

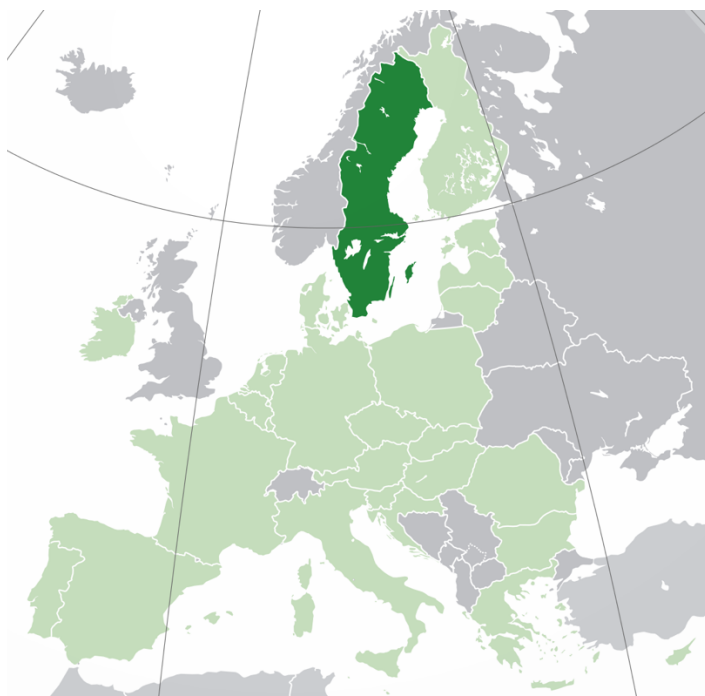
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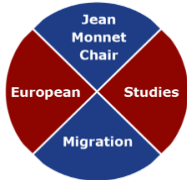
UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI TORINO

GROUP COUNTRY REPORT 2020-2021

MIGRATION IN SWEDEN

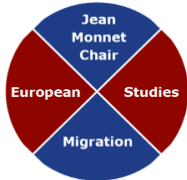


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Abstract

This report focuses on the migration trend in Sweden, which in recent years has become one of the leader immigration countries within the European Union, welcoming several thousands of immigrants and refugees every year.

In this analysis, Sweden is examined as a country of destination, taking into account the decade 2010-2019, and referring to statistical data taken almost entirely from EUROSTAT¹. When available, data of 2020 are shown in separate comments.

The report is structured in three parts.

Part I provides a general overview of the effective number of people living in Sweden during the period of time analyzed, differentiating between citizens and immigrants, followed by a detailed analysis of immigrants distinguished by categories such as age, sex, country of birth and reason for the residence permits issued.

Part II, by following the same methodology, illustrates the same data but considering the flow of immigrants, namely the effective number of people entering or leaving Sweden in the concerned period. Moreover, particular reference is also made to the population growth (taking into account natural change and net migration) and the flow of migrants.

Part III analyses a specific group of immigrants, those who have been granted refugee status in Sweden, with reference to migrants who are still waiting for such recognition, i.e., asylum seekers. In addition, a specific section is devoted to migrant's integration indicators, with reference to employment and unemployment.

¹ European Statistical Office, European Commission, Luxembourg: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>

Part I

1.1 STOCK OF TOTAL POPULATION

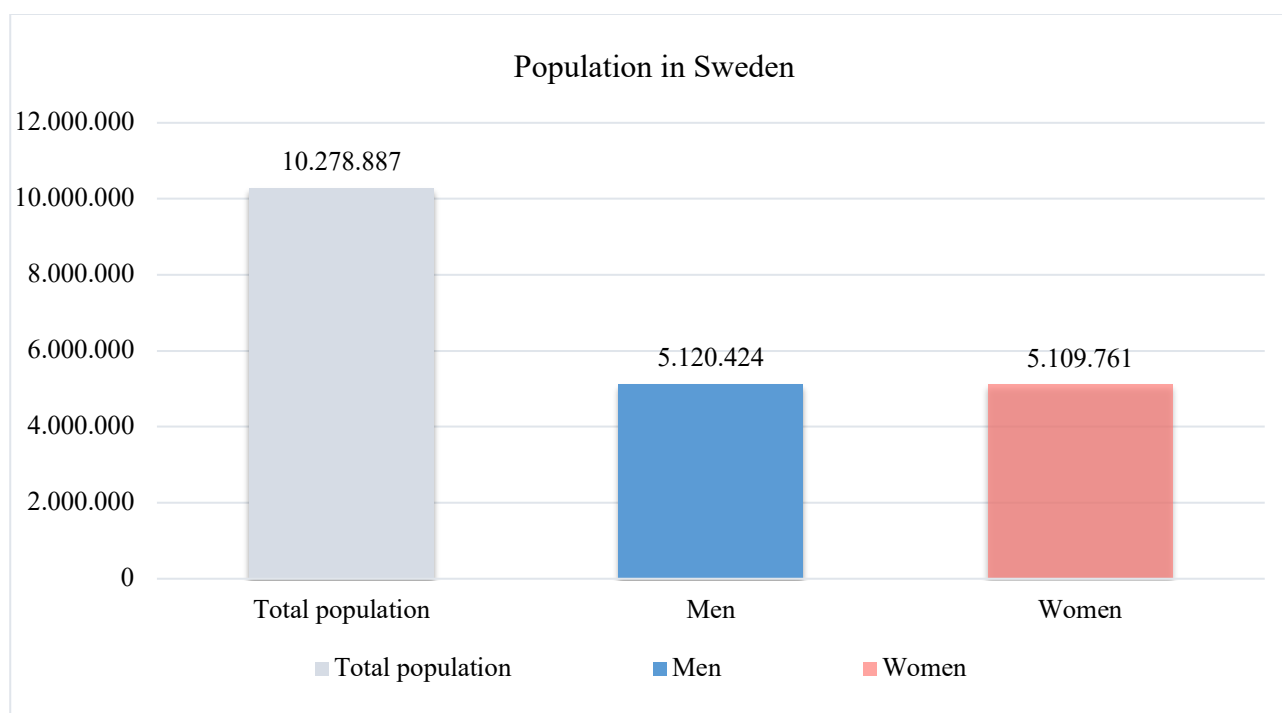
Sweden	1° Jan 2019
Total	10278887
Men	5120424
Women	5109761

Table 1 – source: EUROSTAT [demo_gind]

In Sweden, the total stock of population at 1° January 2019 is 10.278.887 million people, men represent half with 5.120.424 and women about half with 5.109.761. Instead, at 1° January 2020 the total stock of population is 10.327.589 million people. By “stock of population” it is meant the number of population in a given area at a given time of the year in question.

The population is very unevenly distributed in the country with most people aggregated to the southern third of the country. The average population density for Sweden is 25.4 inhabitants per km² in 2019².

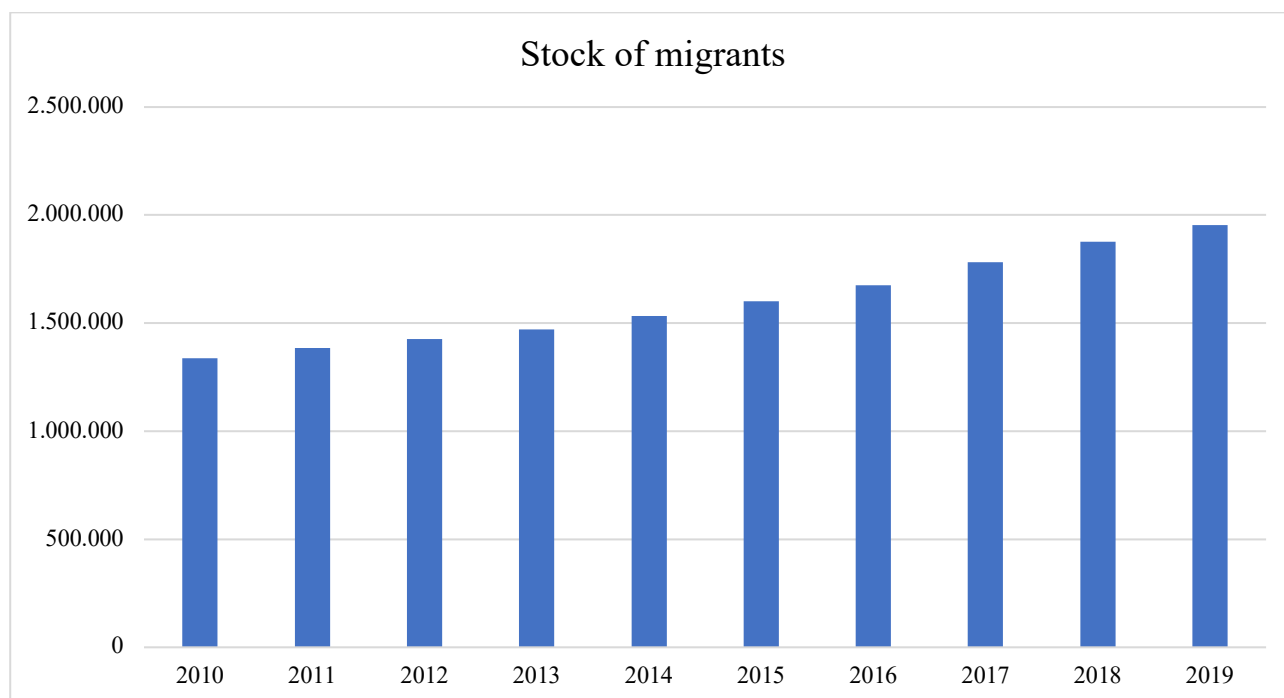
The graphs below, the histogram and the pie chart respectively, show the homogeneity of distribution between females and males.



Graph 1 – source: EUROSTAT [demo_gind]

² Eurydice, European Commission, *Population: Demographic Situation, Languages and Religions*: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/population-demographic-situation-languages-and-religions-80_en

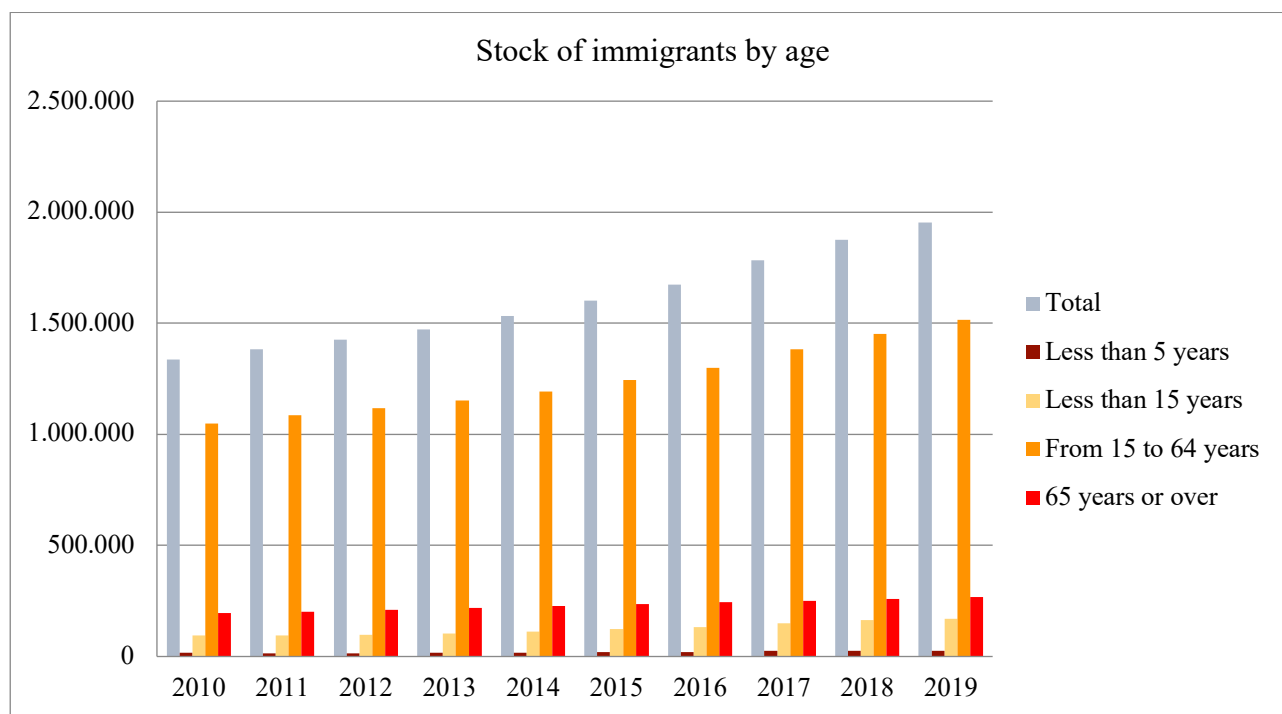
1.2 STOCK OF MIGRANTS IN THE LAST 10 YEARS



Source: EUROSTAT [migr_pop3ctb]

The stock of migrants is the number of people born in a country other than that in which they live. The estimates are derived from the data on foreign-born population, namely people who have residence in one country but were born in another country. As it can be seen in the above graph, over the decade 2010-2019 there is a continuous trend of increasing numbers of migrants. In fact, it goes from 1.337.214 in 2010 to 1.954.065 in 2019.

1.3 IMMIGRANT STOCK BY CATEGORY



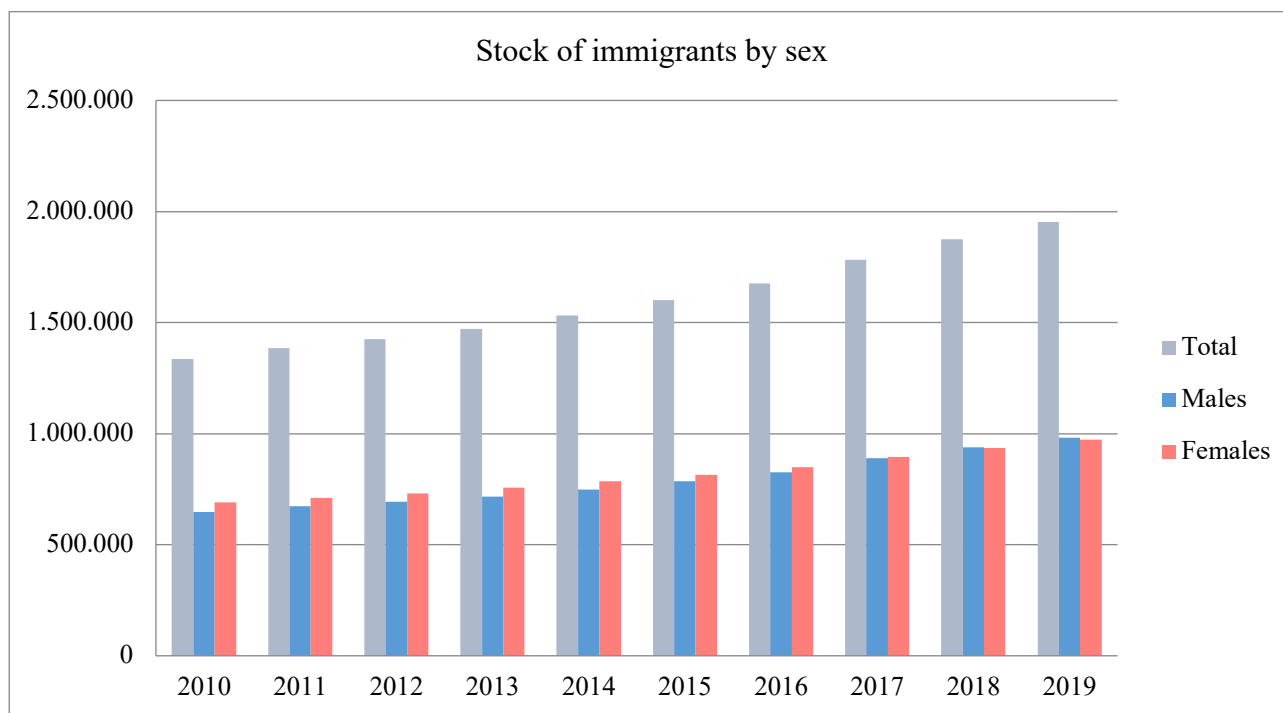
Source: EUROSTAT [migr_pop3ctb]

The graph shows the stock of immigrants in Sweden by age in every year between 2010 and 2019. During this period the total stock of immigrants is increasing: from 1.337.214 million in 2010 to 1.954.065 million in 2019.

In 2020 the stock of immigrants about the total age is 2.018.191 million. The highest immigration rate is found between the ages of 15 and 64 with 1.500 million in 2019. In that range the young people who are more inclined to move is allocated. During this age they are more favorable to migrate due to their health conditions, capacity of adaptation and work.

The stock of immigrants aged less than 15 years has little relevance, even though it increased from 2010 with 93.479 thousand to 2019 with 171.113 thousand.

Quite relevance has the range of 65 years or over with numbers around 250 thousand until 2019 with 268.137 thousand.

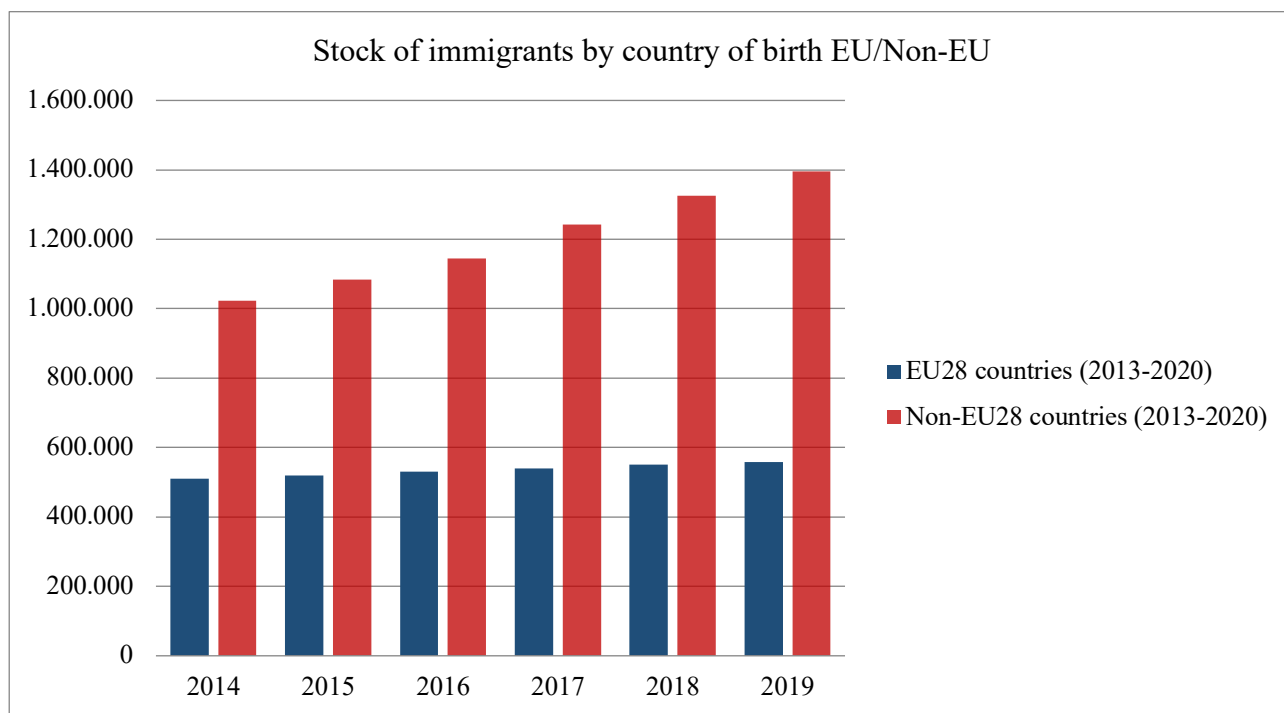


Source: EUROSTAT [migr_pop3ctb]

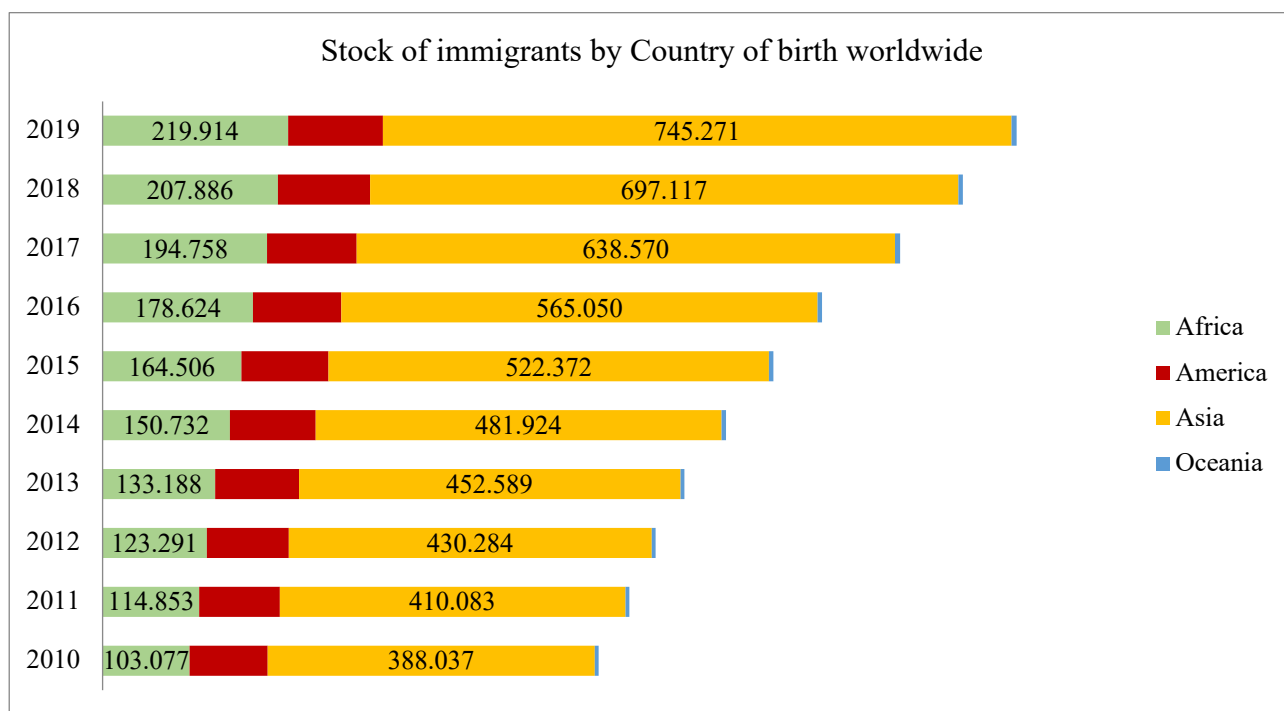
This graph shows the stock of immigrants by sex between 2010 and 2019. It underlines that, in general, the stock of the two categories is quite at the same level, with a little preponderance of females from 2010 to 2017. The stock is increasing during the years analyzed.

It is interesting to notice that in 2019 the stock of male is 981.638 thousand and the one of females is 972.427. The data for 2020 is around 1 million for the two categories.

It is important to evidence, as the graph shows, that there is no very big difference between the two sexes, in fact the stock remains always quite equal for males and females. There is no preponderance of one of the two sexes in that case.



Source: EUROSTAT [migr_pop3ctb]

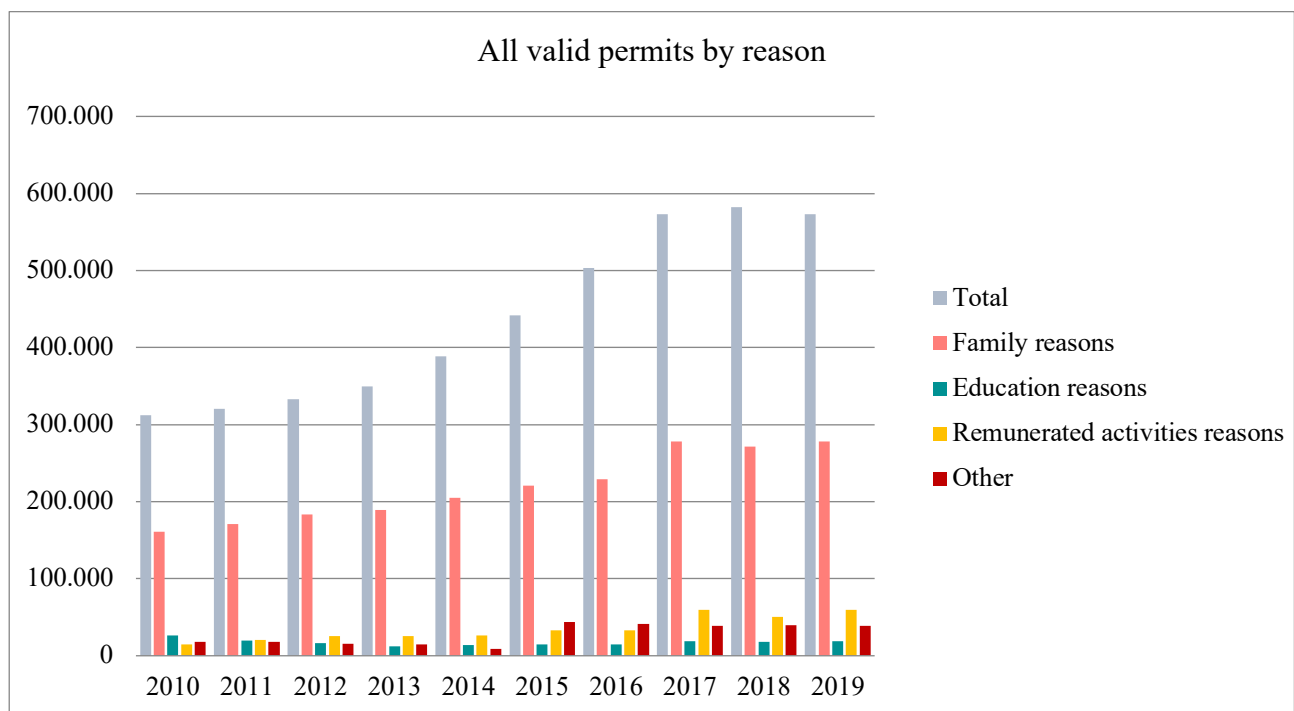


Source: EUROSTAT [migr_pop3ctb]

The graph analyses the stock of immigrants by country of birth grouped by macro areas between 2010 and 2019. The first graph shares only the group EU and non-EU countries from 2014 because it starts to register data from that year. It shows that the stock of immigrants from non-EU countries is bigger than from EU countries. For the first it is nearly 1.400 million in 2019 and for EU countries is nearly 600 thousand immigrants.

The second graph shows the stock of immigrants by continents. The biggest stock of immigrants comes from Asia that sees a rapid increase: from 388.037 thousand in 2010 to 745.271 in 2019. For 2020 there are 782.386 thousand immigrants. Moreover from Africa the stock remains more limited with 219.914 thousand immigrants in 2019, with an increase to 231.276 thousand in 2020.

The data analyzed before, confirm that Sweden is a destination country and that the principal country of birth of the stock of immigrants is from Non-EU28 countries, but in general from the Europe continent (so, from the other countries that are not part of the European Union).



Source: EUROSTAT [migr_resvalid]

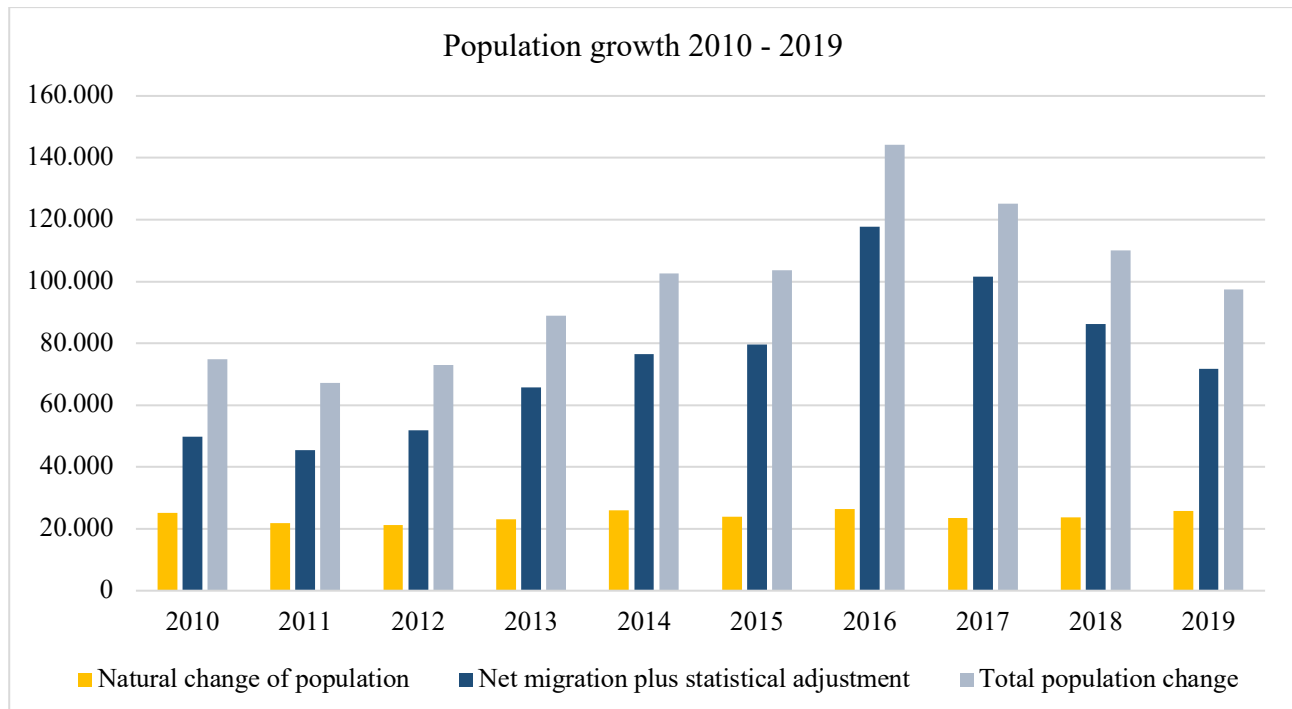
The graph shows the stock of all valid permits by reason on 31 December of each year between 2010 and 2019. During this period the highest stock of permits is given for family reasons. It confirms the general evidence that the first channel of entrance is for family reunification. In fact, the graph shows 278.045 thousand permits for family reasons in 2019. The second highest stock of permits in 2019 is for remunerated activities reasons that is 59.919 thousand.

The stock of permits for education reasons remains during the period very limited and quite the same, around 20 thousand units: in 2019 it measures 19.078 thousand.

It is interesting to notice that the stock of permits for other reasons, considered to be *inter alia* asylum seekers or refugees, is 38.946 thousand. It shows that the stock increases during the year, even if it remains limited.

Part II

2.1 POPULATION GROWTH



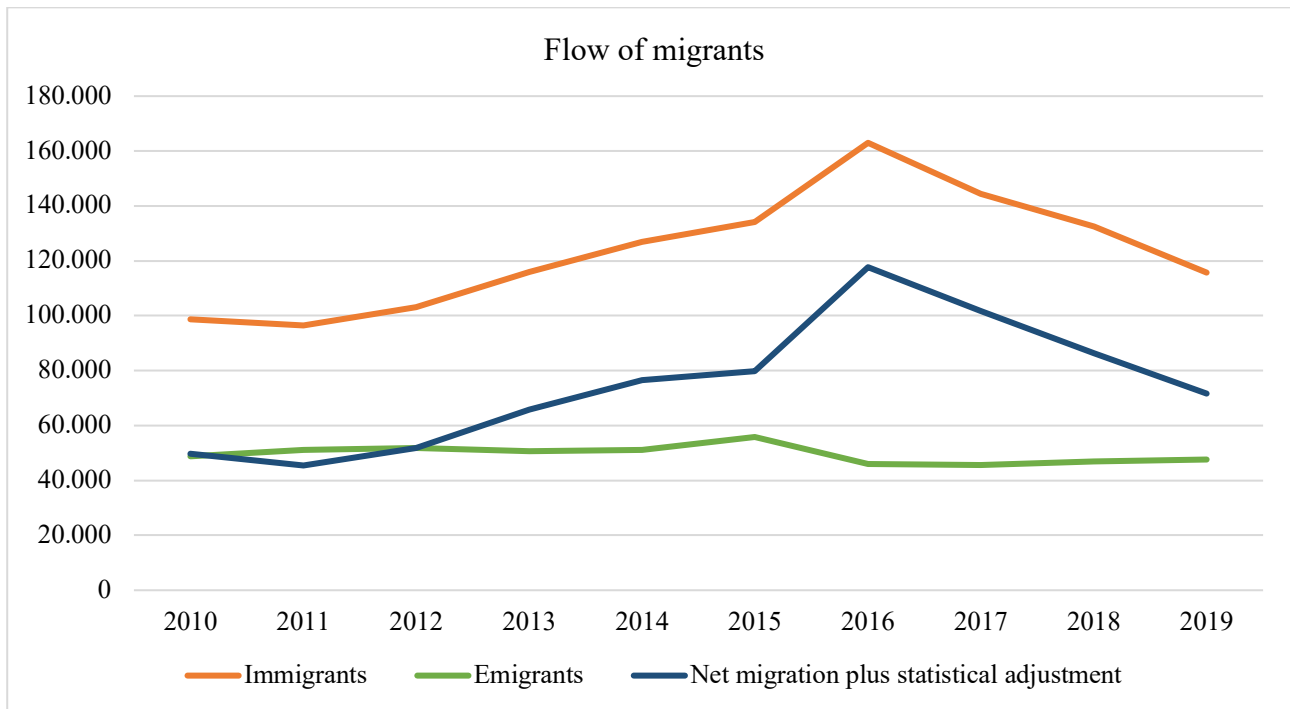
Source: EUROSTAT [demo_gind]

The *population change* (or population growth) is the difference in population size on 1 January of two consecutive years. In order to analyze this change between the years, two components have to be considered: *natural change* (the difference between the number of live births and the number of deaths during a given period of time) and *net migration* (the difference between the number of immigrants and the number of emigrants, but it should be noted that net migration as referred to in the context of population change statistics includes the statistical adjustments occurring in the annual demographic balance, namely the difference between total population change and natural change).

The above graph shows the changes within Swedish population between 2010 and 2019. As it can be noticed, during the analyzed period, the *natural change* of population is mostly steady and lower than the *net migration*. This latter larger contributes to the positive increase in population level.

Moreover, the *total population change* remains constant until 2016 when the growth records its highest value; in the following years the values decrease gradually, still remaining among the highest values recorded so far.

2.2 FLOWS OF MIGRANTS IN THE LAST 10 YEARS



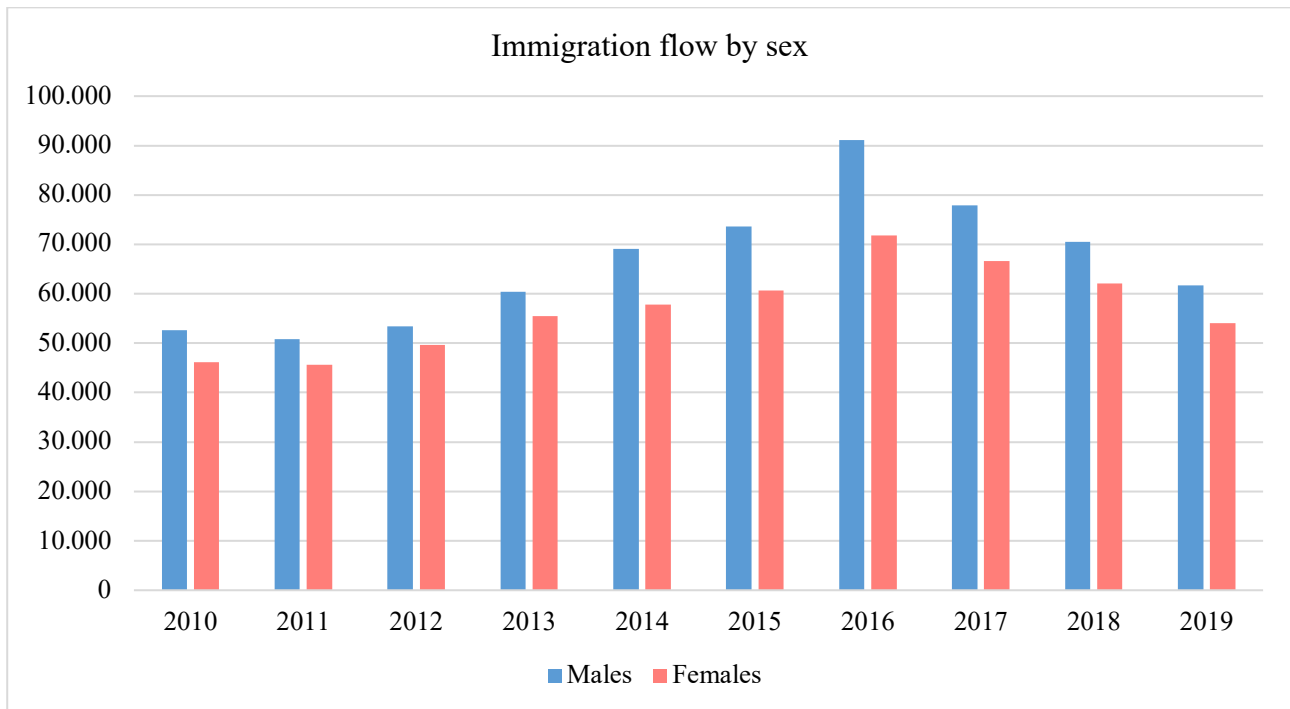
Source: EUROSTAT [migr_imm8]; [migr_emi2]; [demo_gind]

Migration flows refer to the number of migrants entering or leaving a given country during a given period of time, frequently on annual basis. The analysis of the flow of migrants in a given country – Sweden in this case – is focused on the data of immigration and emigration which are put in relation through the *net migration*.

Comparing the two figures, a difference in trend is clearly visible. In fact, the emigrants' value stays regular. Otherwise, the immigrants' value grows constantly and reaches a peak between 2015 and 2016. As a result, the *net migration* reflects the high trend of immigration, because of the continuity of the data of emigration, but it is also counterbalanced by the low-value emigrants.

It is important to remark that in 2011 the *net migration* is under the emigration line because in that same year, it is registered the lowest share of entries and one of the highest values for the exits.

2.3 IMMIGRATION FLOW BY CATEGORY

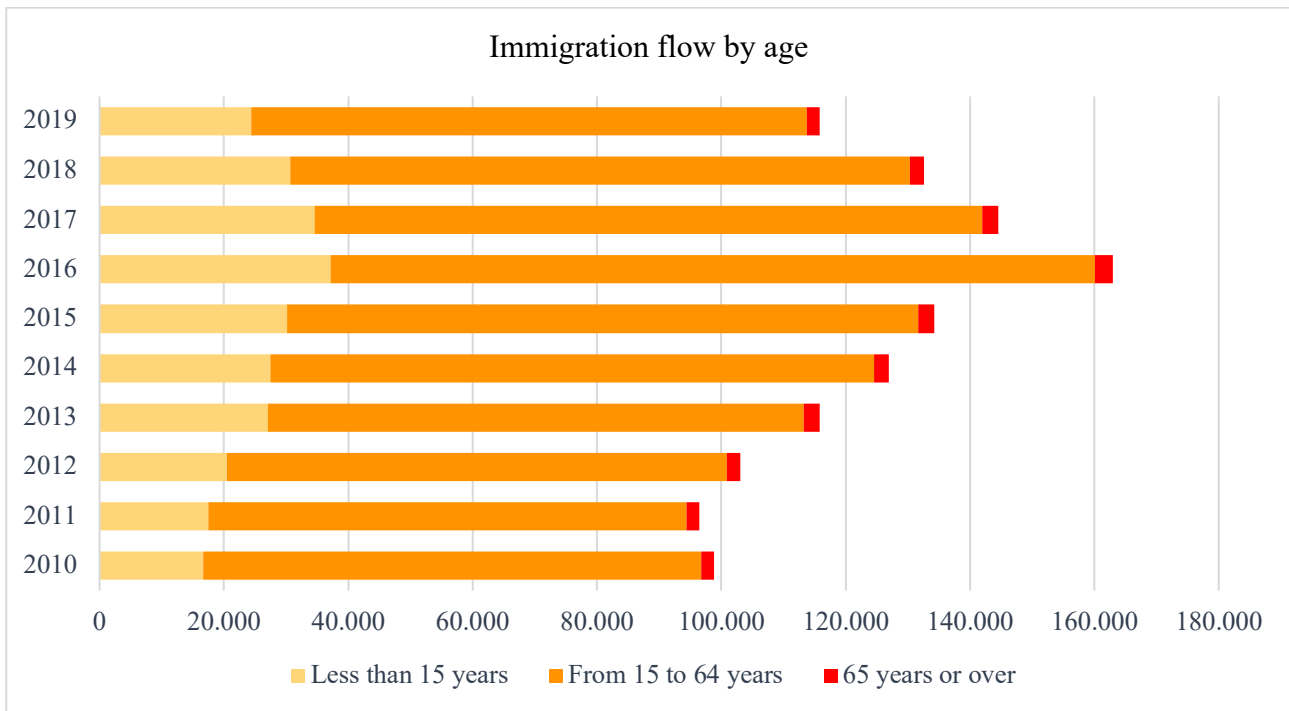


Source: EUROSTAT [migr_imm3ctb]

With regard to the gender distribution of immigrants during the examined period, the number of male immigrants is always larger – even if only slightly – than the number of the female immigrants, as it can be observed from the graphic above.

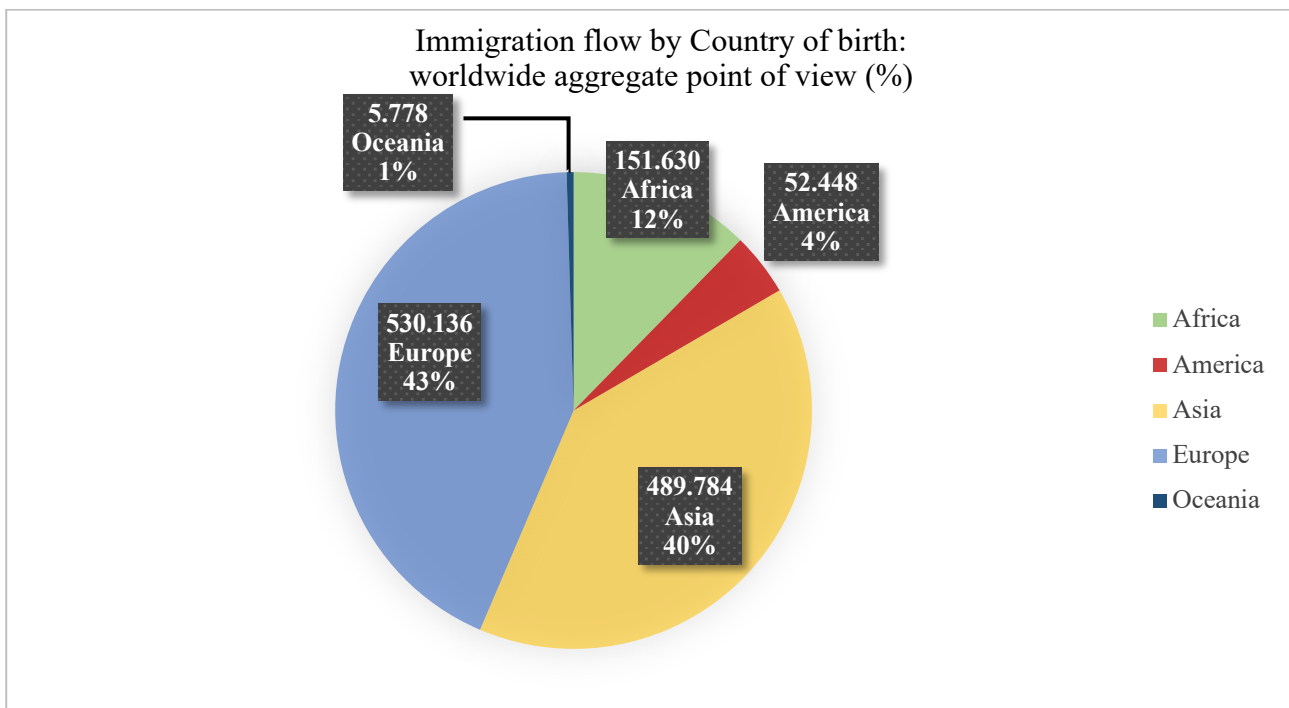
The greatest discrepancy between male and female is registered in 2016, the year in which it is noted the highest access of immigrants. Such a gap is given by the fact that for women it is harder to migrate towards Europe because they are subject to gender-based discrimination; sexual harassment, abuse and exploitation, forced marriage, trafficking, lack of education, unemployment, are only some of the many challenges they have to face³.

³ Gender and migration, EU Council bibliography, 9 October 2020: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/it/documents-publications/library/library-blog/posts/gender-and-migration/>



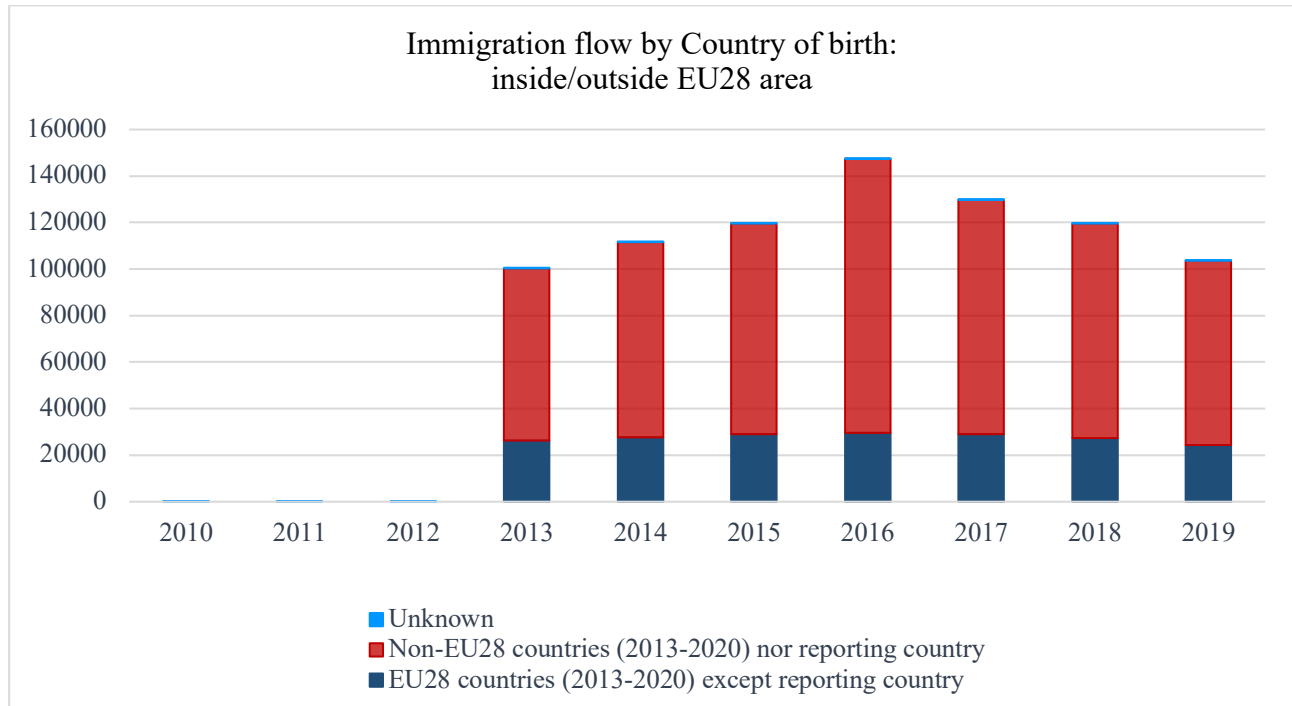
Source: EUROSTAT [migr_imm3ctb]

What can be clearly seen from the graph is that the main category of migrants who decide to move is that of those people between 15 and 64 years old, followed by the one of young people under 15 years old. The category with the lowest number of migrants is that of 65 years old or over.



Source: EUROSTAT [migr_imm3ctb]

When analyzing the roots of migrants coming to Sweden, it is interesting to note that the share of people arriving from Europe is almost equal to the one arriving from Asia. Quite surprisingly, people arriving from Africa are only 12%. This is explained by the fact that African people are subject to discrimination and represent the highest percentage of low-skilled workers⁴.

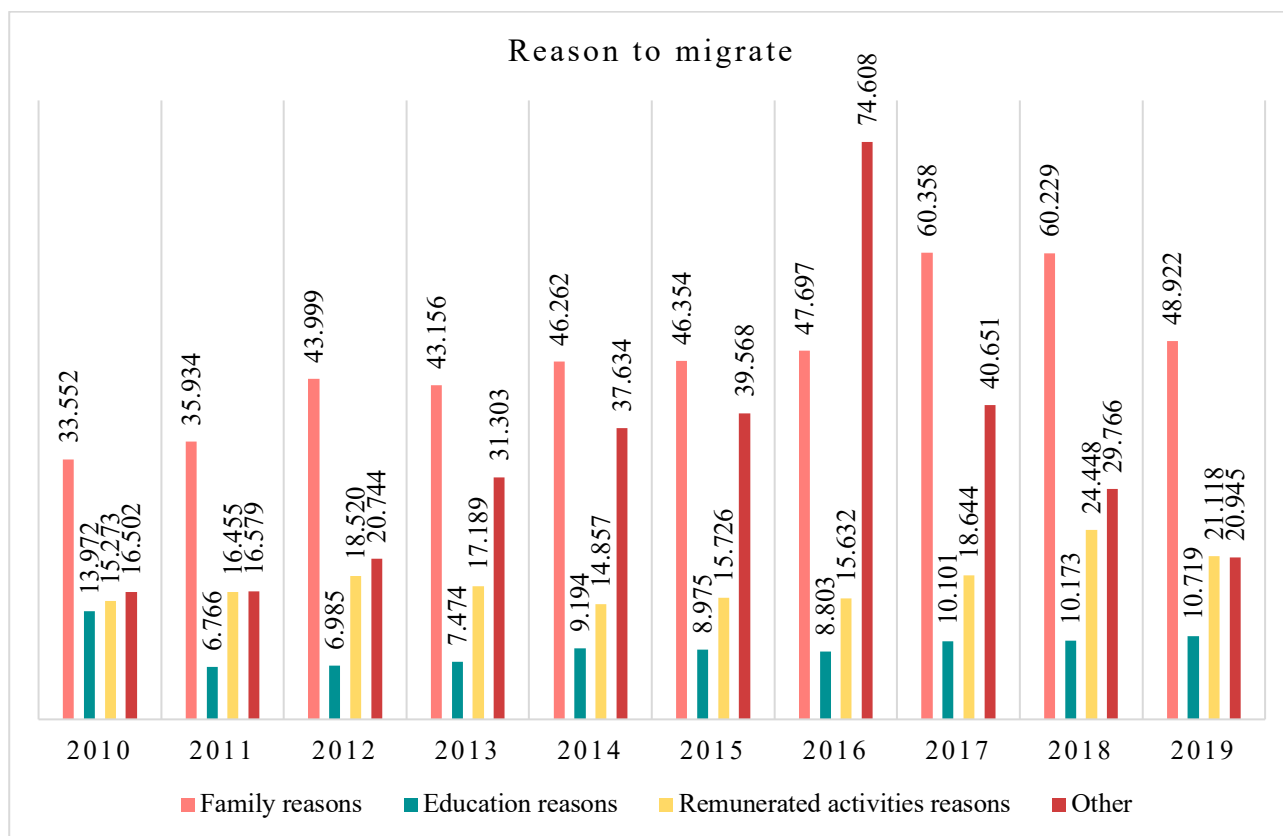


Source: EUROSTAT [migr_imm3ctb]

A more specific analysis of immigration from a European Union perspective shows that out of the high percentage of immigrants arriving from Europe, just a small slice of it is composed by EU citizens.

Since in Sweden the wages of certain work classes are quite similar, people looking for more remunerated jobs are less likely to move there; this can explain the phenomenon of this graph, where it is clear that non-EU citizens form a larger group of immigrants than EU citizens.

⁴ Akuaka Meshiack Uche, *African immigrants in Sweden – how do they make sense of their employability?* – Master thesis in Strategic HRM and Labour relations, University of Gothenburg, 2014: https://gupea.ub.gu.se/bitstream/2077/37871/1/gupea_2077_37871_1.pdf

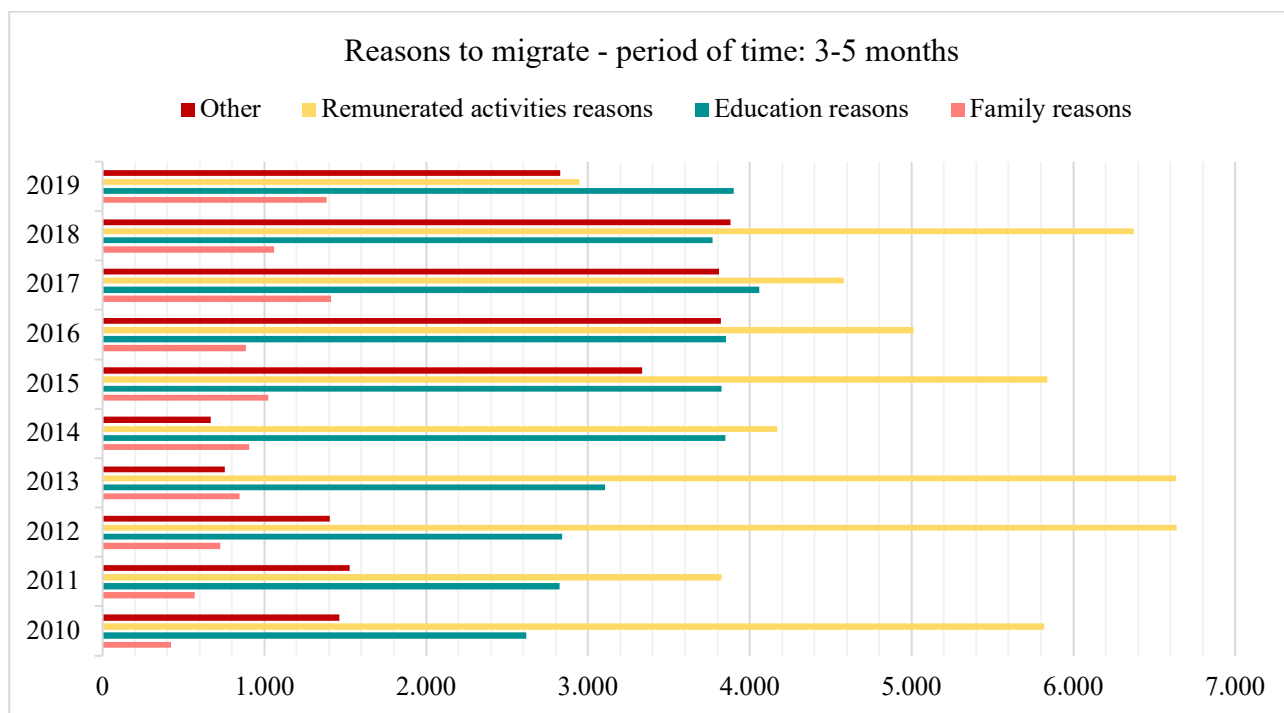


Source: EUROSTAT [migr_resfirst]

In order to find the reasons that bring migrants to move it is useful to look at the first resident permits in the destination country. As for Sweden, a general overview shows that “other reasons” (such as diplomats, consular officers, retired persons, people in the intermediate stages of a regularization process, etc.) and “family reasons” are the most chosen justification to enter the country.

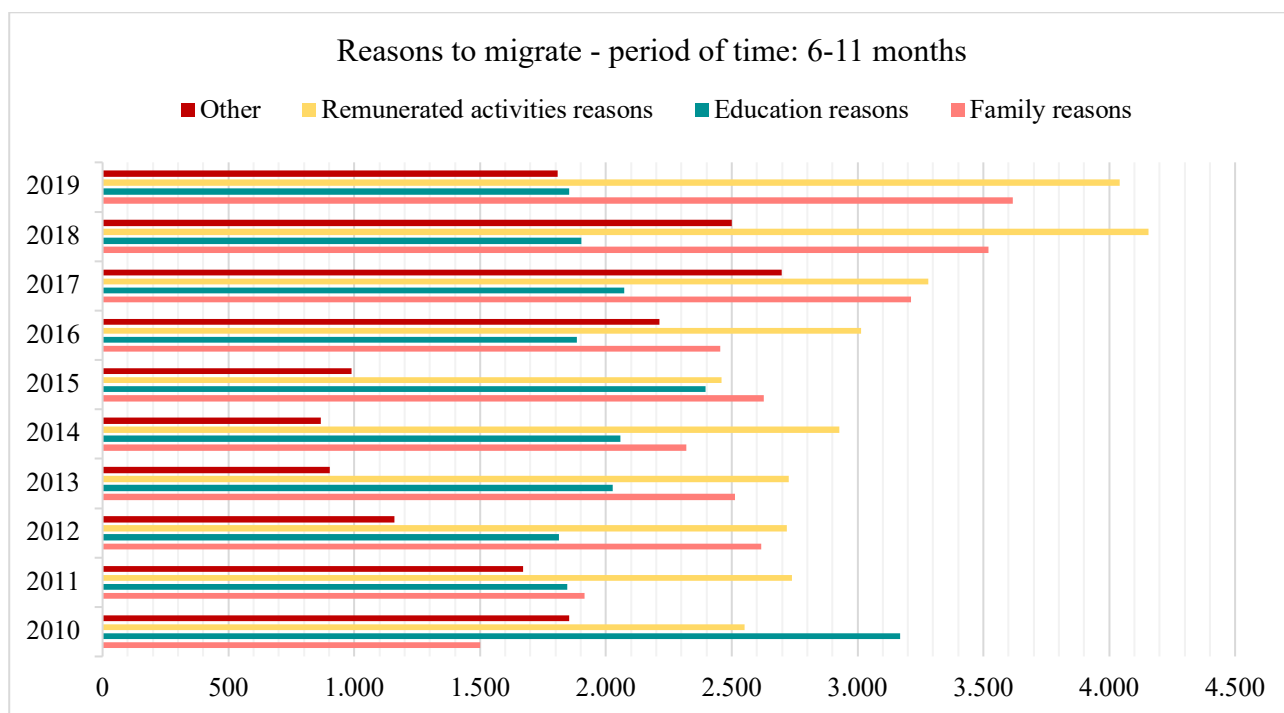
It should be noted that the value of “education reasons” and “remunerated activities reasons” remain constant in the entire analyzed period.

The value “other activities” has a swinging flow and, in 2016, it drops drastically as a consequence of Swedish policies of border definition, in line with EU policies.



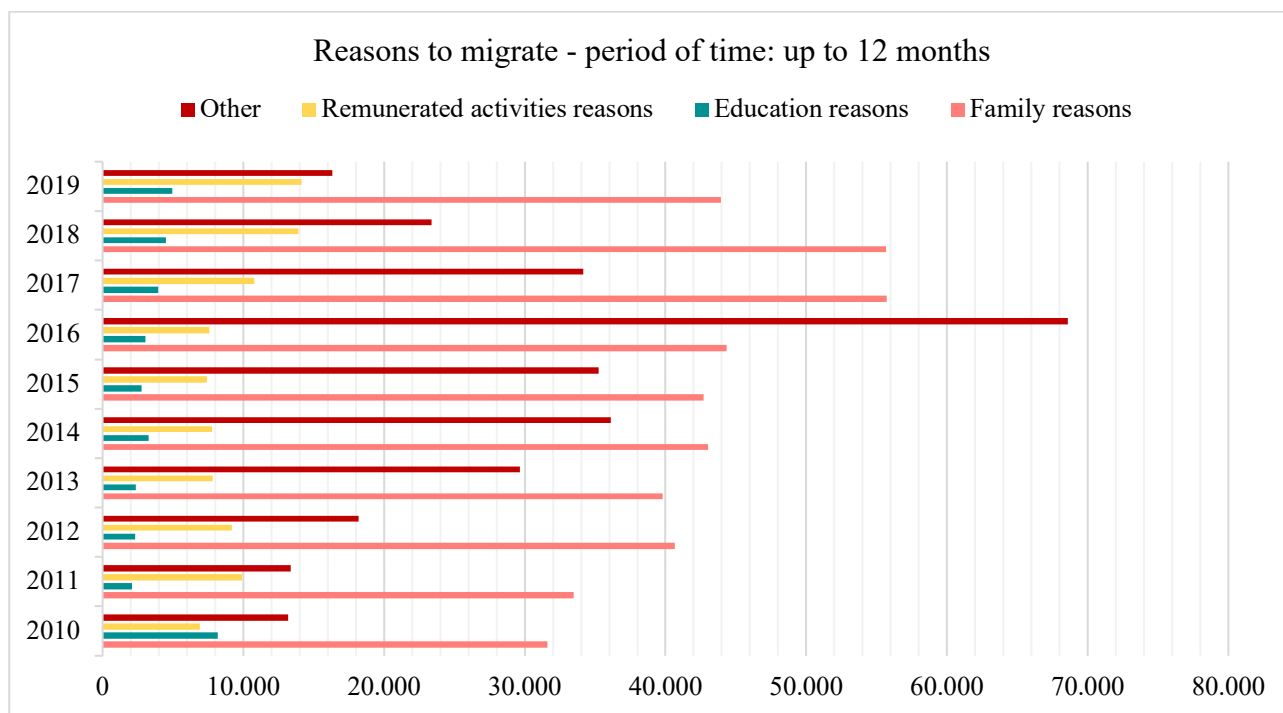
Source: EUROSTAT [migr_resfirst]

By looking at the short-term, it is evident that people move mainly for “remunerated activities reasons”. On the contrary, “family reasons” does not represent a shared immigration choice.



Source: EUROSTAT [migr_resfirst]

Meanwhile, in the medium-term it is registered an increase in “education reasons” and in “family reasons”; on the contrary, “other reasons” and “remunerated activities reasons” tend to decrease.



Source: EUROSTAT [migr_resfirst]

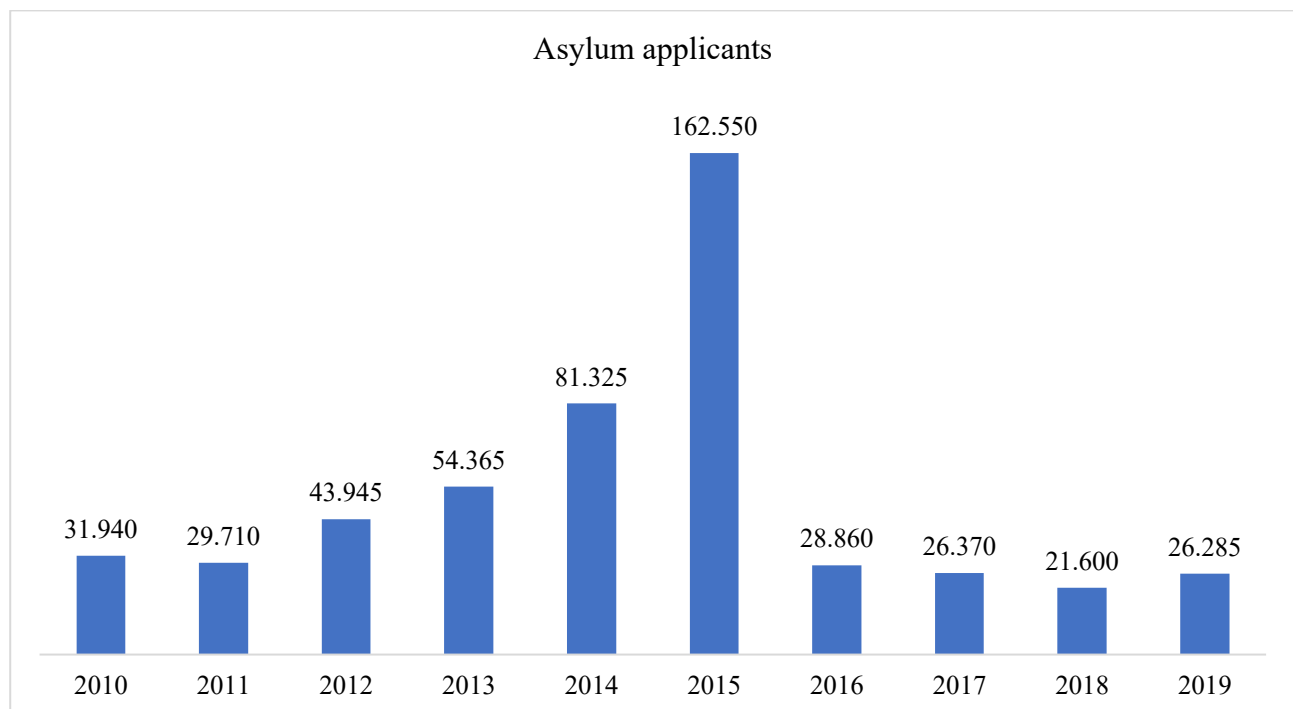
In the long term, the previous results appear magnified for “other reasons” and “family reasons” with data that are almost 10 times larger than data of the shorter periods. “Remunerated activities reasons” and “education reasons” remain on the same scale compared to the shorter periods of time.

Part III

3.1 TOTAL NUMBER OF REFUGEES

Sweden has been, for several years, one of the main countries within the European Union in terms of admission and integration for many migrants, including asylum seekers.

The reason for this primacy was due to the permissive policy that encouraged new entries within the country, as the following graphs show, only in 2015, more than 160 thousand asylum applications were registered in Sweden. A number that has shaken Swedish public opinion to such an extent that since January 2016, the Swedish government has introduced more restrictive migration policies in the country, *inter alia*, by reducing the duration of temporary residence permits to 13 months for those with refugee and subsidiary protection status, and limiting residence permits for family reunification.

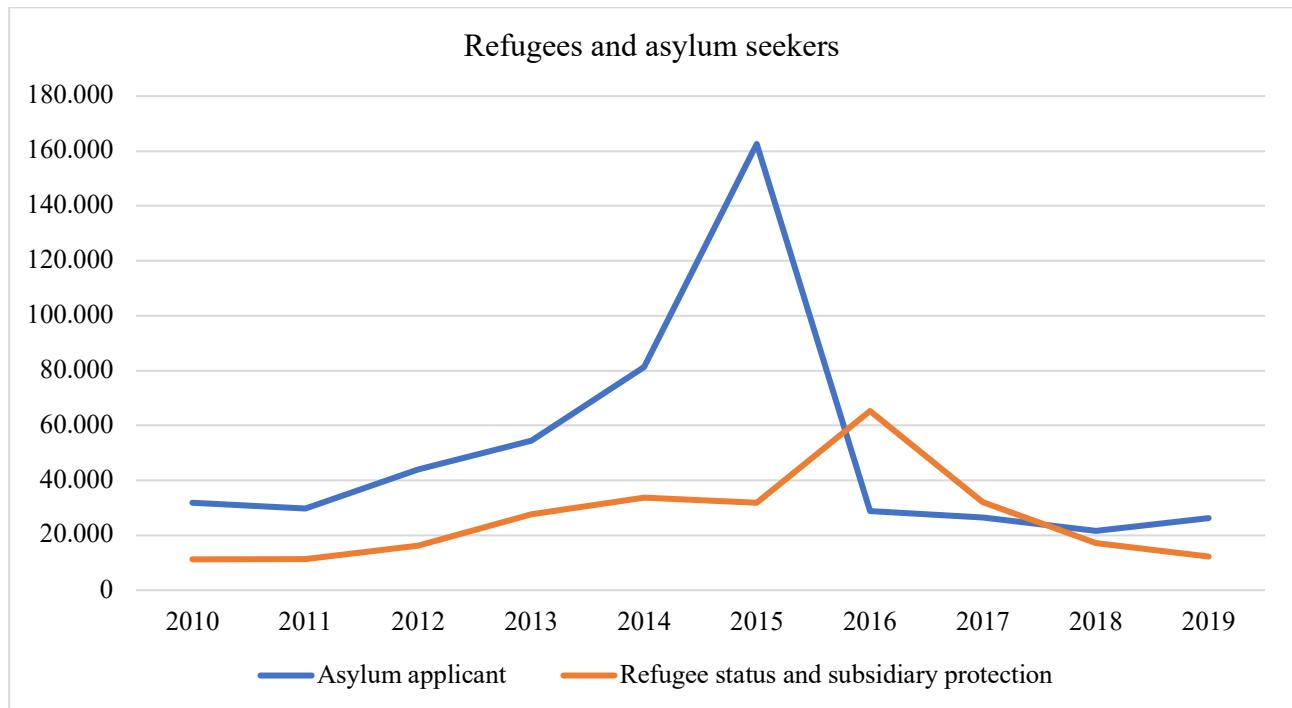


Source: EUROSTAT [migr_asyappctza]

The result of these more restrictive policies is a drastic drop in asylum seekers from around 162.000 in 2015 to around 28.000 in 2016. This decline remains constant in the following years and, as the graph shows, the lowest number of asylum applications from 2010 to 2019 is reached in 2018.

With regard to the year 2020, affected by the restrictions on the movement of persons caused by the global pandemic COVID-19, 16.260 asylum applications are registered in Sweden.

The following graph compares data on asylum seekers (individuals who have sought international protection and whose claims for refugee status have not yet been determined, irrespective of when they may have been lodged) and the number of residence permits issued in Sweden for refugee status and subsidiary protection.



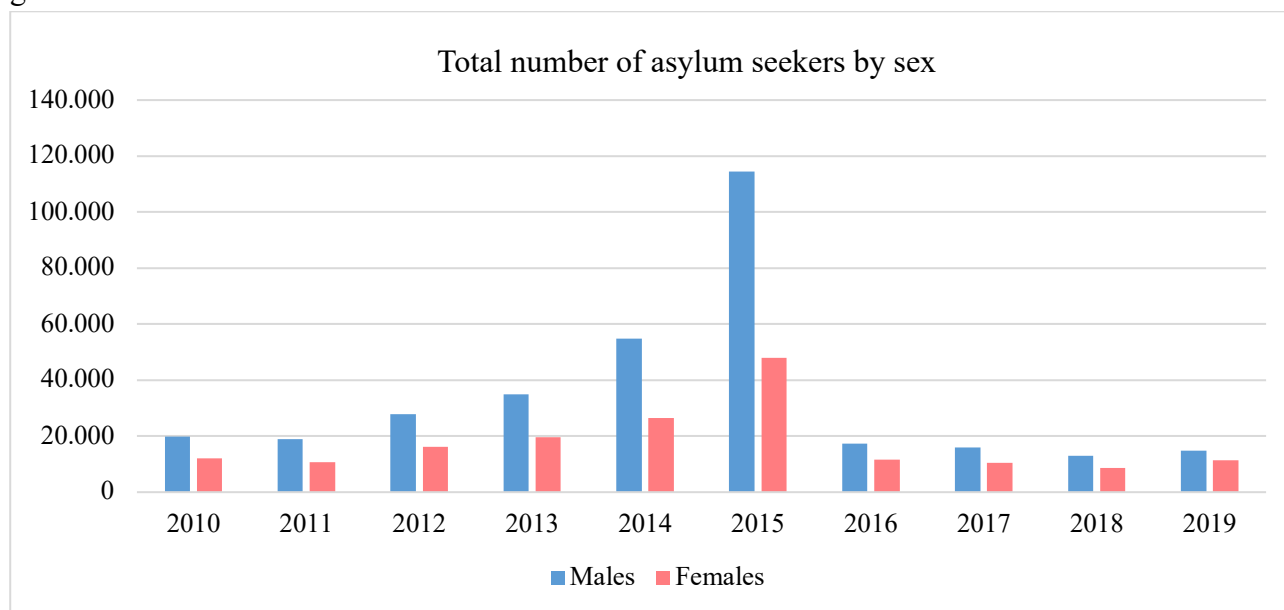
Source: EUROSTAT [migr_asyappctza]; [migr_resoth]

It can be noted that asylum applications from 2010 to 2015 is always more than twice the number of residence permits actually issued to individuals recognized as refugees.

The peak in the number of residence permits granted to asylum seekers is 65.272 and it is reached in 2016, following numerous requests made in previous years.

After 2016, due to the more restrictive migration policy implemented by the Swedish government, the number of residence permits issued to refugees decreased significantly as well as asylum requests.

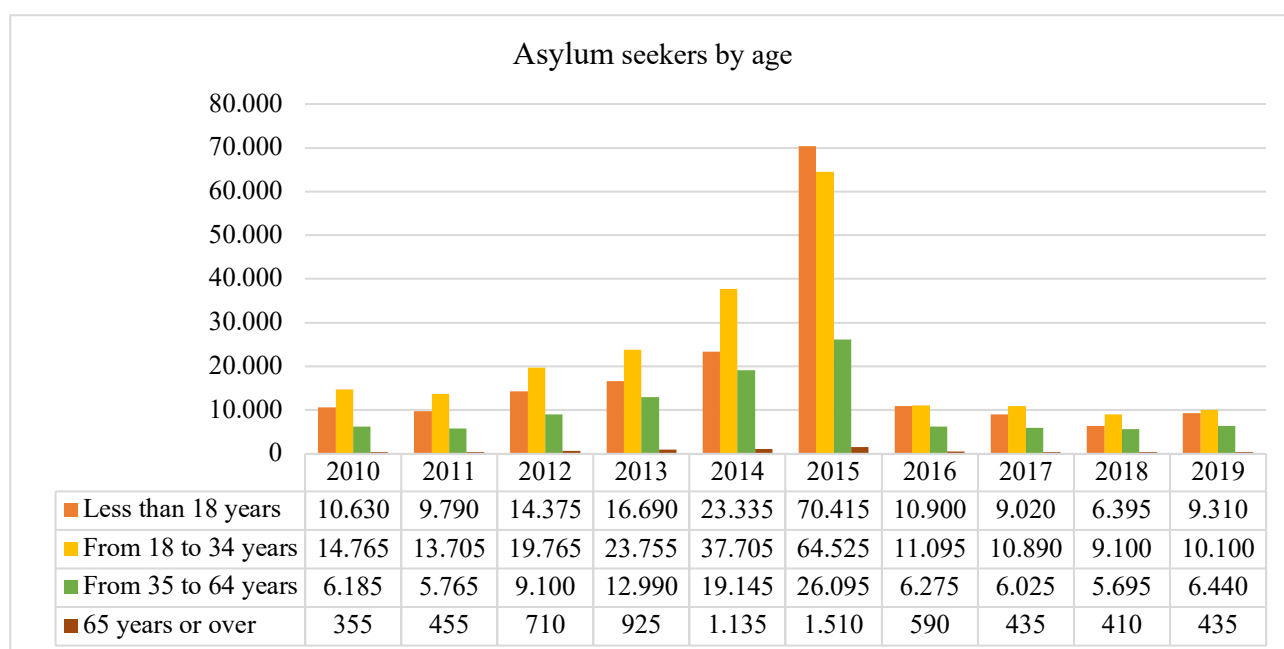
Looking at the migration flow of asylum seekers more in detail, a first classification can be based on gender:



Source: EUROSTAT [migr_asyappctza]

It is evident from the analysis carried out that from 2010 to 2019, male asylum seekers always outnumbered female asylum seekers. In particular, from 2010 to 2015, male asylum seekers are about twice as numerous as female ones, while from 2016 to 2019, applications are more gender balanced. Additional information to the previous analyzed graph concerns the year 2020, which follows the trend of the years preceding it, with 9.165 male and 6.735 female asylum seekers.

A further specification concerns the number of asylum seekers according to their age group:



Source: EUROSTAT [migr_asyappctza]

Over the ten-year period covered by the analysis, immigrants who have applied for asylum in Sweden are mainly minors under the age of 18 and people between the ages of 18 and 34, followed by people aged between 35 and 64. Less relevant, instead, is the number of asylum seekers over the age of 65, who account for a small proportion of the total number of migrants. Within the group of asylum seekers under-18 age, a further distinction can be made: children under 14 and children between 14 and 18. The requests of the first ones are approximately the double of the seconds.

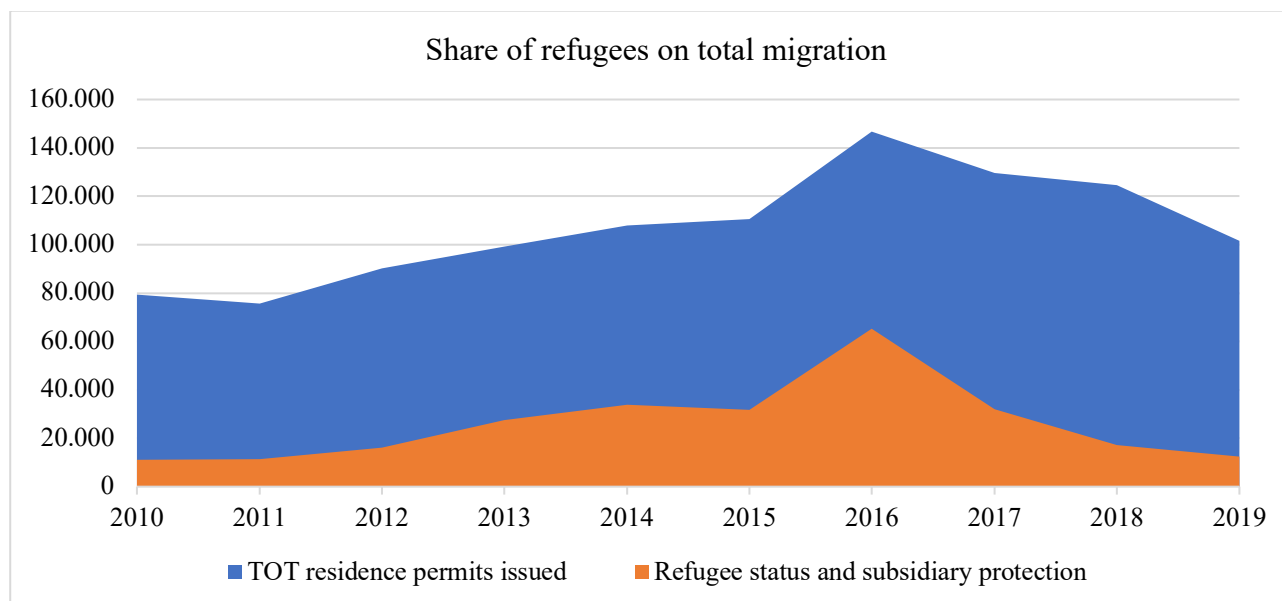
3.2 SHARE OF REFUGEES ON TOTAL MIGRATION

By examining the available Eurostat data on the total number of first residence permits issued by Sweden, it is possible to identify the four macro-reasons why they are issued: family reasons, education reasons, remunerated activities reasons and other reasons.

First permits issued “for other reasons” includes: refugee status and subsidiary protection, International protection status, humanitarian reasons, residence only, other reasons not specified, unaccompanied minors and victims of trafficking in human beings.

By extrapolating the data concerning refugee status and subsidiary protection within “for other reasons”, it is possible to compare the ratio between all residence permits issued in Sweden and the number of permits issued for refugee status. The result obtained is the following:

RESIDENCE PERMITS/TIME	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
TOT residence permits issued	79.299	75.734	90.248	99.122	107.947	110.623	146.740	129.754	124.616	101.704
Refugee status and subsidiary protection	11.226	11.273	16.156	27.617	33.814	31.803	65.272	32.125	17.134	12.356

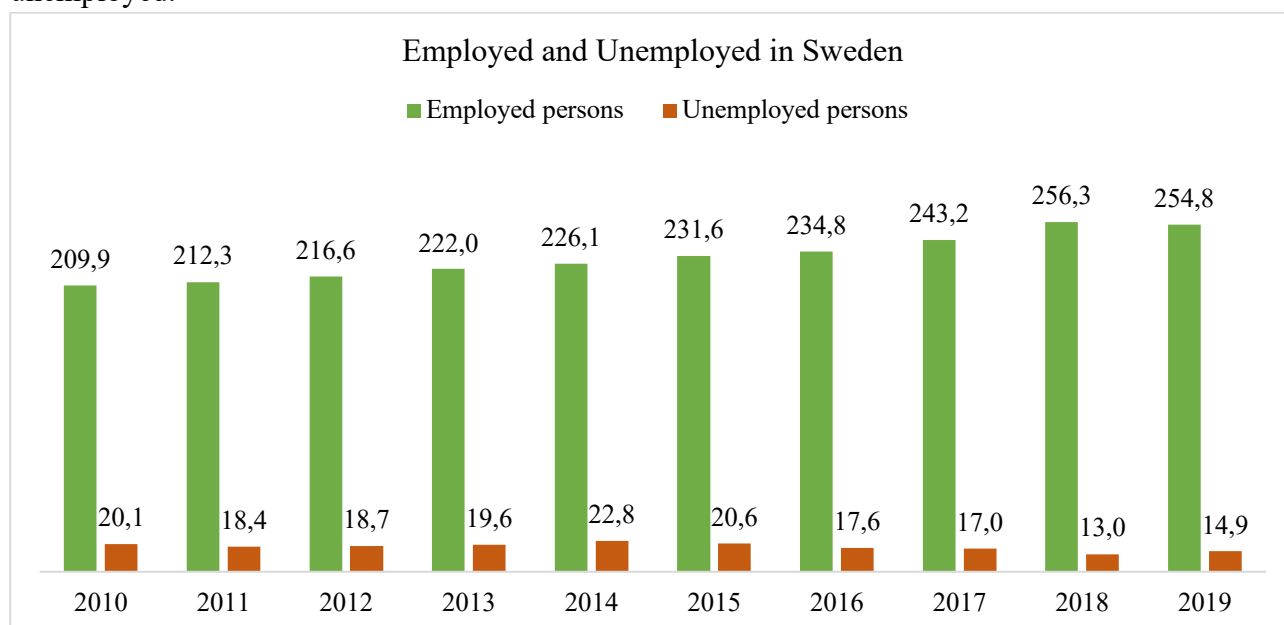


Source: EUROSTAT [migr_resfirst]; [migr_resoth]

Thus, it can be observed that the trend of the total residence permits issued to migrants and the number of residence permits issued to refugees is constant, as the first increases, the second also increases and vice versa. There is a steady upward trend from 2010 to the end of 2015, and then at the beginning of 2016 a downward trend until 2019.

3.3 MIGRANTS INTEGRATION INDICATORS EMPLOYMENT OR UNEMPLOYMENT

One of the possible explanations for the number of migrants in Sweden is the possibility of finding work. In fact, as the following graph shows, the number of workers far exceeds the number of unemployed.



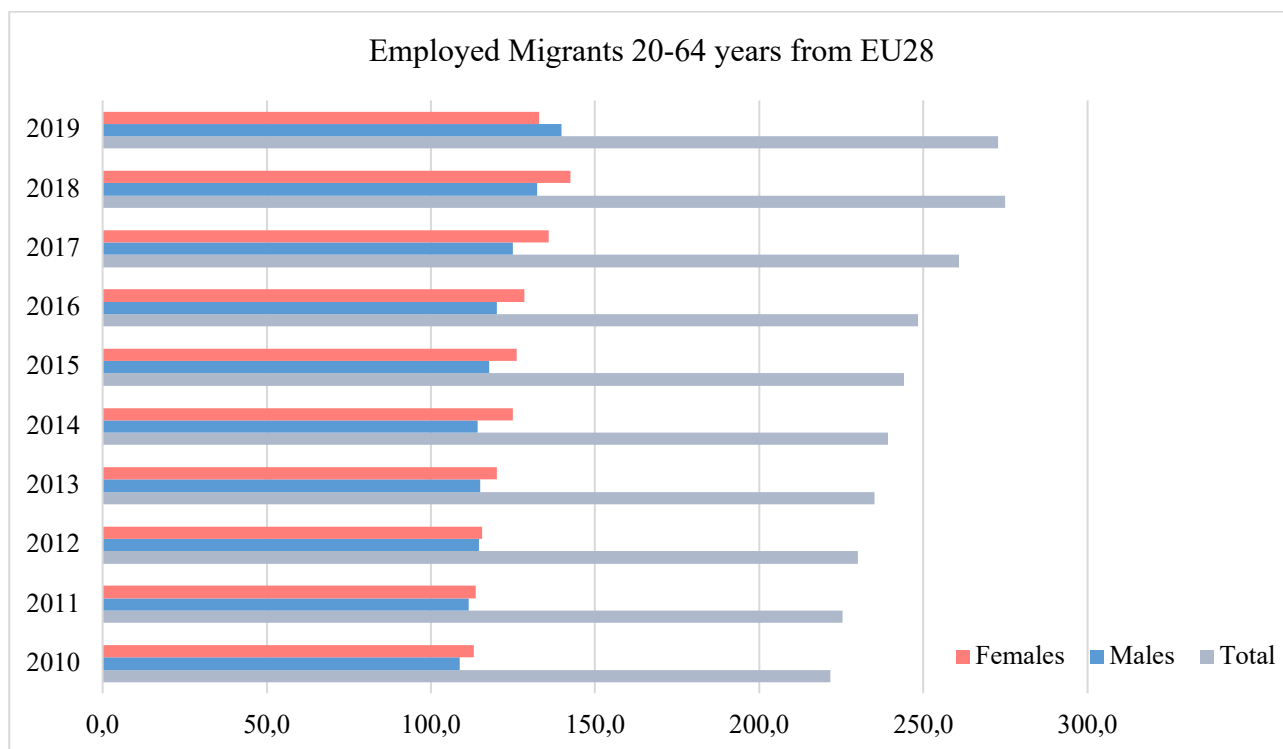
Source: EUROSTAT [lfsa_pgacws]

The year with the largest difference between employed and unemployed is 2018, a year which also has highest number of employed (256.3 thousand) and the lowest number of unemployed (13 thousand). Furthermore, it can be observed that, except for 2019, the number of employed persons is increasing year on year, while, as far as the number of unemployed is concerned, it can be seen that it is not constant but only in one year, in 2014, it exceeded 20.000 unemployed.

An in-depth analysis of the number of EMPLOYED persons distinguishes migrants into:

- Migrants born in an EU country (except Sweden) it will be called EU migrants.
- Migrants born in a non-EU country, it will be called NON-EU or Extra EU.

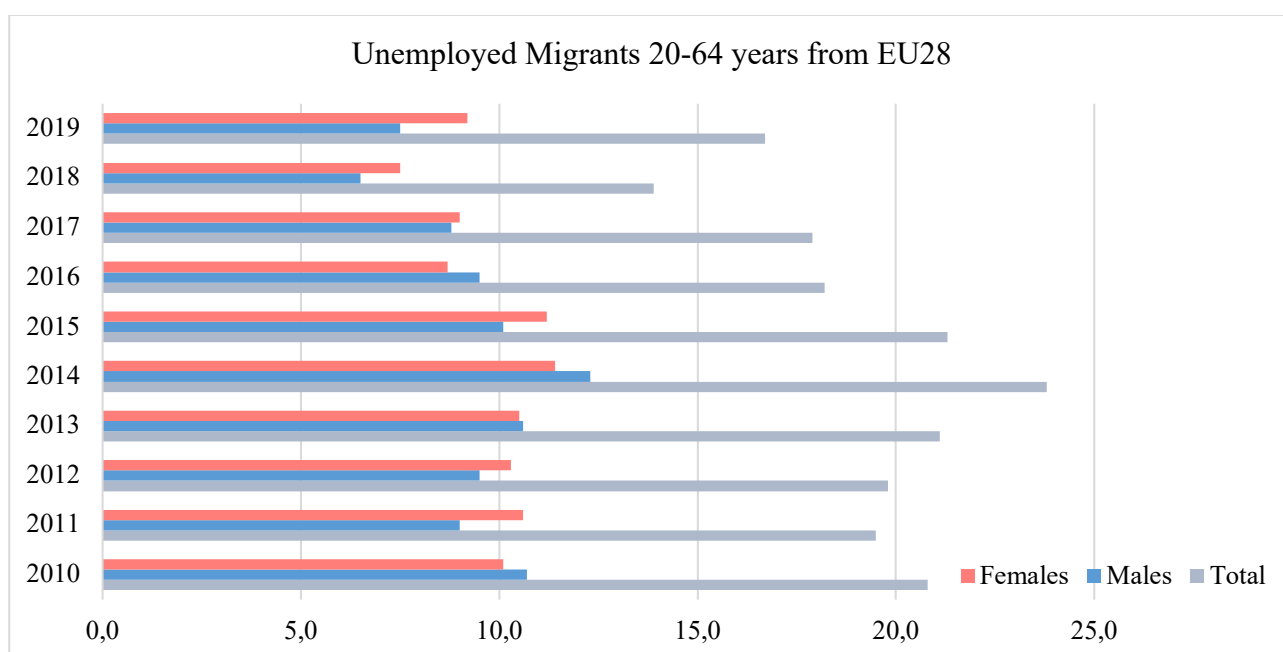
With regard to the first category of migrants, that is migrants born in an EU country, it is possible immediately to note a figure that goes against the trend in other European countries, namely that women outnumber men in employment in all years.



Source: EUROSTAT [lfsa_pgacws]

The year in which there is the greatest gap is 2018, with a difference of 10.2 thousand in favor of women, but the following year, 2019, is the only year in the decade where males outnumber females by 6.8 thousand.

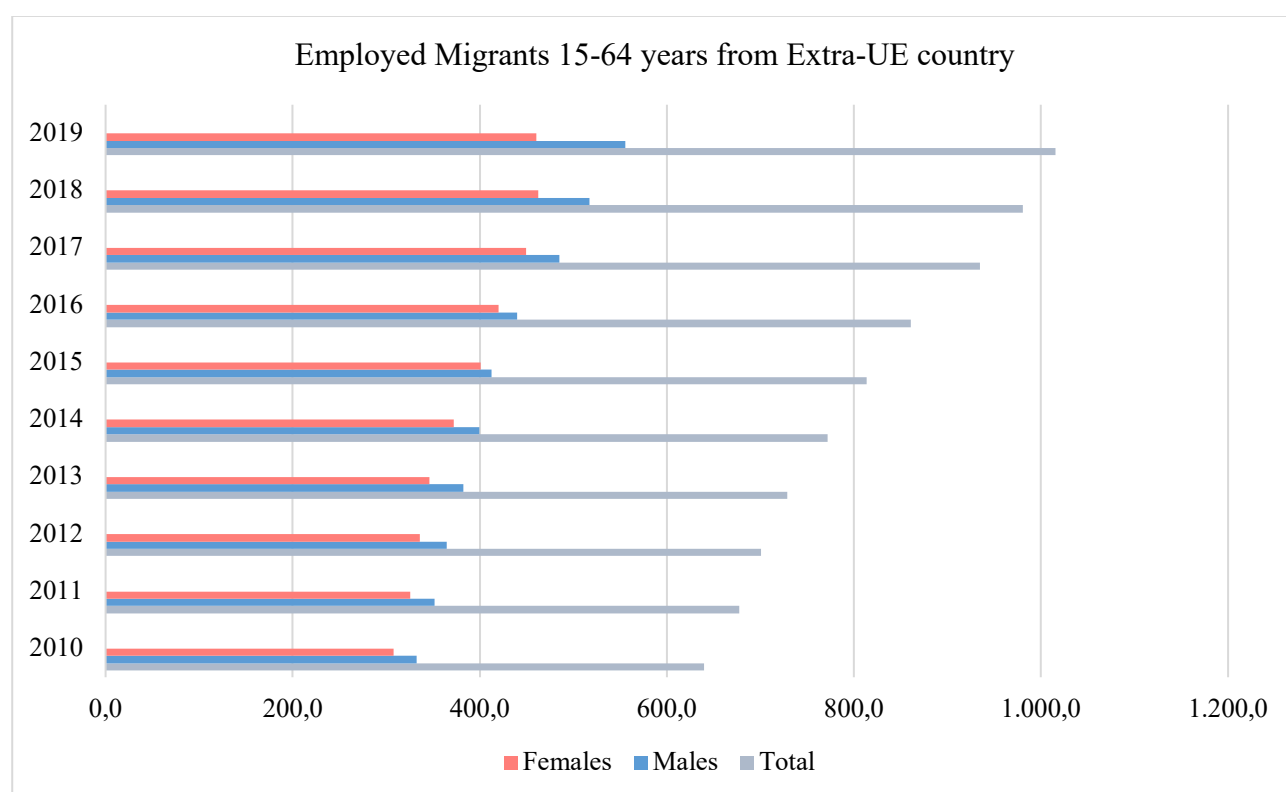
With reference to the first category of migrants (born in EU) it is possible to make the same analysis but taking into account the unemployed:



Source: EUROSTAT [lfsa_pgacws]

Here the data are more flexible, most years always see women outnumbering men, but in four years (in 2010, 2013, 2014 and 2016) men outnumber women, albeit slightly, respectively: 0.6 thousand in 2010, 0.1 thousand 2013, 0.9 thousand 2014 and 0.8 thousand in 2016. In all the other years, women outnumber men and the year with the largest difference between unemployed men and women is 2019 with 1.7 thousand more unemployed women. This coincides with the employment figure that in 2019 alone sees males outnumbering women (previous table).

In the second category of migrants, i.e., those born outside the EU28, by contrast, the data change dramatically.



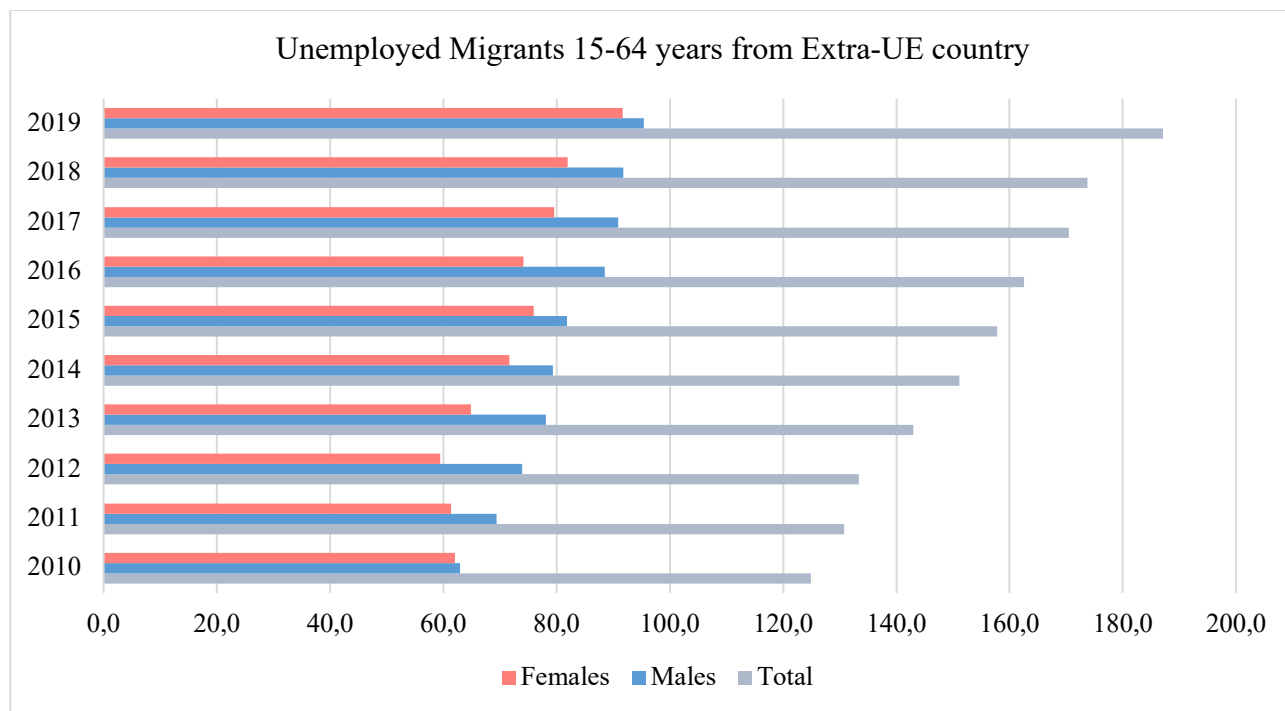
Source: EUROSTAT [lfsa_pgacws]

In fact, it can be seen that in all years, the number of employed men is higher than that of women. It is then curious to note that even in this case the figures always tend to rise from year to year, without ever slowing down. Starting from 2010 with a number of employed men of 332.2 thousand and in 2019 they are 555.6 thousand, so an increase of 223.4 thousand; while for women the 2010 records 307.6 thousand employed and in 2019 460.2 thousand, so an increase of 152.6 thousand.

From these data it can be noted that although both categories are growing there is a visible increase in the number of employed men compared to women.

The total number of employed (i.e., Males + Females) in 2010 is 639.9 thousand and in 2019 is 1,015.8 thousand, with a total increase of employed migrants born outside the EU27 of 375.1 thousand.

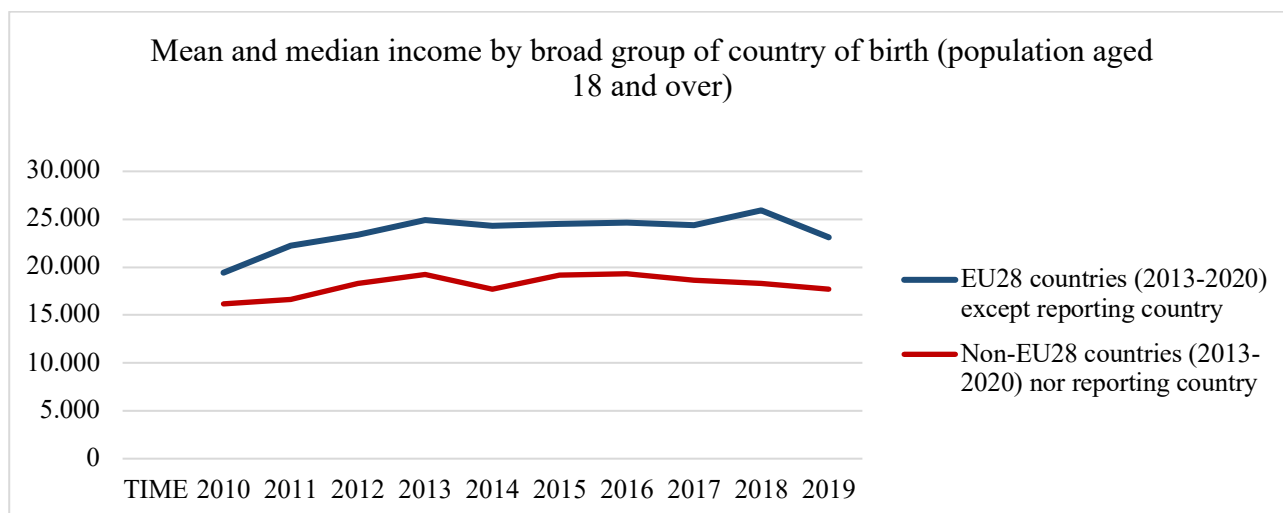
Still considering the second category of migrants but analysing the unemployed, the following graph shows that in the last ten years (2010-2019) the number of unemployed men is always higher than women:



Source: EUROSTAT [lfsa_pgacws]

Moreover, as well as for the employed, the number tends to increase year by year but not exponentially as for the employed. In fact, the total number of unemployed (i.e., males + females) in 2010 is 124.9 thousand while in 2019 it is 187.1 thousand with an increase therefore of 62.2 thousand. This is a lower increase compared to the previous graph (non-European born migrants employed).

After looking at the numbers of employed and unemployed it is worth understanding the living conditions of migrants working in Sweden. The main figure is the average income; hence the following graph compares the average income of migrants born in the EU and the non-EU migrants.



Source: EUROSTAT [ilc_di16]

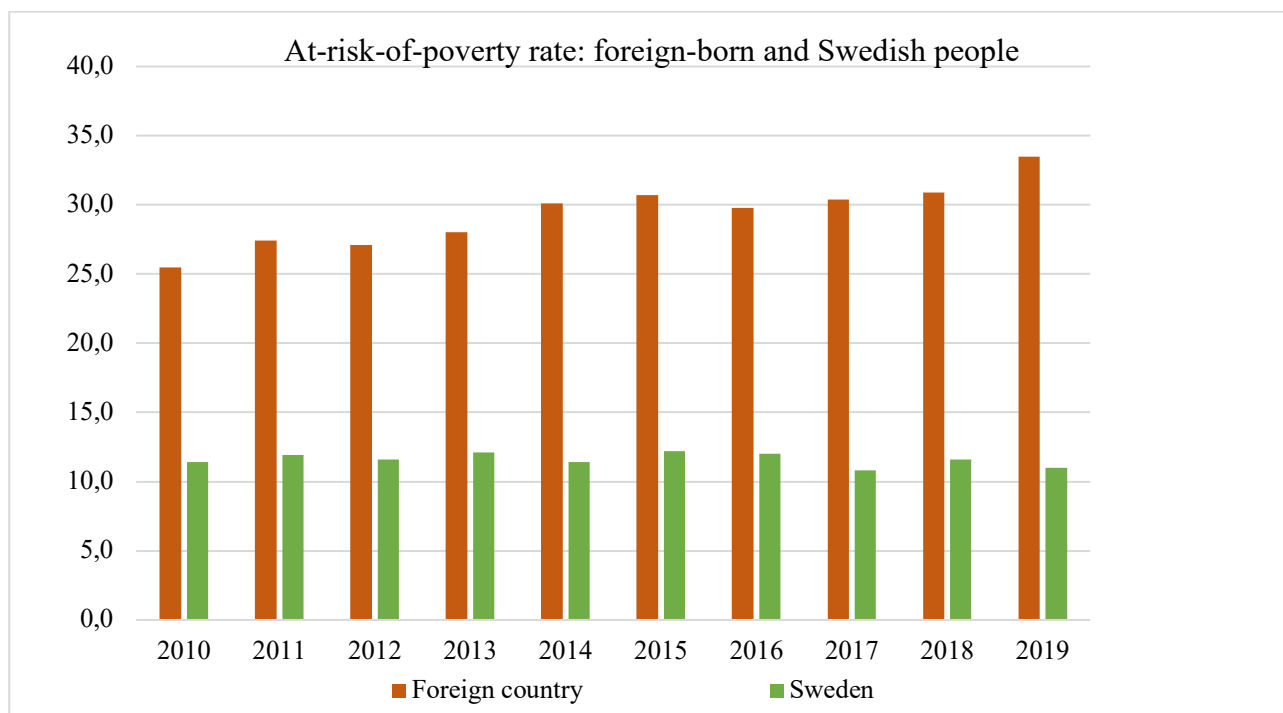
It can be seen immediately that in all the years (2010-2019) the average income of EU migrants is higher than the others.

The highest average income for the first category of migrants is 25926 euros in 2018, while for the second category 19307 euros in 2016. This figure shows, in addition to the difference between the two highest average income figures, that while for European migrants the average income despite the best year in 2016 has been continuously decreasing.

The average income of both types of migrants drops significantly in 2019:

- European migrants lose, compared to 2018 (the year with the highest average income), €2836 touching the lowest figure since 2011.
- Non-European migrants lose, compared to 2016 (the year with the highest average income) €1616 and compared to 2018 €617. In 2019 they touch the lowest figure since 2011.

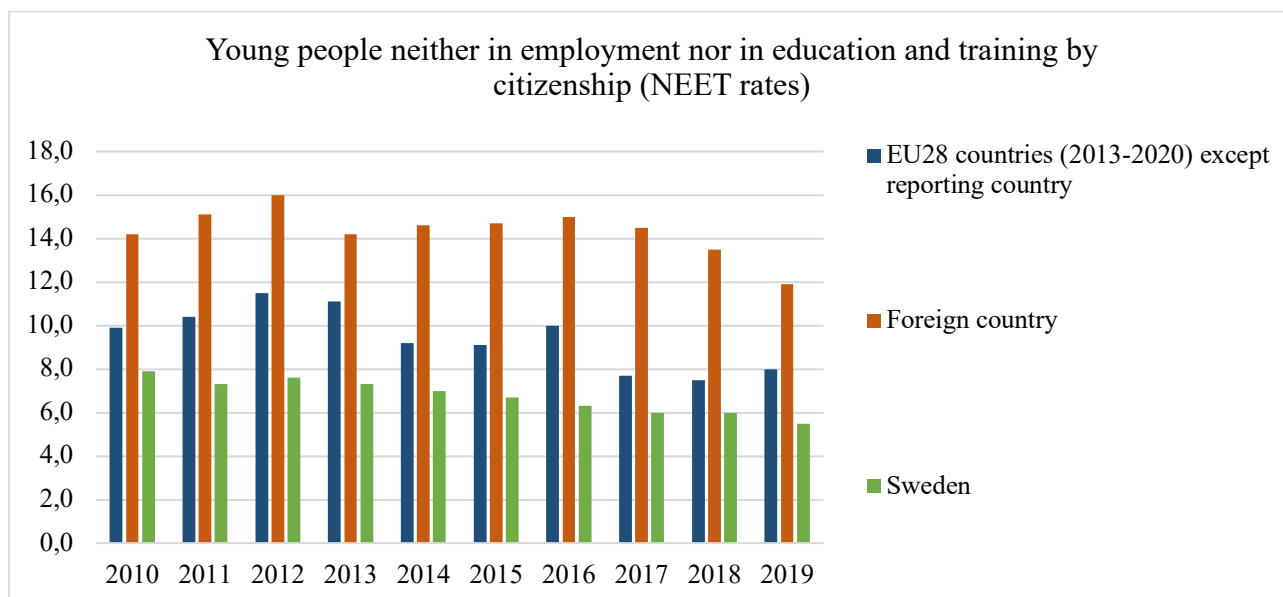
Another useful piece of information for understanding and knowing the living conditions of migrants is the data on the percentage of people at risk of poverty.



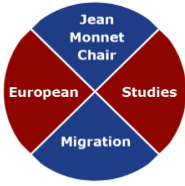
Source: EUROSTAT [ilc_li32]

In this graph it is noticeable that the number of total migrants (EU and non-EU) at risk of poverty from the first year (2010) to the last year (2019) increases drastically (from 25.4 to 33.5) while the number of Swedes at risk of poverty increases slightly from 11 to 11.4. This data can also be linked to the drastic drop in average income in 2019 and the number of unemployed and non-Europeans in 2019 increasing compared to previous years.

The last data that is useful to understand the integration of migrants in Sweden is how many young people (18-34 years old) are neither students nor employed.



Source: EUROSTAT [edat_lfse_23]



There are three categories:

- EU migrants
- non-EU migrants (foreign country)
- Swedish (reporting country).

From 2010 to 2013 the number of NEETs from EU and non-EU migrants increases in all 3 years, while Swedish NEETs decrease overall by 0.3%. While from 2013 to 2019 there is a total decrease of both EU and non-EU migrants but also of Swedes:

- EU migrants: decreases from 11.1% in 2013 to 8.0%.
- Non-EU: 14.2% from 2013 to 11.9%.
- Swedish: from 7.6% in 2013 to 5.5%.

The big decrease is in EU migrants, while Non-EU migrants, despite the decrease, still have the highest number.