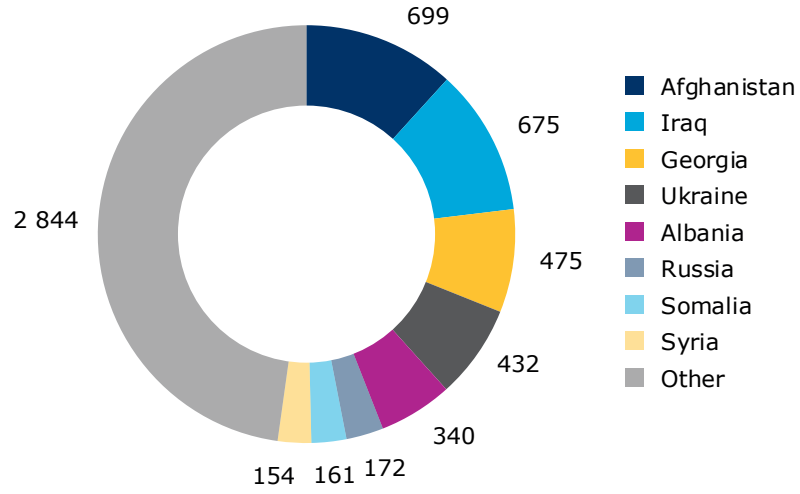
The main countries that third-country nationals who were granted a residence permit for study purposes came from were China (2 433), India (1 922), Pakistan (1 340) and Bangladesh (1 258).

2.8 Return

In 2019, a total of 9 224 persons returned from Sweden to their countries of origin (5 687), to member states of the EU or EEA (3 007), other countries (352), or to unknown destinations (178). Out of 9 224 of these returns 5 952 were voluntary, assisted by the Swedish Migration Agency. The remaining 3 262 cases were forced returns, carried out by the Police.

Among those returning voluntarily (5 952), most people had Afghan (699), Iraqi (645), Georgian (475), Ukrainian (432) and Albanian (340) nationality; see figure 8 below. The main destination countries were Germany, Ukraine, Georgia, France, and Iraq. Most of the Afghan nationals were returned to other countries within Europe. Only 427 were brought back to their country of origin (104 assisted by the Migration Agency and 323 by the Police) of the 1 113 Afghans returning. By contrast, nationals of Iraq (792) went back to their country of origin (394) and other EU countries (387) at the same proportion. The majority with the assistance of the Swedish Migration Agency (677).

Figure 8: Voluntary return, main citizenship groups, 2019



Source: Swedish Migration Agency

3 Introduction

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

As during the past three years, the EMN Annual Report on Migration and Asylum for 2019 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 February 2020 and sent to the Commission.

This report represents Part II of the Swedish EMN Annual Report on Migration and Asylum for 2019. 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 is published on the national website of EMN Sweden.⁸

The Report covers the period 1 January to 31 December 2019. However, at some instance, it may also include references to developments that started in earlier years and continued in 2019 or early 2020. It is the 16th report in a series of such EMN annual reports

⁸ www.emnsweden.se

4 Context for asylum and migration policy developments

4.1 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 shared between several other ministries, but mainly lie within the responsibilities of the Ministry of Employment.

The Swedish Migration Agency and the Swedish Police Authority 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.⁹

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 Authority, the Swedish Prison and Probation Service, the Swedish missions abroad and the Swedish Public Employment Service (Arbetsförmedlingen). In addition, the County Administrative Boards negotiate with the municipalities on the reception of individuals who have been granted 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 and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection is a responsibility of the Swedish Public Employment Service Arbetsförmedlingen and the 290 Swedish municipalities.

While the Swedish Migration Agency has the responsibility for voluntary returns, the Police Authority 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

⁹ 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.

third country nationals' entry and exit and the Coast Guard shall control the vessel traffic at sea borders.

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 (Utlänningsförfordningen, 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. A temporary law, restricting the possibility of being granted a residence permit in Sweden, and the right to family reunification, has been in force since July 2016. It was scheduled to expire in 2019, but in June 2019, Parliament voted to extend it until July 2021. The extension included some changes related to family reunification, which will make it possible again for people who are granted a residence permit as beneficiaries of subsidiary protection to reunite with their family members again, in a similar way as people with refugee status. The temporary law had originally been adopted in reaction to the extraordinary refugee situation in 2015.

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).

4.2 Overarching changes to the national migration and asylum system 2019

According to the Statement of Government Policy that the Swedish Prime Minister made in the Parliament in January 2019, several reforms are planned as regards immigration and asylum policy. Apart from the extension of a temporary law, as mentioned above, the government intends to introduce a language requirement for foreigners to become Swedish citizens. According to the Prime Minister, the right of asylum must be safeguarded in Sweden, in Europe and internationally, and the government intends to work to establish a common asylum system in the EU that distributes the reception of refugees fairly and proportionately. He also said that those with grounds for protection must rapidly become a part of society, and those without such grounds must return promptly. There were no overarching changes to the national migration and asylum system in Sweden in 2019, but in response to the aforementioned facts, the Government decided in June 2019 to appoint a cross-party commission of inquiry to examine Sweden's future migration policy.

The inquiry is to consider the design of the policy with the aim of establishing a system that is sustainable in the long-term. The Swedish government stated that in a changing world, migration policy should reduce the need for temporary solutions and ensure a permanent system that enjoys broad support in the Swedish Riksdag. The migration policy must be humane, legally secure and effective.

The inquiry's remit includes considering:

- whether the general rule should be to grant persons in need of international protection temporary or permanent residence permits;
- whether it should be possible to grant asylum seekers residence permits on grounds other than those provided under EU law and Swedish convention

commitments and, if so, to particularly consider whether a new humanitarian ground for granting residence permits should be introduced;

- the extent to which family reunification should be possible if the person to whom a third-country national cites family ties has applied for asylum and been granted a residence permit in Sweden; and
- whether a maintenance requirement should apply in family reunification and, if so, how this requirement should be designed.

In its work, the inquiry is to conduct an international assessment that primarily looks at the regulations of other EU countries, and analyse what the contributing factors are in Sweden that lead people to seek asylum here. The terms of reference are based on an agreement between the government parties, the Centre Party and the Liberal Party. The commission of inquiry is to present its report by 15 August 2020.

5 Legal migration

5.1 Legal and practical changes to the Swedish work immigration system

The number of work permits issued in 2019 showed an increasing trend over most of the main (top-10) occupational groups among labour migrants. This was true for occupations requiring low-skills (berry pickers, cleaners) while there is a small decrease for high-skill workers (such as IT architects and engineering professionals). The most common nationality groups engaging in labour market-related migration to Sweden in 2019 were Thailand (6 489), India (4 975), Ukraine (1 189), Turkey (878) and China (875). Indian nationals often work in the Swedish IT sector and Thai nationals in the seasonal berry-picking business.

Table 9: Work permits granted, 2017 - 2019, 10 main occupational groups

Area of work	2017	2018	2019
Berry pickers and planters	3 043	4 882	6162
IT architects, systems analysts, and test managers	4 026	4 415	4347
Fast-food workers, food preparation assistants	781	1 117	1141
Cooks and cold-buffet managers	849	1 085	1045
Engineering professionals	1085	1 249	1003
Physical and engineering science technicians	433	656	921
Cleaners and home service personnel	513	688	734
Carpenters, bricklayers, and building frame workers	240	653	699
Forestry workers	257	327	531
Operations, support, and network technicians	246	480	509
Others	4 079	5 289	4858
Total	15 552	20 841	21 950

Source: Swedish Migration Agency

The Swedish Migration Agency has developed a certification system for trusted employers that frequently recruit workers from abroad. This system has been further developed. A certification is an agreement between an employer and the Swedish Migration Agency that allows faster processing. The agreement entails that the employer submits a complete application via the web and the Swedish Migration Agency makes a decision within 20 business days. The three most common occupational groups within the certification system are IT-architects and related professions, civil engineers, and engineers as well as technicians.

In 2019, Sweden signed a Working Holiday Agreement with Japan. The purpose of such agreements is to facilitate cultural exchange for young adults. In practice, it means that citizens of Japan, aged between 18 and 30, can apply for a permit that allows them to live and work in Sweden for up to one year. Sweden has similar agreements in place with selected third countries.

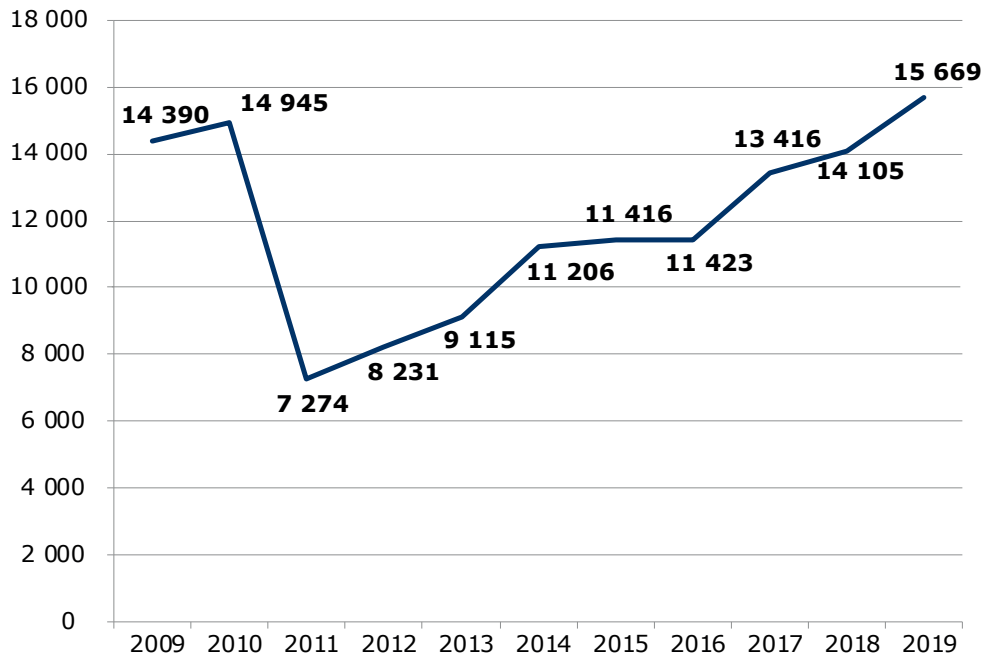
5.2 International students and visiting researchers

Third-country national students

Migration to Sweden for study reasons is generally 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 2011, the number of third-country nationals who were granted residence permits for study reasons fell sharply, mainly due to the introduction of tuition fees for incoming third-country students. Since 2012, however, the numbers have been rising again.

In 2019, a total of 15 669 residence permits were granted for study reasons, including doctoral studies and accompanying family members of international students.

Figure 9: First-time residence permits granted for study reasons (including accompanying family members), 2009-2019



Source: Swedish Migration Agency

As Table 10 shows, the by far most important nationality group among international students in Sweden over the past five years has been Chinese. The second and third largest nationalities in 2019 were India and Pakistan.

Table 10: First-time residence permits granted for study reasons, top-10 nationality groups, 2014-2019

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
China	2 081	2 339	2 327	2 466	2 201	2 433
India	917	1 005	1 218	1 577	1 858	1 922
Pakistan	635	943	849	952	1 039	1 340
Bangladesh	300	330	350	653	1 029	1 258
Iran	628	543	572	884	937	1 189
USA	821	804	752	874	772	826
Singapore	385	389	357	416	381	440
South Sudan	351	373	329	330	342	392
Japan	268	270	252	336	308	352
Canada	416	420	408	384	361	350

Source: Swedish Migration Agency

Possibilities for international students to remain in Sweden to look for work

There was an important policy change regarding international students in 2014, which started having some impact in 2015 and subsequent years. Students who have carried out studies at a Swedish higher education institution for at least two terms can now receive a residence permit for looking for employment opportunities to start a business. According to a provision in the Aliens Ordinance, this permit can be valid for a maximum of six months.

The period of validity of the job-seeker permit was extended from six to nine months when the legislation implementing the Students and Researchers Directive (Dir.2016/801)¹⁰ in national law, was passed by Parliament in 2019, entering into force 1 January 2020.

¹⁰ Directive (EU) 2016/801 of the European Parliament and of the Council 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.

6 International protection including asylum

6.1 Legislative developments

The temporary law¹¹ restricts the possibility of being granted a residence permit for protection purposes in Sweden, and the right to family reunification; the law was prolonged until 19 July 2021 with some amendments mostly regarding family reunification. The law means that asylum seekers who have the right to protection are granted temporary residence permits in Sweden. A person who receives a refugee status declaration receives a residence permit for three years, and a person who receives the eligible for subsidiary protection receives a residence permit for 13 months. When the permit expires, a new application is required for an extension of the permit and an examination regarding the possibility of returning the person to his or her country of origin is conducted.

The temporary law also limits the ability of asylum seekers to reunite with their families. Those who receive refugee status and residence permits for three years will have the opportunity for family reunification and also those who are granted permission as an alternative need for protection (i.e. the person who has been granted 13 months). No material conditions are required if the application is lodged within a period of three months, counted from the date the person to whom the applicant invokes a connection has been granted a refugee status or a beneficiary of subsidiary protection status. The residence permit must be granted before entering Sweden.

Regarding financial support requirements, the temporary law demands that the sponsor in Sweden (who wants to be reunited or joined by family members) must not only be able to support him-/herself but also his or her family members.¹² This was a significant change as before, sponsors only needed to prove that they could support themselves. The extension of the temporary law means that asylum seekers granted refugee status and subsidiary protection will not be entitled permanent residence permits but temporary permits of three-year and thirteen-month duration respectively. The extension also lifted the ban on family reunification for subsidiary protection beneficiaries.

¹¹ A temporary law that was adopted in 2016 and aimed at reducing the number of new asylum applicants in Sweden remained in place throughout the year 2018. Most importantly perhaps, it introduced temporary residence permits for beneficiaries of international protection (instead of permanent permits), restricted humanitarian grounds for residence in Sweden, and narrowed family reunification entitlements. On 1 July 2018, legal amendments to this temporary act entered into force. These amendments meant that a limited group of unaccompanied young migrants, who had received, or would otherwise have received, an expulsion order, could be granted residence permits for studies at upper secondary schools, under certain circumstances (please see below under "Unaccompanied minors").

¹² The maintenance requirement will not apply, however, if the sponsor is a child. In addition, family members of beneficiaries of international protection are also exempt from the maintenance requirement if the family member applies for family reunification within three months of the date when the beneficiary of protection obtained his/her residence permit.

As a result of the proposal for a continuation of the temporary law and against the background of Sweden's commitments under the UN Convention on Statelessness, a provision has also been adopted which, in some cases, allows for a permanent residence permit to be issued to persons born in Sweden and who have been stateless since birth.

6.2 Reception of asylum applicants

The Swedish reception system for asylum seekers is managed by the Swedish 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. This type of housing is called reception facilities (anläggningsboende, ABO).
- As an alternative to stay in ABO accommodation provided by the Migration Agency, an asylum seeker has the possibility to arrange his/her own accommodation, which is called eget boende (EBO). Since applicants usually do not have the financial means to pay rent, they often stay with friends or relatives in such cases.

By the end of 2019, a total of 40 312 were enrolled in the Swedish reception system for asylum seekers, which is a decrease by around 12 000 persons compared to 2018. Following a strong decrease in the number of asylum applications, the Swedish Migration Agency reduced its housing capacity and discontinued accommodation facilities, especially temporary ones. The Agency also downsized various other operations and reduced the number of branch offices across Sweden as well as the number of employees.

Expected changes to the Swedish reception system

Whether or not asylum seekers should be allowed to arrange their own accommodation and stay with family members or friends has often been debated in Sweden. On the one hand, staying with people who are already established in Swedish society can have positive effects on integration and self-reliance. On the other hand, the EBO system has been criticized of leading to an unequal distribution of asylum seekers across Sweden as many individuals chose to live with family members in larger metropolitan areas. The EBO system can therefore contribute to segregation and overcrowded living conditions.

In November 2015, the Swedish Government commissioned an inquiry to propose measures to create a coherent system for the reception and settlement of asylum seekers and new arrivals in Sweden. In 2017, the Government issued supplementary terms of reference to this inquiry, extending its mission. Based on the proposals of the inquiry, which were presented in 2018,¹³ the government proposed a reform of the accommodation system in 2019. While it does not aim to abolish EBO, the proposal aims to encourage asylum seekers to stay in areas where a socially sustainable reception is

¹³ Mottagandeutredningen (2018): *Ett ordnat mottagande – gemensamt ansvar för snabb etablering eller återvändande*, SOU 2018: 22.

possible. This includes the introduction of disincentives for asylum seekers who chose to move to areas that are socio-economically challenged.

The law *Daily allowance entitlement restricted for asylum seekers who choose to live in areas with socioeconomic challenges*¹⁴ covering asylum seekers living on their own, is aimed to get asylum seekers to live in areas where there are better conditions for a sustainable reception and less risk of negative social consequences. The changes mean that if an asylum seeker on his own arranges accommodation in an area with socio-economic challenges, he/she as the main rule, will not be entitled to daily allowance or special economic benefits. The first areas that are included will be listed by the Swedish Migration Agency starting 1 July 2020. The changes has its origin in the "January agreement" – a political agreement between the Social Democrats, the Centre Party, the Liberal Party and the Swedish Green Party in 2019.

In addition, following a judgement by the Administrative Court of Appeal, the Swedish Migration Agency made a change to its practice regarding the right to housing and financial support for some asylum seekers who have been granted a temporary residence permit. Persons who have been granted a temporary residence permit (for example due to impediments to the enforcement on return) do not have the right to housing and financial support from the Migration Agency, in accordance with the Act on Reception of Asylum Seekers.

6.3 New developments about the asylum procedures in 2019

The Swedish Migration Agency has enabled legal counsellors to submit appeals against a first instance decision digitally via a secure digital portal.

The Swedish Migration Agency revised the different channels Dublin cases shall be categorised into. The different tracks reflects a preliminary estimation of the handling time. A technical change in the Swedish Migration Agency's IT-system enables the agency to send information to the Eurodac-database the date the actual transfer occurred. Cases when another Member State requests Sweden to accept a transfer are handled digitally.

The pilot project "Asylum360" from the fall 2018 has continued and been extended to additional regions in 2019. The aim is to create a more efficient case processing, handling both the accommodation and the initial phase of the asylum examination in one process. The pilot project also aimed to handle as many asylum cases as possible in a continuous flow and in case of bottlenecks, analyse them in order to remove them. Since 2017, the Swedish Migration Agency handles all new asylum applications digitally. In 2019, a new project concerning a new technical solution for transferring asylum appeals digitally to the Migration Court was initiated. The project ended 30 March 2020.

Country of origin information (COI)

The COI-unit was incorporated with functions for migration analysis and coordination of the Agency's involvement with work related to national security issues and organised crime. The COI-unit is now an integrated part of a newly created Section for Information Analysis.

¹⁴ Lagen (1994:137) om mottagande av asylsökande m.fl. och förordningen (1994:361) om mottagande av asylsökande m.fl. Basis for decision: Govt Bill 2019/20:10 Ett socialt hållbart eget boende för asylsökande SFS: 2019:1204–1205 Entry into force: 1 January 2020

Concerning methodology there are plans to initiate a project together with an academic institution in order to enhance analytical methodology and create a more harmonized and academic approach to the information cycle. These ambitions have however been postponed but are still part of the future agenda. In the field of COI a number of products have been published during the year. They are publicly available through the LIFOS website and include reports on Afghanistan, Armenia, Georgia, Iraq, Syria, Cameroon, Somalia, Sudan, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, the State of Palestine and Nigeria. Fact-finding missions have been carried out to Georgia, Ethiopia, Great Britain and Uzbekistan. Cooperation on COI-issues with other member states has primarily been carried out within the framework of the EASO country networks.

6.4 Rights/obligations of beneficiaries of international protection

In July 2019, the Swedish Parliament prolonged the temporary law passed in 2016. In connection to the prolongation, the provisions on family reunification were amended so that beneficiaries of subsidiary protection were granted the same right to family reunification as refugees. The Migration Court of Appeal ruled in three cases on conditions regarding sufficient resources before allowing family reunification (MIG 2019:12, MIG 2019:21 and MIG 2019:22). The cases concerned the way the conditions are examined and calculated as well as the interpretation of sufficient resources.

The cooperation with the Turkish Directorate-General of Migration Management (DGMM) continued during 2019 with focus on capacity building activities on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI), Gender Based Violence (GBV), vulnerable groups and protection. The cooperation continues during 2020 with close coordination with EASO to ensure that overlaps will not occur and that synergies can be identified.

The Swedish Migration Agency is the lead partner of a Twinning project in Serbia with a view to supporting the strengthening of the migration management and asylum system. The project is implemented with junior partners Slovenia and the Netherlands. It started in October 2019 with a duration of 12 months.

6.6 Institutional changes in the national asylum system

During 2019 the amount of workers full-time equivalent decreased from 5 842 in 2018 to 5 096. The decrease of workers is related to the decreasing number of asylum seekers in Sweden. In 2019, the General Director of the Swedish Migration Agency decided that the agency will be restructured and the number of regions reduced from five to three. There will also be a restructuring of the head office. The changes were initially expected to come into force in May 2020, but has been delayed until the second half of the year due to the SARS-COV-2 emergency.

6.7 Efficiency and quality in the national asylum system

The Swedish Migration Agency is regularly updating the training modules and guidance regarding quality and legal concerns in the asylum system. The Swedish Migration Agency has trained about 500 case officers and 40 head of units in children's rights, issued a new method/guidance on children's rights and best interests of the child determinations and developed a technical tool for best interests of the child determinations.

The pilot project "Asylum360"¹⁵ initiated in the fall of 2018 has continued and been extended to more regions in 2019. Due to Asyl 360 the handling time regarding new applicants has been reduced by 219 days during 2019.

6.8 Asylum decisions 2019

In 2019, the Swedish Migration Agency made 24 569 first-instance decisions on asylum cases. This represents 30 % fewer decisions than in 2018, when over 35 000 decisions were taken. The overall protection rate was also lower in 2019 (27 %) than in 2018 (32 %). Table 11 shows the distribution of positive and negative decisions for the ten quantitatively most important citizenship groups among all applicants who received a decision in 2019. Among these ten nationalities, Syrian and Eritrean nationals had the highest proportion of positive decisions, 74% and 73%, respectively. Another important nationality group with a relative high share of positive decisions was Stateless asylum seekers, with a recognition rate of 43%. By contrast, citizens of Georgia were generally not found to be in need of protection.

Table 11: First-instance decisions in asylum cases, main nationality groups, 2019

Citezenship	Total number of decisions	Positive	Negative (after material consideration)	Negative (Dublin)*	Negative (Other)**	Proportion positive decisions of all decisions
Syria	2 712	1 995	52	266	399	74%
Iraq	1 704	305	942	202	255	18%
Iran	1 346	424	681	125	116	32%
Afghanistan	1 173	429	533	95	116	37%
Georgia	1 160	1	988	41	130	0%
Stateless	1 104	480	324	136	164	43%
Eritrea	975	715	71	118	71	73%
Somalia	917	291	334	180	112	32%
Ukraina	844	13	633	24	174	2%
State of Palestine	632	247	227	120	38	39%
Other	12 002	1 640	7 401	1 336	1 625	14%
Total	24 569	6540	12186	2643	3200	27%

* "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.

¹⁵ In 2018, a pilot project was launched at the Swedish Migration Agency with the aim of handling all asylum cases within 30 days. The aim of the project is to speed up and increase the efficiency of the asylum procedure, and to combine the accommodation of asylum seekers and the examination of their applications into one comprehensive process. The ambition is that 50% of the total asylum caseload are be managed within 30 days. This target was reached in December 2018. The pilot was called "Asyl360", which symbolizes the pilot's all-encompassing perspective and expresses that all departments within the Swedish Migration Agency shall focus on reducing the handling times on new asylum applications.

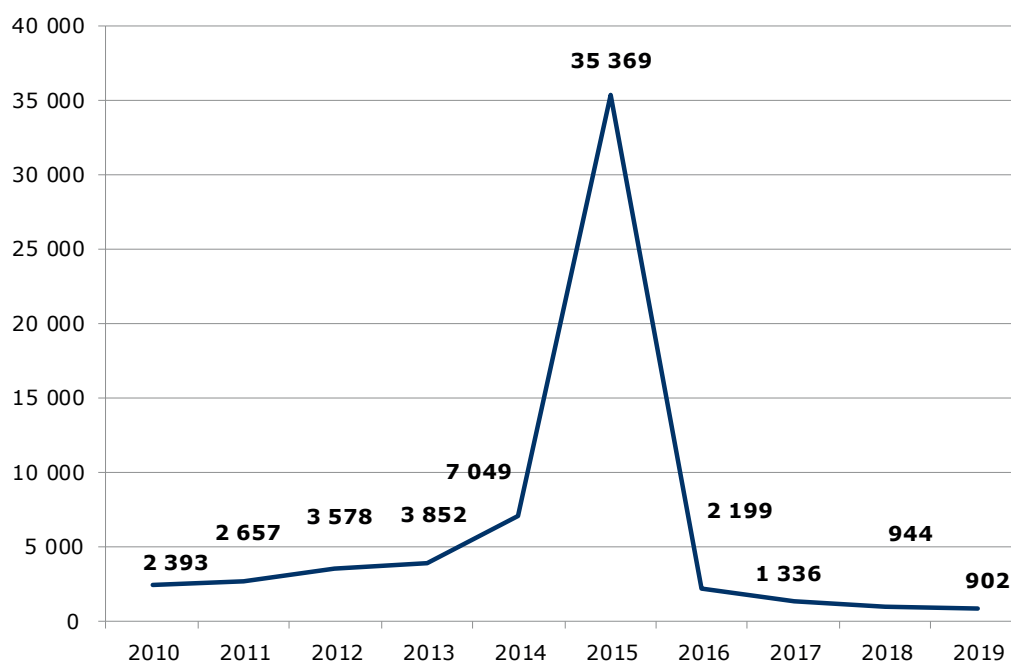
7 Unaccompanied minors and other vulnerable groups

7.1 Unaccompanied minors applying for asylum

Children and youths that come to Sweden without a legal guardian and apply for asylum are placed in a home provided by the municipalities. They usually stay in a group or youth home, if they do not have relatives they can stay with. It is the municipality's responsibility to receive unaccompanied minors, which means they should also appoint a custodian (God man) who act in the parents' place. A public council is appointed to help the child/youth with its asylum application.

The number of unaccompanied minors (UAM) seeking asylum in Sweden has increased remarkably over recent years, up to and including the year 2015, and after the implementation of border controls the number started to drop in 2016, and continued in 2017, 2018 and 2019, see Figure 10 below. While as many as 35 369 UAM applied for asylum in Sweden in 2015, their number was only 2 199 in 2016, 1 336 in 2017, 944 in 2018 and 902 in 2019. In 2019, UAM accounted for roughly 4% of all asylum seekers that came to Sweden that year.

Figure 10: Unaccompanied minors applying for asylum in Sweden, 2009-2019



Source: Swedish Migration Agency

The number of staff assigned to the processing of asylum applications by unaccompanied minors is continuously adapted to the need within the process. Due to the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (UN CRC) being integrated in Swedish law 1 January, 2020 the Swedish Migration Agency has developed guidelines on how to assess

the best interest of the child according to art. 3 in UN CRC. The Agency has conducted training of case officers and decision makers as well as managers on the assessment of the best interest of the child during 2019 and are planning to continue the training of staff in other processes in 2020.

New guidelines concerning the placement of asylum seeking unaccompanied children, who are assigned to a municipality, were developed during 2019. The aim was to reduce the amount of placement based on the child's own wish to stay together with a person related to the child and/or already settled in Sweden. The municipality now takes a greater responsibility in assessing whether a decision to place the child with the related person is mutual and in the best interest of the child.

In 2018, the Swedish Migration Agency received, in the annual budget and policy specification from Ministry of Justice, an instruction to assign unaccompanied children to Sweden's municipalities based on the municipalities' population, previous reception of asylum seekers and newly arrived. The aim of the model that is based on the previously mentioned parameters is a more fair overall distribution of unaccompanied minors in Sweden. Children can be assigned through a connection, either to a person in a municipality, or to the municipality itself, for example if the child has previously lived in the municipality. The social services in the municipalities have the competence to examine the connection and should for this reason be the responsible authority. The improvement that was carried out in 2019 was thus to involve the social services assessment at an earlier stage, a change in line with the best interests of the child.

Procedural safeguards

During the year, the Swedish Migration Agency has conducted training with emphasis on the asylum process, focusing on children and protective factors, including female genital mutilation. At the beginning of 2019, the Swedish Migration Agency also took a judicial position regarding contradictions between asylum-seeking children, public counsel and guardians.

The Swedish Migration Agency took a judicial position during the year resulting in two different documents regarding the situation in Afghanistan. The first one was a legal comment regarding the increased violence in Afghanistan during the summer of 2019. The other document was a judicial position regarding the examination of applications for international protection, etc. from citizens of Afghanistan, including children and unaccompanied children. (SR 29/2019 and SR 03/2019).

The Swedish Migration Agency has been preparing the organization in relation to the fact that the Swedish parliament decided to incorporate the Convention on the Rights of the Child into Swedish Law on January 1, 2020.

The situation in Iraq was noticed by the Swedish Migration Agency in a judicial position highlighting that children are quite vulnerable in Iraq's current state. (SR 34/2019).

The Swedish Migration Agency took a judicial position regarding the situation in Nicaragua (SR 14/2019). UAMs are not commented specifically, but children in general are noted upon in how Nicaraguan government efforts were insufficient to combat child abuse and sexual violence against minors.

Another judicial position taken in 2019 regarding the trial of applications for international protection, etc. for people from Somalia (SR 27/2019). UAMs are commented specifically in several parts of the text.

The Swedish Migration Agency took a judicial position concerning the assessment of the protection needs of people from Syria. The Swedish Migration Agency argues that

children in Syria have been severely affected by the extended conflict. They risk both forced recruitment and forced labour, which constitute human trafficking. Furthermore, the violence against them and their sexual exploitation have increased during the conflict. For those unaccompanied children who do not have parents or other networks in their country of origin who can protect and safeguard their interests, the situation is particularly vulnerable.

The brochure of information that is given to children applying for asylum has been updated in 2019, mostly due to the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (UN CRC) being integrated in Swedish law 1 January 2020. The information given in the initial part of the asylum processes has now more focus on the rights of children in the asylum process.

The Swedish Migration Agency has in 2019 worked with the implementation of the law approved by the Swedish Parliament in 2018, which entitles young asylum seekers, whose asylum applications were rejected, to apply for a residence permit for studies at upper secondary school. This temporary law is expected to regularize the legal situation of several thousand young migrants who came to Sweden as unaccompanied minors and had their asylum application rejected.

The Swedish Migration Agency together with the National Board of Health and Welfare produced information material on the topic child marriage during 2019. The reason behind this collaboration is that foreign child marriages are not accepted in Sweden since 1 January 2019.

The Swedish Migration Agency updated an internal guideline for handling cases concerning married children due to the new law. The amendment of the law clarifies that no marriage of a person under 18 is considered legal. Before the law came into force, marriage that took place before entering the county were assessed legal under some circumstances.

The internal guidelines can be summarized in the following points;

- handles the child's case individually
- asks questions about the child's relationship/marriage
- investigate if the child is subjected to violence or is in immediate danger
- designates a different public assistant than that prescribed for the child's spouse/partner
- make a report of suspicion of children who are disadvantaged by the social services
- The guideline also include administrative support for examining the best interests of the child in migration cases.

7.2 Unaccompanied minors recorded within the childprotection system

- in 2019 a renewed internal guideline for handling cases where unaccompanied minors who turns 18 or are written up to the age of 18. The purpose of the guideline is to clarify for the persons who work with UAMs:
- when in the process children without guardians should be given information about what it means to be in legal age
- how children without guardians should be handled when they are no longer children, but are of legal age

The revision has been carried out with the aim of better preparing the unaccompanied minors for the changes that takes place when they are of legal age. One major change is the shift of responsibility from the municipality to the Swedish Migration Agency, which also includes another accommodation.

7.3 Other vulnerable groups applying for asylum

Because of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child becoming Swedish law, a greater effort has been made to improve/develop the children's rights perspective at the Swedish Migration Agency. Among other things, a new treatment support for examining the best interests of the child has been developed. Training efforts aimed at staff have been implemented and will continue during 2020. The aim is to strengthen the child's rights in the asylum and legal migration processes and to develop the quality of decision motivation and formulation of decisions. For the same purpose, the Swedish Migration Agency's existing children's policy has been updated and revised in 2019. The Swedish Migration Agency's internal guidelines regarding children in the asylum process who are married has been updated based on stricter legislation in the area.

Targeted information for children in the asylum process has been developed. The information is accessed via a mobile application, and is specially addressed to children at the age from 7-12. The information is meant as a complement found elsewhere on the web and information given orally, in groups or individually.

A national forum for the dialogue with NGOs with a special focus on children and children's rights perspectives has been initiated during 2019. The purpose is information sharing and knowledge development, and in the long term opportunities to develop the ability to obtain and utilize children's perspectives and experiences in the handling of, among other things, the asylum process.

8 Integration

8.1 Integration of third-country nationals

Combining language training with Vocational Educational Training (VET) in adult education

The Government is carrying out a Knowledge Boost initiative to provide people with a greater opportunity to obtain an education or training and a job. It consists of, among others, a state grant for regional adult vocational education including also organizing vocational education in combination with Swedish for immigrants or Swedish as a second language. The government has decided on an additional state grant for supporting measures for the municipalities that organize vocational education in combination with language training. The aim is to create better conditions for integrated vocational and language education and speed up integration; the amendments will come into force in 2020.

Support for validation

The National Delegation for Validation 2015–2019 has the government's mission to follow and support a coordinated development of validation on the national and regional level. The government sees a need for continued state support for the validation work to ensure that the development work that is underway does not stop. The Government has therefore instructed The National Agency for Higher Vocational Education to maintain some state support for validation pending a more permanent system and to strengthen the Authority's support sectoral validation. As from 2020 the government has also proposed a state grant to support the development or update of sectors' validation models.

Recognition of foreign qualifications

The Swedish Council for Higher Education, the public agency responsible for recognition of foreign qualifications, is responsible for evaluating foreign secondary education, post-secondary vocational education and foreign higher education qualifications. The Council evaluates completed foreign qualifications and compares them to the Swedish education system. In 2019, approximately 23 100 people applied for an evaluation, a decrease of 10 percent compared to 2018. The reason for the decline is the decrease in the number of persons seeking asylum in Sweden. The total number of applications regarding education and recognition statements from Syria decreased by 35 percent. The Council notes an increase in applications related to technology and IT, for example from Indian nationals.

Special measure for validation of skills acquired abroad

The Swedish Council for Higher Education has been tasked with trying out a special measure for validation of insufficiently documented foreign qualifications. The aim of the measure is to make it possible for a person with an insufficiently documented, completed foreign qualification to get his or her education evaluated by the Council, by way of an assessment of real competence performed by a higher education institution. In the first phase the Council will focus on higher education. The Council will also develop a process to enable people with incomplete but documented foreign education to get his or her education evaluated by the Council.

Developing recognition and accreditation of prior learning

The Government has tasked the universities and university colleges with developing their work with recognition and accreditation of prior learning. The Swedish Council for Higher Education has been tasked with contributing to the establishment of a permanent structure with the purpose of supporting universities and university colleges in their work. As was proposed by the Government in the Budget Bill for 2016, 30 million SEK annually during 2016–2018 has been allocated to higher education institutions and the Council for this work.

Bridging programmes

The Government allocates resources for bridging programmes, aimed at people with foreign higher education qualifications and degrees in for example law, medicine, nursing, dentistry, pharmacy, engineering and teaching who need complementary education in order to engage in professional activities in Sweden. The aim of the bridging programmes is to attain a corresponding Swedish degree or to acquire the skills to practice the profession in Sweden. Providing an opportunity to supplement foreign training can be an important measure for facilitating the integration of jobseekers with foreign higher education qualifications and the government has increased the funding for bridging programmes which has led to an increase in existing programmes and additional programmes aimed at other educational backgrounds.

8.2 Measures to enhance language skills

Swedish from day one

Since 2015, the Swedish study associations and folk high schools have been granted government funding for outreaching measures targeted at primarily asylum seekers with the aim to strengthen their knowledge of the Swedish language and about the Swedish society. The initiative gives the participants a meaningful activity during the asylum period and opens the door to the local civil society. An increase in the knowledge of the Swedish language leads to a faster establishment on the labour market. The initiative has now been prolonged until 2022.

Increased investments in Swedish language teachers

The Government has allocated SEK 100 million per year to the education of Swedish language teachers teaching Swedish for immigrants (SFI). This is of great importance for the future availability of qualified teachers in both Swedish for immigrants and the subject of Swedish as a Second Language. The effort means, inter alia, an opportunity for teachers to receive 80 per cent of their salary during leave of absence for studies as they develop skills in the subject of Swedish as a second language. Because of the increased number of pupils in education in Swedish for immigrants, demand for and competition for qualified teachers has increased. Difficulties in recruiting competent teachers can affect the quality of education and extent to which a municipality can provide SFI within the prescribed timeframe.

Swedish language training for persons on parental leave

Swedish language training for persons on parental leave is a new government initiative from 2020. For 2020-2022, the government has proposed that new funding for newly arrived and foreign-born parents on parental leave. The aim of the initiative is to improve the knowledge of the Swedish language. Longer periods of parental leave can increase the time it takes for especially women to be integrated to the labour market. An interruption from former language studies may lead to a regression in the language development.

8.3 Integration into the labour market

Civic orientation programme

As a part of the introduction program for newly arrived immigrants, the Government has allocated funds for an increase of the civic orientation course, from 60 to 100 hours. In addition, the County Administrative Boards were commissioned to revise the material used for Civic orientation in order to increase the focus on Gender equality and Human rights as well as creating a handbook for using the material.

The Delegation for the Employment of Young People and Newly Arrived Migrants

The Delegation for the Employment of Young People and Newly Arrived Migrants (DUA) is to promote cooperation between municipalities and the Swedish Public Employment Service and the development of new forms of collaboration. The aim is to help reduce youth unemployment and enable newly arrived migrants to become more effectively established in work. Within its overarching mandate, DUA's tasks include encouraging municipalities and the Swedish Public Employment Service to enter into collaborative agreements at local level and put them into practice. DUA is also to allocate government grants to municipalities linked to these local agreements. A final report on DUA's mandate is to be submitted by 28 February 2021.

DUA has received an extended assignment and additional funds for the period 2018-2019, including the so-called Local Job Tracks. Local Job Tracks consist of cooperation between the Swedish Public Employment Service, municipalities, educational and training institutes and employers in public and private sector, and are based on employers' need for labour. In a LocalJob Track, newly-arrived immigrants receive the education and training needed to get a specific job and is at the same time work experience with a future employer.

Fast Tracks for a more rapid labour market introduction

The Fast Tracks are mainly for newly arrived refugees with education, training or work experience in areas for which there is demand of labour in Sweden. The Fast Tracks have been created through tripartite talks with the social partners, the Swedish Public Employment Service and other relevant government agencies. The first Fast Track concerned chefs. Since the introduction, 14 Fast Tracks have been presented for about 30 professions such as doctors, teachers, painters and butchers. The Fast Tracks are a new concept in a number of ways. One important feature is that they are created in very close collaboration with the industries. They also consist of earlier and more efficient measures such as validation and professional language training. To increase resources to the social partners' work on Fast-Tracks, the Government increased the funds for special promotion and development measures in the budget bill (by SEK 20 million in 2018 and SEK 30 million in 2019).

Intensive introduction year for newly arrived immigrants

According to the political agreement from January 2019 between the government, the Centre Party and the Liberal party, an integration year should be introduced. This is an intensive introduction year for newly arrived immigrants within the introduction program. The intensive introduction year will consist of a chain of language intensive measures and vocational oriented measures that are given in parallel or consecutively in a relatively short period of time. The aim is that the participants, after finishing the intensive introduction year, will find employment within one year after the start of the intensive introduction year. A gender perspective should mainstream the intensive introduction year.

Entry agreements

Entry agreements are based on a proposal from the social partners for getting long-term unemployed and newly arrived immigrants into the labour market and to ease future skills supply for employers. The objective of the measure is to encourage employers to hire newly arrived and long-term unemployed workers. The aid is an indirect wage subsidy where the subsidy is paid to the employee instead of the employer. The intention is to implement the measure the second half of 2020. The Government also announced in the Budget Bill for 2020 that entry agreements also will be possible in companies without collective agreements and in recruitment agencies.

8.4 Integration through active participation and social inclusion

The objective of Sweden's integration policy is to promote equal participation for newly arrived immigrants in working and social life. Civil society organisations have an important role in achieving this goal. People's voluntary commitment and organisation is essential in fostering a cohesive society characterised by community and trust. The Swedish Government has therefore designed a number of measures to strengthen dialogue with civil society and create better conditions for civil society organisations, both through general policy measures and through targeted measures to promote integration and combat segregation.

In Sweden integration and (socioeconomic) segregation policies are to some extent interlinked, yet organized in different policy/political areas. In parts of Sweden differences in terms of unemployment rates, school results, income, social security dependency, need for support from public social services, health and electoral participation can vary significantly between different residential areas in the same city or municipality. In order to decrease and prevent socioeconomic segregation the Government has launched a long-term reform program particularly focusing on actions in five strategic areas: reduce residential segregation and strengthen community service; improve school conditions and student results; reduce long-term unemployment; to combat crime; and to strengthen democracy and support civil society.

Government grants aimed to decrease and prevent socioeconomic segregation that is granted to municipalities, regions and civil society organisations (CSOs), for instance have been used to fund measures focusing on children and youth, cooperation between different actors and conducting local needs analysis on segregation (concrete examples: education of young parents and an increase of leisure activities provided by the municipality in socioeconomically disadvantaged areas).

In the budget bill for 2020, several of the proposals aim at and/or can also have an impact on decreasing and preventing socioeconomic segregation. For instance, the Government is proposing measures to increase the number of jobs, safeguard welfare throughout the country, and address crime and its causes.

8.5 Non-discrimination

Work to safeguard effective and comprehensive legislation against discrimination continues. An inquiry has been appointed to analyse whether the current provisions regarding supervision of active measures are appropriate for effective compliance with the law. The inquiry chair is also to analyse how supervision of the provisions in the Discrimination Act that cover the sphere regulated by the Education Act can be transferred from the Equality Ombudsman (DO) to the Swedish Schools Inspectorate.

9 Citizenship and statelessness

9.1 Statistical trends

The number of applications for Swedish citizenship has been increasing over recent years. The main nationality group applying for Swedish citizenship has been Syrians. The strong increase regarding the acquisition of Swedish citizenship can be seen as a result of increased immigration to Sweden, not least by refugees and other beneficiaries of international protection, during earlier years.

In 2019, the Swedish Migration Agency received 73 047 applications for citizenship (naturalization), which compares to 58 869 during the previous year. 48 637 applications for naturalization were decided in 2019, which is a higher number than in 2018 (41 410). Handling times have recently been very long. The grant rate in 2019 was 86%, almost exactly as in 2018. This means that roughly 41 800 individuals became Swedish nationals by naturalization in 2019. Another 22 000 people acquired Swedish citizenship by registration, which is a simplified procedure for certain groups of immigrants. In total 64 944 persons were granted Swedish citizenship in 2019, an increase of 3,600 persons compared to the previous year.

During previous years, Somalis have been the largest group, but are now replaced by people from Syria and the United Kingdom. A resident of Sweden can, after a certain period, usually after five years, apply to become a Swedish citizen. One can become a Swedish citizen through an application or a notification, as well as by birth, adoption or parent marriages.

9.2 Acquisition of citizenship

A government inquiry was appointed on 24 October, 2019 to inter alia prepare proposals to make the successful completion of a test in the Swedish language and civic society obligatory for the acquisition of Swedish citizenship. The purpose of this is to facilitate integration where knowledge of the Swedish language and society is key to employment and inclusion. These proposals are to be presented by 15 October, 2020. In addition, the inquiry will look at other issues pertaining to acquisition and release of Swedish citizenship. For example, strengthening the protection of children from being released from Swedish citizenship by their parents in honour-related oppression, possible further provisions for the avoidance of statelessness, preventing children and young adults who have committed serious crime, from becoming Swedish citizens. These proposals are to be presented by 1 May, 2021. The Swedish Migration Agency has been tasked by the government to prepare for the implementation of the results of the inquiry.

9.3 Statelessness

The government has examined the UNHCR report on the assessments made in the mapping of statelessness in Sweden. The Swedish Migration Agency has initiated measures to ensure that challenges highlighted in the study will be addressed. The government has initiated a dialogue with the responsible national agencies to discuss registration of statelessness, nationality and "unknown" nationality.

Sweden has established an “Inquiry on Nationality”, which will look at further measures to limit statelessness, including if certain children born stateless in Sweden could acquire nationality automatically at birth, instead of through the current simplified notification process.

10 Borders, schengen and visas

10.1 Activities to improve the effectiveness of controls at external borders

During 2019 Sweden continued to take action as a consequence of the recommendations from the 2017 Schengen evaluation of the external borders. Staff level of the border police at Stockholm-Arlanda airport increased significantly and the second line staff was strengthened considerably. A strategy for training and refresher training was introduced.

Sweden kept performing temporary controls at intra-Schengen borders throughout 2019.

10.2 Visa policy

Regarding the issuing of short-term visas for third-country nationals who want to visit Sweden for a limited time for tourism purposes, visiting family members or business activities, there were no significant new developments in 2019.

Sweden issued 242 136 Schengen visas (mostly type-C visas) in 2019, an increase compared to 2018 (219 847). Most Schengen visas in 2019 were issued to Chinese, Indian and Russian travelers. In addition to Schengen visas, approximately 3 200 national (type-D) visas were issued.

Schengen 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 type-D visas as well as temporary residence permits are used, for example, when the reason for travelling to Sweden does not match any of the travel purposes outlined in the EU Visa Code, or when a foreign national wishes to stay in Sweden for more than 90 days.

Regarding new visa representation agreements during 2019:

New representation:

- Sweden has represented France in Monrovia (Liberia) since 1 January 2019, but only regarding visas for diplomats
- The Netherlands has represented Sweden in Dakar (Senegal) since 1 January 2019, as well as Banjul (Gambia) via the Dutch mission in Dakar since 1 January 2019
- France has represented Sweden in Kampala (Uganda) since 1 January 2019
- The Netherlands has represented Sweden in Paramaribo (Surinam) since 1 January 2019, via the Dutch mission in Dakar
- Sweden represents Norway in Khartoum (Sudan) since 1 July 2019

Cancelled representation:

- Denmark ended its representation for Sweden in Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) 1 April 2019
- Norway ended its representation for Sweden in Manila (Philippines) 1 May 2019

- Norway has ended its representation for Sweden in Khartoum (Sudan) since 1 July 2019, as well as Juba (South Sudan) 1 July 2019
- Italy has ended the its representation for Sweden in Yaoundé (Cameroon) 30 November 2019

11 Irregular migration and migrant smuggling

During 2019 many unfounded asylum applications from Georgian nationals were recorded, the Swedish Migration Agency is handling those applications in a fast track procedure. During 2018 and 2019 no Georgian national was granted asylum.

The government has initiated a legal inquiry with the task to suggest legal amendments in order to improve the rules of manifestly unfounded applications and to possibly suggest a procedure of a list of safe countries of origin.

12 Trafficking in human beings

12.1 Trends regarding trafficking in human beings

Seen over several years, trafficking in human beings seemed to be a growing phenomenon in Sweden, although rising numbers of suspected cases can also be a result of increased awareness and resources made available to and by competent authorities. In 2019, the Swedish Migration Agency identified a larger number of victims of trafficking who were forced to commit crimes, compared to previous years. Furthermore, there has been a focus on identifying victims that are exploited in the labour market, which resulted in a significant amount of cases identified within that category.

In 2019, the Swedish Migration Agency identified 481 persons as potential victims of trafficking, an increase compared to 2018. Among these, 288 were women and 193 were men, 92 were underage. The potential victims were mainly from Nigeria. In 2018, 384 individuals were identified as potential victims, which was a decrease in comparison to 2017 (444).

When the Swedish Migration Agency suspects trafficking, it informs the Police and contacts municipalities' social services. However, not all of the reported cases relate to trafficking offences within Sweden. They can also have happened before a person reaches Sweden, or in the country of origin.

The Swedish Migration Agency also processes cases in which the person in charge of a preliminary criminal investigation applies for temporary residence permits for suspected victims or witnesses of crimes. This includes trafficking victims that cooperate with law enforcement authorities. In 2019, the Agency issued 60 such permits in relation to potential victims of trafficking. In 2018, 54 such permits were granted.

Over the year 2019, 51 individuals were arrested or otherwise involved in criminal proceedings related to trafficking offences and four persons were convicted. These figures represent a substantial decrease compared to the year before, when 82 suspected traffickers were arrested or involved in criminal proceedings, and 16 convicted.

12.2 Policy developments regarding trafficking

During 2019, the Swedish Migration Agency launched a new handbook in order to improve the ability to detect suspected cases of human trafficking. One part of the handbook is aimed to all employees. That section describes the crime and the Agency's responsibility. Other parts focuses on the asylum procedure and a special chapter is aimed to employees within the authorities' detention centres.

In addition to the new handbook, the template for interviewing unaccompanied children has been updated. Additional and more specific questions regarding the journey to Sweden has been added to the template in order more easily to detect signs of human trafficking.

Furthermore, the training material that is used when training the Swedish embassies has been updated to enable the employees to discover signs of human trafficking more effectively.

13 Return and readmissions

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. In the first place, the persons concerned should return on a voluntary basis, if needed 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.

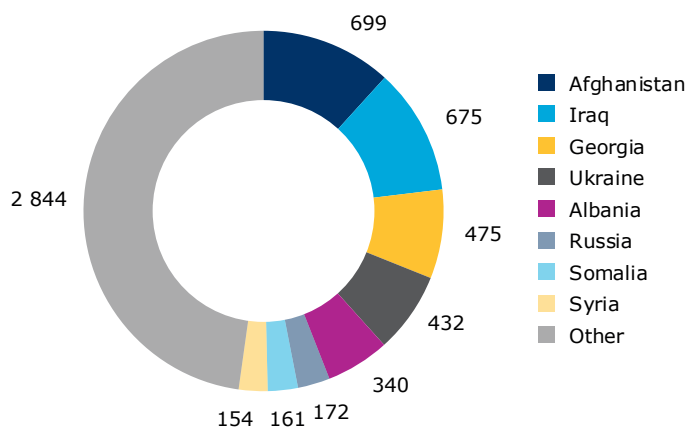
At the end of 2019 the number of beds available for detention was 528 and will be adjusted to 520 in accordance with the appropriation directions for 2020. Occupancy at detention centres in Sweden has been high throughout 2019 with an average occupancy-rate between 97% and 100%. It should be noted, however, that detention is most often used as part of the return process and not during asylum procedures.

13.1 Voluntary and forced returns

In 2019, a total of 9 224 persons returned from Sweden. Out of the total 5 687 returned to their home countries, 3 007 to member states of the EU or EEA, 352 to other countries (352), and 178 to unknown destinations. Out of 9 224 return, 5 952 of these returns were voluntary, assisted by the Swedish Migration Agency. The remaining 3 262 cases were forced returns, carried out by the Police Authority.

Among those returning voluntarily (5 952), most individuals had Afghan (699), Iraqi (645), Georgian (475), Ukrainian (432) and Albanian (340) nationality; see figure 11. The main destination countries were Germany, Ukraine, Georgia, France, and Iraq. Most of the Afghan nationals were returned to other countries within Europe. Only 427 were brought back to their country of origin (104 assisted by the Migration Agency and 323 by the Police Authority) of the 1 113 Afghans returning. By contrast, nationals of Iraq (792) went back to their country of origin (394) and other EU countries (387) at the same proportion. The majority with the assistance of the Swedish Migration Agency (677).

Figure 11: Voluntary return, main citizenship groups, 2019



Source: Swedish Migration Agency

13.2 Assisted voluntary return

The Swedish Migration Agency has implemented measures to increase the number of returns that are carried out from the Agency's designated return centres. The definition of the type of return cases that should stay at a return centre was temporarily expanded. The new internal guidelines led to an increased proportion of persons returning after a stay at the return centre, 45 percent returned after a stay at the return centre in 2019 compared to 38 percent in 2018.

The proportion of voluntary returns in relation to the proportion of cases submitted to the Police Authority was 52 percent, which is higher than in 2018. In total, around 16 200 return cases were completed in 2019, excluding around 1 700 cases that were closed.

The Swedish Migration Agency deployed a European Union Return Liaison Officer (EURLO) in Kabul (Afghanistan) on 1 February, 2019. At the end of August 2019, the Swedish Migration Agency ended the mission of the return liaison officer (RLO) in Amman (Jordan), who worked with voluntary return.

In January 2019, the Swedish Migration Agency temporarily stopped deciding on reintegration support for return to Afghanistan within the framework of the European Return and Reintegration Network (ERRIN) due to uncertainties in the financial reporting of the partner organization. The proceedings were resumed in November 2019. The fact that the authority did not handle applications for reintegration support during much of 2019 may have had an impact on the number who have chosen to return to Afghanistan voluntarily.

In January 2019 a revised return process was implemented. The new process aims to be more flexible and put trust in the case officers competence to undertake correct measures depending on the circumstances in each individual case. The revised process is to be evaluated in 2020. Changes in the case management system have been made to distinguish more easily whether the third country national returned according to the return decision or not.

13.3 Use of (alternatives for) detention in return procedures

A pilot regarding alternatives to detention was conducted in 2019 during 10 months to investigate whether the return could be performed more efficiently. The alternative used was supervision (with counselling) and the result was that it did not have any effect on the number of returns. There is however, a number of reasons why no returns were carried out, such as the destination country, civil status or if forced return was possible.

13.4 Reintegration measures

The Swedish Migration Agency continued being a partner in the European Return and Reintegration Network (ERRIN) and experts have, in 2019, been involved in working groups/workshops, information exchange activities etc organised by ERRIN in the area of return and reintegration. The program aims to strengthen, facilitate and streamline the return process in the EU through common initiatives, and to promote a durable and efficient reintegration in countries outside the EU. The program is led by the Dutch migration authority and is financed through AMIF from 1 June, 2018 until 1 July, 2020, when an extension is foreseen. Through the program the Swedish Migration Agency offers reintegration support in Afghanistan, Iraq (South/central and Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG)), Morocco, Nigeria and Pakistan.

The Swedish Migration Agency previously offered reintegration support to those returning voluntarily to Russia through the ERRIN programme. The co-operation with ERRIN in Russia ended however, during 2019. The reason for this was due to the fact that the service provider in Russia could only provide cash support and not in-kind support to returnees.

The Swedish Migration Agency has since 2016 provided in-kind reintegration support to both voluntary and non-voluntary returnees to Afghanistan via the ERRIN programme. The Swedish Migration Agency paused the provision of this support to persons who returned between the end of January 2019 and the end of November 2019. This was due to irregularities in the financial reporting provided by the ERRIN service provider in Afghanistan. Following intensive co-operation with the service provider and the ERRIN project management unit during 2019, these difficulties have been resolved and agreement has been reached in relation to standards for financial reporting with the service provider. The provision of in-kind reintegration support in Afghanistan was resumed at the end of November 2019.

13.5 Involvement of third countries in return measures

Ukraine

The Swedish Migration Agency together with the Swedish Police Authority have had close co-operation with the Ukrainian Embassy in Stockholm during 2019 in an effort to encourage implementation of the readmission agreement.

Ethiopia

In April and September 2019 the Swedish Migration Agency participated in two identification missions from Ethiopia, whose purpose was to conduct interviews to determine nationality in line with the "Admission Procedure for the Return of Ethiopians from European Union Member States". The missions were financed by FRONTEX. The first was coordinated by Finland and the second by the Swedish Police Authority; altogether approximately 15 returnees were interviewed, only a few were accepted for return and issuance of a travel document.

About the EMN

The European Migration Network (EMN) is an EU funded network, set up with the aim of providing up-to-date, objective, reliable and comparable information on migration and asylum for institutions of the European Union, plus authorities and institutions of the Member States of the EU, in order to inform policymaking. The EMN also serves to provide the wider public with such information. The EMN was established by Council Decision 2008/381/EC adopted on 14 May 2008. The Swedish Migration Agency is the Swedish National Contact Point (NCP) for the EMN.

Migrationsverket • 601 70 Norrköping

phone +46 (0)771-235 235 • e-mail emn@migrationsverket.se

www.migrationsverket.se • www.emnsweden.se

