

Return migration by time spent in Sweden

The object of the paper is to determine whether time in Sweden has a significant influence on foreign born persons' risks of emigration, and if so, it is justifiable to construct a model where the risks for emigration vary based on how long time a person has been living in Sweden since immigration.

Statistic Sweden's population projection for Sweden is based on analyses of births, deaths and immigration/emigration. At the request of the department of finance the foreign born population are divided into six different country groups based on countries of birth. Europe is divided into three parts: The Nordic countries (except Sweden), the EU (except the Nordic countries, and the rest of Europe. Countries outside of Europe are divided into three groups according to their level of development.

The study includes all persons that immigrated to Sweden 1997-2009. For this population event history analyzes has been used in models containing the fixed variables sex, age at immigration, country of birth and reason for residence permit and the time varying variables citizenship, employment status and parenthood.

For immigrants there is a clear pattern that risks to re-emigrate decrease the longer a person has been in Sweden. But closer analyzes show that this pattern is very different for the various country groups that the population forecast is divided into. The relationship between re-emigration and time in Sweden is strong among persons born in the Nordic countries, countries with a high development level and the EU. In contrast, it is nearly non-existent for persons born in Europe outside of the EU and the Nordic countries, and countries with a medium or low level of development.

The tendency for women to re-emigrate is nearly 20 percent lower compared to men. This is when consideration has been taken to the differences in composition concerning country of birth, age upon immigration and calendar year. Women still have a 20 percent lower tendency to re-emigrate when consideration is taken to citizenship, parenthood, employment and reason for residence permit.

Persons who immigrated to Sweden between the ages of 20 and 24 re-emigrate to the greatest extent. The risk to re-emigrate is lower the older a person is when they immigrated. Even those who were younger when they immigrated had a lower risk of emigrating compared to persons who were

20-24 years old. This is mainly reflected in the tendency of the parents to move. The tendency to re-emigrate is lower for parents than for persons who do not have children. This also applies when consideration has been taken to country of birth, age upon immigration, sex, citizenship and calendar year. Re-emigration is lowest for persons with children younger than age 6.

Foreign born persons who are or will become Swedish citizens have about half as great a tendency to emigrate as persons with another citizenship.

Persons who are unemployed have a greater tendency to emigrate than those who have work. Re-emigration is highest among those who are unemployed without any income at all. These persons have more than twice as high a tendency to emigrate than those who have a job. Unemployed persons without an income are also more sensitive to the economic cycle than those who have work or unemployed persons with a certain income. During an economic boom the tendency for them to emigrate is greater than during an economic slump.

Among persons born in countries outside of the EU and the Nordic countries, re-emigration has been greatest for those who immigrate to Sweden for employment. Those who have received asylum in Sweden have a 94 percent lower tendency to re-emigrate, while those who have come as a family member or relative have a 78 percent lower tendency than those who immigrated for employment.

If the emigration model is to take consideration to the time in Sweden, it would be most justified for the country of birth groups the Nordic countries, highly developed countries and the EU. For the other three groups, the results of this study indicate that it would not be particularly profitable to introduce a model that considers amount of time in Sweden. However, it may be that the situation of immigration to Sweden from these countries changes and will be dominated by labour force immigration in the future. Today labour force immigration is increasing from medium developed countries, but still only comprises a small part of the group.