



Education and Culture DG

## Lifelong Learning Programme

### The migrant situation in Sweden

The situation for native inhabitants compared to immigrants is better concerning socio economic status. This probably depends on the background in both groups. With e.g. a university education one is generally better off, no matter from which country one comes from.

The situation for immigrants is described here in a short form from the national agency Statistics Sweden (see below). Statistics Sweden, originally from 1749, is a statistical agency for statistics in all areas in Sweden, which includes surveys to mapping out how new inhabitants from other countries gets integrated.

These following pages is a summary of **Report N:o 6 2013: *Integration – en beskrivning av läget i Sverige 2013.*** (*translation: Integration – a description of the situation in Sweden 2013*). The report can be read in its full length with tables partly in English at

[http://www.scb.se/Statistik/ Publikationer/LE0105\\_2013A01\\_BR\\_BE57BR1301.pdf](http://www.scb.se/Statistik/ Publikationer/LE0105_2013A01_BR_BE57BR1301.pdf)

# In English

## Summary

The aim of this report is to describe the similarities and differences between Swedish born and foreign born persons with regards to education, labour market, income, democracy and health. The first report in the *Integration series* presented five years ago was in reference to a comparable description in such areas as education, labour market and democracy. In these areas, the aim this time includes following up on whether the differences and similarities remain.

## Demographics

Immigration to Sweden has increased, especially in recent years, and many of these immigrants were born in Africa, Asia and the EU. There are many reasons why people immigrate to Sweden. These include work or studies or because conflicts and instability in the home country have forced people to flee.

In 2011, there were 1 427 000 foreign born persons in Sweden, which represented 15 percent of the entire population. This is more than before in terms of both number and percentage. Since the previous report, the percentage and number of those born in Africa and Asia have increased. In 2011, 9 percent of foreign born persons were from Africa and 30 percent were from Asia. These groups consist of many young people of working age and a large proportion have been in Sweden less than five years.

Many foreign born persons were born in countries in the EU and the rest of Europe, 19 and 16 percent respectively. Nordic born persons were previously a large group, but they are now declining as a result of aging and lower immigration. In 2011, they represented 18 percent of the foreign born population. Most Nordic born persons have resided a long time in Sweden, more than twenty years.

## Education

During 1998-2010, foreign born girls and boys had lower grade values in compulsory school than Swedish born girls and boys. At the same time, the girls, no matter where they were born, had higher average grade values than boys from the same region of birth.

For foreign born students, the duration of residence in Sweden was decisive in determining how high their grade values would be in compulsory and upper secondary education. In particular, those students who had resided a short time in Sweden had comparatively lower grade values in compulsory school. They also represented a significantly lower proportion of those who were eligible for upper secondary school compared with those who had resided in Sweden for a long time.

The average grade value in compulsory school increased between 2006 and 2011, but the trend has not been in the same direction for all regions of birth. This applies, for example, to students from Africa where immigration has been high in recent years and where the short duration of residence significantly affects the average grade value.

As for upper secondary school grade values, foreign born students have lower average grade value points than Swedish born students, and the boys have lower grade values than the girls. The boys also lack eligibility to post-secondary school education to a greater extent than girls for all regions of birth.

Most people are expected to have completed any post-secondary education by the age of 30. During 2007-2011, 48 percent of Swedish born 30-year-olds had completed a post-secondary education. The corresponding share for foreign born persons was 42 percent. The proportion with post-secondary education has increased compared to 2002-2006 for both Swedish and foreign born persons overall. The proportion with only compulsory education remains higher among foreign born persons than among Swedish born persons.

### **Labour market**

Foreign born persons are gainfully employed to a far lesser extent than Swedish born persons. In 2011, 82 percent of Swedish born and 57 percent of foreign born persons aged 20-64 were gainfully employed. The difference between Swedish born and foreign born women has risen slightly over the past five years and was 27 percentage points in 2011. The difference between Swedish born and foreign born men remained at virtually the same level as five years ago at 23 percentage points.

*The number* gainfully employed persons has increased by 124 000 compared with 2006. The number of foreign born persons in gainful employment has increased by 113 000 and the number of Swedish

born persons by 11 000. This means that foreign born persons account for over 90 percent of the growth in employment over the past five years. The growth in the number of foreign born persons who are gainfully employed has not resulted in a significant increase in the percentage gainfully employed among foreign born persons. This is because the foreign born population has increased.

Just as was stated in the previous report five years ago, there are large differences between different groups of foreign born persons (SCB, 2008). Those who have resided in Sweden for a short time have the lowest employment by far. However the share of gainfully employed is lower among foreign born persons despite a long duration of residence than among Swedish born persons. When looking at different regions of birth, foreign born persons from Africa and Asia continue to have the weakest position in the labour market.

### **Income**

In 2011, median income in the 20-64 age group was SEK 19 000 per month among Swedish born persons and SEK 14 400 per month among foreign born persons. Foreign born persons have lower net income than Swedish born persons among the gainfully employed as well as those who are not gainfully employed. The composition of income differs between Swedish born and foreign born persons in that the income of the Swedish born mainly consists of income from salary, business activities and capital, i.e. income that is not derived from the economic security system.

The report relies on two different criteria to describe the groups at risk of economic vulnerability. According to both of these criteria, foreign born persons face an increased risk of economic vulnerability. Foreign born persons from Africa and Asia have the worst economic situation, regardless of the income measure used. It is also clear that foreign born persons who have a short duration of residence in Sweden have a greater risk of economic vulnerability than other groups of foreign born persons.

### **Democracy**

Swedish born persons participate in voting to a greater extent than foreign born persons. This difference has increased between the parliamentary elections in 1991 and 2006. However, the difference in voter turnout decreased between Swedish born and foreign born persons from 18 to 14 percentage points between the last elections in

2006 and 2010. Voter turnout for Swedish born persons was 87 percent in the 2010 parliamentary election, while the voter turnout for foreign born persons was 73 percent. Voter turnout increases with the duration of residence in Sweden, but regardless of the duration of residence in Sweden, voter turnout among foreign born persons is lower than among Swedish born persons. Voter turnout in parliamentary elections also varies according to region of birth, which was already evident in the previous report. The lowest voter turnout was among foreign born persons from Africa, Asia, and Rest of Europe. Persons born in the Nordic countries and South America vote in a relatively great extent. However, this is not as high as the voter turnout among Swedish born persons. This pattern has not changed since the previous year's parliamentary election.

Political representation has also been compared between Swedish born and foreign born persons. The nominations of foreign born persons for parliamentary election nearly match the percentage of foreign born persons among eligible voters. However, foreign born persons are not elected to the Riksdag to the same extent. This pattern also applies in county and municipal elections.

## Health

Overall health conditions are studied based on the *Living Conditions Survey (ULF/SILC)* for 2011 and 2012. Swedish born women assessed their general health as good to a greater degree than foreign born women. However, there is no significant difference between the men. When physical health is measured in terms of aches and pain, it is clear that both foreign born women and men suffer severe pain to a greater extent than Swedish born persons. For example, this may involve severe pain in the back, shoulders or neck. Insomnia or anxiety disorders, worries or distress are also more common among foreign born persons. Many of these health problems apply in particular to foreign born women.

## A note of thanks

We would like to express appreciation to our survey respondents – the people, enterprises, government authorities and other institutions of Sweden – with whose cooperation Statistics Sweden is able to provide reliable and timely statistical information meeting the current needs of our modern society.