



Unaccompanied and Separated Refugee Minors in Sweden

Helsingfors May 6, 2015



Aycan Çelikaksoy & Eskil Wadensjö
Stockholm University

Swedish Institute for Social Research (SOFI), Stockholm University Linnaeus Center for
Integration Studies (SULCIS)

Outline

1. Unaccompanied minors
2. Data
3. Who are coming and how are they doing?
4. Labour market outcomes (employment, wage income)
5. Some conclusions

Unaccompanied children seeking asylum

- Extensive in Sweden compared to other European countries, both in relation to population size and in absolute terms.
- In 2013, the total number of unaccompanied minors seeking asylum in the EU28 countries was 12,730, according to Eurostat. Sweden received the largest group: 3,852 children. Germany (2,485), the United Kingdom (1,265), and Austria (935) came next.

Unaccompanied children seeking asylum II

- Looking at the development between 2008 and 2013, the total number of unaccompanied minors seeking asylum in EU countries is about the same from year to year, but the distribution between destination countries has changed during this period.
- The number of asylum claims by unaccompanied minors in Sweden and Germany has increased significantly, while the number of claims in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands has decreased.

The process

- Not more than 3 months according to law
- On average 4 months (for many longer time)
- Missing documents as explanation
- Age? (below 18?); tests
- From which country? And which part of the country? Testing language spoken
- 2013: 1,955 yes; 435 rejected; 166 rejected according to the Dublin convention; 386 withdrawn applications

Data

- Statistics Sweden (STATIV data base)
- The Migration Authority
- The National Board of Health and Welfare

Unaccompanied children; comparing with children coming from the same countries and children born in Sweden with Swedish-born children

Composition

- Mainly boys (75 per cent)
- A few countries of origin dominate (Iraq (early years), Afghanistan, Somali, Eritrea, Syria)

Table 1. Number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors registered between 2003 and 2012, divided by gender

Year of arrival	Girls	Proportion of girls (%)	Boys	Total
2003	127	34	242	369
2004	51	46	60	111
2005	30	45	37	67
2006	68	38	111	179
2007	150	18	673	823
2008	164	22	583	747
2009	221	24	688	909
2010	294	23	1012	1306
2011	261	14	1670	1931
2012	1092	31	2441	3533

Note: Some of those in the 2003 group were registered prior to that year.

Table 3. The four countries from which the largest number of unaccompanied minors was registered each year (by country of birth); the proportion of girls is listed in parentheses

Year	Largest number	Second largest number	Third largest number	Fourth largest number
2003	Iraq (14)	Somalia (58)	Afghanistan (11)	Rest of Africa (56)
2004	Somalia (53)	Rest of Africa (67)	Afghanistan (0)	Rest of Europe (57)
2005	Somalia/ Rest of Africa (56)/(39)	Iraq (43)	Afghanistan (33)	Eritrea/Rest of Europe (0)/(50)
2006	Iraq (25)	Somalia (61)	Afghanistan (5)	Eritrea (54)
2007	Iraq (11)	Afghanistan (2)	Somalia (41)	Rest of Africa (28)
2008	Iraq (11)	Somalia (44)	Afghanistan (3)	Rest of Africa (50)
2009	Somalia (42)	Afghanistan (2)	Iraq (15)	Eritrea (58)
2010	Afghanistan (1)	Somalia (44)	Iraq (29)	Eritrea (43)
2011	Afghanistan (5)	Somalia (35)	Iran (17)	Eritrea (53)
2012	Afghanistan (11)	Somalia (44)	Rest of Asia (46)	Eritrea (56)

Age composition

- Most of them are 16-17 years
- Those aged 18 or 19 years arrived at an age below 18 but were included in the population register in the year they became 18 or 19
- Boys are on average older than the girls at arrival
- The very young children?

Table 6. Age distribution among unaccompanied minors who were registered in 2011 and 2012 – number of children

Age	Girls		Boys	
	2011	2012	2011	2012
0	0	9	0	19
1	0	11	0	11
2	0	15	0	11
3	1	21	0	14
4	1	21	1	28
5	2	27	3	29
6	4	40	1	28
7	6	48	6	40
8	0	48	7	43
9	5	46	7	64
10	2	67	7	70
11	8	62	9	60
12	6	64	15	77
13	11	77	37	108
14	12	68	93	177
15	32	91	233	305
16	53	142	513	588
17	80	148	572	558
18	36	86	165	210
19	2	1	1	1

Taking part in education in Sweden

- -15 compulsory school
- 16 compulsory school, secondary school
- 17-21 secondary school, municipal school for adults (komvux)
- 22- komvux, folk high school, higher education, other forms of education

Table 7. Proportion (%) of those aged 16-27 undergoing education at different ages

Age	Women	Men
16	68	70
17	74	82
18	84	92
19	77	88
20	62	67
21	56	50
22	43	35
23	38	29
24	40	26
25	36	24
26	22	26
27	23	15

Employment

- Low employment rates among teenagers; higher for those in their twenties
- Higher employment rates among men than among women (larger differences than among Swedish born)
- Concentrated to some mainly unqualified occupations (different for men and women)
- Wage income increasing by age
- NEET rates are high among women

Table 10. Proportion (%) of unaccompanied minors aged 16–27 with employment

Age	Women	Men
16	0	0
17	0	1
18	2	5
19	9	12
20	11	19
21	22	33
22	29	45
23	40	53
24	46	60
25	51	62
26	47	65
27	42	65

Note: Proportion with employment during a reference week in November each year, according to register-based employment statistics from Statistics Sweden.

Table 12. The average income for those with a salary in 2012 (in SEK thousand), divided by age

Age	Men			Women		
	All	Those who combine work with studies	Those who do not combine work with studies	All	Those who combine work with studies	Those who do not combine work with studies
18	61.7	52.7	108.2	43.2	43.3	42.5
19	81.6	70.3	112.6	73.2	70.5	79.7
20	128.5	114.3	141.6	112.6	99.3	134.6
21	152.6	129.6	164.6	125.8	115.2	139.9
22	174.7	144.0	186.3	133.1	118.8	140.4
23	181.7	141.7	194.7	136.5	127.7	141.5
24	198.8	161.2	209.8	156.7	131.5	171.9
25	234.0	221.0	237.3	172.5	185.3	166.3
26	234.1	190.1	246.5	168.7	*	166.2
27	243.4	*	249.3	206.4	*	198.2

* Too few observations

Table 13. Proportion (%) of those aged 16–27 who are not in employment or education (NEET)

Age	Women	Men
16	30	28
17	25	16
18	14	5
19	19	6
20	28	13
21	29	18
22	31	17
23	30	19
24	28	14
25	22	16
26	33	17
27	39	18

Factors influencing employment I

Estimations with only unaccompanied children
(probit); all, men, women

- Gender, age, education, taking part in education, civil status
- Days registered in Sweden (+)
- Parents joining (-)
- Region in Sweden (Stockholm +)
- Country of origin (Afghanistan +)

Factors influencing employment II

Estimations with unaccompanied children and comparison group; (probit); all, men, women

- Unaccompanied child (+ for men)
- Gender, age, education, taking part in education, civil status
- Days registered in Sweden (+)
- Region in Sweden (Stockholm +)
- Country of origin (Afghanistan + compared to all groups except Europe)

Wage income equations (log wage)

Estimations with only unaccompanied children
(OLS); all, men, women

- Gender, age, education, taking part in education, civil status
- Days registered in Sweden (+)
- Parents joining (-)
- Region in Sweden (Stockholm +)
- Country of origin (Afghanistan +)

Wage income equations (log wage)

Estimations with unaccompanied children and comparison group (OLS); all, men, women

- Unaccompanied children (+ for men)
- Gender, age, education, taking part in education, civil status
- Days registered in Sweden (+)
- Region in Sweden (Stockholm +)
- Country of origin (Afghanistan + for all except Europe)

Some conclusions

- An increasing number of children is coming
- Enter to education
- Later to employment

- Coming alone or with parents; what explains the difference?

- Stockholm's labour market; why such a large effect?

