



Migration in Sweden



Marta Bernardi
Stefano Lioy
Mara Moreale
Gaia Puglisi
Giorgia Santamaria
Francesco Zagaria

The aim of this country report is to provide an overview of the migration phenomenon in Sweden. As *Figure 1* shows, Sweden has been a country of Net Migration since the 1960s, with the trend remaining relatively stable until 2010, when it began to exponentially increase. Nevertheless, *Figure 2* shows how the foreign-born population remains a smaller percentage of the country's population as it provides a breakdown of the total Swedish population differentiating between natives and foreign-born. *Figure 3* instead shows the proportion of yearly new migrants with regards to the country total population, which includes natives and foreign-born.

Sweden Net Migration

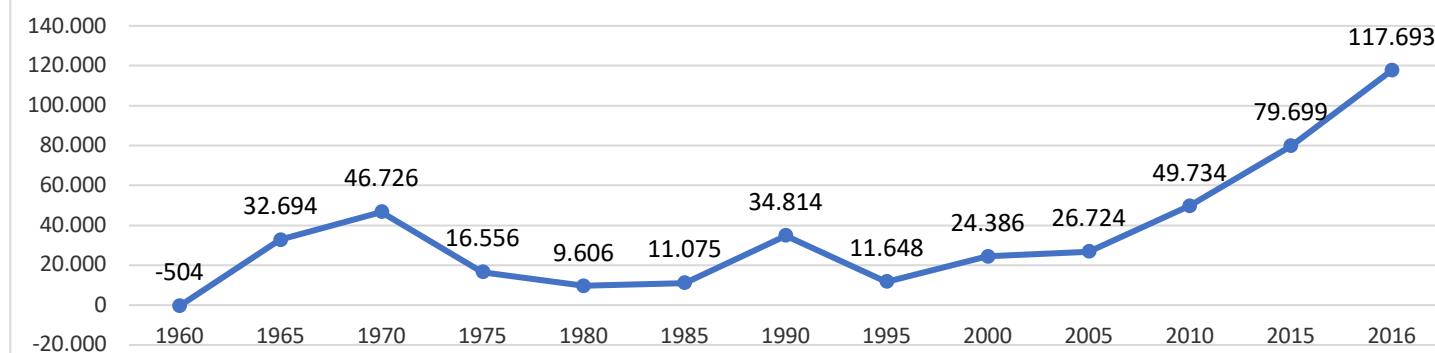


Figure 1: source Eurostat Population change - Demographic balance and crude rates at national level [demo_gind]

Stock of Swedish Population: Natives and Foreign-born

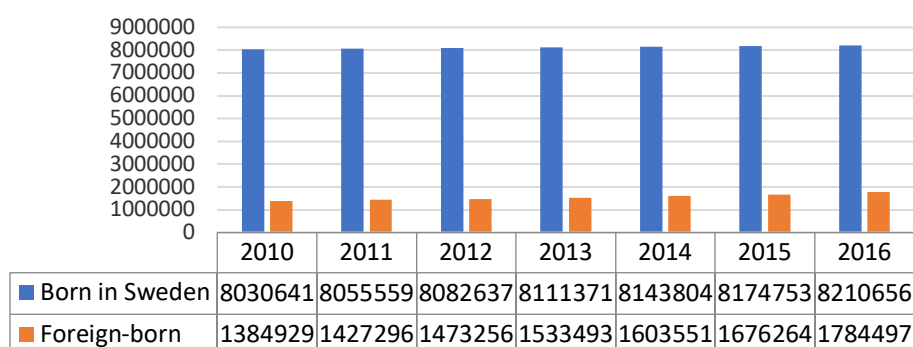


Figure 2: source Statistics Sweden
http://www.statistikdatabasen.scb.se/pxweb/en/ssd/START_BE_BE0101_BE0101E/InrUtrFoddaRegAlKon/table/tableViewLayout1/?rxid=86abd797-7854-4564-9150-c9b06ae3ab07#

Proportion of New Migrants of Swedish Population

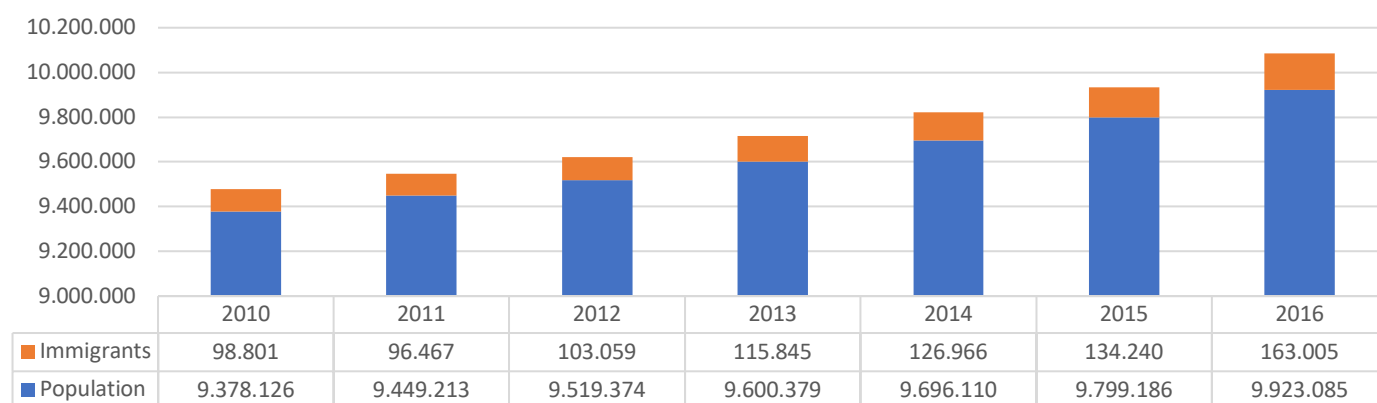


Figure 3: source Eurostat Population change - Demographic balance and crude rates at national level [demo_gind] and Immigration by age and sex [migr_imm8]

Figure 4-8 focus on the migration flow of the past 10 years looking specifically at the composition of migrants arriving in Sweden. Figure 4 highlights how the yearly migration flow has seen a gradual increase over the years with the greatest increase in arrivals between 2015 and 2016.

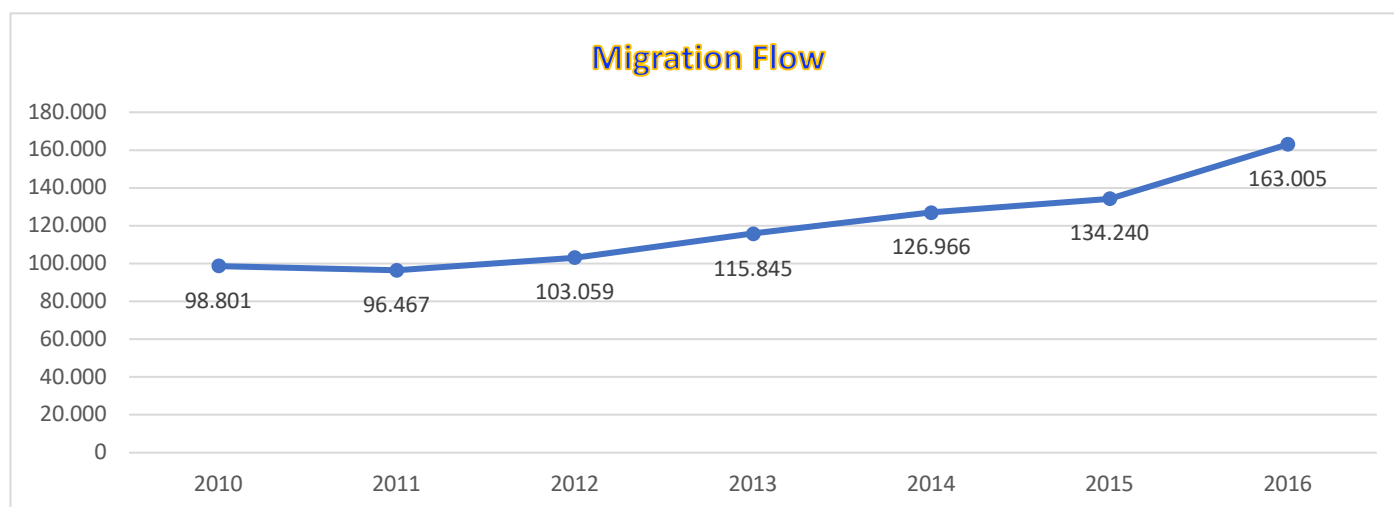


Figure 4: source Eurostat Immigration by age and sex [migr_imm8]

Figure 6 provides an overview of the education attainment level of incoming migrants. Although tertiary educated migrants are a wide proportion of the population, so are migrants with less than primary, primary and lower secondary education. This could be explained by looking at the reason of entrance of migrants, as family reunification is one of the main channels of entrance. Further details are provided below.

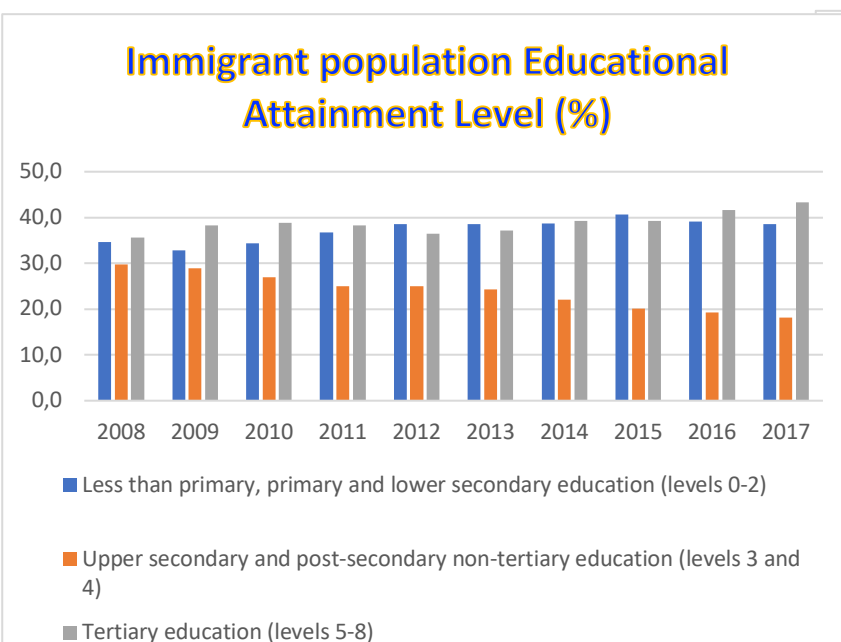


Figure 6: source Eurostat Population by educational attainment level(%) [edat_lfs_9911]

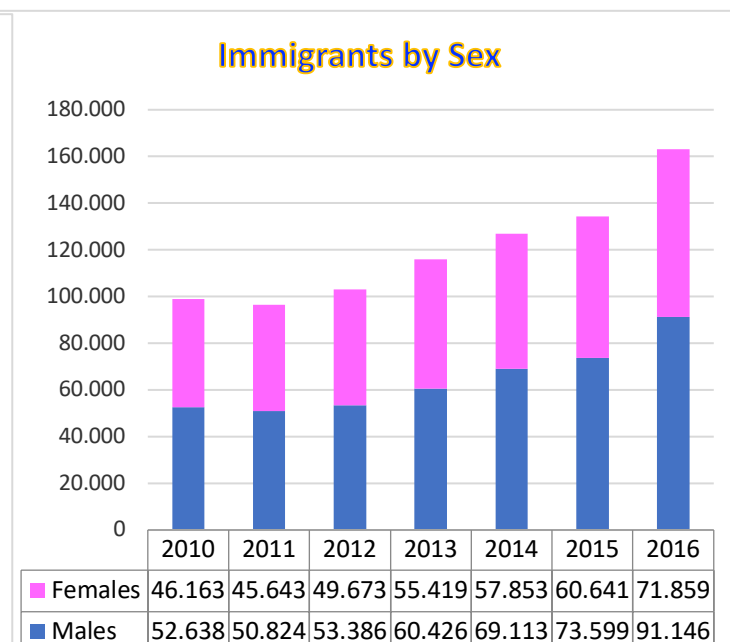
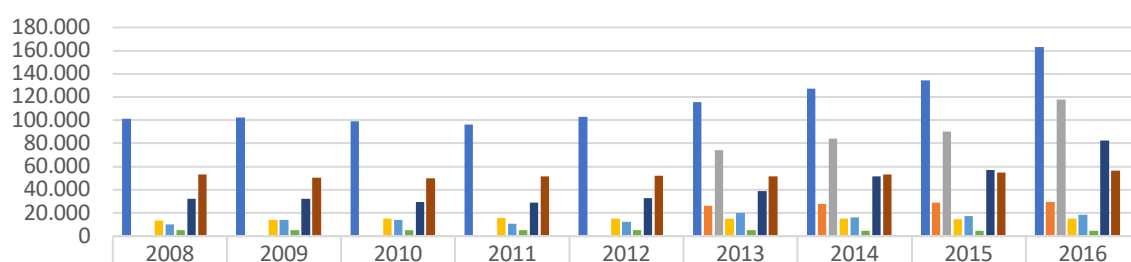


Figure 5: source Eurostat Immigration by age and sex [migr_imm8]

Figure 5 instead provides a breakdown of the migrant population by sex, which shows a higher proportion of men over women arriving in Sweden.

Immigration Flow by Region of Birth

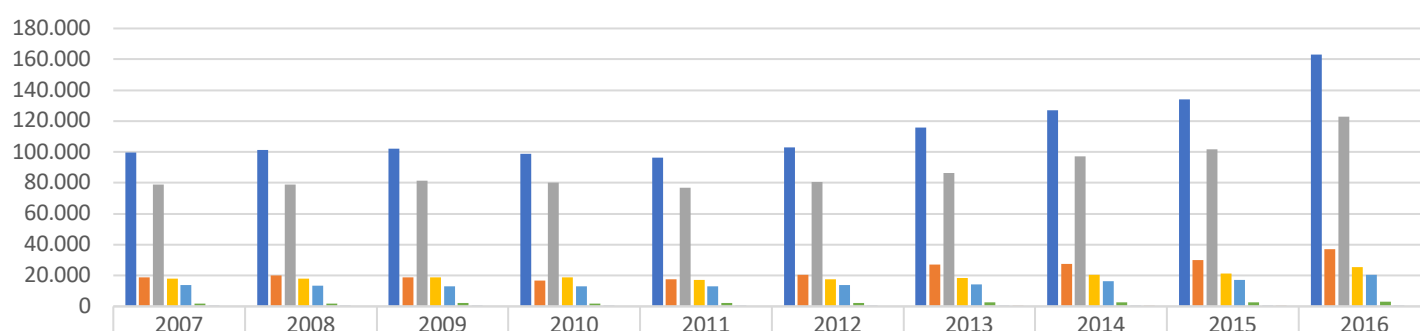


	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total	101.171	102.280	98.801	96.467	103.059	115.845	126.966	134.240	163.005
EU28 countries (current composition) except reporting country	0	0	0	0	0	26.176	27.582	29.015	29.583
Non-EU28 countries (current composition) nor reporting country	0	0	0	0	0	74.236	84.028	90.470	117.894
Reporting country	13.388	13.985	14.870	15.582	15.341	15.332	15.194	14.580	15.318
Africa	10.313	13.877	14.041	10.783	12.550	19.850	16.411	17.088	18.289
America	4.961	5.116	5.121	4.944	5.102	4.925	4.720	4.860	4.887
Asia	32.326	32.127	29.340	28.665	32.508	38.993	51.695	56.890	82.462
Europe	52.957	50.516	49.627	51.425	52.352	51.469	53.411	54.631	56.502
Oceania	510	521	555	532	473	507	567	596	655

Figure 7: source Eurostat Immigration by age group, sex and country of birth [migr_imm3ctb]

Figure 7 focuses on the origin of migrants and portrays how a clear majority, since 2013, are non-EU nationals. Within the non-EU, those born in Asia are a vast majority. This can be explained by the fact that Middle-Eastern countries are included in this category. Figure 8 provides instead an age group breakdown, which points, to immigrants of working age, being the majority of those arriving.

Immigration Flow by Age Group



	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total	99.485	101.171	102.280	98.801	96.467	103.059	115.845	126.966	134.240	163.005
Less than 15 years	18.703	20.151	18.959	16.678	17.452	20.475	27.073	27.448	30.133	37.180
From 15 to 64 years	78.785	79.022	81.229	80.117	76.973	80.410	86.210	97.082	101.570	122.883
From 25 to 29 years	18.084	18.086	18.803	18.979	17.204	17.629	18.326	20.558	21.258	25.338
From 30 to 34 years	13.706	13.232	13.058	13.001	13.021	13.971	14.293	16.460	17.192	20.418
65 years or over	1.997	1.998	2.092	2.006	2.042	2.174	2.562	2.436	2.537	2.942
85 years or over	86	113	110	95	99	110	119	112	126	147
100 years or over	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	0

Figure 8: source Eurostat Immigration by age group, sex and citizenship [migr_imm1ctz]

Figure 9-19 focus on the channels of entrance of the immigrant population providing further details on the case of asylum seekers and international students.

Figure 9 can be interpreted considering the international context in the years 2008-2016. In fact, until 2011, family reunification was by far the main reason of acceding in Sweden. However, with the onset of the Arab Spring and particularly the breakout of the conflict in Syria, the reason of entrance defined as “other,” which includes entrance for Subsidiary Protection and Asylum, has risen exponentially, reaching its peak in 2016.

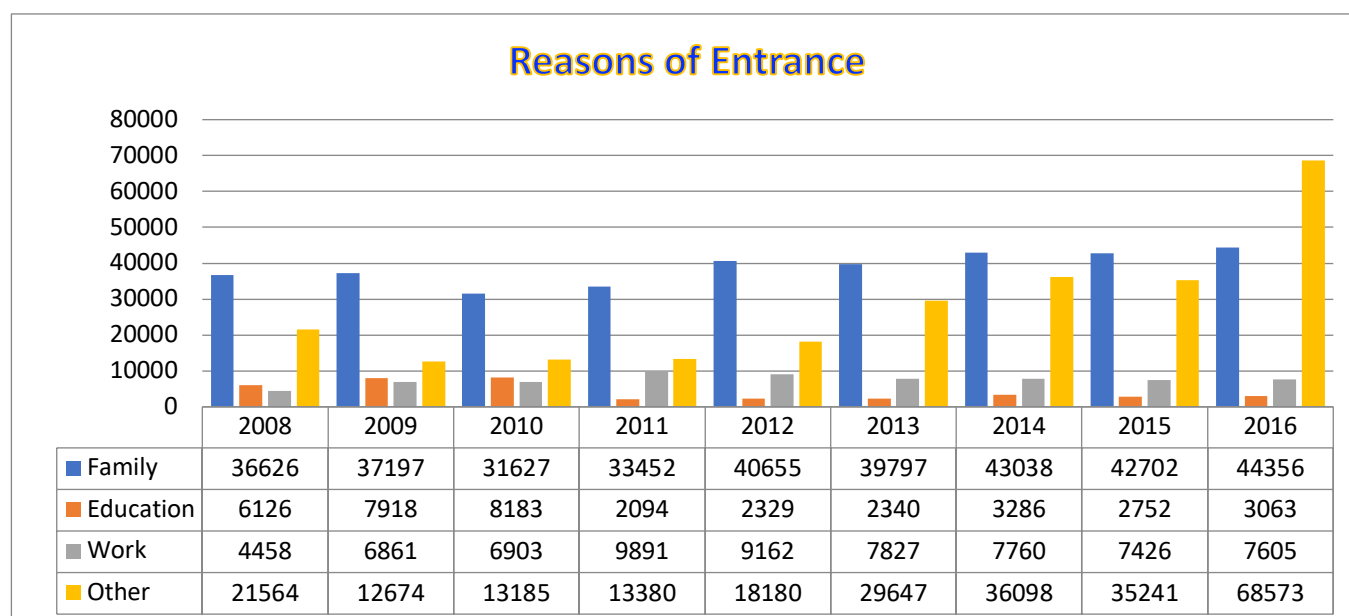


Figure 9: source Eurostat First permits by reason, length of validity and citizenship, migr_resfirst, [tps00170]

Focusing on the length of permits released, it can be noticed from *Figure 10* that permits with a duration of 12 months or longer tend to make up the majority of permits issued in comparison to short-term permits.

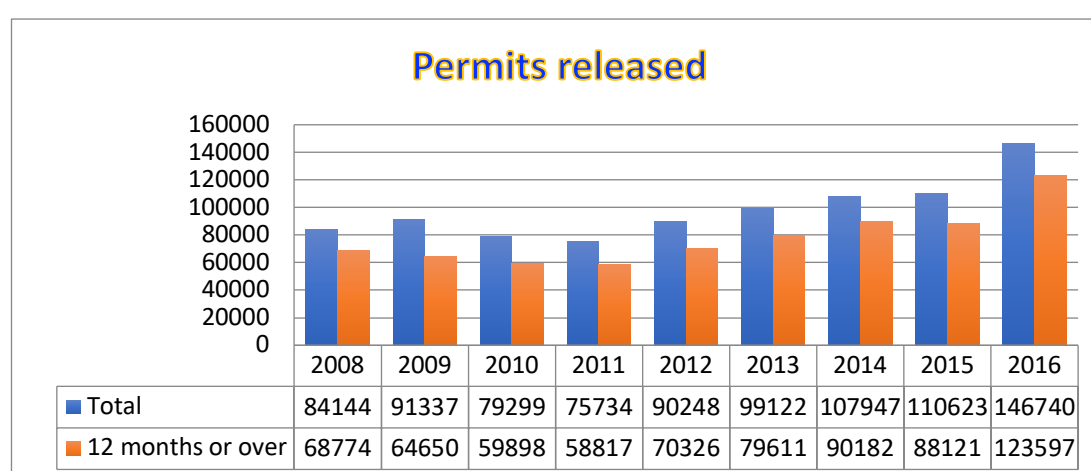


Figure 10: source Eurostat First permits by reason, length of validity and citizenship, migr_resfirst, [tps00170]

Reasons of entrance in 2010 Top five countries

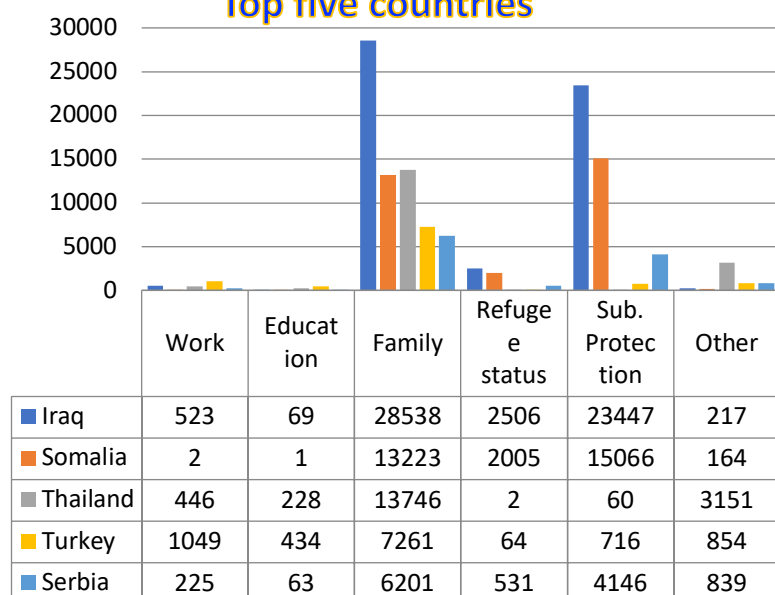


Figure 11: source Dynamic Data Hub
<https://bluehub.jrc.ec.europa.eu/migration/app/>

Reason of entrance in 2016 Top five countries

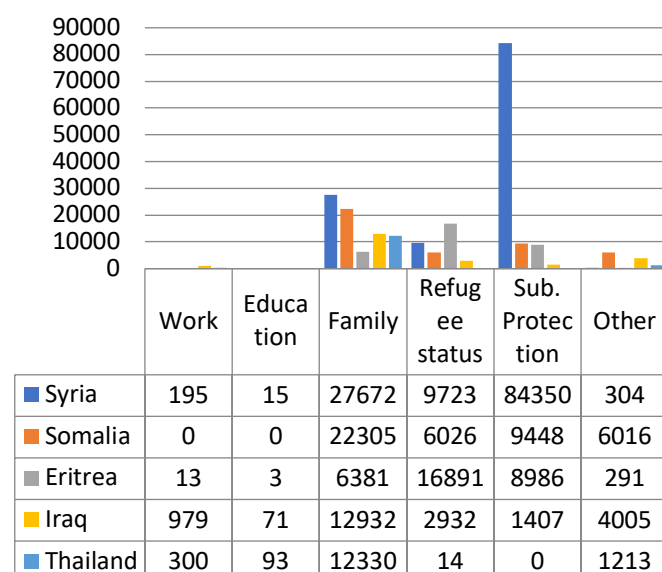


Figure 12: source Dynamic Data Hub
<https://bluehub.jrc.ec.europa.eu/migration/app/>

Figure 11 and 12 are a comparison between two years looking at the top five countries with the highest rate of citizens in Sweden with a permit for 12 months or over. The graphs provide insight on the actual change in the trend of migration. In 2010, we can clearly see how family reunification was the main channel of entrance for most (4/5) of the countries analyzed; instead, in 2016 we can see a sharp increase of the subsidiary protection and the change in some of the top five countries.

Figure 13-17 focus on asylum as the channel of migration, which previous graphs have shown to have become one of the primary channels. Figure 13 provides an overview of the applications received over the past 10 years and show a sharp increase in application in 2015, which has now reverted to the average of 2008-2010. Figure 14 and 15 instead provide further details in the overall applications showing the number of first time applicants and unaccompanied minors.

Asylum applicants

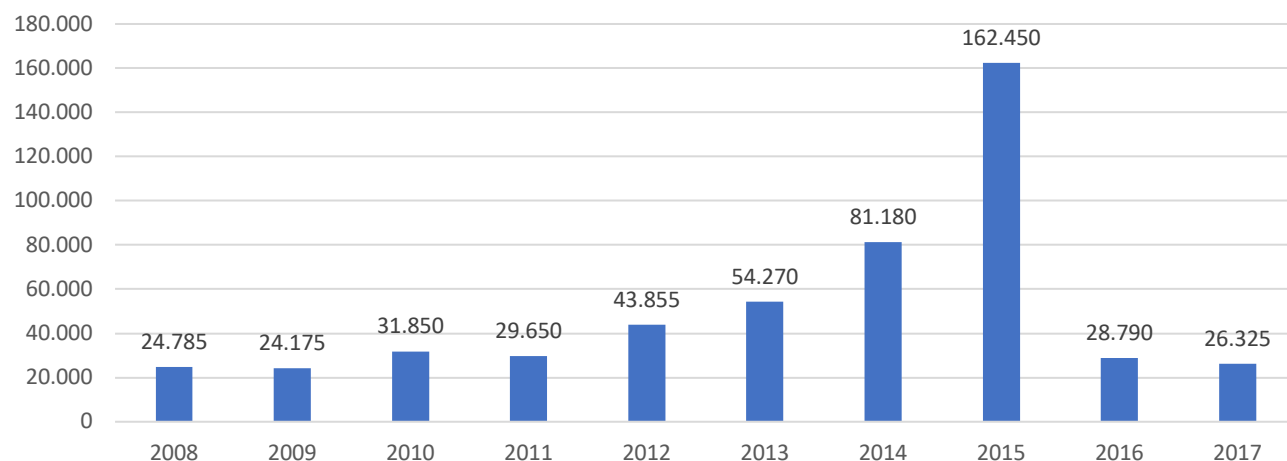


Figure 13: source Eurostat Asylum and first time asylum applicants by citizenship, age and sex Annual aggregated data (rounded)[migr_asyappctza]

First time applicants

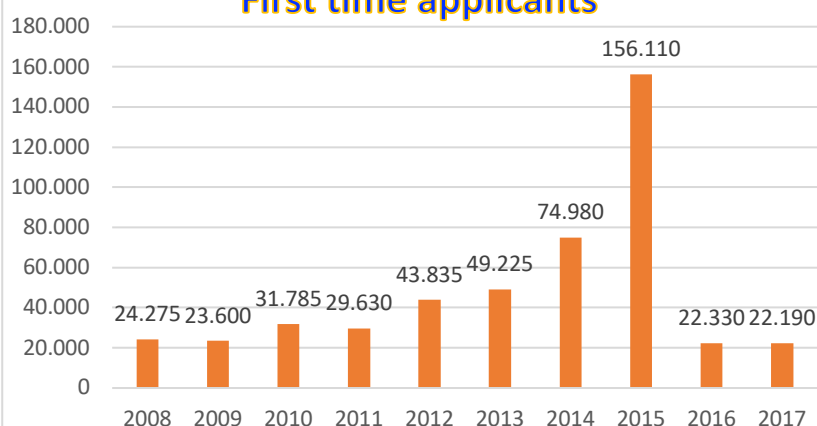


Figure 14: source Eurostat Asylum and first time asylum applicants by citizenship, age and sex Annual aggregated data (rounded)[migr_asyappctza]

Asylum applicants considered to be unaccompanied

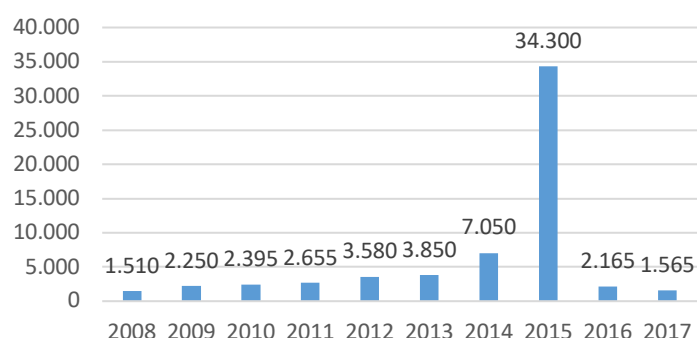


Figure 15: source Eurostat Asylum applicants considered to be unaccompanied minors by citizenship, age and sex Annual data (rounded)[migr_asyunaa]

5.473 Asylum Applications Received in 2018 (jan-mar)

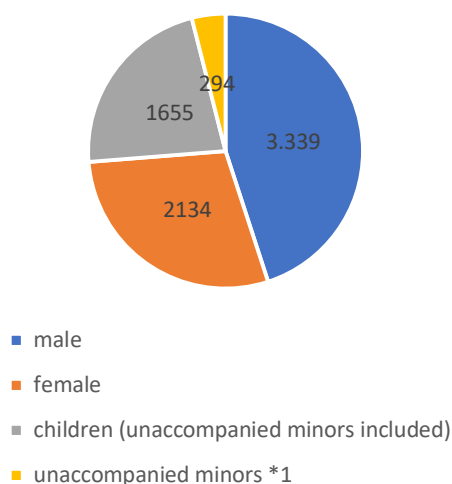


Figure 16 and 17 are drawn from the Swedish Migration Agency and provide an overview with the most recent data on the number of applications received in 2018 breaking them down by gender and the top 20 countries of origin.

Figure 16: source Swedish Migration Agency <https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/About-the-Migration-Agency/Facts-and-statistics-/Statistics.html>

Top Countries of Asylum Applications

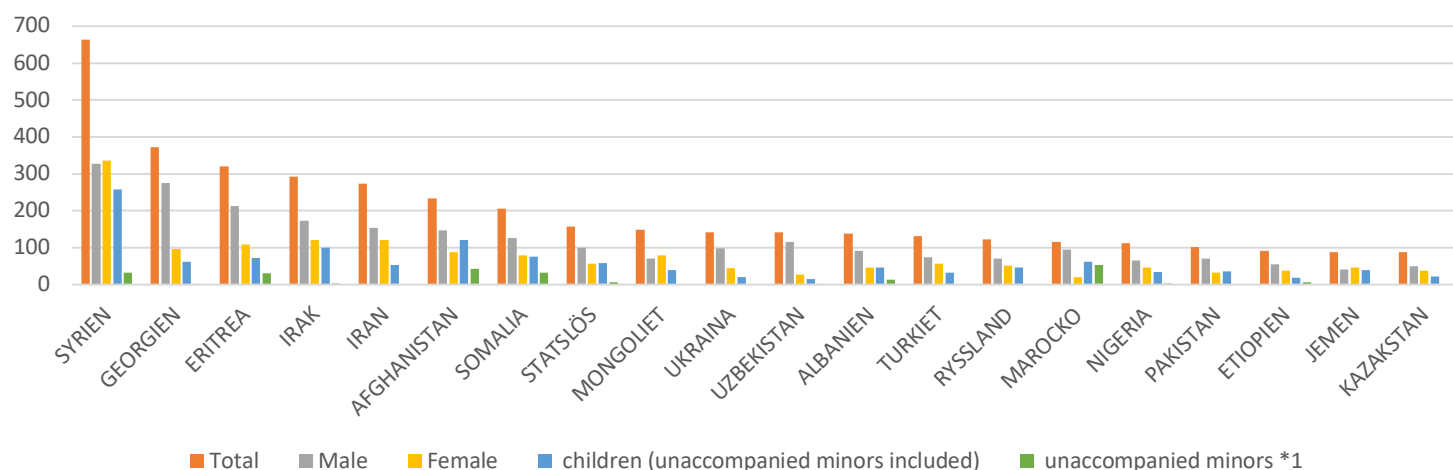


Figure 17: source Swedish Migration Agency <https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/About-the-Migration-Agency/Facts-and-statistics-/Statistics.html>

Another interesting channel of entrance to look at is education; which is the focus of *Figures 18-20*. The first graph (*Figure 18*) is an overview of the country of origin on international tertiary students enrolled in Swedish universities. Interestingly, most students come from Asia, whereas quite predictably the second largest group is that of European students.

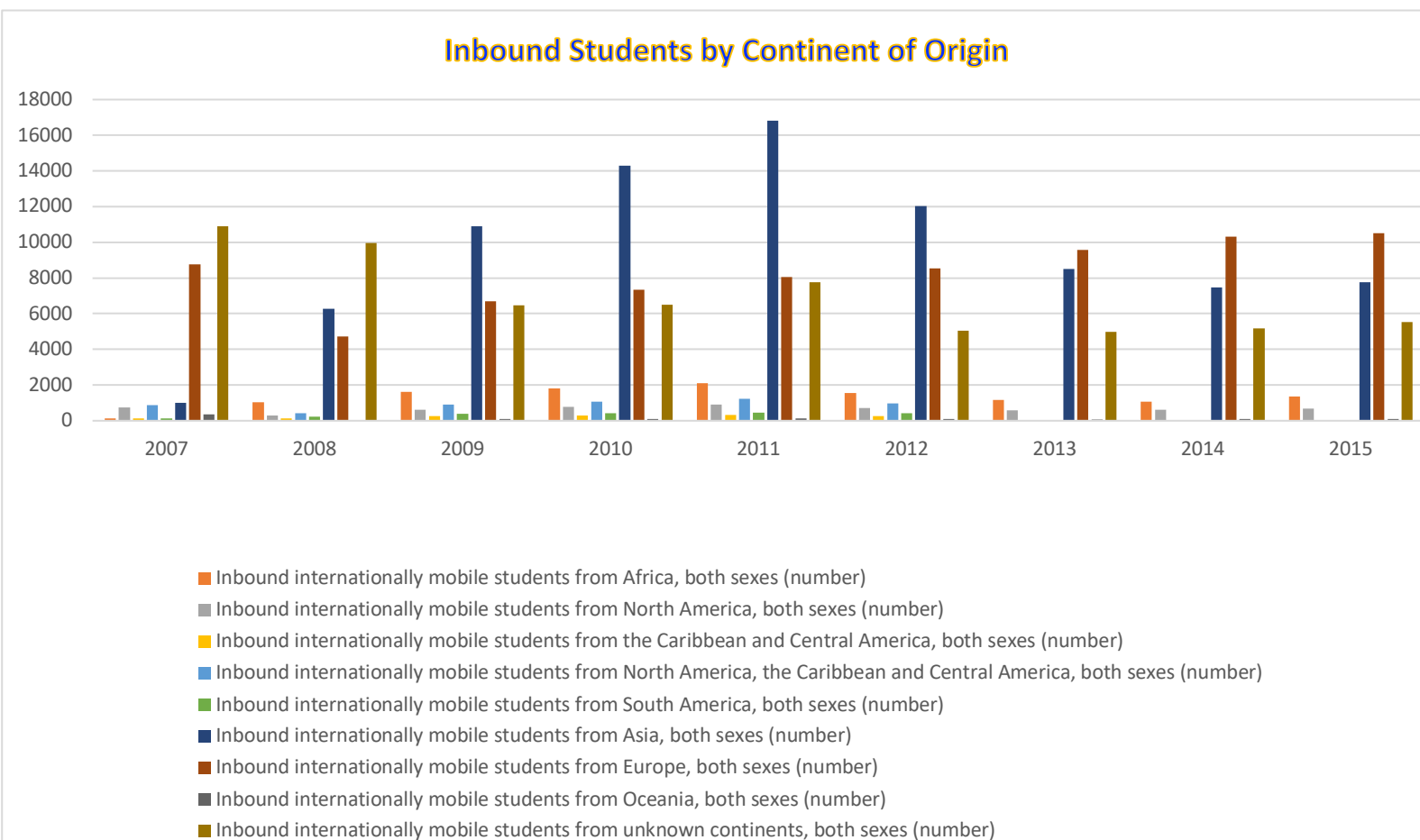
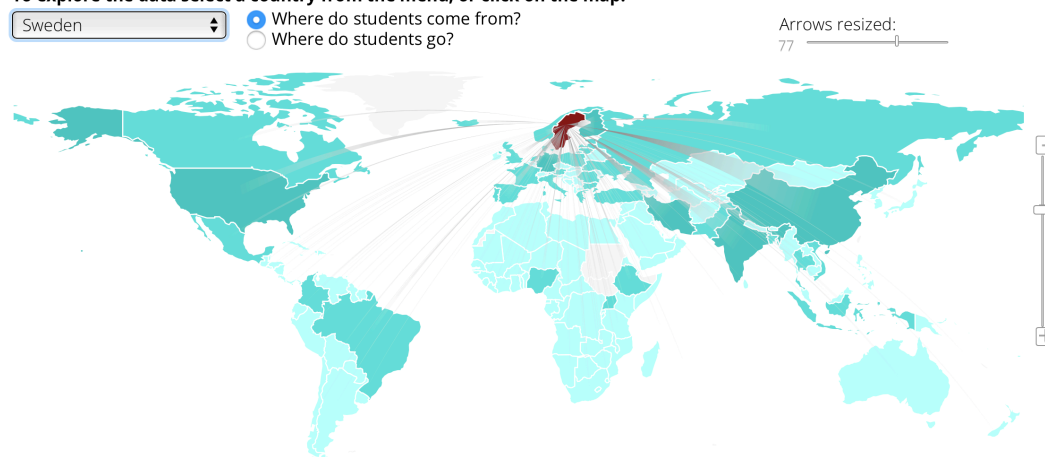


Figure 18: UNESCO Institute for Statistics http://data.uis.unesco.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=EDULIT_DS

Further detail is provided in the two images below, one portraying the most recent data with a world map showing the country of origin of the students and the other table listing the Top 10 countries of origin.

To explore the data select a country from the menu, or click on the map.

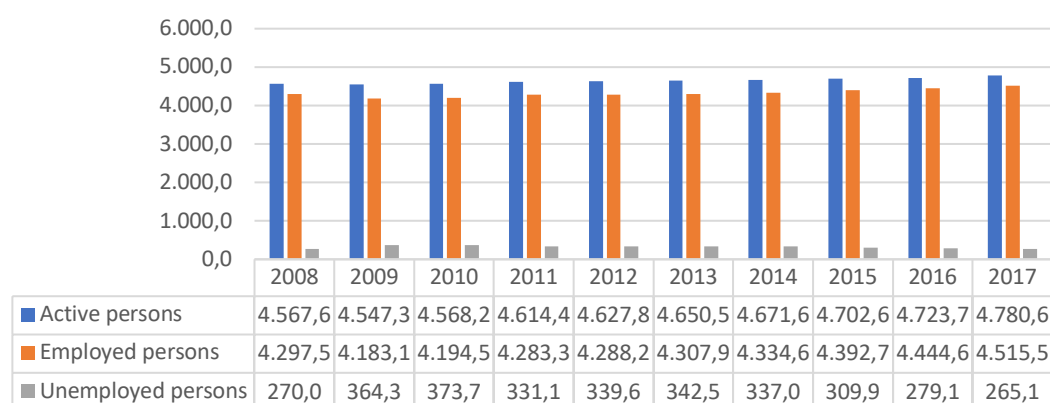


Country of origin	
China	2,337
Finland	1,906
Germany	1,804
India	1,354
Iran, Islamic Rep.	1,303
Pakistan	788
Greece	668
Italy	606
United States	527
France	520

Figure 20: UNESCO Institute for Statistics
<http://uis.unesco.org/en/uis-student-flow>

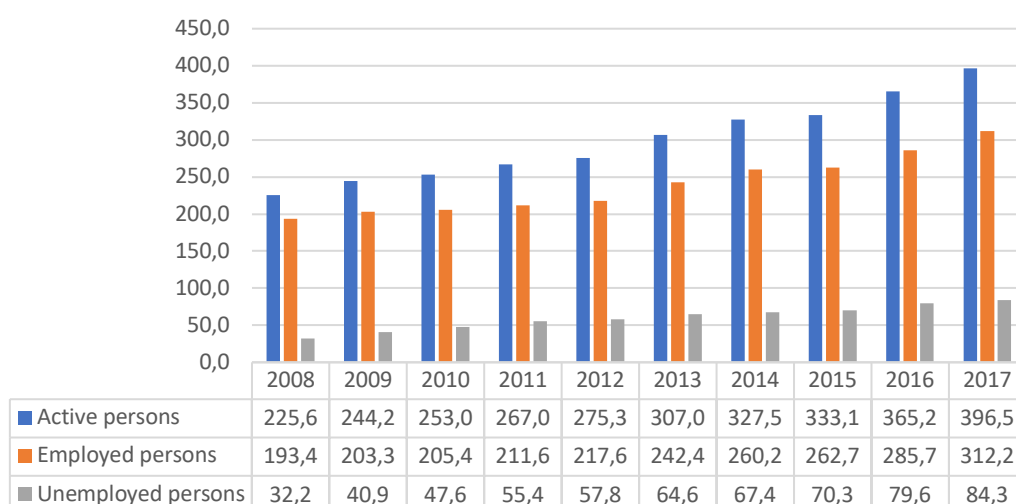
Figure 19: UNESCO Institute for Statistics <http://uis.unesco.org/en/uis-student-flow>

Reporting Country Labour Status



This last set of graphs show the integration of migrants focusing on the labour market. Despite levels of employment being high in Sweden for both natives and foreign-born as seen in *Figure 21 and 22*, the unemployment rate is higher among immigrants.

Foreign People Labour Status



As per the net income, the results of *Figure 23 and 24* show a similar trend with foreign-born earning less in comparison to the natives. This inequality seems to have increased in the last few years since 2014.

Figure 21: source Eurostat Population by sex, age, citizenship and labour status (1 000) [lfsa_pganws]

Figure 22: source Eurostat Population by sex, age, citizenship and labour status (1 000) [lfsa_pganws]

Mean Equivalent Net Income

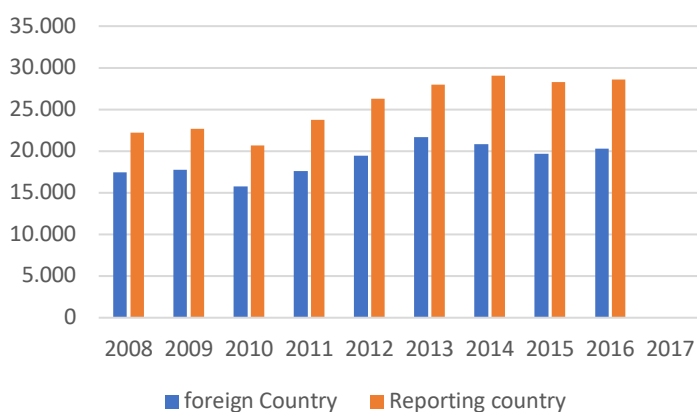


Figure 24: source Eurostat Mean and median income by broad group of citizenship (population aged 18 and over) [ilc_di15]

Median Equivalent Net Income

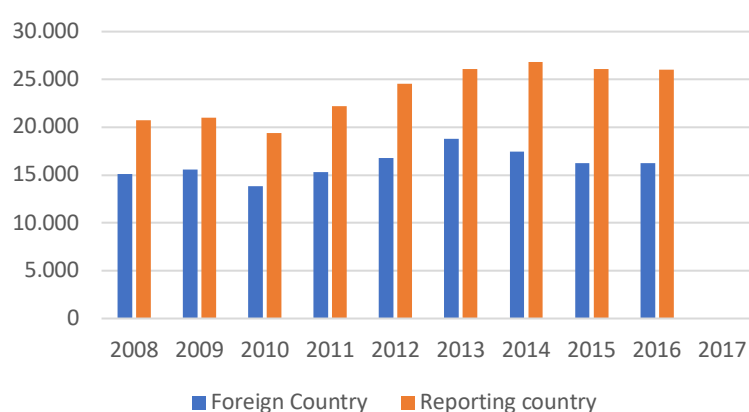


Figure 23: source Eurostat Mean and median income by broad group of citizenship (population aged 18 and over) [ilc_di15]

Conclusion:

This country report has provided an overview of the Swedish migration situation looking not only at the stock and flow of migrants but further breaking down the composition of the flow, examining the reason of entrance with two case studies on the asylum and education as channels of entrance, and finally exploring the labour market integration dimension.

As has been shown, Sweden has been a country of immigration since the 1960s, whose flow has remained steady at roughly 100.000 new arrivals a year until 2016 when it drastically increased also due to the exponential increase in asylum applications as a result of the Syrian conflict. Despite the increase in the flow, foreign-born remain around 15% of the total Swedish population.

With regards to the channel of entrance, family reunification has by far exceeded other entry applications. This can be explained not only by the fact that immigration is an old phenomenon in Sweden and therefore families whose members had left to seek employment decades ago are now reuniting; but also because according to MIPEX, non-EU family member face fewer obstacles in the reunification procedure than in other EU countries.¹ Since the onset of the Arab Spring the asylum applications have increased exponentially, becoming the primary channel of entrance, reaching the peak in 2016 (*Figure 9*) also due to the Syrian conflict. However, for the past two years, the number of applications seem to have reverted to the pre-2010 levels (*Figure 13*). With regards to the composition of asylum seekers, men remain the biggest gender group to apply for asylum, followed by women and children. In the case of Sweden, relatively few remain the unaccompanied minors that arrive.

Finally, with regards to the labour market integration, the situation, as further illustrated by MIPEX, is rather positive especially in comparison to other EU countries. In fact, “newcomers enjoy equal legal access and rights to the labour market, general support and the social safety net.” Technically, the Swedish labour market regulations don’t make any formal distinctions between natives, EU nationals and non-EU nationals. In fact, the graphs show that only ¼ of the immigrant population is neither employed, in education or in training, which is among the lowest rates in Western Europe. Access to the labour market is also facilitated for temporary migrant workers who can change jobs and sectors fairly quickly.² Nevertheless, inequalities remain as the foreign-born population has a higher unemployment rate and a lower median and mean equivalent net income.

¹ <http://www.mipex.eu/sweden>

² <http://www.mipex.eu/sweden>

References:

European Commission - Knowledge Centre on Migration and Demography Dynamic Data Hub. Retrieved from <https://bluehub.jrc.ec.europa.eu/migration/app/>

Eurostat - Database by Themes. Retrieved from <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>

MIPEX (2015). *Sweden*. Retrieved from <http://www.mipex.eu/sweden>

Statistics Sweden. *Swedish and foreign-born population by region, age and sex. Year 2000 - 2017*. Retrieved from http://www.statistikdatabasen.scb.se/pxweb/en/ssd/START_BE_BE0101_BE0101E/InrUtrFoddaRegAlKon/?rxid=86abd797-7854-4564-9150-c9b06ae3ab07

Swedish Migration Agency. Retrieved from <https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/About-the-Migration-Agency/Facts-and-statistics-/Statistics.html>

UNESCO Institute for Statistics - Data by Theme. Retrieved from http://data.uis.unesco.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=EDULIT_DS

UNESCO Institute for Statistics. *Global Flow of Tertiary-Level Students*. Retrieved from <http://uis.unesco.org/en/uis-student-flow>