Research Paper

Managing Labour Migration in Times of Crisis – The Swedish Case

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MANAGING LABOUR MIGRATION IN TIMES OF CRISIS
Recent trends and open issues in selected EU countries

THE SWEDISH CASE

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the reform of the Swedish labour migration policy, passed in 2008 by the centre-right government headed by Fredrik Reinfeldt, with the support of the Green Party.

The background of the reform was the debate, starting in the early 2000s and still on-going, on the challenges posed by demographic decline, labour market failures and pressures for welfare state sustainability.

The discussion on the need for new rules on labour migration occurred in a time of deep changes in the Swedish political culture and power relations, witnessed by the defeat of the Social Democrats (in power since 1994) in the 2006 general elections. Thus, the need for a reform, and the content of it, was debated in the context of a more general confrontation on the competitiveness and sustainability – and, therefore, on the fate – of the Swedish model.

After an examination of the driving arguments and actors pushing for new rules on labour migration – and, at the same time, of the criticism from the trade unions and the Left – this paper analyses how the 2008 law has been implemented and what polemics this new policy has raised, coming not only from Swedish actors but also from the OECD, which has devoted an ad-hoc report to the new Swedish system.

Finally, the paper raises some questions concerning the way labour migration is currently pursued, in the light of the on-going global economic crisis and the growing feelings (according to the polls) of xenophobia.

1. National policy development and changes in the national debate on labour migration

During the post-war years, the number of immigrants in Sweden has increased rapidly. In 1940, the proportion of foreign-born persons of the total population of the country amounted to only 1%. The corresponding proportion had increased to nearly 7% in 1970 and to about 11% at the beginning of the new millennium (Ekberg 2006:1).

Today the proportion is about 14%, which is more than 1.3 million individuals: it is comparable to the United States. Moreover, there is a growing group of so-called second generation immigrants (persons born in Sweden with at least one parent born abroad), who are nowadays nearly 1 million individuals. So, today more than 2 million individuals living in Sweden have an immigrant background (Ekberg 2011a:3).

In 1947 the National Board of Labour started recruiting workforce in Italy, Hungary and Austria, due to the labour shortage which affected the flourishing Swedish export industry (LO 2006:27-28). During the 1950s, a series of liberalising changes were introduced, with the approval of trade unions (Frank 2005: 212), first of all the abolition of visa requirements for citizens of a wide range of European countries and the institutionalisation of a common Nordic labour market in 1954, which maintained some restrictions but nonetheless enabled large-scale migration during the 1950s and 1960s, with Finland as the main source country (Wadensjö 2010: 7-8). All of that helped bringing about (from 1955 onwards) free labour immigration from Europe, known at the time as “tourist immigration” (but as well as “laissez-faire system”; Frank 2005: 211): people were allowed to spend three months in Sweden seeking employment (Lundqvist 2004: 3).

However, apart from this form of individual migration, the recruitment carried out by companies and public authorities must also be mentioned (SAP 2008: 353). Besides Italy, companies also turned to Yugoslavia and Greece for manpower, initiating a substantial
migration from these countries (and from Portugal and Turkey as well; Wadensjö). The flow of immigrants peaked in 1970 (Westin 2006).

The employment situation for immigrants in Sweden has been favourable up to the mid-1970s, as numerous studies show. The unemployment rate was low and there was full employment for both natives and immigrants. For a long time, employment rates among immigrants even exceeded those of the natives. This was especially the case in the 1960s. Upward occupational mobility among those early immigrants was also about the same as among natives (Ekberg 2011a:7).

However, already in the early 1960s the large number of job-seeking foreign citizens (mostly coming from Southern Europe) caused social tensions; both the rise in the flows and their ethnic composition alarmed trade unions, due to the feeling of losing control over labour migration (Bucken-Knapp 2009: 53). This concern led to criticism of the liberal system in force, which was abolished between 1966-1967, in spite of the opposition of the National Employers’ Association; work permits were required prior to entry. The new regulation provided that the domestic labour reserve (first of all married women) was to be utilised before labour migration could be considered and that the volume of the latter was to be determined, on one hand, by the current situation of the labour market and, on the other hand, by the availability of social services (house, healthcare and so on) (Lundqvist 2004: 3). The new requirements were codified in the 1968 Alien Act (OECD 2011: 57). The collective transfer of labour was reintroduced and it remained the only feasible route of entry until the early 1970s, when it ended not because of a shift in politicians’ attitude, but due to the LO’s choice to turn down all applications for work permit. From the outset of the post-war age, indeed, trade unions had insisted for the mobilization of the domestic labour force instead of recruiting foreign workers and not incidentally LO stopped the flows until a measure providing an incentive for married women to enter the labour market – i.e. separate taxation for spouses – was introduced by the first government of Olof Palme in 1971 (Bucken-Knapp 2009: 54).

Since then (early 1970s) to 2008, besides intra-Nordic migration (and, since 1994, the EEC/EU one), Sweden allowed only the following two types of labour migration: 1) short-term jobs (temporary hires, up to 18 months; international exchange, up to 48 months; seasonal workers, up to 3 months) in order to meet shortages not being filled in a short time by domestic labour force; 2) high-skilled workers, who were granted a permanent status. The Labour Market Board checked the labour market situation and employer and employee organizations were asked to issue an opinion (OECD 2011: 57-58).

When labour recruitment from non-Nordic countries was stopped in 1972, the number of new immigrants dropped considerably. However, refugees and their family members (spouses, minor children, and, in some cases, elderly parents) were still accepted for permanent residence. Indeed, Sweden has been one of the major recipients of refugees in the past few decades (Westin 2006).

The issue of asylum has become politicised since the late 1980s: the 1989 legislation restricted asylum seekers’ chances to enter Sweden (Geddes 2003: 110-111). The timing of stricter asylum policy coincided with the collapse of the former Soviet Union and wars in the former Yugoslavia (Westin 2006).

Towards the end of the century labour migration – which for a long time, since the early 1970s, had not been an issue – came out again. In the light of the recovery of the Swedish economy in the second half of the 1990s, and of the challenges issued by the ‘demographic threat’, the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise (Svenskt Näringsliv, SN) initiated in the
early 2000s a campaign for a less restrictive labour migration policy (Fahimi 2001; Ekenger, Wallen 2002).

In the 2002 general election immigration was one of the campaign issues, in a double form: integration policies (with the Liberal Party putting forward the proposal to introduce language skills tests as a condition for citizenship) and labour migration. The centre-right parties (i.e. the Moderate party, the Liberal party, the Centre party, and the Christian Democrats), together with the Green party and employers’ representatives, insisted on the need of making it easier for non-EU citizens to work in Sweden, whereas the Social Democrats, the Left party and the unions replied that, before turning to labour migration, domestic unemployment needed to be reduced. The confrontation between the opposite sides went on after the election (won by the Social Democrats), and, in March 2003, a bipartisan alliance formed in Parliament by the Green party together with the centre-right parties charged the government with the appointment of a committee to examine how to manage labour migration (Borevi 2010: 111).

The Committee for Labour Migration (KAKI, after the Swedish acronym) was appointed in 2004, at a time when EU enlargement stimulated a debate on whether and how immigration from new member states was to be regulated; the Social Democratic Prime Minister, Göran Persson, pulled the alarm over “social tourism” (xenophobes’ main issue), i.e. the danger that people from new EU countries at least to some extent moved to Sweden with the aim of taking advantage from the generous Swedish welfare state, and, particularly, from the generous compensation system for those out of work (Wadensjö 2007: 2); an alarm which, later on, proved to be totally groundless (LO). The ruling party supported a transitional, one-year permit regime, but it did not succeed in achieving a majority in Parliament and Sweden ended up as one of the very few EU countries (together with Great Britain and Ireland) which did not apply any transitional rules. This debate, and its outcome, contributed to a more positive attitude to labour migration (Wadensjö).

The KAKI published its proposals in October 2006, just a couple of weeks before the installation of the new (centre-right) government. In order to fulfil the commitment to a regulated immigration, the committee proposed that the Labour Market Board verified the labour shortage in the concerned occupation sector prior to approving recruitment of TCN workers (KAKI 2006: 130-131). While accepting many of the Committee’s recommendations, the centre-right government later took distance from this particular point (i.e. the labour market test).

The government argued that employers’ assessment of the need for recruiting TCN workers should be crucial in the process, although underlining that from the employers’ point of view it was supposed to be easier to recruit someone from Sweden and not from abroad, when

1 The author of this pamphlet preferred avoiding the term ‘labour migration’ as it recalled the past mass immigration of low-skilled workers and using, instead, the concept of ‘recruitment immigration’, i.e. immigration as an individualized process (i.e. a single employer recruiting a single foreign worker) (Fahimi 2001: 7). Fahimi’s proposal was to find a middle way between a labour market closed to foreign workers (as the system in force at that time) and a completely unrestricted immigration system (Fahimi 2001: 16).

2 The authors put forward economic arguments in favour of labour migration (declining labour force and the pressures of globalization), yet stressing that recruiting foreign workers could not be seen as a first choice, since the process is more demanding and more risky compared to recruiting domestic labour force (Ekenger, Wallen 2002: 15-16).

3 Since 30 April 2006, migrants from EU countries do not need a residence permit to work in Sweden, although they have (with the exception of citizens from Denmark and Finland) to register at the Migration Board, the Swedish authority in charge of immigration issues (Wadensjö 2007: 1; 5-6).

4 The Board was replaced in 2008 by the Public Employment Service (Arbetsförmedlingen).
competences can be found inside the country (Justitiedepartementet 2007: 20 and 37); at the same time, work permits would be granted following an individualised assessment of foreign labour need as opposed to a broader sector-based assessment (Justitiedepartementet 2007: 19).

Besides the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise, also most political parties, starting with the Moderates (the party the Prime Minister and the Minister for Migration belong to), share the idea that, in the end, the question is not whether to give a particular job to a Swede who is unemployed or to a TCN, but to give the job to the one who is more fit to do the job, so that economic growth will benefit from that, and the unemployed Swedes as well, as more jobs will be created. Although this is a political message not easy to sell in all political quarters, the Moderates decided to go along this way, together with the other small coalitions partners (AMD2).

However, yet being able to count on its own majority, the centre-right government pursued a bipartisan agreement and, in the end, got the Green Party’s support (MV1). The latter has a cultural more than a socio-economic profile but as far as economy is concerned, the party shows a liberal attitude more close to the centre-right parties than to the Left (LO).

It must be borne in mind, however, that the initiative of appointing an Inquiry Committee on Labour Migration came from a Social Democratic government (JD2).

Several arguments were put forward to support the thesis that a new immigration policy was needed:

1) Demographic trends and labour shortages. They seem to have been the main driving force of the reform: many people will soon be leaving working life. This development may have negative consequences for labour market and economic growth – and therefore for the sustainability of the Swedish welfare system as well. Despite fluctuations in the world economy, labour shortage is already affecting several occupations and sectors (Minister for Migration).

2) Changed composition of migration flows to Sweden. After the stop to labour migration, immigration to Sweden came to be dominated by asylum seekers. The new rules have changed the perspective (Minister for Migration; SN). The decision to reform labour migration has been influenced, in fact, also by the will to convey an image of immigration not only connected to asylum seekers but, instead, to a more active and positive dimension in terms of contribution to the society (both of the sending and of the destination country), an idea of immigration meant as a process of mutual development (JD2).

3) Labour market failure. The link between an unsatisfying match between demand and supply, notwithstanding unemployment – and the need for more labour migration - is clearly present in Sweden’s public debate. It is argued that the previous immigration policy did not provide all the workers Sweden was in need of; moreover, it could take years to find the right worker to fit the job description. These difficulties in recruiting people prevented companies from expanding and ultimately from creating more jobs. This is where increased labour immigration can make a difference, although it is not to be seen as the only response to the demographic challenges: instead, it represents a complement to measures aiming to utilize the labour force already available in the country (Minister for Migration 2008: 1).

4) Export-oriented industry. Another argument made by the entrepreneurial side is that many Swedish companies (not only the big-sized ones) depend on export: Sweden is high-ranked in the global index of countries operating in several countries; it depends on international trade and ‘business and people go hand in hand’ (SN). The Minister for Migration emphasizes that the ‘right person’ for a job is not simply someone with an education, but rather someone with
special competences not always available in the domestic labour market (Minister for Migration).

5) Consistency with Swedish tradition of openness. Quite steadily, open-door migration policies have been supported by centre-right parties and the Green party by referring to liberal values (Spehar, Bücken-Knapp, Hinnfors 2011: 27). Minister Billström believes that facilitating increased opportunities for labour immigration, apart from being of vital importance for Sweden’s chances to meet both present and future challenges in the labour market, will contribute to a more culturally diverse and open society (Billström 2008: 1).

6) Will to be at the forefront. The criticism to EU immigration policy is general and cross-party among the interviewees. The Minister for Migration emphasizes the role that Swedish immigration policy can play in the European context:

We hope that the Swedish reform is setting an example which others in Europe will follow. Southern European countries’ policies are sometimes worrying, when the basic principle is: well, we will let foreign workers come and work every year, paying them very little, with no chance to get a permanent residence permit and to become citizens one day. This is astonishing to me, as in my opinion the system must work in the opposite way: labour migrants must have rights and, at the same time, they have to pay taxes; they must be integrated, in other words. Employers must accomplish their duties by paying contributions and so on, but, on the other hand, immigrants must also give a contribution to the society as a whole: this is very important if a country wants its citizens to accept labour migration (Minister for Migration).

However, two of the political arguments put forward for the reform (besides the economic ones, which have been prevailing) – i.e. a liberal shift in immigration policy and the will to reduce the financial burden of asylum seekers on State budget – show that there has been an influence by the EU with regard to the need of introducing a more restrictive asylum policy and, at the same time, facilitating a more active migration (Spång).

It has been pointed out that, on the one hand, Sweden wants to teach Europe on labour migration, but, on the other hand, Sweden wants to learn from Europe on asylum policy, because it is more restrictive. ‘Sweden aims at “Europeanising” asylum policy, and to “swedify” labour migration’ (Hansen 2010: 91-93).

2. Current state of admission policy for foreign workers: institutional framework

The Government describes the reform, which entered into force on 15 December 2008, as one of the most significant shifts in the history of Swedish immigration policy. Minister for Migration Tobias Billström sums up this turning point by saying: ‘now it is the market to assess its needs, not the Minister, or the Parliament, or another State authority. Of course politics has to make sure that rules are followed, but the starting point is that the individual employer best knows the recruitment needs of his business. That is why, when processing cases involving residence and work permits, decisions are based on employers’ own assessment of what kind and how much of labour force he needs, although complying with collective agreements and other requirements’ (Minister for Migration).

Until December 2008 the Swedish law provided that, if a company wanted to employ a foreign person, the company had first to check if this competence was available within the EU; the big change after December 2008 is that the company no longer needs to look within
the EU but can choose wherever it wants. This difference between the two laws, according to one interviewee, could be defined as ‘a change of paradigm’ (MV2).

In other words, under the previous rules, when an employer looked for a foreign worker, the system worked in the following way:

Those who want to work in Sweden and come from a country which is not an EU member state must have a work permit. In case they plan to work in Sweden for longer than three months, they will also need a residence permit. Those wishing to work in Sweden must normally apply for a work permit in their native country or in another country outside Sweden, where they are resident. They have to apply either on the Swedish Migration Board's website, or at a Swedish embassy in the country they live in. However, in certain cases labour migrants may apply for a work permit in Sweden in case they are: 1) a student at a university or college in Sweden; 2) someone visiting an employer in Sweden; 3) an asylum seeker. People planning to work in Sweden for longer than three months also need a residence permit (Migration Board 2011a).

The Swedish Public Employment Service was previously responsible for checking that the Community preference was respected (posts were to be made available to job applicants in the other EU/EEA countries and Switzerland). Under the new rules, the Swedish Migration Board has taken over this task. Cases relating to residence and work permits are, thus, all dealt with by a single agency (Government Offices of Sweden 2008: 2). That does not preclude a cooperation with other organizations (e.g. trade unions), but the final decision is up to the Migration Board (JD2). The Government explains that ‘in assessing the conditions offered with the employment, the main rule has not been changed, the employer is normally required to give the employee organisations an opportunity to issue an opinion on the terms of employment. The statements made by the employees’ organisations are of great importance when making these examinations’ (Government Offices of Sweden 2008: 2). That means, however, that the trade unions’ statement is no longer crucial (Wadensjö).
The Labour Market Administration now is out of the picture: this is a huge difference compared to the former regulation, where a sort of labour market test was required and, in case there was no labour shortage in that occupation sector, then the Labour Market Board, after receiving a negative opinion from the trade union, had to reject the application. Instead of the labour market test, under the new law employers are obliged to advertise the position for ten days in the EURES system (The European Job Mobility Portal), but that is more of a fig leaf, based on Sweden’s obligations with the EU. The Labour Market Board was also responsible for checking with the unions that the working conditions were at least in line with collective agreements. One of the most important tasks which the Swedish Migration Board has is to make sure that there is no salary dumping in Sweden; therefore, every application which is received by the Board is forwarded to the relevant labour union, who is given 2 weeks to look through the application and, then, the union can tell the Migration Board if the salary and the working conditions as a whole are good enough.

Time limits for work permits have been extended: they can be granted for the duration of the employment and, anyway, for a maximum of two years; if the person is still working after this, it is possible to extend the permit up to no more than four years. After this time, a permanent residence permit can be granted. The application for an extension of a work permit is processed in Sweden: the applicant will not need to return home to apply. Furthermore, simplified rules have been introduced for visiting students wishing to stay and work in Sweden after the completion of their studies and for obtaining a visa to attend a job interview in the country (both categories do not need any longer to return home to apply, if offered employment).

Finally, asylum seekers, whose application has been refused by a final decision, may be granted a residence permit for work without having to leave the country first; the condition is that the asylum seeker has had a job for at least six months. The position must be permanent or for a period of at least one year from the date of application, and it must fulfil the general conditions for a work permit. The application must reach the Swedish Migration Board within two weeks from the final decision on the asylum application. The possibility of being granted residence permits without leaving the country is extended to the family members of the applicant (Government Offices of Sweden 2008: 2-3).

One of the most controversial points in the reform is that, for the first two years, the residence and work permit is restricted to one specific employer and a particular profession. For this reason, one has to apply for a new work permit if s/he changes employer or profession over the first two years. If the residence and work permit has been extended after two years, it will be restricted to a particular profession. But, even here, one must apply for a new work permit if s/he changes profession (Migration Board 2011e).

3. Current state of admission policy for foreign workers: criteria for selection

The rules passed in 2008 do not allow for a free immigration: this is still regulated. What the government has taken away is the labour market test. Nevertheless, there are still conditions: collective agreements, but also labour migrants’ capability to support themselves, which basically is a limit if one does not work full-time. To be granted a work permit a person has to: 1) be in possession of a valid passport; 2) to earn one’s own living thanks to the job the s/he has been offered; 3) to work to such an extent that the wage is at least SEK 13,000 (about 1.435 euro) per month (Migration Board 2011b).
There is no special program for the recruitment of high-skilled workers; proposals have been put forward in order to make it easier for international students to stay and work in the country for a while, but, besides this, the system is open to all groups. High-skilled workers have to follow the same rules as all the others: it is the employer who decides on how many people and what kind of competencies are needed (Minister for Migration; MV1; JD2). This openness to low-skilled workers is definitely unusual in an international perspective, as well as the lack of a binding list of sectors affected by labour shortage: the idea behind this is that it is impossible to predict from the beginning which employments will stimulate economic growth (AMD1).

Actually, Sweden has an official list on labour shortage, which is published twice a year, and it is based on statistics predicting the country’s future labour needs. People looking for a job on the list not only have more chances of finding employment in Sweden, but they can apply for a work and residence permit from within Sweden, without returning to their home country first (SN). However, this list does not compromise the employer-driven character of the new Swedish labour migration policy: it is intended only as a way to facilitate those looking for certain jobs (AMD2).

What the OECD has found in its survey on Swedish labour migration policy is that labour migrants are overrepresented in shortage occupations, but the average permit duration for high-skilled workers on the shortage list is definitely shorter than for low and medium-skilled jobs not included in the list (OECD 2011: 109-110).

The entry of labour migrants for elementary occupations in which there is a surplus is a possible point of concern, since there may be a risk of migrants substituting for less educated natives or prior immigrants in these jobs. Some of these occupations are taken up by rejected asylum seekers. On the other hand, if these occupations are in business where Swedish workers are unlikely to be employed – especially ethnic restaurants or business […] – then labour migration into surplus elementary occupations may reflect the evolution and expansion of ethnic enterprises. The question then becomes whether expansion in the future will continue to be biased in favour of low skilled jobs, a trend which is at odd with that of economy as a whole (OECD 2011: 113).

4. Current state of the admission policy for foreign workers: mechanisms for matching offer and demand

The role of the State has been reduced to lowest terms when compared to the system in force during the 1960s, when Sweden had recruitment agencies in some foreign countries (e.g. Italy) (Wadensjö). The Swedish Institute gets money from the State to finance a web-site (Work in Sweden), in order to facilitate people who are considering moving to Sweden to work. But the Public Employment Service has no specific task in trying to get migrants outside the EU to move to Sweden (AMD2).

If there is no striking problem, it is more or less automatic that the Migration Board grants work permit.

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5 Sweden.se (The official gateway to Sweden), http://www.sweden.se/eng/Home/Work/Get-a-job/Labor-shortage-list/.
Recruitment channels are diverse: sometimes, for instance, companies (especially big companies) benefit from their local contacts. The easiest way is to advertise the job with the Public Employment Service for a period of ten days. This will also provide access to EURES (Migration Board 2011c). Once accomplished that, the employer has to look for the right person; “how” – whether to rely on local contacts or instead on head-hunters - depends on the employer’s network. But there is no public channel supporting employers in this task (SN).

To employ a TCN may be less expensive – although the job contract must be in line with collective agreements – but, on the other side, it is more demanding in terms of bureaucracy, language, and so on. For instance, it is not possible to meet the worker before recruiting him/her. There are many unknown factors, when employing a TCN (AMD1). This is one of the starting points of the reform, after all.

The possibility of introducing bilateral agreements does not ultimately seem to achieve widespread consensus, mainly because of the idea of spontaneous migration as the basic principle of the Swedish system (IT company; SN; MV1). The only bilateral agreements are, besides those regarding tax system and the portability of social rights like pensions (Wadensjö), international students exchange programs, with Canada, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand, but they do not require any work permit (JD2).

For the recruitment of berry-pickers (coming mostly from Thailand) there is a well-established cooperation between Swedish companies and the sending country (JD2), without any state intervention (UD).

However, employment agencies play an important role in the recruitment system in general, and particularly when berry-pickers are concerned. In 2009 and 2010, berry-pickers from China, Thailand and Vietnam paid a great deal of money to some of these agencies for working in Sweden, which promised that they would earn a lot, but things went differently (Andersson Joona, Wadensjö 2011: 14).

The biggest group among labour migrants is IT engineers, almost 40-50%; they are mostly intra-company transfer personnel; this means that when, for instance, Ericsson – which has employers in India – needs 500 engineers quickly, the company just calls them from there, there is no need ‘to recruit’ them in the labour market (MV2; see also JD2). As far as non intra-company transfer personnel is concerned, big companies, which have production units all over the world, launch campaigns for the recruitment of engineers and IT technicians, going to other countries but also cooperating with universities in China, sometimes in partnership with the Swedish Institute sometimes on their own. Ericsson has its ‘Eric-clubs’ in China, intended to attract people and make them interested in Sweden. Engineers are recruited in Serbia, too. In other sectors, there are temporary agencies both in Sweden and abroad which the employers can turn to if they do not have their own connections (AMD2).15

Local authorities, as well, launch campaign in order to recruit foreign doctors in specific countries. However, despite the emphasis put by the Minister for Migration as well as by some experts on the public sector (particularly, the health sector) as a potential big recruiter of labour migrants, a limited number of work permits have been issued to municipalities, county councils and hospitals (OECD 2011: 91). According to the Swedish Medical Association (Sveriges Läkarförbund), the reason why few TCN doctors are recruited is that the certification process of foreign education and job experiences makes it shorter and easier to recruit doctors from EU countries instead (Petersson 2012: 14-15).

Campaigns are launched, as well, for recruiting engineers, but again with no public coordination (MV2).
When it comes to labour migrants, recognition of foreign education and experiences is not so relevant: compared with many other countries, in Sweden there are fewer professions which are protected by this kind of requirement, mainly in the health sector (TCO). When an organization wants to hire a doctor from Iraq, for instance, the Migration Board waits until the Social Department has checked that doctor’s education before granting the work permit (MV2).

The validation system is used also with engineers, for example; the point here is convincing Swedish employers that the person has the qualifications to do that job. The high education system (Högskoleverket) is in charge of this certification, but usually it is not enough, since the job applicant (not so much engineers, as many companies work in English, but rather doctors and nurses) needs some specialized Swedish language skills. And then comes the difficult part: getting the first experience in the Swedish labour market. Usually, people (for example, an engineer from Iraq) work in a company for a short period, thus companies can see if s/he is the right person, and report on that. When their skills have been evaluated not by an authority, but by a real employer in a real work situation, then they can go on (TCO).

In the whole, the certification of foreign education and experiences is one of the problematic areas of the Swedish labour migration policy (OECD 2011: 126): highly qualified immigrants need a special permission of the Swedish authorities in order to enter the Swedish labour market, but the time needed to issue that kind of permit is very long (Ekberg).

The validation system is very heterogeneous: different authorities (Swedish National Agency for Higher Education, the National Board of Health and Welfare and others) dealing with different kind of validations for different jobs in different sectors. New attempts are made for making the system more transparent, as it gives a confusing impression, due to the lack of coordination (AMD2).

What is pointed out, furthermore, is that the Swedish validation system has worked quite a lot on refugees’ education, and it should now be developed in order to be effective in validating labour migrants’ competences as well (SN). But it is to be noticed that, if few asylum seekers find a job, it is also because of the poor efficiency of this system (LO).

Where recruitment is carried on is, however, an unclear point, as far as the implementation of the new system is concerned. Although the law provides that TCN workers have to apply from their own country (with the exceptions pointed out in par. 2), perception about how the match between demand and supply is, in fact, achieved varies quite a lot: both in Sweden and in sending countries (JD1; JD2); only in Sweden (TCO; UD); usually in Sweden (LO); depending on the sector (Wadensjö). Actually, only 7% of the job applicants have been recruited in Sweden between 2009 and 2011; rejection rates are definitely higher for in-country applications (among rejected asylum seekers trying to switch track, 1,059 out of 1,787 were granted work permits; among people with visa, applying under the shortage list, 150 out of 292) (OECD 2011: 83-84).

5. Functional equivalents: policies for the access of non-labour migrants to the labour market

Before the reform, the need to keep labour migration and humanitarian migration separated was constantly emphasized; but then the possibility to change track came in, thanks to the 2008 reform (see par. 2). The background of this shift is that, in Sweden, asylum seekers are allowed to work from the first day. There were a number of cases which newspapers pointed
at: asylum seekers got a job, they were working and taking part in the community in the small cities, but then their asylum application was denied and they were supposed to be sent home. By the change of track it was open a kind of possibility in these cases. But there is a condition: this possibility to change track only exists if one applies for a work permit in the 2 weeks following the final decision on his or her application (TCO).

On the other hand, the argument was made that those applying in Sweden for asylum are not always in actual need of it, being rather attracted by Swedish generosity in terms of social policy; after the reform it can be expected that some of them will take instead advantage of the labour migration track (JD1).

In order to be granted a work permit, the applicant must prove that:

- s/he has a passport covering the whole period of validity of the permit;
- s/he has been employed for at least 6 months as an asylum seeker, and that the employment will continue for at least 12 months from the date of application;
- s/he has had the same employer;
- s/he has earned at least SEK 13,000 per month;
- s/he can earn her/his own living (Migration Board 2011).

The Migration Board acknowledges that there are not so many asylum seekers who have turned into labour migrants because of the current system (post-2008) being very bureaucratic and making it more difficult for asylum seekers to get a work permit.

The high rejection rate (40% from 2009 to May 2011) for asylum seekers trying to change track is due to the following reasons: working conditions (wage, working hours) not in line with the requirements; delay in applying; a too short work history (less than 6 months) (OECD 2011: 84).

In September 2011 the Migration Board made the argument that it is unacceptable that asylum seekers have to wait for the final decision on their application before applying for a work permit; according to the proposal put forward by the Board, they should be rather allowed to apply on both tracks at the same time (Persson, A. 2011). The Migration Board believes that this would be a better system (both for the applicants and for Sweden) than the current one. But the Board acknowledges that it is quite a controversial suggestion (MV2). And, indeed, the proposal has been criticized both by trade unions and the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise, arguing that refugee and labour migration are two completely different channels of immigration, and they are to be kept separate: all those moving to Sweden are welcome in the Swedish labour market, but the point is that the refugee policy cannot be evaluated merely in economic terms (Sörman, Ågren, Ekström, Lindqvist, Arrius, Nordmark 2011).

However, while the government is positive on the possibility to switch track, many voluntary organizations are critical about it; their argument is that the overlap between the two categories risks to compromise asylum seekers’ rights (Spång): a fear shared by the Social Democrats (Yohansson).

For some groups among the asylum seekers (e.g. those coming from Somalia), it may not be easy to find a job in Sweden. For doctors and engineers from Iraq, it is somewhat better (TCO).

A sector employing several asylum seekers and refugees is the home service industry, which is expanding in Sweden following decline in public expenditure, privatization of public services, flexibilization of labour force and tax deductions such as RUT (Rengöring, Underhåll och Tvätt, i.e. home services) (Gavanas 2010: 10). The latter were introduced in
2007, with the aim, on the one side, to stimulate the sector, and, on the other side, to reduce the black labour market (Wadensjö).

A recent research focuses on the interchangeability of formal and informal labour in the home service sector: a company may offer regular work to its customers carried out by named workers, officially registered, but then the work is done by someone else, possibly an irregular migrant, in a shorter time and for a lower wage, paid off the books. In other words, companies (sometimes the big ones) working in the formal sector may turn to intermediaries (subcontractors), who hire workers on the black labour market. Furthermore, migrants’ lack of language skills and needed ID documentation can be easily exploited in this sector: home services may be one of the few accesses to labour market for some migrants, regardless of their education (Gavanas 2010: 27-3124).

From the mid-1980s up to the mid-1990s, and also later on, Swedish authorities placed out immigrants in different areas, in order to avoid ethnic enclaves. The result was that authorities spread out many refugees in areas where there was plenty of dwellings, but that was because many natives had to move out from the area, due to lack of jobs. Studies show that this has been negative for the refugees and their access to labour market. Nowadays, politicians acknowledge that such a system is not sustainable, and that authorities have to find areas where refugees have good chances to get a job. In this respect, the debate has changed. But, still, many refugees are placed in municipalities where there is a low chance to get a job; the reason is that many municipalities do want refugees because of the fee they receive from the government. If a refugee is unemployed in many years in that area, the municipality is compensated by the government (Ekberg).

However, the home service sector is in constant need for staff, as it has been growing continuously since the introduction of RUT in 2007. Workers are sometimes recruited through advertisements on ‘Metro’ (a free newspaper with worldwide circulation), since the people the companies are looking for cannot afford an ordinary newspaper but they still read that. Besides this channel, companies turn to the Public Employment Service (Home Service Company).

6. The external dimension of labour market policy

Supporters of the reform stress that immigration to Sweden contributes to increased economic growth, for instance thanks to improved Swedish foreign trade, as it has been showed by the ‘Kosmopolit’ project (MV1), started in 2007 by Minister for Trade Ewa Björling in order ‘to make use of the unique skills of people born abroad to increase Swedish trade with the rest of the world’. A study showed, for instance, that an increase in the number of people born abroad by some 12,000 individuals would lead to an increase in exports by as much as 7 billion Swedish crowns: entrepreneurs who were born abroad have good knowledge of the culture of their former home countries. They are in an excellent position to conduct cross-border trade and can also help pave the way for other Swedish companies (Government Offices of Sweden 2011).

The Minister for Migration believes that, after the reform passed in 2008, a step further is needed, and that is why the government – once again, with the support of the Green Party – appointed in 2009 a Committee on Circular Migration (CIMU), with representatives of all political parties (excluding the xenophobic party of the Sweden Democrats, the committee being appointed before the last general election). In its intermediate report, the committee analysed the concept of circular migration (the Minister reminds that in Brussels there are
diverse understandings of it), and then (April 2011) it released a report with recommendations on how to facilitate mobility of people planning to work in Sweden for a while, and then to return home or to move to another country (Minister for Migration). The main proposals by CIMU were:

- Allowing migrants with a permanent resident permit to leave Sweden up to five years (under the current system, the period is one year), while holding their permits.
- Granting a time-limited work permit longer than the four-year period currently in force (after which, a foreign worker is allowed to apply for permanent residency), under special conditions (people who wish to work in Sweden but do not plan to settle in the country).
- Introducing the ability of fulfilling the total qualification period of four years for a time-limited residence permit within an eight-year period (instead of the current five).
- Relaxing the requirements for rejected asylum seekers wishing to change track (from at least a six-month employment to a three-month one, and through two employments; extension of the deadline from two to four weeks after receiving the final decision on the application for asylum).
- Appointing an independent economic authority to verify whether the business plan of TCN entrepreneurs wishing to start their own activity in Sweden is reliable.
- Granting students who have completed their education in Sweden a six-month residence permit allowing them to look for a job.
- Allowing migrants who have been granted an unemployment insurance to benefit from it for three months, while looking for a job abroad (CIMU 2011: 32-37).

The Minister for Migration reaffirmed his commitment to circular migration in a speech at the London School of Economics (May 2012):

The links between migration and development is a prioritized policy area of the Swedish Government. We believe that if migration is managed responsibly it has the potential to benefit receiving countries, countries of origin and migrants themselves […]. A key aspect of such an approach is to promote coherent policy approaches that promote synergies between migration and other relevant policy areas, including development cooperation, trade, foreign affairs and integration […]. There are many definitions of circular migration, but in Sweden the term is used to describe how migrants that have a residence permit in Sweden, can have the opportunity to return and contribute to development in their country of origin. Circular migration in the Swedish context is not a temporary migrant worker program, but a view that it should be possible for migrants to make a decision to leave Sweden either on a temporary or more permanent basis, and still have the possibility to come back again (Billström 2012).

However, the impact of circular migration on sending countries is a controversial issue of debate in Sweden. Research shows that, while the emigration of high-skilled workers may have a positive effect on large sending countries, in the case of small and poor countries negative effects seem to prevail (Lundborg 2010: 33).

Furthermore, although some experts believe that there is no contradiction between support by centre-right parties and the Green party for circular migration and the current labour migration policy allowing TCN migrants to get a permanent residence permit in Sweden (Spehar, Bucken-Knapp, Hinnfors 2011: 14), others point out that the new labour migration law is
better compared to several other equivalent countries, but, as far as the question of permanent residence is concerned, there is no strong guarantee that there is a citizenship path and today, with Europe being affected by the crisis, no one would commit to the social incorporation of migrants, whether irregular or regular (Hansen).

7. Strengths and weaknesses of Sweden’s approach to labour migration management

Prior to the 2008 reform, the number of labour migrants was very low (with the exception of seasonal workers). After 2008, however, labour migrants have increased and are now the second category of inflows after family reunification (the third being free movement migration from EU countries) (OECD 2011: 48). The number of accompanying family members being granted a work permit has increased as well, although it is hard to say how many of them have actually found a job, and which kind of employment (OECD 2011: 77).

Experts agree that, in the first years after the passage of the law, the number of foreign job seekers has not at all increased as much as someone was afraid of. The OECD draws some lessons from Sweden’s new labour migration policy:

The first lesson is that a shift from a restrictive to one driven exclusively by employer demand with a minimal verification that the demand is legitimate does not necessarily lead to an explosion in labour migration […]. The second lesson is that the assumption by the Swedish authorities of a natural preference of employers for locally available employees seems to be borne out by the experience since the introduction of the reform (OECD 2011: 132).

Despite the economic crisis, in 2009 there was a light increase in the number of applications to the Migration Board, but not at all a mass immigration: this shows that the system is flexible enough to adapt itself to economic ups and downs (SN).

As well as in the previous system, under the new regulation many permits are issued for short periods, either for intra-corporate transfers or for seasonal jobs. Moreover, employers may chose to offer a short-term contract in the first place, in order to be able to get rid of workers more easily if they do not fit the job (employment protection is quite strong in Sweden) (OECD 2011: 78-79). In view of these developments, one could assume that, even if it is too early to evaluate its impact, the reform seems to have to do mainly with circular migration (Spång).

Within a general satisfaction about the implementation of the reform, the Minister for Migration admits, however, that there are some problems – which nonetheless were put on the bill – but nonetheless he appears to be confident in the administration’s will and capability to solve them: ‘by the new regulation it is possible to oppose workers’ rights violations’ (Minister for Migration).

However, the poor correspondence between the conditions promised to foreign workers in the offer of employment and the ones applied in fact are not only a polemic by trade unions, but rather a problem which officers, researchers and media – and now OECD as well - are fully aware of.

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The Migration Board acknowledges that there is no certainty about how the job which will actually be carried on once the foreign worker has moved to Sweden. At this moment, it is very difficult for the Migration Board to have an in-depth look at an application, so to assess whether it is a fake (MV2). Problems occur in different sectors, restaurants and the building industry first of all, but sometimes also in jobs covered by the ‘white-collar’ union (TCO).

The rejection rate of permit applications was low (less than 11%) in an international perspective over the period 2009-2011, but nonetheless it doubled compared to the average rejection rate (5-6%) reported in the two years before the reform. Unsuccessful applications come mostly from small businesses and organizations (sometimes run by immigrants) (OECD 2011: 117-118).

The point is that the offer of employment is not legally binding: this is one of the main criticisms from the union (LO). Bound to the same employer for two years and with no legal instruments on his/her side, the worker cannot do much when the employer pledges to offer e.g. 16 Swedish crowns/h in the job contract, and then pays 10 crowns only in reality. Another way to bypass collective agreements is to hire a foreign worker (a berry-picker, for instance) through a foreign company (e.g. in Thailand), on the working conditions in force in that country, although the worker is granted a Swedish work permit (‘posted workers’). The Committee on Labour Migration (KAKI) was well aware of both the dangers and the recommended controls, especially the fiscal ones, but not much attention seems to have been paid to this part (UD).

The work permit duration has been extended, and this is a positive development, from the unions’ point of view: the employer can plan his/her business in a long-term perspective, the immigrant feels safer, and Sweden becomes more attractive as a labour marketplace. The problem is that, for some time, the residence and work permit are restricted to one named employer and a particular profession. This obligation brings with it an advantage and a disadvantage: it is not easy for irresponsible employers hiring foreign workers and then subcontracting them; at the same time, even if the worker is not satisfied with his/her working conditions, s/he can not change (LO).

Seasonal workers. In public discourse, polemics focus mainly on berry-pickers working in summer in Northern Sweden. The OECD points out that, under the new system, identification of seasonal workers is complicated: they are granted the same work permit as any other labour migrant. The companies recruiting seasonal workers were, in 2009 and 2010, fewer than 50; in both years, 75% of this group of workers were sponsored by five employers only (OECD 2011: 82).

Minister Billström talks about ‘secondary problems’ − and anyway foreseen − related to berry-pickers, within a new system which is working altogether very well. What happened before was that those workers moved to Sweden (not with a work permit, but with a visa) and did their job for some months, returning home afterwards without paying any tax (Minister for Migration). In 2010 a new regulation came into force; berry-pickers have got the guarantee of some basic rights (SN), included a guaranteed minimum wage (LO).

This change followed a poor berry season in 2010, when many workers were laid off and found themselves with no means to return home (OECD 2011: 83).

That is why, prior to the berry-picking season of 2011, the Migration Board established new requirements for those who want to pick berries in Sweden. In order to be granted a work permit, they must be offered conditions of employment which are on a par with Swedish collective agreements or − the specification is due to the lack of collective agreements in the sector − ”whatever is customary within the occupation or industry”’. Berry-pickers are
expected to earn at least 13,000 Swedish crowns (approximately 1.450 euro) a month. Furthermore, the employer must prove that s/he can pay the salary stated in the offer of employment and, in case s/he has previously hired berry-pickers, that s/he has paid their wages from the year before. Finally, the employer must give the trade union organisations concerned the opportunity to comment on the conditions in the offer of employment (Migration Board 2011).

Despite these requirements, what is supposed to happen, as the liberal newspaper Dagens Nyheter has warned, is that berry-pickers are forced to sign two distinct contracts: one in line with law requirements, and another one by which they give up completely the official wage, probably without understanding what they are giving their consent about (Smedslund 2010). Moreover, media report that companies in the sector have started recruiting workers from Bulgaria and Romania instead of people from Asia just to get out of the new rules (Wadensjö).

The union has always had difficulties in organizing berry-pickers: they are often formally self-employed (although, in fact, they are employees), therefore they cannot be represented by the union (LO); they stay in Sweden for a short time, earn some money and then return home and are very scared by the danger to lose their job in case they denounce violations of their rights (AMD1).

**Posted workers.** At the same time, when EU enlargement took place, the ‘Vaxholm affair’ raised the issue of foreign workers’ working conditions and, above all, of the challenges issued by ‘globalization’ to the Swedish model. In 2004 a Latvian company (*Lavall un Partneri*) was awarded a public tender in Sweden to renovate a school in Vaxholm (near Stockholm). Laval posted workers from Latvia; they were employed to work through a subsidiary of Laval and negotiations began between it and the Swedish building and public works trade union. When these negotiations broke down, Laval signed collective agreements with the Latvian building sector trade union, to which 65 per cent of the posted workers were affiliated. The Swedish trade union then took collective action by means of a blockade of all Laval sites in Sweden and this action was supported by other Swedish trade unions. Laval brought proceedings in the Swedish courts and then the case was transferred to the European Court of Justice (ECJ) (Eurofund 2010; see also Persson, I. 2006). On 18 December 2008, the ECJ passed the verdict on the Laval case, ruling that the right to industrial action can sometimes be justified under EU law to protect against social dumping, but at the same time the Court also pointed out that ‘the exercise of that right may be subject to certain restrictions’. The ECJ noted that industrial action aimed at obtaining terms and conditions which went beyond the minimum established by law made it less attractive for companies to carry out their business in the member state and, therefore, represented a restriction on the freedom to provide services, guaranteed under the Treaty. In Sweden there was no statutory minimum wage, nor were collective agreements universally applicable. Consequently, industrial action to impose terms could not be justified under EU law. The court also held that failure to take account of the collective agreement reached between the employer and the Latvian trade union amounted to discrimination against both organisations (Eurofund 2010).

Swedish laws on working conditions apply to everybody who is posted to Sweden; the obligation that foreign employers have to follow Swedish laws is based on regulations in the EU Directive on posting. There is also a Swedish law which is based on the EU Directive; it was altered in 2010 following the verdict of the European Union Court of Justice. Since then, the union organisations may only take industrial action against foreign employers under certain conditions and must hand in a copy of the conditions applying in their collective agreements to the Swedish Work Environment Authority (Swedish Work Environment 2011).
The blue-collar trade union, LO (Landsorganisationen), is a strong critic of the reform passed in 2008, putting forward arguments that the white-collar trade union, TCO and SACO (the latter being the Swedish Confederation of Professions) partly agree upon. The Social Democratic Party and the Left party were critical as well when the new rules were presented. Yet, it is noteworthy that the Social Democratic Party was not united in its opposition.

According to the ‘blue-collar’ trade union, the previous system had proved to work quite well and borders were not as close as the centre-right parties described them (LO 2006: 7). The competent authority for labour market defined the need of labour force thanks to lists of shortage-affected sectors and occupations, and the cooperation between social partners (unions and employers), who were given ten days to state their joint opinion on the single offer of employment, was effective, thanks to their knowledge of local labour markets (LO).

When the centre-right government proposed new rules for labour migration, the trade unions were rather negative, because they predicted that the system would be misused, as labour force coming to Sweden can slow down wages; today this is an argument made by the xenophobic Sweden Democrats as well. Trade unions also pointed out the problem with low educated labour force such as berry-pickers. LO was and is afraid that, if such low educated immigrants enter the labour market, there will be competition for LO members.

The proposals put forward by the Social Democrats and the unions in order to improve the implementation of the reform are the following:

- The offer of employment ought to be legally binding. As long as it is perfectly legal to write one thing in the offer of employment and then a different thing in the employment contract, what follows is that the individual cannot base his rights on the offer of employment, and that is abused by the system (TCO).
- An employer who was responsible in the past for workers’ rights violations should not be allowed to hire labour migrants (SAP).
- The Tax Agency should check if the employer’s contributions do correspond to the wage s/he promised (this would be a very easy thing, if the Tax Agency and the Migration Board just exchanged information by computer) (TCO).
- Controls would be easier if labour migrants moved to Sweden only after being granted the work permit; with visa it is the opposite, and this increases the danger that the worker, once in Sweden, becomes more willing to accept not satisfactory working conditions, just to stay in the country (LO).
- The Migration Board is not competent in the field of labour market, hence its difficulties in preventing workers’ rights violations; the responsibility for controlling that the actual working conditions are in line with collective agreements should be transferred to another authority, as it was in the previous system (LO).
- Labour market test (and the cooperation between social partners) should be restored in order to avoid that labour migration is absorbed by sectors with bad working conditions (which make it difficult to recruit domestic labour force) (Larsson 2010).

The unions concerned with the tourism and restaurant sector complain that the presence of a cheap foreign labour force makes collective bargaining difficult because responsible companies have to compete with employers who underpay workers; and that implies as well that free competition is undermined (SAP; LO).

Nevertheless, it is not only the unions and the Left who express their concern over the shortcomings of the new labour migration policy. In the long run, difficulties are to be
expected when it comes to monitoring working conditions (i.e. whether the employer follows what he has promised in the offer of employment or not). In Sweden it is mostly up to the unions to accomplish this task and it is not easy for unions to monitor sectors/areas where they do not have members or with workers whose language they do not speak, and/or who are scared of or prevented from getting in touch with trade unions: this is a remark also made by the OECD (OECD 2011: 126). Thus, maybe in the long run, a public monitoring system will be needed. In the service sector, for instance, the rate of unionization is going down, and this may mean that, in the future, the public authority will be forced to be more inquisitive compared to today (AMD2).

However, in the face of these controversies, in December 2011 the Board has introduced tighter rules for granting work permits in certain industries:

The goal is to prevent people from being exploited on the Swedish labour market as much as possible within current legislation. The new rules mean that businesses in the cleaning, hotel and restaurant, service, construction, staffing, trading, agriculture and forestry, and automobile repair industries, as well as all newly-started operations, must show in connection with a work permit application that wages can be guaranteed for the time that an offer of employment is valid.

Businesses in these industries that previously employed people from outside the EU must show documentation of wages paid. In the event the employee is hired by a foreign business (outside the EU) conducting operations in Sweden, the company must have a branch office registered in Sweden. Furthermore, the company must show that the employee has received information on the conditions of the employment offered. (Migration Board 2011d).

The new controls have gone into effect on 16 January 2012.

At the same time when unions and left parties complain that the new rules on labour migration have weakened workers’ position on the labour market, what is mostly criticized by the employers is Migration Board’s ineffectiveness and, particularly, its handling of time. The Minister actually acknowledges that this is a problematic area (Minister for Migration).

The waiting time for recruiting a foreign worker is lower than in most other countries; nevertheless, it adds one month for Swedish firms to the hiring time, compared with hiring on the domestic labour market (OECD 2011: 121).

What the Migration Board is doing is to modernize and strengthen its IT system, making it easier to apply for a work permit by the internet7. The Board is also reflecting on how to increase the knowledge of the Swedish labour migration policy abroad (MV1).

Furthermore, in autumn 2011, the Board started a certification system, which would make it easier for companies which the Board – and the unions – trust (big companies like Ericsson mostly) to get a decision within twenty days (or five days, when the application also includes the statement from the concerned union). This certification system is both qualitative and quantitative: a company can be part of it if it applies to at least 25 work permits for TCN citizens per year (the reference year is not only the current one, but the past one as well), if it fulfils all the legal requirements and has a good relationship with the union. When all this is

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7 About four out of ten applicants apply online. The amount of the application fee, which can be paid either by the employer or by the employee (usually the latter) is 2,000 Swedish crowns (about 220 EUR) while for a permit extension it is 1,000 Swedish crowns (about 110 euros) (OECD 2011: 64). In an international perspective, the Swedish fee is low, but when it comes to seasonal workers – who have to pay the same amount – it is in the upper range (OECD 2011: 125).
met, the Migration Board issues a certificate which means that the applications will be given a priority line (Migration Board 2012).

In the end, neither the xenophobic party (Sweden Democrats) gaining representation in the Parliament in 2010 nor the on-going recession are likely to threaten the open-door labour migration policy formulated by the centre-right coalition. The open question in the Swedish public debate is, rather, whether and how the government will be able to improve the implementation of the reform, getting rid of unnecessary red tape, but in the first place safeguarding employees’ rights in a more effective way.

It is to be stressed, on the other hand, that the tighter regulations introduced by the Migration Board and in force since January 2012 show the government’s will to agree on at least some of the recommendations made both by domestic and international organizations on this point.

Nonetheless, it is reasonable to expect that the degree of this commitment to improve the policy will also depend on the understanding of labour migration, i.e. whether it is meant in a traditional sense (and, as such, one entailing measures promoting immigrants’ social and economic inclusion) or instead more as circular migration, which – despite all the emphasis on it as a key factor in international cooperation, benefitting destination as well as sending countries – reminds closely the old ‘guest workers’ system.
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Annex: List of interviewees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>POSITION</th>
<th>ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>IDENTIFICATION CODE</th>
<th>DATE / PLACE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tobias BILLSTRÖM</td>
<td>Minister for Migration</td>
<td>Ministry of Justice</td>
<td>Minister for Migration</td>
<td>April 4, 2011; Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>Government Officer</td>
<td>Migration Board (Migrationsverket)</td>
<td>MV1</td>
<td>March 29, 2011; Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>Government Officer</td>
<td>Migration Board (Migrationsverket)</td>
<td>MV2</td>
<td>September 23, 2011; Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>Government Officer</td>
<td>Justice Department (Justitiedepartmentet)</td>
<td>JD1</td>
<td>April 4, 2011; Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malin BERGMARK</td>
<td>Government Officer</td>
<td>Justice Department (Justitiedepartmentet)</td>
<td>JD2</td>
<td>April 5, 2011; Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna SANTESSON</td>
<td>Government Officer</td>
<td>Labour Market Department (Arbetsmarknadsdepartementet)</td>
<td>AMD1</td>
<td>April 5, 2011; Stockholm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anonymous</td>
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<td>Labour Market Department (Arbetsmarknadsdepartementet)</td>
<td>AMD2</td>
<td>September 27, 2011; Stockholm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peter SPRINGFELDT</td>
<td>Government Officer</td>
<td>Foreign Office Department (Utrikesdepartementet)</td>
<td>UD</td>
<td>April 5, 2011; Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ylva JOHANSSON</td>
<td>Vice-Chairman of the Swedish Parliament’s Labour Market Committee</td>
<td>Swedish Social Democratic Party (Socialdemokratiska Arbetarepartiet)</td>
<td>SAP</td>
<td>April 6, 2011; Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monika ARVIDSSON</td>
<td>Expert of migration issues</td>
<td>Swedish Trade Unions Confederation (Landsorganisationen)</td>
<td>LO</td>
<td>April 8, 2011; Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuel ENGBLOM</td>
<td>Labour lawyer</td>
<td>Swedish Confederation for Professional Employees (Tjänstemännens centralorganisation)</td>
<td>TCO</td>
<td>September 22, 2011; Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karin EKENGEBERG</td>
<td>Expert of labour market</td>
<td>Confederation of Swedish Enterprises (Svenskt Näringsliv)</td>
<td>SN</td>
<td>April 1, 2011; Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christer WALLBERG</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer</td>
<td>Tacton IT company</td>
<td></td>
<td>September 27, 2011; Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan EKBERG</td>
<td>Senior Professor</td>
<td>Linnaeus University</td>
<td>Ekberg</td>
<td>September 28, 2011; Växjö</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peo HANSEN</td>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td>Linköping University</td>
<td>Hansen</td>
<td>September 23, 2011; Norrköping</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mikael SPÅNG</td>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td>Malmö University</td>
<td>Spång</td>
<td>March 31, 2011; Malmö</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eskil WADENJSÖ</td>
<td>Senior Professor</td>
<td>Stockholm University</td>
<td>Wadensjö</td>
<td>April 4, 2011; Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monica LINDSTEDT</td>
<td>President of Board of directors</td>
<td>Hemfrid</td>
<td>Home Service Company</td>
<td>September 28, 2011; Stockholm</td>
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