European Migration Network

Annual Report on
Asylum and Migration
Statistics, 2007

28th of October, 2008
1. INTRODUCTION .......................................................................................................................................................... 3

1.1 Methodology .................................................................................................................................................................. 3

2. ASYLUM ....................................................................................................................................................................... 4

2.1 Analysis and interpretation of asylum statistics ........................................................................................................ 4

2.1.1 Trends in first-time asylum applications in 2007 compared to the previous year .................................................. 4

2.1.2 Total number of first and final positive decisions .................................................................................................. 5

2.1.3 Changes in the statuses regularly granted to particular citizenship groups .......................................................... 6

2.2 Contextual interpretations (legal, political and international factors) ........................................................................ 6

2.2.1 New or amended laws effective in 2006 ...................................................................................................................... 6

2.2.2 Procedural changes effective in 2006 ......................................................................................................................... 7

2.2.3 European / international factors explaining certain changes regarding asylum trends in 2006 .............................. 7

3. MIGRATION ................................................................................................................................................................. 8

3.1 Analysis and interpretation of migration statistics ...................................................................................................... 8

3.1.1 Migration Flows .......................................................................................................................................................... 8

3.1.2 Population by Citizenship in 2007 ............................................................................................................................... 9

3.1.3 Residence Permits: annual total of first issuing in 2007 .......................................................................................... 10

3.2 Contextual interpretations (legal, political and international factors) ........................................................................ 11

3.2.1 Main trends and most important developments in the area of migration policy .......................................................... 11

3.2.2 Existing categories of admission or non-admission in 2007 .................................................................................. 11

3.2.3 European / international factors explaining certain changes/continuity regarding migration in your Member State in comparison to the previous year ........................................................................ 11

4. REFUSALS, APPREHENSIONS AND REMOVALS ........................................................................................ ........ 12

4.1 Analysis and interpretation of statistics ......................................................................................................................... 12

4.1.1 Developments/trends pertaining to the number of refusals in 2007 in comparison to the previous year .................. 12

4.1.2 Developments/trends pertaining to the number of apprehensions of illegally-resident third-country nationals in 2007 in comparison to the previous year ........................................................................ 12

4.1.3 Developments/trends pertaining to the number of removals in 2007 in comparison to the previous year .................. 13

4.1.4 In cases of refused, apprehended, and removed migrants in 2007, are these from the same countries in all categories, or are particular citizenship groups more common in a particular category? ........................................................................ 13

4.2 Contextual interpretations (legal, political and international factors) ........................................................................... 13

4.2.1 New or amended laws influencing illegal immigration in 2007 .............................................................................. 13

4.2.2 Procedural changes influencing illegal immigration in 2007 .................................................................................. 13

4.2.3 European / international factors explaining certain changes/continuity regarding illegal entry in 2007 ................. 14
1. INTRODUCTION

The immigration in Sweden 2007 was the largest since 1875 when the population register was established in Sweden. At the same time the emigration was the largest for over one hundred years. During 2007, 99,485 person immigrated, of which 45,857 women and 53,628 men. In the same period 45,418 persons emigrated and the net migration amounted to approximately 54,000 persons. During 2007 over 36,000 persons applied for asylum in Sweden, which is the highest figure since the Balkan war 1991. The influx of asylum seekers was to a large extent – approximately 50 percent – from Iraq. Amongst the major target countries in Europe for asylum seekers from Iraq, Sweden receive almost half of the total amount of asylum seekers. The Temporary Law, presenting temporary amendments to the 1989 Aliens Act, was in force from November 2005 to October 2006, and provided more than 17,000 permits in 2006 to former asylum seekers. This, in turn, was a major reason for the increase in the numbers of family reunification during 2007. At the same time the number of asylum permits decreased and the migration balance for third country nationals shifted from asylum permits to family reunification, work permits and permits for students. The number of registrations of EU-citizens was stable compared to previous years – approximately 20,000 each year.

1.1 Methodology

The data referred to in this report is based on data from EUROSTAT. It should, however, be noted that there are differences between the national statistics and statistics compiled by EUROSTAT according to the Migration Statistics Regulation. Most of the national statistics from the Migration Board on legal migration (Article 6 in Migration Statistics Regulation) are divided into permits according to national legislation and permits according to EU legislation instead of grouping the data in third country nationals and EU citizens. In data submitted to EUROSTAT according to the Migration Statistics Regulation all EU citizens are excluded.
2. ASYLUM

2.1 Analysis and interpretation of asylum statistics

2.1.1 Trends in first-time asylum applications in 2007 compared to the previous year

(on the basis of persons, e.g. dependant children should be included, but counted separately). Are these trends related to legislative or administrative developments/changes?

In 2007, the number of asylum seekers increased in Sweden by 50 percent from 2006 (23,785 to 36,207). Almost half of the number of asylum seekers were citizens of Iraq, 9 percent were citizens of Somalia and 7 percent Serbia (figure 2.1). Approximately 70 percent of all new asylum applications in 2007 were from males, 25,128, compared to 11,079 females. The proportions were similar to those in 2006 (66 percent and 34 percent respectively). The majority of the asylum seekers were aged between 18 and 35, 55 percent of males and 45 percent of females. In 2007, 1,264 asylum applications were made by unaccompanied children (820 in 2006), 80 percent were from males - a slightly higher proportion than in 2006 (79 percent).

Figure 2.1 Asylum applications for the five main countries of citizenship in 2007, 2004-2007.

---

1 If this is not possible, add a note stating this and clarifying on what basis the asylum data are provided.
2 A dependant child refers to a person below the age of 18 years who claims asylum with their dependants (e.g. parents, guardians) and would then be counted as an individual person. In addition, their dependant(s) would also be counted as separate person(s).
The huge influx of asylum seekers from Iraq (18,559) was an effect of several circumstances of which the deteriorating situation in Iraq 2006 were the major factor combined with the Swedish temporary law 2006, which resulted in many permits, and a relative high recognition rate in Sweden for asylum seekers from Iraq 2006 and 2007 compared to other states. Sweden became one of the main target countries for asylum seekers from Iraq in Europe. During the second half of 2007 the security situation in Iraq improved, and some rulings by the Swedish Migration High Court clarified that there were no armed conflict in Iraq and that people could return. The article in the new Aliens Act (which entered into force on March 31, 2006) concerning what should be considered as “distressing circumstances” was also clarified (“humanitarian grounds” in the old Aliens Act). These circumstances caused decreasing recognition rates. Together with more active return efforts there was a substantial decline in the influx from Iraq during 2008.

Figure 2.2 Applications for asylum in Sweden, total (non-EU 27) and for citizens of Iraq, 2004-2007.

2.1.2 Total number of first and final positive decisions

(again on the basis of persons) in 2007, disaggregated by the citizenship of the person concerned? Please explain changes in the total number of positive decisions in comparison to the previous year.

The total number of decisions in 2007 were 32,472, almost a 60 percent increase from the previous year (18,838, the temporary law excluded). Of the total number of decisions in 2007, 48 percent were positive (15,640) compared to 42 percent (the temporary law excluded) in the previous year. The temporary law resulted in a total of 45,968 decisions 2006, of which 22,727 were positive.

Of the 15,640 positive initial decisions, 856 were granted Geneva Conventions status, 13,721 were granted Humanitarian Status and other types of subsidiary protection, and 1,063 were on other grounds.
It should be noted that subsidiary protection according to the Qualification Directive 2004/83/EC was 15 percent (1 564) of the total number of granted subsidiary protection (10 208). Humanitarian status (exceptionally distressing circumstances) amounted to 3 938 permits. Thus, the there was a large proportion of national subsidiary protection status outside of the directive.

The nationality that received the highest number of positive asylum decisions in the first instance was Iraq, where the decisions made up to 63 percent (9 841) of all positive decisions. Beside Iraq the numbers of positive decisions was distributed to the following four nationalities in descending order; Somalia (1 552), Serbia (526), Eritrea (488) and Russian Federation (311).

The overall recognition rate in the first instance was slightly higher compared to previous year – 48 percent compared to 42 percent. The outcome of both these years is to a great extent explained by the large proportion of decisions on asylumseekers from Iraq.

2.1.3 Changes in the statuses regularly granted to particular citizenship groups

How do you explain these changes or continuity?

Almost 10 000 of those who were granted permits in 2007 were citizens of Iraq. It’s an increase of 17 percent compared to 2006 (8 397). The asylumseekers from Iraq during 2007 were to a great extent considered in need of protection according to the rules in the Aliens Act on subsidiary protection. The calendar-based recognition rate for decisions in the first instance for Iraqis was 72 percent in 2007. As mentioned in chapter 2.1.1, due to a revised assessment on the situation in Iraq as well as several other circumstances, the recognition rates fell during the last months of 2007.

2.2 Contextual interpretations (legal, political and international factors)

2.2.1 New or amended laws effective in 2006

Please describe briefly any new or amended laws on asylum and relevant case law effective in 2006. Have there been important changes in comparison with the previous year?

Several rulings by the Migration Court of Appeal characterized year 2007, which provided guidance to the interpretation of the new Aliens Act that entered into force on the 31st of March 2006. The two most principal rulings were on the Article in the Aliens Act referring to humanitarian grounds (Chapter 5, Paragraph 6), reflecting what would constitute “exceptionally distressing circumstances” and what would constitute an “internal armed conflict”. Compared to some of the
praxis that had developed during 2006, these rulings implied a stricter practise. Together with an improved security situation in Iraq, the recognition rates fell in towards the end of the year.

2.2.2 **Procedural changes effective in 2006**

*Please explain briefly administrative or legal changes in the application, decision, or appeals process contributing to any numerical changes. Have there been important changes in comparison with the previous year?*

No relevant changes occurred in this context. The major changes occurred during 2006 due to the new Aliens Act and the temporary amendments to the old law (see previous report).

2.2.3 **European / international factors explaining certain changes regarding asylum trends in 2006**

*Has the situation changed in comparison with the previous year?*

In 2006 Sweden became one of the main target countries for asylum seekers from Iraq. One reason for this was probably the pardon (Temporary Law). The temporary amendments to the 1989 Aliens Act were in force from November 2005 to October 2006, and involved a review of 31 000 cases carried out by Swedish Migration Board, which resulted in 17 000 permits. This constituted a major pull-factor for asylum seekers. The assessment of the situation in Iraq, together with the interpretation of the new Aliens Act regarding subsidiary protection, led to a significant high recognition rate in Sweden compared to many other European states. This might have encouraged many Iraqi’s to seek asylum in Sweden. The influx continued to increase to historically high levels during 2007 with 36 000 asylum seekers, of which 18 000 was from Iraq. As mentioned above the recognition rate decreased during 2007. A lower recognition rate combined with different enforcement measures, such as a return agreement with Iraq, led in 2008 to a situation were Sweden no longer was perceived as the main target country and a decreasing trend was seen.
3. MIGRATION

The immigration numbers in 2007 were the highest since 1875, when the population register was established in Sweden. At the same time the emigration numbers were the highest for over one hundred years.

3.1 Analysis and interpretation of migration statistics

Note that, in accordance with Article 3 of the Migratory Statistics Regulation (862/2007), asylum applicants should be counted among flow and stock data if they stay effectively one year or more in your Member State (or if they intend to stay one year or more) like for other migrants. The data provided from Eurostat is in accordance with this. However, if this is not the case for your Member State, provide a note explaining this.

3.1.1 Migration Flows

How did migration flows in your Member State change compared to the previous years, from 2002 onwards? Please explain the reasons for changes. Did the migration trends observed in this field reflect immigration policies at the time?

In 2007, 99 485 people immigrated to Sweden, compared to the year 2006 when 95 750 people immigrated. The recorded emigration in 2007 were on the same level as in 2006 (45 000 and 44 908, respectively) (figure 3.1), which is historically a high figure.

The major reason for the increased immigration in 2007 was an increase in family reunification, which to some extent was a secondary effect of the permits issued under the Temporary Law (which was in force in 2006), and a significant number of asylum permits – although not as many as in 2006.

Figure 3.1 Total migration to/from Sweden, 2002-2007
3.1.2 Population by Citizenship in 2007
As well as giving the total number of third country nationals residing in your country, provide information on the largest groups\(^3\) (by citizenship) of third country nationals in 2007? If significant changes occurred in reference to the size of particular groups of third country nationals in 2007, what were the underlying causes of these changes (e.g. legal, political, economical, other)?

At the turn of the year 2007/2008, 491,996 people in Sweden were foreign citizens, or 5 percent of Sweden's population. More than half of the foreign citizens were third country nationals. The largest groups were nationals from Iraq and Thailand followed by citizens of Bosnia (figure 3.2).

**Figure 3.2** Largest groups of third country nationals by citizenship\(^*\) in 2007

![Largest groups of third country nationals by citizenship](image)

\(^*\) In the total numbers there are a large proportion of citizens from Yugoslavia. Their citizenship are indicated as unknown and not shown in this table.

It is relevant to make a comparison with foreign nationals by country of birth. In the end of 2007 there were 1,227,770 foreign born citizens in Sweden, or 13 percent of Sweden’s population. The numbers foreign born are thus almost three times higher than the numbers of foreign citizens (5 percent). This reflects a high inclination to become a Swedish citizen and a relatively quick naturalisation procedure, usually five years.

\(^3\) Normally up to and including at least the 10 largest nationality groups on the basis of the number of third country national persons is sufficient. More can be provided if you consider relevant, e.g. a particular interest in a specific nationality at EU-level.
The largest group of third country nationals residing in Sweden were nationals from Iraq, Yugoslavia and Iran (figure 3.3).

**Figure 3.3** Largest groups of third country nationals by country of birth in 2007.

![Bar chart showing population of different countries of birth in Sweden in 2007](image)

3.1.3 Residence Permits: annual total of first issuing in 2007

How did the total number of residence permits issued for the first time in 2007 change in comparison to the previous year? Please explain the reasons for this (legal, political, administrative changes, etc.). Note that this section should refer only to the first issuing of residence permits and not any subsequent extensions to a residence permit issued in previous years.

During 2007, the total number of residence permits were 62 836 for third–country nationals only, a minor increase compared to 2006 (61 851) (table 3.1). Yet, there were major variations within the categories belonging to the group of resident permits.

About 28 000 permits were family formation/reunification or adoption, which was an increase from previous year (24 396). Citizens of Iraq, Thailand and Somalia represented the majority of the family formation/reunification permits. The study and employment category also increased between 2006 and 2007 from 6 309 to 8 920 and from 6 093 to 7 501, respectively. “Other categories” refers

---

4 Owing to the different definitions and practices between the Member States, prior to the entry into force of Regulation 862/2007, there are limited comparable data. You are, therefore, requested to provide the data you have, according to
to asylum permits, and this group decreased from previous year – from 25 053 in 2006 to 18 414 in 2007. The large numbers of asylum permits in 2006 were to a great extent due to the pardon in 2006 (Temporary Law).

**Table 3.1** Residence permits for third country nationals, 2006-2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family formation/reunification</td>
<td>24 396</td>
<td>28 001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study</td>
<td>6 309</td>
<td>8 920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>6 093</td>
<td>7 501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other categories</td>
<td>25 053</td>
<td>18 414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>61 851</strong></td>
<td><strong>62 836</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.2 Contextual interpretations (legal, political and international factors)

#### 3.2.1 Main trends and most important developments in the area of migration policy in your Member State since the previous year (political stance; new or amended laws; procedural changes; etc.)? Please give a short overview.

No specific changes relevant in this context.

#### 3.2.2 Existing categories of admission or non-admission in 2007

No specific changes relevant in this context.

#### 3.2.3 European / international factors explaining certain changes/continuity regarding migration in your Member State in comparison to the previous year

The high numbers of asylum permits in 2006 and 2007, and a subsequent migration based on family reunification/formation was the major driving force behind the increasing migration trend. A high labour demand in 2007 increased the number of work permits. The increased supply of study places of higher learning at universities and colleges along with the absence of study fees made studies in Sweden relatively attractive for new groups.

---

5 Please explain briefly new or amended immigration laws, and the areas they cover.

6 Please describe modifications to immigration procedure, including changes in application stages and agencies responsible. Include changes that are the result of both administrative and legal developments.

7 This refers to the categories which might be used in your Member State for the admission or non-admission of migrants. Examples for admission are family reunification, work, study; and, for non-admission, examples are false documents, known criminal activities, potential threat to national security. Please list the categories used in your Member State (or, if none, state this also) and breakdown any data provided using these categories.
4. REFUSALS, APPREHENSIONS AND REMOVALS

The year 2007 was characterized by a historically high level of asylum seekers and a high recognition rate. Almost half of the asylum seekers came from Iraq and approximately one third of all asylum decisions – most of them positive – in first instance concerned a national from Iraq. There were relatively few persons in the removal phase.

4.1 Analysis and interpretation of statistics

4.1.1 Developments/trends pertaining to the number of refusals in 2007 in comparison to the previous year.10

Have there been changes in the main countries of citizenship of refused migrants since the previous year? If possible, give reasons for these changes/continuity.

In 2007 the total number of refusals were 752 compared to 668 in 2006. The largest groups in 2007 were residents from Iraq (193), Serbia (117) and Eritrea (38). In 2006, the three largest groups were residents from Serbia (105), Romania (102) and Iraq (45).

4.1.2 Developments/trends pertaining to the number of apprehensions of illegally-resident third-country nationals in 2007 in comparison to the previous year.11

Have there been changes in the main countries of citizenship of those apprehended in 2007? If possible, give reasons for these changes/continuity.

In 2007 the total number of apprehensions were 32,851 compared to 20,926 in 2006, and 14,528 in 2005. The largest groups in 2007 were residents from Iraq (16,861), Somalia (3,298) and Serbia (2,321). In 2006, residents from Iraq (8,189), Serbia (1,812) and Somalia (1,031) were the three largest groups. Apprehended aliens, in the statistics, are in the figures for 2007 and previous years calculated as a function of the number asylum seekers in Sweden.

---

8 This includes, for letters a) to c): information on the number of refusals; their citizenship; the difficulties in return of migrants; and special arrangements with certain countries of origin or transit regarding return and deportation.

9 A "Third-country national refused entry" means a third-country national who is refused entry at the external border because they do not fulfil all the entry conditions laid down in Article 5(1) of Regulation (EC) No 562/2006 and do not belong to the categories of persons referred to in Article 5(4) of that Regulation.

10 In case your Member State does not collect data on refused aliens, we kindly ask you to send us your enforcement statistics, even if they are not directly comparable.

11 In case your country does not collect data on apprehensions, please provide your Enforcement Statistics, even if they are not directly comparable.
4.1.3 Developments/trends pertaining to the number of removals in 2007 in comparison to the previous year.

Have there been changes in the main countries of citizenship of removed migrants? If possible, explain the underlying factors for these changes/continuity.

In 2007 the total number of removals were 3,011, compared to 3,793 in 2006. The largest groups in 2007 were residents from Serbia (286), the Russian Federation (225) and Bolivia (221). In 2005 and 2006 residents from Serbia and Montenegro, Bulgaria and the Russian Federation were the largest groups of removals. The decreasing number of removals reflect the fact that the number of persons in the removal phase were comparably few due to the abovementioned pardon for failed asylum seekers (the Temporary Law).

4.1.4 In cases of refused, apprehended, and removed migrants in 2007, are these from the same countries in all categories, or are particular citizenship groups more common in a particular category? If possible, explain the underlying causes.

Apprehended and removed aliens usually reflect the overall composition of asylum seekers. Removed aliens are also closely linked to the possibilities to enforce removals. Refused aliens are people who do not apply for asylum.

4.2 Contextual interpretations (legal, political and international factors)

4.2.1 New or amended laws influencing illegal immigration in 2007

Please explain the most important changes in policies regarding refusal of entry or return from the previous year.

No specific change of laws influencing illegal immigration were made during the period for this report. The policy towards asylum seekers from Iraq changed in 2007, and more applications from Iraqi citizens were rejected. Criminal investigations concerning cases of human smuggling were furthermore somewhat more frequent.

4.2.2 Procedural changes influencing illegal immigration in 2007

Please describe modifications to the procedure in cases of identified illegal entry, illegal residence and return since the previous year. Include changes that are the result of both administrative and legal developments.

No specific change in procedure during the period for this report.
4.2.3 European / international factors explaining certain changes/continuity regarding illegal entry in 2007

Policies in neighboring countries affects the number of illegal entries in Sweden. If a neighboring country for instance increases the rates of approved applications of asylum and grants residence permit, it is likely that the number of illegal entries to Sweden decreases.