

Sweden



Permanent-type migration movements of foreign nationals to Sweden increased by almost 40% from 2005 to 2006, reaching approximately 74 000 persons. This is the highest

level observed in the statistics of (harmonised) permanent-type migration since 1995 and this is also mirrored in the national statistics. Much of the increase relative to 2005 is attributable to a temporary amendment to the Aliens Act, which gave asylum seekers who had been denied a residence permit but had stayed in Sweden for a long period the right to a new assessment. As a result of this amendment, 17 350 were granted a residence permit. Iraq, Serbia and Somalia were the countries of origin with the largest number of reviewed cases.

Family migration also increased by about 20% and labour-related residence permits (largely to non-Nordic EU nationals) are at all time high at about 9 500. Permanent-type labour migration from non-EEA countries, however, remains limited, at less than 400 persons per year.

International student flows (from non-EEA countries) have been increasing steadily over the last decade and have more than tripled since 1997. It is not known how many of these students remain in Sweden after the end of their studies.

After showing a steady decline since 2002, the number of asylum seekers increased by almost 40% to reach 24 300 persons in 2006. On a per capita basis, these numbers are the highest in the OECD. The absolute numbers are exceeded only by France and the United Kingdom. Preliminary figures for 2007 indicate a further strong increase. Most of the increase is attributable to asylum seekers from Iraq, for whom Sweden has been the principal destination country. In the light of the increases, in July 2007 the Swedish Migration Board clarified the requirements for asylum seekers from Iraq to be granted a residence permit in Sweden. An applicant for asylum must be personally at risk of abuse in order to be considered a refugee.

There have also been a number of other changes regarding immigration regulations in Sweden concerning asylum seekers. The first of these concerns the granting of the right to work to asylum seekers, in situations when it is expected that the

decision on their cases will take longer than four months. Since early 2006 appeals against migration decisions have been transferred to newly established "migration courts" from the Alien Appeals Board. Under the former system, the cases at the Aliens Appeals Board were most often decided without a hearing.

Under the new Aliens Act, residence permits can no longer be granted on "humanitarian grounds". Instead, the concept of "exceptionally distressing circumstances" has been introduced. A residence permit may be granted in such cases, subject to an assessment of the applicant's state of health, adjustment to Sweden and the situation in the country of origin.

A Committee on Labour Immigration, with a mandate to propose a regulatory framework to allow more extensive labour migration from outside the EU/EEA, presented its report in October 2006. It proposed in particular that there be broader possibilities for foreign students who find a job in Sweden to stay and work after completion of their studies.

Many of the selective labour market programmes were replaced in 2007 with a general subsidy of payroll costs for people excluded from the labour market. Newly arrived immigrants are among the groups eligible. Employers hiring them are exempt from payroll taxes and social security contributions for at least a year. A job and development guarantee was introduced in 2007, to help long-term unemployed return to working life by means of individually tailored measures.

A project for newly arrived immigrants has been piloted since 2006. It is centred on early contact with the labour market, a rapid assessment of education and experience and Swedish language instruction combined with job-oriented initiatives. A new labour market scheme known as "Step-in jobs" was introduced in July 2007, which offers possibilities for new arrivals to combine language training with part-time employment in their field of education or competence. On the administrative side, the Swedish integration board closed down in July 2007.

A new bill on anti-discrimination is expected to be presented to parliament in 2008.

For further information...

www.migrationsverket.se/english.html

Flow data on foreigners

Migration flows (foreigners) National definition	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level ('000)
					1995-2000	2001-2006	2006
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>							
Inflows	4.1	4.8	5.7	8.9	4.0	5.9	80.4
Outflows	1.7	1.4	1.8	2.2	1.6	1.7	20.0
Migration inflows (foreigners) by type Permit based statistics (standardised)	Thousands		% distribution				
	2005	2006	2005	2006			
Work	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.5	Inflows of top 10 nationalities as a % of total inflows of foreigners		
Family (incl. accompanying family)	22.8	27.5	42.4	37.1			
Humanitarian	8.1	20.7	15.0	27.9			
Free movements	22.6	25.5	42.0	34.5			
Others	-	-	-	-			
Total	53.8	74.0					
Temporary migration	2000	2005	2006	Annual average 2000-2006			
International students	5.2	10.8	10.8	8.3			
Trainees	..	..	..	..
Working holiday makers	..	..	..	..
Seasonal workers	..	..	..	..
Intra-company transfers	..	..	..	..
Other temporary workers	..	6.6	6.8	7.5			
Inflows of asylum seekers	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level ('000)
					1995-2000	2001-2006	2006
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>							
	1.0	1.8	1.9	2.7	1.2	2.8	24.3

Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators

Macroeconomic indicators	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level
					1995-2000	2001-2006	2006
Real GDP (growth, %)	4.0	4.4	3.3	4.1	3.3	3.2	
GDP/capita (growth, %) – level in US Dollars	3.4	4.2	2.9	3.5	3.2	2.7	31 988
Employment (growth, %) – level in thousands	1.6	2.2	1.0	2.0	0.8	0.5	4 340
Unemployment (% of labour force)	7.7	4.7	5.8	5.3	6.8	4.9	
Components of population growth	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		
					1995-2000	2001-2006	
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>							
Total	2.3	2.5	4.0	7.3	1.3	4.3	
Natural increase	1.0	-0.3	1.0	1.7	-0.1	0.7	
Net migration	1.2	2.8	3.0	5.6	1.4	3.6	
Total population	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level ('000)
					1995-2000	2001-2006	2006
<i>(Annual growth %)</i>							
Native-born	0.4	-0.1	0.1	-	-0.1	0.1	7 906
Foreign-born	1.5	2.3	2.3	4.4	1.4	2.7	1 175
National	0.6	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.2	0.4	8 589
Foreign	-1.0	-2.0	-0.3	2.5	-2.1	0.7	492
Naturalisations	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level
					1995-2000	2001-2006	2006
<i>As a percentage of foreign population</i>							
	6.0	8.9	8.2	10.7	6.9	7.8	51 239
Labour market outcomes	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		
					1995-2000	2001-2006	
<i>Employment/population ratio</i>							
Native-born men	73.2	75.8	76.3	77.1	73.8	76.7	
Foreign-born men	51.7	59.6	64.1	65.6	56.1	64.9	
Native-born women	71.7	73.2	72.9	73.1	71.4	73.8	
Foreign-born women	50.0	54.7	57.5	58.0	50.6	58.5	
<i>Unemployment rate</i>							
Native-born men	8.8	5.1	7.9	6.0	8.2	5.7	
Foreign-born men	28.1	13.5	15.6	13.6	22.0	13.1	
Native-born women	7.0	4.3	7.8	6.4	6.8	5.3	
Foreign-born women	19.9	11.2	14.1	13.3	17.7	11.4	

Notes and sources are at the beginning of the Chapter.

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