



**Migration, immigration and future transport**    **Summary**  
**Report 2016:14**



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# Summary

In the autumn of 2015 refugees flooded Europe, including Sweden. Their arrival posed challenges for the European transportation system, as well as for society in general. The purpose of this report is twofold. One section addresses how the Swedish transportation system and its stakeholders managed to handle, in the short term, the rapidly increasing migration flows without major disruptions. The other section addresses whether the transportation policy needs to be adapted to meet the different needs and requirements of the new Swedes.

A large proportion of asylum applications are being denied. In a discussion about what future residents expect from the transportation system, it is more relevant to consider the largest immigrant groups rather than groups of asylum seekers. The people who immigrated are the ones who will use the Swedish transportation system for a longer period of time. In 2015, immigration hit a record of over 134,000 people. The ongoing conflict in Syria is a major contributing factor to the large wave of immigration, resulting in the largest immigrant group for the second consecutive year.

The robustness of the transportation system was highlighted in an interview study in which about a dozen stakeholders in the transportation system were interviewed. The transportation system has worked well at all levels: regional public transportation, nationwide scheduled transportation and international traffic. However, the introduction of internal border controls caused delays in both bus and train services. Other sectors of society, such as housing and schools, have experienced greater pressure than the transportation sector. It is also encouraging that the interviews did not describe any serious disturbances or safety/security issues. The few problems that have arisen were mainly related to situations in which people travelled without a ticket.

Although the transportation system has proven to be robust enough to receive the increased migration flows, there is room for improvement in certain areas. In the interviews several stakeholders stated that there is a need to exchange information between sectors. Such information may involve forecasts of asylum seekers that can serve as a basis for changes in the transportation services offered, as well as for staffing of both stations and vehicles that can serve as support for asylum seekers.

Does the transportation policy need to be adapted to meet the different needs and requirements of the new Swedes? The question of whether people born abroad or in Sweden have different expectations of the transportation system can be answered both yes and no. After the initial period, their demands are the same and the similarities between the groups are greater than the differences. However, people born abroad are more dependent on a functioning public transportation system since they are less likely to have a driver's licence or own a car.

When reviewing transportation policy objectives, it can be discussed whether the concept of *citizen* should be eliminated from the overarching goal. It could be interpreted to mean that the transportation policy objectives only apply to Swedish citizens. Instead, perhaps the more neutral "resident" should be used.

One important question is whether the transportation system is perceived as safe by foreign-born residents. Regarding common aspects of security such as road safety and the risk of assault, people born abroad appear to feel secure, at least for themselves. Foreign-born men, however, may be concerned on behalf of the female members of their families. There is reason to discuss the linguistic insecurity experienced by foreign-born residents, though, to the extent that they have not mastered the Swedish language. Just as with insecurity caused by the risk of assault or accidents, linguistic insecurity can also restrict freedom of movement among people born abroad.

We can conclude that the foreign-born residents themselves noted that in many ways the transportation system works better in Sweden than they are accustomed to in their home countries. People born outside

Europe in particular stated that they are not used to such a well-organized and safe transportation system. Against this background, the question is whether the transportation policy should be changed in response to the findings of this report. The solutions to the identified problems are measures that largely fall outside the national responsibility and therefore do not require any changes in national transportation policy. Some proposed measures that emerged from the interviews with people born abroad include:

1. More symbols. Newcomers who do not understand English find it too difficult to find their way. Many say they understand that signs cannot include every single language, but that having more signs with symbols would help.
2. Clearer signs, especially at bus stops, which many find difficult to locate in the dark. They would like to see more lighting and better signage.
3. Lighting is mentioned on several occasions, both for trains and for the bus in winter. It is difficult for people to find their way when transferring in the dark. More booths are also requested, as many express concerns about the cold while waiting for a train or a bus.
4. Buses should run more frequently at night. Many people born in Sweden agree on this point. However, it is more common for respondents born abroad to have jobs that require travel in the early mornings and late evenings (e.g., people working in grocery stores, restaurants, and tailor shops) than people born in Sweden. Moreover, members of this group are not as likely to have a driver's licence or access to a car, so long waits in early mornings and late evenings have a greater impact on the group of foreign-born individuals.
5. Many criticize the lack of guards to maintain order among rowdy people (drunks, gatecrashers, etc.).





Trafikanalys är en kunskapsmyndighet för transportpolitiken. Vi analyserar och utvärderar föreslagna och genomförda åtgärder inom transportpolitiken. Vi ansvarar även för officiell statistik inom områdena transporter och kommunikationer. Trafikanalys bildades den 1 april 2010 och har huvudkontor i Stockholm samt kontor i Östersund.