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CARIM-INDIA – DEVELOPING A KNOWLEDGE BASE FOR POLICYMAKING ON INDIA-EU MIGRATION

Co-financed by the European Union

Swedish Case Study Indian Migration and Population in Sweden

Kristina Myrvold

CARIM-India Research Report 2012/06



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Developing a knowledge base for policymaking on India-EU migration

Research Report
Case Study
CARIM-India RR2012/06

Swedish Case Study
Indian Migration and Population in Sweden

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CARIM-India – Developing a knowledge base for policymaking on India-EU migration

This project is co-financed by the European Union and carried out by the EUI in partnership with the Indian Council of Overseas Employment, (ICOE), the Indian Institute of Management Bangalore Association, (IIMB), and Maastricht University (Faculty of Law).

The proposed action is aimed at consolidating a constructive dialogue between the EU and India on migration covering all migration-related aspects. The objectives of the proposed action are aimed at:

- Assembling high-level Indian-EU expertise in major disciplines that deal with migration (demography, economics, law, sociology and politics) with a view to building up migration studies in India. This is an inherently international exercise in which experts will use standardised concepts and instruments that allow for aggregation and comparison. These experts will belong to all major disciplines that deal with migration, ranging from demography to law and from economics to sociology and political science.
- Providing the Government of India as well as the European Union, its Member States, the academia and civil society, with:
 1. Reliable, updated and comparative information on migration
 2. In-depth analyses on India-EU highly-skilled and circular migration, but also on low-skilled and irregular migration.
- Making research serve action by connecting experts with both policy-makers and the wider public through respectively policy-oriented research, training courses, and outreach programmes.

These three objectives will be pursued with a view to developing a knowledge base addressed to policy-makers and migration stakeholders in both the EU and India.

Results of the above activities are made available for public consultation through the website of the project: <http://www.india-eu-migration.eu/>

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Abstract

The Indian migration to Sweden began in the twentieth century with students, labour migrants, and asylum seekers settling in the country and children being adopted from India by Swedish parents. In the beginning of the twenty-first century the Indian population in Sweden has increased considerably as an effect of family reunification, natural increase, and an intensified immigration of students and skilled laborers in response to changing immigration policies and internationalization processes of higher education. This case study provides an overview of the migration and the demographic and socio-economic profile of the Indian population in Sweden. As the study illustrates, Indians in contemporary Sweden have diverse migrations histories and constitute a more heterogeneous group of people with different economic, social and cultural backgrounds. While media discourses and perceptions of India have often privilege religion, the Indians in Sweden have used religion and culture as key elements for organizing collective activities and creating representation and visibility in society. In general the Indians have succeeded fairly well in their economic, social and cultural integration into Swedish society, while their political participation has been more restricted..

1. Introduction

The history of contacts between Sweden and India goes back more than 400 years and is essentially an account of commercial interests, voyages of discovery, and missionary activities. When Sweden was the “great power” in Northern Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries a considerable number of Swedish men worked for the Dutch East Indian Company (1602-1798) and participated in trade exchanges and journeys to India, China and Japan.¹ With the creation of the Swedish East Indian Company (1731- 1813) Sweden dispatched several expeditions to India from 1733 onwards with the purpose of establishing factories and trade goods in the present states of Gujarat and Tamil Nadu.² These voyages were driven by economic interests and they created excitement for the “exotic” Orient through numerous travel books and reports on Asian people, cultures and flora and fauna that were written by Swedish academics and adventurers.³ In the nineteenth century, Christian Lutherans engaged in missionary work which generated further interest in India and its people through countless magazines, books and lectures.⁴ The industrialization of Sweden in the late nineteenth century and the emergence of multinational companies based on inventions and technology meant new and larger-scale commercial exchanges between Sweden and India.⁵ After the Second World War and India’s Independence the two countries developed diplomatic relations and in 1951 an Indian Embassy was established in Stockholm. Bilateral exchanges have since then broadened and deepened in a wide range of areas, including commerce, politics, research, development, and culture.⁶ If the Swedish cultural media earlier projected images of India as a country hardened by poverty and social problems, the nation is today associated with information technology and rapid economic growth. A contributing factor to this change in attitudes is contemporary Swedish market interests in India and the substantial presence of a growing and highly-educated Indian immigrant community in Sweden.

¹ It is estimated that around 20,000 Swedish men worked for the Dutch East Indian Company between 1670 and 1720. Nils Matsson, a Swedish employee who worked for the company 1647-1656, wrote a book about his experiences in his travels in Asia, including India (Surat, Dieu), which became a bestseller among aristocrats and intellectuals in seventeenth-century Sweden. Information provided by Jürgen Offermanns who is working on the research project *Buddhism: A Swedish Cultural Heritage* (Swedish Research Council).

² During the first charter (1731-1746) the Swedish East Indian Company was responsible for three expeditions to Bengal. In 1733 the ship Ulrika Eleanora sailed to India with the goal of establishing a factory in Parangipettai (Tamil Nadu). However the expedition proved unsuccessful and the Swedes were defeated by British and French colonizers. During the second charter (1746-1766) the Swedish ship Götha Leijon disembarked in Surat (Gujarat) in the autumn of 1750 and stayed there for five months on the way to Canton. Information provided by Jürgen Offermanns who is working on the research project *Buddhism: A Swedish Cultural Heritage* (Swedish Research Council).

³ Perhaps the most productive writers were the disciples of Carl von Linné (1707-1778) who travelled with expeditions of the Swedish East Indian Company in Asia as priests and surgeons while making observations and collecting samples of plants and natural objects.

⁴ Malin Gregerson, *Fostrande förpliktelse: Representationer av ett missionsuppdrag i Sydindien under 1900-talets första hälft* (Lund, 2010).

⁵ For example, the Ericsson company received its first order for a manual telephone switch from the Indian government in 1903 and opened a sales office in Calcutta. *Ericssonhistory.com*, “India”, available at: <http://ericssonhistory.com/templates/Ericsson/Article.aspx?id=2068&ArticleID=1341&CatID=365&epslanguage=EN>. In the beginning of the nineteenth century, Jönköping and Vulcans Tändsticksfabriksaktiebolag (now Swedish Match) became the world largest producer of matches. The company established five large factories in India and produced religious label designs of match boxes to suit the Indian market. Jones, Ben, “Matchbox Cover Design: The Evolution of and the Influences on the Graphical Design of Matchboxes” (2004), available at: <http://www.protimient.com/MatchBoxLabels.pdf>

⁶ Today there are more than 100 Swedish subsidiaries registered in India and close to 800 companies are involved in import and exports, while about a hundred Indian companies have been established in Sweden. See: *Regeringskansliet*, “India” (November 9, 2011), available at: www.regeringen.se/sb/d/3895; *Confederation of Indian Industry*, “India-Sweden Economic Relations: Forging a Strong Partnership” (New Delhi, 2009).

Historically speaking Sweden was characterized by strong outward migration up to the early 1930s when the net migration rate became positive and more people immigrated to the country than emigrated from it.⁷ Immigration after the Second World War was primarily due to refugee migration and family reunification and, at times, targeted to the needs of the labor market. In the postwar period Swedish industry expanded rapidly and found itself in dire need of workers, which caused a liberal immigration policy and the recruitment of employees abroad, particularly in Southern Europe. In the 1970s Sweden gradually abandoned this policy while refugee status and family reunification became the most recognized causes for immigration. More recently, in 2008, Sweden has again introduced an active policy in favor of labor immigration since the country is facing a new skilled labor gaps in different sectors. As of 2010 approximately 19 percent of the population in Sweden was foreign-born and this number illustrates how the country has gradually been transformed into a nation of immigration.⁸ Regulated by changing immigration policies during the past sixty years the patterns of Indian migration have also been diverse.

Although statistical data for Indians in Sweden is only available from 1968,⁹ other sources indicate that a few individuals of Indian origin visited and lived in the country during the first part of the nineteenth century.¹⁰ From the 1950s a smaller number of skilled Indians from different regions of India arrived as engineers, doctors, university teachers and students and settled primarily in the larger cities and university towns.¹¹ More tangible immigration began in the 1970s when mostly men migrated either directly from India or through neighboring countries (such as Finland, Denmark, Norway, Poland, and Germany). The officially stated reasons for immigration were of different typologies, but the majority appears to have entered the country because of studies and marriage with Scandinavian spouses. Sweden was perhaps not the first choice for many, but a residence permit in the country provided an opportunity to legally stay and work in Europe.

From the 1970s onwards, Sweden also received refugees and asylum seekers who fled political unrest at home. One group in this category were the “twice migrants” of East Africa who had left India during the colonial period to build the Kenya-Uganda railway, but who were later affected by Africanization policies. When Idi Amin in 1972 decided to expel the Asian population from Uganda between 800 and 900 Indians entered Sweden with a refugee status (of whom 100 were quota refugees) and as labor migrants.¹² The majority of the Ugandan Asians were Hindus from Gujarat (80 percent), but the group also included Shia Muslims and Sikhs from the Punjab. During the 1980s and the 1990s many Sikhs who escaped the political turmoil in Punjab and the anti-Sikh riots that followed the assassination of Indira Gandhi came as migrants and asylum seekers.¹³ From the 1990s onwards Sweden also received around 300 “twice-migrant” Indians from Afghanistan who had fled the country

⁷ *Statistiska centralbyrån*, “Folkmängd och befolkningsändringar efter tid och tabelluppgift”, available at: www.scb.se.

⁸ *Statistiska centralbyrån*, “Sveriges befolkning 2010” (March 17, 2011), available at: http://www.scb.se/Pages/PressRelease____310406.aspx.

⁹ Information provided by Inge Göransson at *Statistics Sweden*, September 27, 2011.

¹⁰ One of the earliest accounts of a Punjabi visiting Sweden is given by Prakash Thandon, who writes about his cultural encounter with Swedish people and traditions in the 1930s. Prakash Tandon, *Punjabi Century 1857–1947* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1968).

¹¹ Eva Rosén-Hockersmith, “Hinduer och Hinduism: förnya(n)de tolkningar av den eviga ordningen”, in Daniel Andersson and Åke Sander (eds), *Det mångreligiösa Sverige: ett landskap i förändring* (Lund, 2009).

¹² *Immigrantinstitutet*, “Asiater från Uganda”, available at: <http://www.immi.se/alfa/as.htm>; D. P. Ghai and Y. P. Ghai, *Porträtt av en minoritet: Asiaterna i Östafrika* (Stockholm, 1971); Ulla Lindmark, “Muslimska ugandier i Trollhättan: en studie av islams betydelse vid mötet mellan invandrare och det svenska samhället”, *Nord Nytt* 20 (1984), pp. 15-27; Elizabeth Hole, *Neither Here- Nor There: An Anthropological Study of Gujarati Hindu Women in the Diaspora* (Uppsala, 2005).

¹³ Between 1984 and 2000 a total of 1,083 people sought asylum in Sweden. Even if the regional and religious affiliation of immigrants is not mentioned in statistical data, one can presume that a large proportion of them were Sikhs. *Migrationsverket*, “Asylsökande till Sverige under 1984–2009”, available at: <http://www.migrationsverket.se/download/18.78fcf371269cd4cda980004204/tabs2.pdf>.

because of religious and ethnic persecutions against Hindus and Sikhs during the civil war and, later, under the Taliban regime.¹⁴

Another and often neglected group in discussions on Indian immigration are adopted children. Swedish adoptions of children from India began in the 1960s and reached its peak during the 1970s and 1980s when between 200 and 400 children arrived each year. Within a forty-year period around 7000 children (in the 0-10 year age group) were adopted in India through authorized agencies, this number excludes older children and those who arrived through other means.¹⁵ The number of adoptions has decreased since the 1990s, but India still remains one of the leading areas for adoptions in Asia, alongside China, Korea and Vietnam.

Research on Indians in Sweden has been restricted to studies of particular religious communities and a few migrant groups, while quantitative and qualitative studies on the migration, settlement and integration of the broader Indian population are absent.¹⁶ Perhaps this relative lack of studies comes from the fact that Indians constitute a fairly small immigrant community in the cultural landscape of Sweden and have not particularly attracted public attention. During the first decade of the twenty-first century, however, the Indian population has almost doubled with family reunification, natural increase, and the intensified immigration of students and skilled laborers from all over India. The demographic outlook of the population is consequently changing and is becoming more visible in Swedish society. Today, Indians have established about forty religious and cultural organizations in the country and more than ten of the officially spoken languages in India are to be found in home-language education for children in Swedish schools.¹⁷ This case study provides an overview of the immigration, representation, and integration of Indians in Sweden based on statistical data, reports from governmental bodies, news items in the media, and previous research studies.

2. Demographic Characteristics of the Indian Population

Estimating the Indian population in Sweden is entangled with several methodological problems, considering that Swedish population registers do not measure people by ethnicity or religion.¹⁸ The

¹⁴ As the statistics of immigrants do not specify ethnic and religious belonging, the numbers are based on self-estimates by Afghan Indians. According to these sources, about 50 Sikh and 15 Hindu families from Afghanistan are living in Sweden today.

¹⁵ According to the Swedish Intercountry Adoptions Authority, 6872 children in the age group 0-10 years old were adopted from India through authorized agencies between 1969 and 2008. *MIAinfo*, "Indien", vol. 1 (2009), available at: http://www.mia.eu/publikationer/MIAblad/MIAinfo1_2009/miainfo_012009.pdf. The 2010 statistics indicate that 1457 children and youth up to the age of 21 were adopted from India, although it is uncertain what types of adoptions are referred to. *Statistiska centralbyrån*, "Adopterade barn och ungdomar, antal efter kön, ålder, födelseland och tid"; available at: www.scb.se.

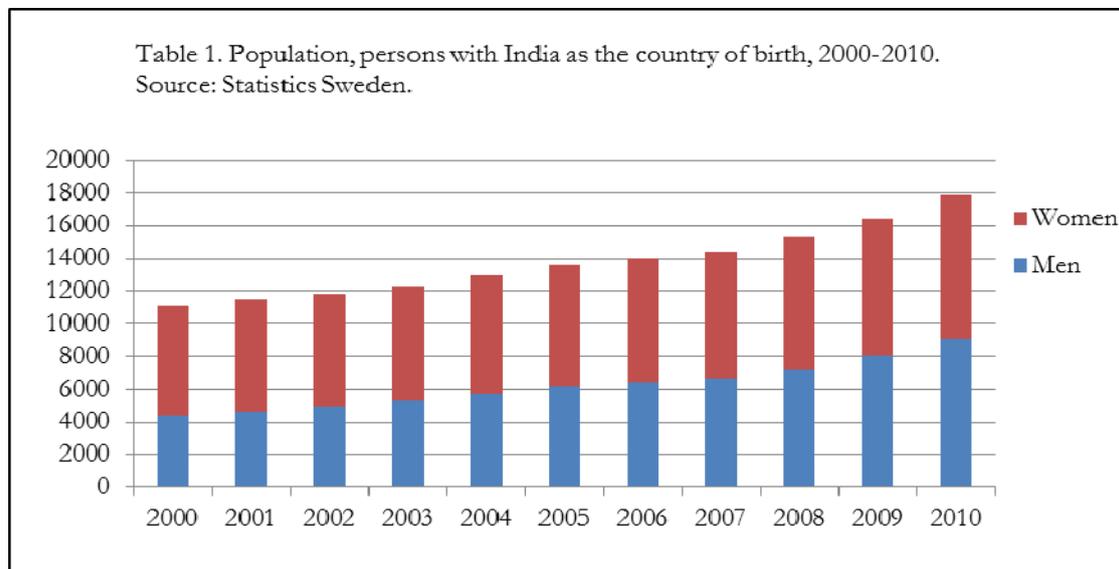
¹⁶ Swedish researchers have paid particularly attention to the Ugandan Asians. See for example: Jonas Alwall, *Muslim Rights and Plights: The Religious Liberty Situation of Minorities in Sweden* (Lund, 1998); Elizabeth Hole, "Ethnicity and Symbolism among Hindu Women in a small Diaspora Community", in T. S. Rukmani (ed.), *Hindu Diaspora: Global Perspectives* (Montreal, 1999); Charles Westin, "The Ugandan Asians in Sweden: Twenty-five Years after the Expulsion", in R. Ballard (ed.), *Ethnicity and Economy: "Race and Class" Revisited* (Gordonville, 2002). The Hindus and the Sikhs have also been studied. See: Kristina Myrvold, "The Swedish Sikhs: Community Building, Representation and Generational Change", in Knut A. Jacobsen and Kristina Myrvold (eds), *Sikhs in Europe: Migration, Identities and Representations* (Farnham, 2011); Eva Rosén-Hockersmith, "Hinduer och hinduism: förnya(n)de tolkningar av den eviga ordningen", in Daniel Andersson and Åke Sander (eds.), *Det mångreligiösa Sverige: ett landskap i förändring* (Lund, 2009).

¹⁷ These languages are (in alphabetical order): Bengali, Bihari, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Marathi, Malayalam, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu. *Statistiska Centralbyrån*, "Elever med annat modersmål än svenska/Sv2 i samtl. skolor (alla huvudmän)", available at: www.scb.se.

¹⁸ Sweden has not registered people by religion since the 1930s because it was considered to be at odds with the constitutional freedom of religion. The Personal Data Act (1998:204) prohibits processes of personal data that reveal ethnic origin and religious belonging. *Statistiska centralbyrån*, "Meddelanden i samordningsfrågor för Sveriges officiella statistik", available at: <http://www.scb.se/Statistik/LE/LE0101/2007A01/X11OP0203.pdf>.

available constructs to approximate the size of an immigrant population is by country of birth and citizenship, while immigrants arriving each year are registered by country of emigration. In 2010 the number of Indian-born individuals recorded for Sweden amounted to 17,863 individuals (see table 1), which was the highest figure ever registered for Indians. The statistics further indicate that within a ten-year period, between 2000 and 2010, the population of Indian origin has increased by 61 percent. In addition, Sweden has a growing second and second-point-five generation with children of Indian origin as well as inter-ethnic families. As of 2010, there were 2,109 Sweden-born persons with both parents from India and 5,592 persons with one Indian and one Swedish parent.¹⁹ Registration also included over 700 persons who either have an Indian father or mother with the second parent from a country other than Sweden.²⁰ The Indian population, including the first generation born in India and their children, thus comprises more than 25,000 individuals. However, these numbers should be treated with caution, since migrants who are ethnically Indians, but who have other national backgrounds are excluded from the statistics. For example, one group that is omitted from the data are the “twice migrants” who were born and emigrated from Uganda, Afghanistan and other countries in Europe and outside the EU/EEA. Although there is no reliable data to calculate how large this group is, a rough estimate points to between one and two thousand individuals who have immigrated during the past forty years.

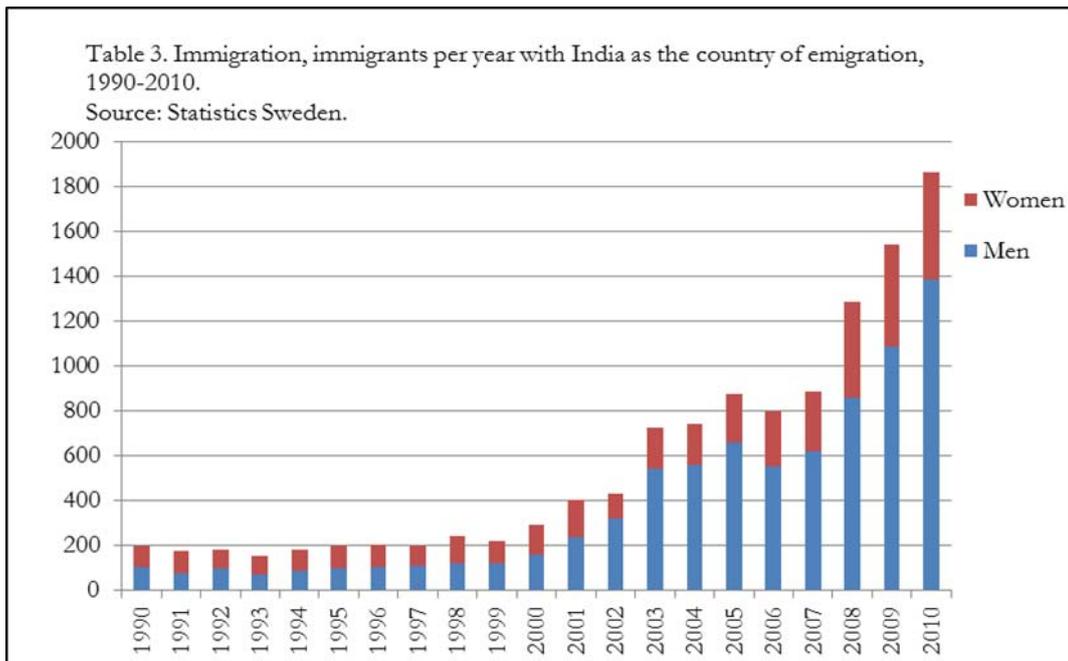
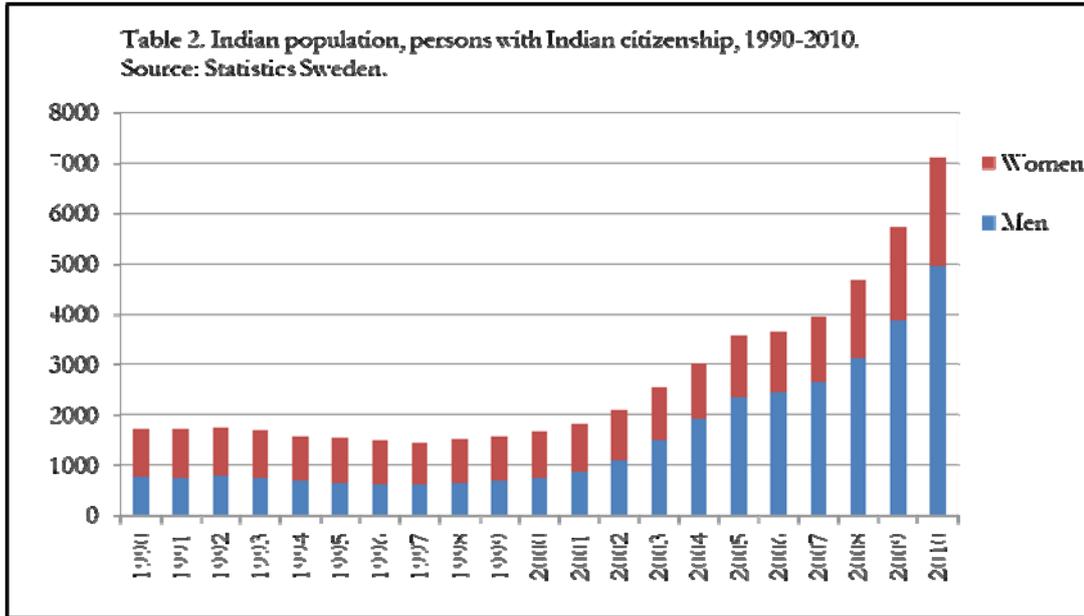
The population with Indian citizenship residing in Sweden grew slowly from the 1970s and was quite stable at the end of the twentieth century, never exceeding 1750 persons. One explanation for the seemingly low figures in the historical data on Indian citizens, in comparison with the statistics on persons born in India, can be found in the composition and integration strategies of migrants. A large proportion of the Indian population today is made up of adopted children who were registered as Indian citizens when they arrived in Sweden, but who later gained Swedish citizenship and who were consequently omitted from the statistics of Indian nationals.²¹ Another explanation is the common tendency among adult migrants with permanent residence permits become Swedish citizens for the purpose of improving work and travel opportunities in Scandinavia and Europe. The twenty first century, however, brought about a drastic change with Indian citizens increasing from 1678 persons in 2000 to 7115 persons in 2010 (see table 2).



¹⁹ Of the 5592 persons born in Sweden with one Indian parent, 2077 persons had an Indian father and 3515 persons had an Indian mother.

²⁰ *Statistiska centralbyrån*, “Utrikes födda samt födda i Sverige med en eller två utrikes födda föräldrar efter födelseland/ursprungsland, 31 december 2010, totalt”, available at: www.scb.se. The total number of persons with one parent from India and the other from another country is not specified.

²¹ A child adopted from India needs a residence permit before leaving the country. If younger than 12 years of age the child will, after his or her arrival in Sweden, get Swedish citizenship by a formal decision of adoption taken by the district court.



Immigration statistics similarly shows a general increase in Indians entering Sweden annually in the past ten years. The historical data on immigrants with India as the country of emigration indicates that direct migration during the twentieth century was not very intense, but rather that it followed a fairly stable pattern with between 150 and 200 individuals arriving each year. A turning point came at the beginning of the twenty-first century when the Indian immigrant community began to multiply (see table 3). For ten years the number of Indian immigrants arriving and being registered by country of birth, citizenship, and country of emigration increased significantly (see table 4). While 458 Indian-born persons arrived in 2000, almost five times as many, 2206 persons, immigrated in 2010, and a high proportion of them were Indian citizens migrating directly from India. This rise in immigration can be viewed as a direct response to changing immigration policies, as well as the internationalization of

Swedish higher education. Over the past decade, university studies and skilled jobs have undoubtedly been the foremost causes in attracting a more mobile and floating Indian population to Sweden.

Table 4. - Source: Statistics Sweden.

Year	Immigrants <i>per year</i> with India as country of birth		Immigrants <i>per year</i> with Indian citizenship		Immigrants <i>per year</i> with India as country of emigration	
	Total number	Yearly increase	Total number	Yearly increase	Total number	Yearly increase
2000	458		369		290	
2001	509	+ 11 %	428	+ 16 %	401	+ 38 %
2002	604	+ 19 %	556	+ 30 %	432	+ 8 %
2003	810	+ 34 %	756	+ 36 %	723	+ 67 %
2004	887	+ 10 %	834	+ 10 %	742	+ 3 %
2005	1131	+ 27 %	1077	+ 29 %	875	+ 18 %
2006	1108	- 2 %	1024	- 5 %	795	- 9 %
2007	1204	+ 9 %	1146	+ 12 %	887	+ 12 %
2008	1629	+ 35 %	1548	+ 35 %	1283	+ 45 %
2009	1854	+ 14 %	1792	+ 16 %	1539	+ 20 %
2010	2206	+ 19 %	2150	+ 20 %	1863	+ 21 %

Gender distribution

Looking at gender distribution among Indian migrants and citizens in a historical perspective, the proportion of men was somewhat higher in the 1970s, whereas the percentage of women was slightly higher in the 1980s and the 1990s (see table 1 and 2). A reason for these variations is the gendered character of some migrant groups. For example, a salient group in the statistics of Indian citizens during the 1970s were girls in the youngest age groups (0-6 years), many of whom were presumably adopted by Swedish families.²² Since the beginning of Swedish adoptions from India, there have generally been more girls than boys and consequently there are more Indian females in the statistics. Although adoptions have decreased in the past twenty years, the preference for young girls remains.²³ In the period 1998 to 2010, for example, on average 74 percent of adopted Indian children granted residence permits in Sweden were girls.²⁴

Early adult migration appears to have followed a traditional model in gender terms and was made up of a higher proportion of young and middle-aged males.²⁵ In the period 1975 to 1979, for example, men constituted on average 71 percent of adult Indian citizens in the age groups with the largest

²² *Statistiska centralbyrån*, "Utländska medborgare i riket efter medborgarskapsland, ålder och kön. År 1973-2010", available at: www.scb.se.

²³ One reason for this gender preference is that more girls in India have been abandoned or given away for adoption by consent of their biological parents and are consequently available for adoption. MIAinfo, "Indien", vol. 1 (2009), available at: http://www.mia.eu/publikationer/MIAblad/MIAinfo1_2009/miainfo_012009.pdf.

²⁴ *Migrationsverket*, "Beviljade tillstånd till indier", pivot table provided by Mattias Thuresson, October 17, 2011.

²⁵ Gender parity was more common among the early Indian refugees from Uganda, as they tended to arrive in families, but these groups were not included in the data on Indians.

population (20-44 years).²⁶ As Sweden abandoned its liberal labor immigration policy in the 1970s and as it became almost impossible to immigrate for work,²⁷ one strategy was to arrive on short-term visas and gain permanent residents by entering real or *pro forma* marriages or partnerships with Scandinavian spouses. After having secured a legal status in the country, some separated from their spouses and initiated a second migration phase by marrying Indian women. Marriage migration and family reunion have certainly included both Indian males and females over time, but statistical data suggest that the male-led migration transformed and came to include a larger number of adult women in the 1980s. This, in turn, created a slightly higher representation of Indian-born women, something that remained until the end of the century.

Table 5. Gender distribution among Indians in Sweden

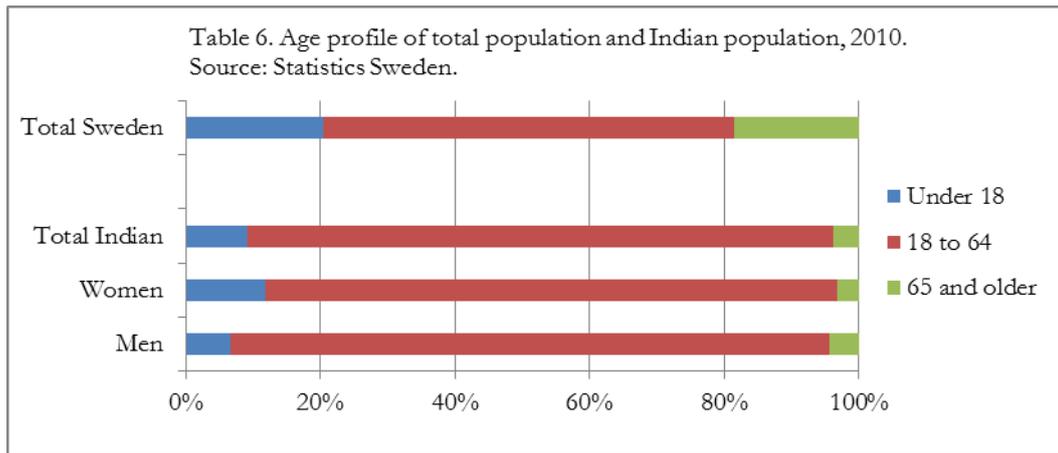
	2000		2010	
Population	Men	Women	Men	Women
India as country of birth	4436 (39,9%)	6674 (60,1%)	9101 (50,9%)	8762 (49,1%)
Indian citizenship	742 (44,2%)	936 (55,8%)	4952 (69,6%)	2163 (30,4 %)
Immigration (immigrants per year)	Men	Women	Men	Women
India as country of birth	217 (47,4%)	241 (52,6%)	1573 (71,3%)	633 (28,7%)
Indian citizenship	179 (48,5%)	190 (51,5%)	1548 (72,0%)	602 (28,0%)
India as country of emigration	156 (53,8%)	134 (46,2%)	1385 (74,3%)	478 (25,7%)

Source: Statistics Sweden.

The larger-scale labor and student migration of recent years has altered the gender composition of the Indian community in Sweden. As of 2000, 39.9 percent of the Indian-born population were men while the majority, 60.1 percent, were women. Ten years later males made up 50.9 percent of all Indian-born persons and females 49.1 percent (see table 5). The gender distribution among Indian immigrants shows that migration opportunities in the past years have generally attracted men. If about half of the Indian immigrants were men in 2000, they constituted more than 70 percent in 2010. However, since the population statistics displayed a surplus of Indian women by the end of the twentieth century, mainly due to family reunification, marriage migration and the high incidence of adopted girls, the increase of male migrants in the past ten years has created a relatively balanced gender distribution in the total Indian-born population.

²⁶ Statistiska centralbyrån, "Utländska medborgare Utländska medborgare i riket efter medborgarskapsland, ålder och kön. År 1973-2010", available at: www.scb.se.

²⁷ It is perhaps indicative that during a 25-year period (1986-2010) only 519 persons with Indian citizenship obtained permanent residence permits because of work and most of these permits were granted in the 2000s. *Migrationsverket*, "Beviljade uppehållstillstånd av arbetsmarknadsskäl efter medborgarskap 1986-2010", available at: <http://www.migrationsverket.se/download/18.78fcf371269cd4cda980004207/tabs5.pdf>.



Age profile

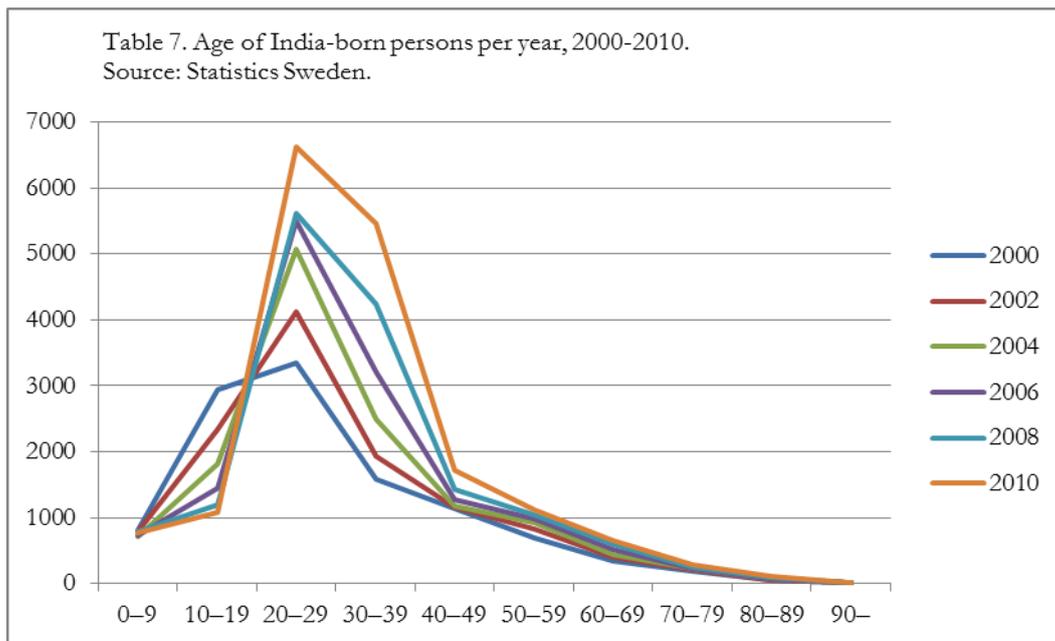
The age profile of the Indian-born population is younger than the national average, partly because Indians constitute a fairly young community in Sweden with early migrants still of working age. They are also younger though because those who have arrived in recent years are young adults. As of 2010, 20.4 percent of the total population in Sweden was between 0 and 17 years, 61.2 percent between 18 and 64 years, and 18.5 percent 65 years and older.²⁸ The proportion of elderly people in the total population has generally grown since life expectancy has increased and the fertility rate is low.²⁹ In comparison, 9.2 percent of the Indian-born persons were between 0 and 17 years and 87.0 percent between 18 and 64 years, while only 3.8 percent were 65 years or older and in retirement age (see table 6).³⁰ The high representation of Indians in the 18 to 64 age group seems to correspond with the increasing immigration of university students and young workers from India. A graph of the age profile of Indian-born persons during a ten-year period illustrates the domination of young adults between 20 and 29 years of age (see table 7). It is again important to note that second and third generation Indians born in Sweden are not covered in these statistics and would, if they were included, further increase the representation of children and young adults. Over the period, the age bracket curve has also shifted to the right as the Indian population grows older. A demographic analysis from Statistics Sweden has suggested that the average length of life among Indians residing in Sweden is expected to increase by 11.0 years for women and 12.7 years for men compared to life expectancy in their home country.³¹ In the next ten years around one thousand Indian-born persons will reach retirement age and, provided that they choose to remain, one can thus expect an aging Indian population in Sweden.

²⁸ Statistiska centralbyrån, "Sveriges befolkning 31 december 2010", available at: www.scb.se/Statistik/BE/BE0101/.../Be0101KomJmfBef_2010.xls.

²⁹ The fertility rate in the total population has been under reproduction level: 1.55 children per women in 2000 and 1.99 in 2010. Within the Indian population in Sweden the rate is even lower: 1.16 in 2000 and 1.68 in 2010. Information provided by Lotta Persson, *Sweden Statistics*, September 29, 2011.

³⁰ Statistiska centralbyrån, "Foreign population by country of birth, gender and age, 2000-2010", available at www.scb.se.

³¹ Åke Nilsson, "Långt liv i Sverige", *Välfärd* Vol. 4 (2004), available at: http://www.scb.se/Statistik/AA/BE0801/2004K03/BE0801_2004K03_TI_09_A05ST0403.pdf.



Spatial distribution

Following a common pattern among the total foreign-born population in Sweden, Indians have mainly chosen urban settlement and tend to reside in the larger cities of Stockholm, Gothenburg, Malmö and their suburban areas. The early skilled labor migrants and students also settled in university towns, such as Uppsala and Lund. A large part of the early Gujarati and Punjabi refugees and labor migrants from East Africa established themselves in the smaller towns of Mariestad, Trollhättan, Jönköping and Borås in western Sweden where many got jobs for industrial companies. More recently, Indian asylum seekers from Afghanistan have spent time in temporary accommodations adjacent to governmental reception centers in Mid-Sweden and then continued to the capital. The new student and labor migration have, in the past ten years, created a new presence of Indians in the Swedish geography. Today both temporary and permanent Indian residents can be found in almost every university town and in most urban areas all over the country.³² The settlement and spatial distribution of the Indian population in Sweden has consequently not been restricted to particular parts of Sweden, but, rather, it is more dispersed depending upon the migrants' status, reasons for immigration, personal resources, kinship network, education and work opportunities in relation to national integration policies and developments in the labor and housing markets. As a consequence, the social distance between Indians, other immigrant groups and native Swedes has, at many places, been very small and has increased their possibilities for integration.

3. Socio-Economic Profile

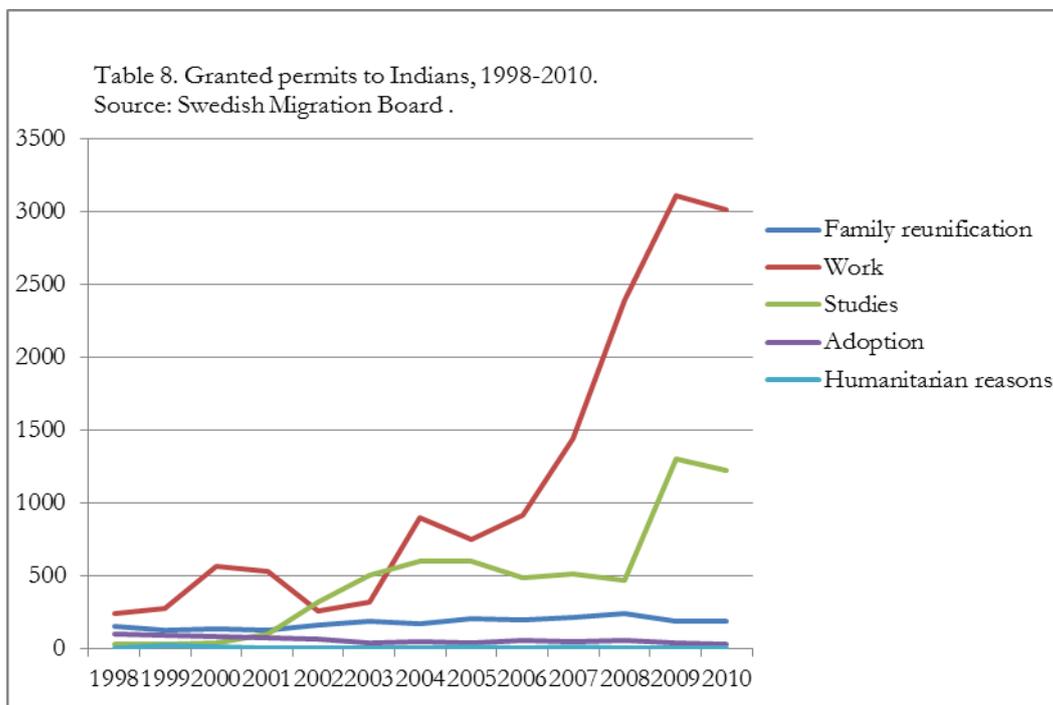
Given their diverse migration histories, Indians in contemporary Sweden constitute a more heterogeneous group of people with different economic, social and cultural backgrounds, and making generalizations become increasingly difficult. At the present there is also a paucity of studies that closely examine the various migrant groups within the Indian community. However, a starting point for identifying current immigration trends and the most predominant migrant groups is to examine the data on residence permits that have been granted to Indians. Statistics from the Swedish Migration Board confirm escalating labor and student migration in the past decade. From 1998 to 2010 24,034 residence permits were granted to Indians and a majority 61.2 percent (14,705 persons), were for work

³² An urban area is by the definition of Statistics Sweden a city or town with more than 20000 inhabitants.

and 25.8 percent (6,200), for studies.³³ Family reunification made up 9.6 percent (2,307) of all permits granted, while 3.1 percent (747) were for adoptions and only 0.3 percent (75) for humanitarian reasons (see table 8).³⁴

Labor migrants and students

Intensified labor immigration means India is now the country from which most skilled labor migrants in Sweden originate.³⁵ The number of Indians arriving for work was already on the rise when the new rules for labor immigration came into force in 2008, and continued to grow after recruitments from third countries were made easier. The newcomers with employment contracts apparently originate from various regions in India, but share a common profile as highly-educated and highly-skilled laborers in particular professions. Reports from the Swedish Migration Board in the past years disclose that most are computer specialists, engineers, architects, and technicians working for Swedish industry or Indian companies with branches in Sweden, primarily in IT, telecommunications and medical technology.³⁶



As the second largest immigrant group, Indian students made their way to Swedish universities especially after a new reform of higher education came into force in 2007 and the Swedish educational system was restructured in line with the Bologna process. Between 2001/2002 and 2009/2010 a total number of 7,870 students from India, primarily free movers but also exchange students, were

³³ If Indian students with citizenship in other EU countries are included, the figures are likely to be higher as they only need a valid passport or identity card which states the person’s citizenship to enter the country and they do not always apply for residence permit. *Högskoleverket*, Anders Wiberg ”Statistisk analys”, available at: <http://www.hsv.se/download/18.d4c7e6a128941e891580006316/inresande-studenter2010-6.pdf>.

³⁴ Humanitarian reasons refer to people who because of illness, disability or other personal circumstances are granted residence permit.

³⁵ *Migrationsverket*, “Allt fler arbetskraftsinvandrare till Sverige” (July 1, 2011), available at: <http://www.migrationsverket.se/info/4287.html>.

³⁶ See the annual reports of the Swedish Migration Board between 2005 and 2010, which are available at www.migrationsverket.se.

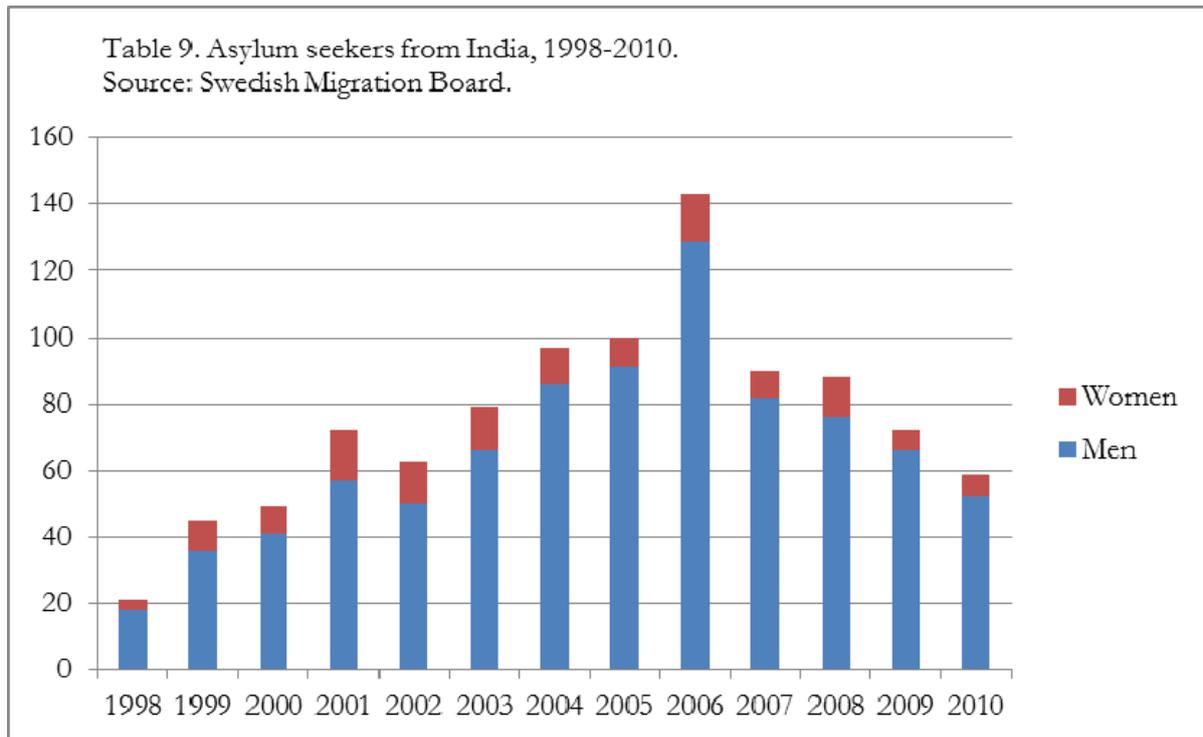
registered for educational programs at thirty Swedish universities. The most popular universities among Indian learners are those which provide master programs in natural sciences and technology. During 2001-2010, for example, Blekinge Institute of Technology alone attracted 1244 students from India because of its specialization in Computer Science, Informatics and Engineering and established programs with IT universities in India.³⁷ According to surveys conducted by the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education, Asian students consider studies in Sweden as a career strategy for job opportunities in the EU and regard the availability of appropriate free education taught in English as the most decisive factor in their choice.³⁸ The number of Indians students is, however, expected to decrease in the coming years, since Sweden has introduced tuition fees for free movers outside the EU/EAA from fall 2011.

It is clear that males in younger age groups have benefited from the new mobility of students and laborers. In 2010, 83.6 percent of all Indians with a student visa and 65.4 percent of those granted work permits were men. The figures also suggest that at least one third of Indian labor migrants entering the country were females. But a closer look at the data on first time work permits granted in 2010 reveals that only 14.2 percent of employees were females, coming to Sweden for their own careers. Most Indian women with work permits, 65.9 percent, were, instead, relatives accompanying family members, presumably their men.³⁹ As a comparison, gender composition among Indians immigrating for family reunification has been biased, in a modest fashion, towards women. From 2000 to 2010 women constituted 53.0 percent of all granted permits for family reunion.

³⁷ Other universities that have received Indian students during the period 2001-2010 include The Royal Institute of Technology (830 students), Linköping University (664 students), University of Skövde (651 students) and Chalmers' University of Technology (586 students). *Högskoleverket*, "Antal inresande utbytesstudenter och free movers", available at: www.hsv.se/download/18.../Inresande_per_hogskola_200910.xls.

³⁸ *Högskoleverket*. "Utländska studenter i Sverige" (2008), available at: <http://www.hsv.se/download/18.4103c723118f5a4ec8f8000403/0807R.pdf>. In a survey of 2000/2011, 14 percent of the respondents were Indians. *Högskoleverket*, "Internationella Utblickar" (2011), available at: <http://www.hsv.se/download/18.27d86368130216405a680002872/internationell-utblick2011-2-inresande-studenter.pdf>.

³⁹ The Swedish Migration Board, "Årsredovisning 2010", available at: http://www.migrationsverket.se/download/18.46b604a812cbcd7dba800023153/%C3%85rsredovisning_2010.pdf.



Irregular migrants

The knowledge of Indian irregular migrants in Sweden is very limited. There is no reliable data on this migrant group, but only estimates based on how many asylum seekers are reported missing after having absconded during detention periods or when claims for asylum have been denied. Prognoses from the Swedish Migration Board and migration experts have suggested a general increase in asylum seekers, but Indians are not mentioned in these discussions.⁴⁰ According to the Swedish border police, illegal immigration among Indian nationals is virtually non-existent, just as Indians are not represented among those irregular migrants hiding in the country, in part, because recent labor immigration policies have opened new means to legally enter the country.⁴¹

The statistics of decisions taken by the Swedish Migration Board in asylum cases between 1998 and 2010 reveal that the number of Indian asylum seekers increased at the beginning of the twenty-first century, from 49 persons in 2000 to 143 persons in 2006, but that it has since then been on decline (see table 9). Most of the applicants for asylum during this period were men (on average 86 percent) who came directly from India. What is characteristic of their asylum processes is a low approval rate and a high degree of cases that are rejected or written off, either because the applicants have absconded or because they have withdrawn their applications.⁴² For those who have managed to escape detention after illegal entry, Sweden seems to have functioned mainly as an entrance into the

⁴⁰ See for example, *Migrationsverket*, "Verksamhets- och kostnadsprognos 2010-02-25", available at: http://www.migrationsverket.se/download/18.78fcf371269cd4cda980001931/Prognos_20100225.pdf; Dominika Borg and Robert Nilsson, *Människosmuggling: Om offer, förövare och allmän begreppsförvirring* (Uppsala, 2005).

⁴¹ Interview with Håkan Andersson, *Gränspolisens*, September 16, 2011.

⁴² In the period 2008 to 2010 between 0-5 percent of cases were approved, while 57-74 percent were rejected and 23-38 percent were written off. *Migrationsverket*, "Avgjorda asylärenden 2008", available at: <http://www.migrationsverket.se/download/18.56e4f4801246221d25680001065/Avgjorda+asyl%C3%A4renden+2008.pdf>; *Migrationsverket*, "Avgjorda asylärenden 2009", available at: <http://www.migrationsverket.se/download/18.57c92aec130eb7a09cf800014797/Avgjorda+asyl%C3%A4renden+hel%C3%A5ret++2009.pdf>; *Migrationsverket*, "Avgjorda asylärenden 2010", available at: <http://www.migrationsverket.se/download/18.57c92aec130eb7a09cf800014800/Avgjorda+asyl%C3%A4renden+2010+-+Asylum+decisions+2010.pdf>.

EU and as a transit to other and more popular destinations in Europe, while only a small number has remained in the country. A few cases of human smuggling have been revealed in the past years and these seem to have been responsible for the temporary upsurge in Indian asylum seekers in the early 2000s.⁴³ However, it is important to note that these cases are exceptions in a broader perspective and most of the Indians residing in Sweden today have arrived by legal means.⁴⁴

Table 10. Educational level of immigrants with India as the country of emigration, age 16 to 74.

Year	Immigrants in numbers	Primary education	Secondary education	Tertiary education less than 3 years	Tertiary education 3 or more years	Post graduate studies	Data not available
2010							
Men	1357	1,5 %	1,4 %	4,5 %	15,5 %	0,8 %	76,3 %
Women	455	1,3 %	2,0 %	8,8 %	22,0 %	0,4 %	65,5 %
Total	1812	1,4 %	1,6 %	5,6 %	17,1 %	0,7 %	73,6 %
2000							
Men	134	5,2 %	9,7 %	8,2 %	36,6 %	10,4 %	29,9 %
Women	116	12,1 %	11,2 %	12,1 %	31,0 %	7,8 %	25,8 %
Total	250	8,4 %	10,4 %	10,0 %	34,0 %	9,2 %	28,0 %
1990							
Men	100	32,0 %	25,0 %	3,0 %	20,0 %	3,0 %	17,0 %
Women	90	25,6 %	10,0 %	10,0 %	22,2 %	6,6 %	25,6 %
Total	190	28,9 %	17,9 %	6,3 %	21,1 %	4,7 %	21,1 %

Source: Statistics Sweden.

Educational profile

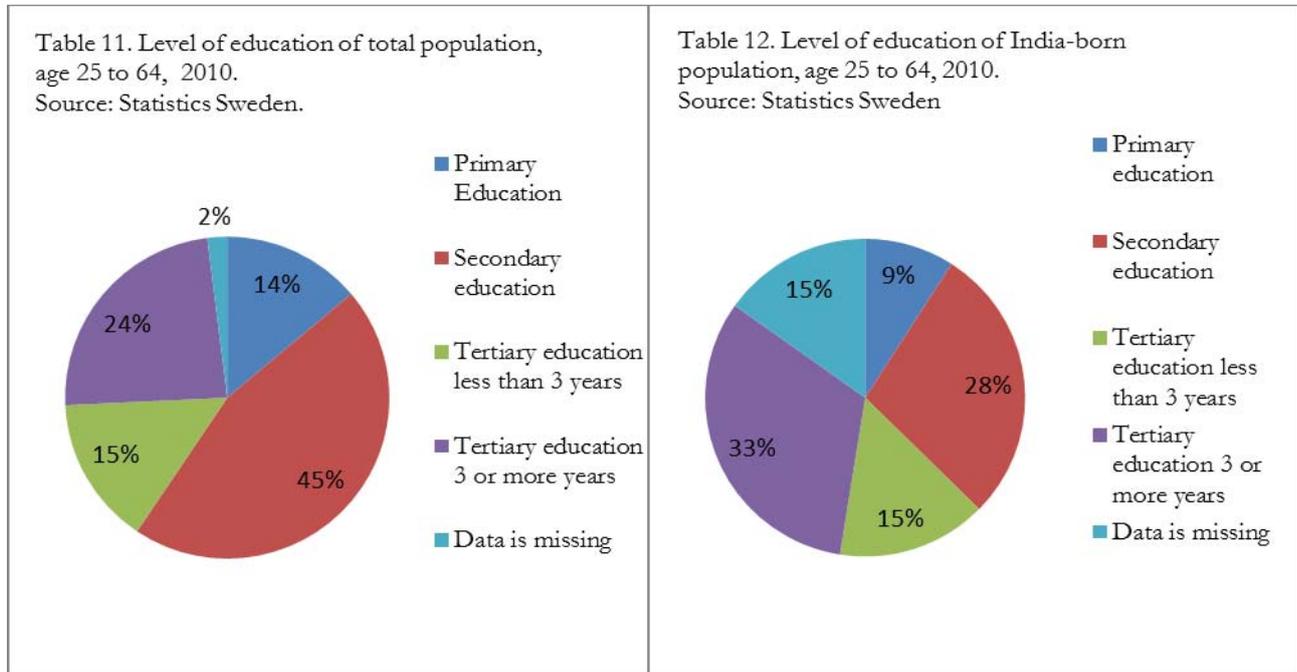
Student and labor immigration in recent years has certainly transformed the educational profile of Indians in Sweden. If the educational level was generally low among migrants from India in the 1980s and the 1990s, a large number of contemporary migrants have already completed tertiary education before they arrive in Sweden or emigrate for the purpose of gaining educational qualifications in the country. According to the statistics for immigrants from India between 16 and 74 years of age, almost half of all men and women who emigrated in 1990 had primary and secondary education, while ten years later nearly half had tertiary education (see table 10). In 2010 the data for about three quarters of the immigrants from India were missing and the reason for this was simply that their educational backgrounds were not registered or that they lacked formal education.⁴⁵ The population register, on

⁴³ In the summer 2006, for example, around 70 Indians arrived and sought asylum in Stockholm, but, shortly after, half of them disappeared from the center at which they had been taken into detention. Later the police revealed that a few Swedish-based persons with far-reaching networks had participated in operations for smuggling irregular migrants to countries within the Schengen zone between 2006 and 2008. See for example; Stockholm TT, "Ny migrationsvåg överraskar polisen", *Svenska Dagbladet* (June 30, 2006); Christina Wahlden, "16 indiska asylsökande tonårspojkar försvunna", *Svenska Dagbladet* (October 14, 2006); Paul O'Mahony, "Four years in jail for Indian smuggling ring", *The Local* (January 21, 2010); Mikael Hellmyrs, "Människosmugglare dömda", *Aftonbladet* (January 21, 2010); Staffan Olsson, "Flyktingar säger sig blivit kidnappade", *Svenska Dagbladet* (August, 16, 2006).

⁴⁴ Even if the new rules for labor immigration allows asylum seekers to apply for work permits while remaining in the country, there is no indication that Indians have taken up this option. *Migrationsverket*, "Arbetskraftsinvandringen i siffror - ansökningar om arbetstillstånd från före detta asylsökande" (November 27, 2009), available at: <http://www.migrationsverket.se/download/18.328c487f1254a87392180001706/atforasylsokande.pdf>; *Migrationsverket*, "Ett år med nya regler för arbetskraftsinvandring" (2009), available at: <http://www.migrationsverket.se/download/18.328c487f1254a87392180003410/ettarmednyareglerforAT.pdf>.

⁴⁵ As Kenny Pettersson at *Statistics Sweden* explained, the important reason for obtaining data about education is that people have been educated within Sweden.

the contrary, shows that Indian-born persons residing temporarily or permanently in Sweden have invested considerably in higher education, even more than the national average. While 39 percent of the total population in the age group between 25 and 64 had pursued higher education in 2010, 48 percent of the Indian-born population had tertiary-level education (see table 11 and 12). The statistics further indicate gender parity with as many Indian women as men (48 percent each) with university-level education. In comparison to other South Asian migrant groups the figures suggest that Indians in Sweden have been quite successful at encouraging both sexes to undertake higher education.⁴⁶



Labor force participation

What also appears to set the Indians apart from many other migrant groups in Sweden is their active labor force participation. Apart from the skilled and highly-skilled computer specialists, architects and engineers who are working for Swedish and Indian companies in Sweden, the Indian population in general seems to have managed well in terms of employability and entrepreneurship.⁴⁷ A survey that was conducted in 2009 among 182 Indians of Punjabi origin indicated that a high proportion of the respondents in all age groups (above 16 years) were engaged in study or work in the private and public sector. In this sample 46 percent of the respondents were employed and 13 percent were running their own business, while 18 percent were occupied with university studies or adult education.⁴⁸ Only 7

⁴⁶ The statistics of persons born in Pakistan show that 61 percent of the men and 41 percent of the women have pursued university studies, while 55 percent of Bangladesh-born men and 42 percent of the women have higher education. Of the persons born in Sri Lanka most men (48 percent) and women (45 percent) have pursued education until upper secondary school. *Statistiska centralbyrån*, "Befolkningens utbildning 2010", available at: http://www.scb.se/Statistik/UF/UF0506/2010A01B/UF0506_2010A01B_SM_UF37SM1101.pdf.

⁴⁷ One of the famous Indians in Sweden is Bicky Chakraborty who arrived from Kolkata as a student and is now a successful entrepreneur. He is the owner of budget hotels and pubs and one of the richest men in Scandinavia. Sujata Dutta Sachdeva, *India-Sweden in Focus* (Stockholm, 2009), p.28.

⁴⁸ The remaining respondents of the survey stated that they were on maternity or paternity leave (1 percent) or that they had retired (7 percent), while a group chose not to state occupation (7 percent). Kristina Myrvold, "The Swedish Sikhs: Migration, Representation and Generational Change", in Knut A. Jacobsen and Kristina Myrvold (eds), *Sikhs in Europe: Migration, Identities and Representations* (Farnham, Surrey, 2011).

percent stated that they were in search of jobs and thus the employment rate for the respondents was lower than the national average in 2009, namely 9 percent. The occupations specified in the responses of this survey, as well as in the national professional register on the Asia-born population suggest that Indians are engaged in both skilled and unskilled work in a wide range of sectors, including health and social care, education, finance and administration, sales and marketing, hotel and restaurant, industrial manufacturing, and transportation.⁴⁹ Though many new immigrants are skilled expatriates with temporary employments in particular occupational sectors, the larger part of the Indian population has divergent educational and economic backgrounds and appears to have successfully integrated into the broader Swedish labor market.

Table 13. Distribution of the total number of marriages and divorces in the Indian-born population, 1978-2010.

Type of marriages	Marriages in percent	Divorces in percent
Indian-born men married to Indian-born women	21,4 %	22,3 %
Indian-born men married to Sweden-born women	21,4 %	32,2 %
Indian-born women married to Sweden-born men	39,7 %	21,8 %
Indian-born men married to partners born in other countries	9,8 %	15,8 %
Indian-born women married to partners born in other countries	7,7 %	7,9 %

Source: Statistics Sweden.

Marriage and divorce patterns

The marriage patterns of the Indian population in Sweden display a high frequency of transnational and mixed marriages, but also a high rate of divorces. Between 1978 and 2010, 3127 Indian women and men were registered for marriage in Sweden.⁵⁰ More than one fifth of these marriages, 21.4 percent, were endogamous with both the wives and the husbands originating from India (see table 13). What is interesting here is the high level of intermarriage or exogamy defined by country of birth. Of all registered marriages for the Indian-born population during the period, 39.7 percent of women and 21.4 percent of men married Swedish-born spouses. A smaller proportion, 7.7 percent of women and 9.8 percent of men, entered marriages with partners born in countries other than Sweden. The data on divorces further suggests that 45.9 percent of all marriages involving Indian-born persons between 1978 and 2010 ended in separation. The distribution of divorces suggests a high frequency of separations in endogamous marriages in which both spouses originate from India, 22.3 percent, and among Indian men and women marrying Swedish-born partners, 32.2 percent and 21.8 percent respectively. The data on Indian marriage and divorce patterns, however, needs to be understood in view of gendered strategies of migration and transnationally arranged marriages.

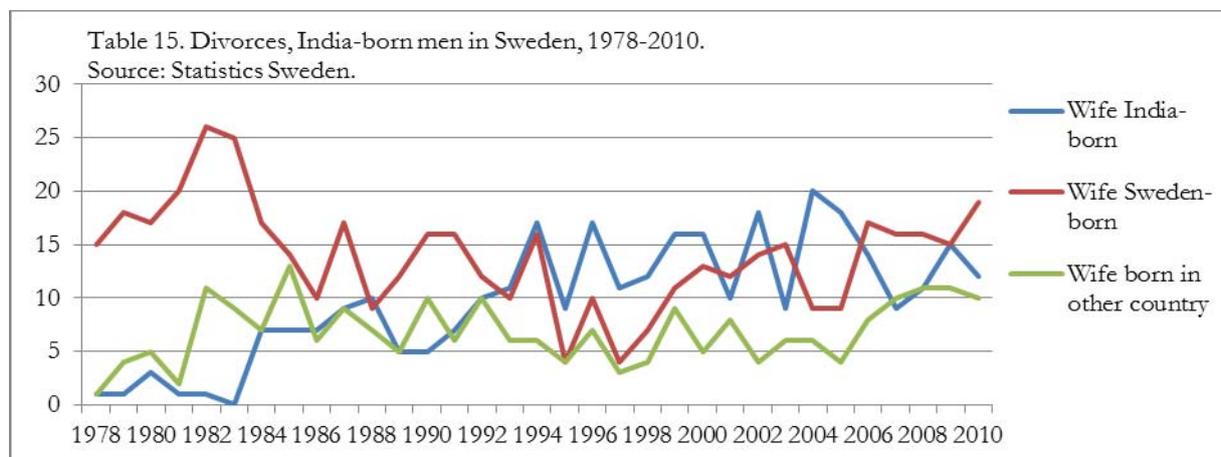
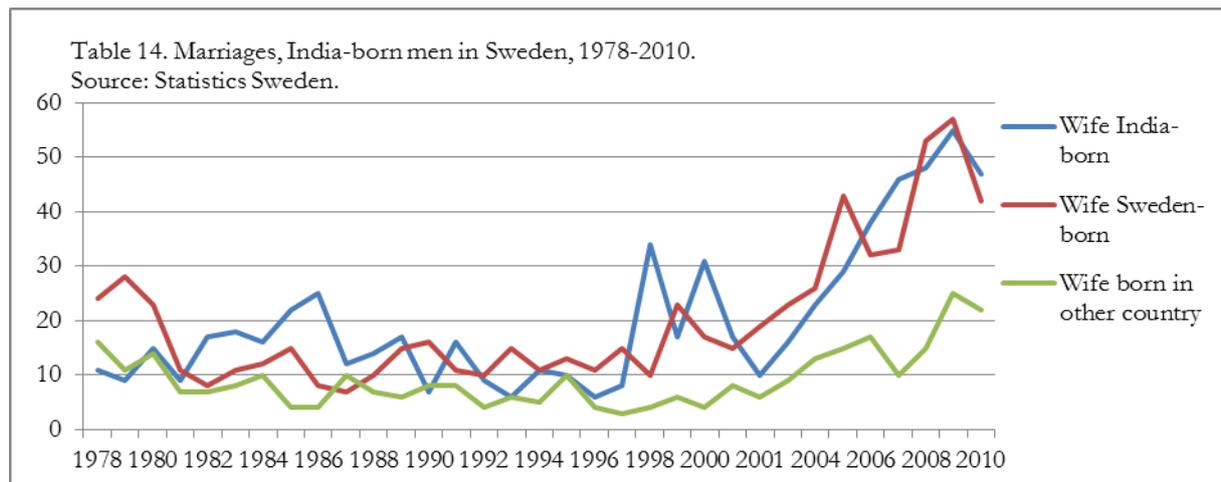
A graph of all registered marriages entered into by Indian-born men shows that they have married more extensively and over a greater range than Indian women during the twentieth century (see table 14). At the end of the 1970s most Indian-born men married spouses from Sweden and other countries and from the early 1980s began to marry with Indian-born women. In the last decade, the number of men marrying women from India and Sweden has been on the rise, even if the statistics do not specify

⁴⁹ *Statistiska centralbyrån*, "Anställda 16-64 år i riket efter yrke (SSYK4), födelseregion och kön. År 2005-2009", available at: www.ssd.seb.se.

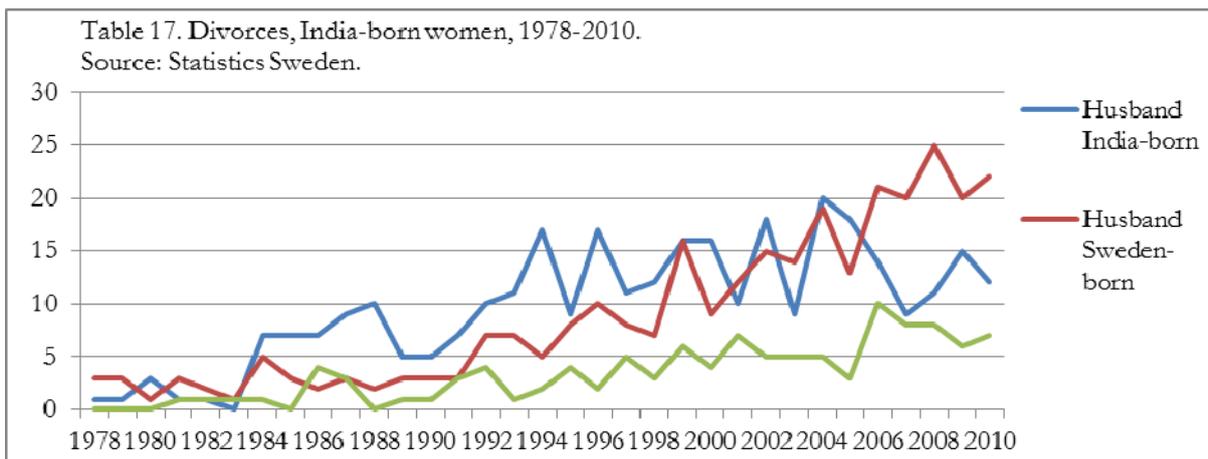
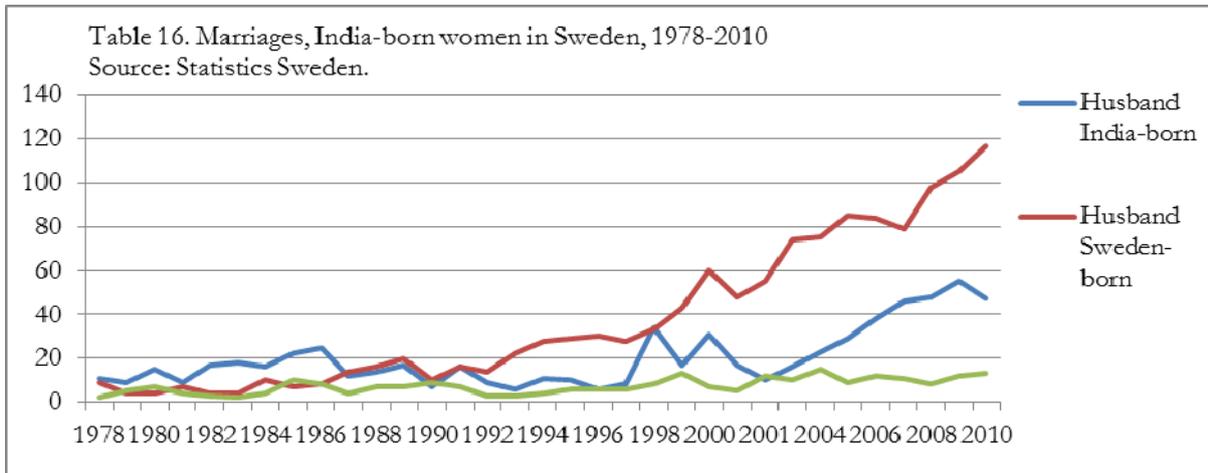
⁵⁰ The registration of marriages of the Indian-born population began in 1978. The data only touches on the country of birth and does not specify how many times a person has been married.

whether the Indian-born women belong to first generation migrants already settled in Sweden or whether they migrated because of the impending marriage. Similarly the data does not clarify the ethnicity of the Swedish-born, even if one can presume that most Swedish wives in the 1970s and the 1980s were native Swedes, while a large proportion of the Swedish-born in the twenty-first century are second generation Indians who have reached marriageable age.

One possible explanation for the dominance of intermarriages among early male migrants is the tendency to enter *pro-forma* marriages with Scandinavian partner for legal papers and, after divorce, to arrange marriage with women from India under more culturally accepted forms. Up to the 1990s divorce statistics show a high frequency of separations between Indian men and their wives from Sweden and other countries, and in subsequent years a higher divorce rate for marriages between Indian men and women (table 15). It is noteworthy that for the whole period a total of 59 marriages with and 79 divorces from Finnish-born females were registered. In other words, a higher number of Indian men divorced than married Finnish women and consequently they must have entered into marriage in Sweden or Finland before registration began in 1978. Other major country groups in the statistics are female partners born in Poland, Pakistan and Eastern African countries (Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania). Men who have married women in the last two categories are likely Hindus and Muslims of the Ugandan Asian community. After Denmark implemented a stricter immigration policy for family reunions at the beginning of the twenty-first century, more Indian men registered for marriage with spouses born in Denmark.



The statistics for Indian women display lower figures and more stable patterns of marriage practices up to the 1990s (see table 16). In an early migration phase most women married Indian-born men and fewer chose spouses from Sweden and other countries. Thus, unlike Indian men, Indian women have not extensively married partners from countries neighboring Sweden. Much of the early female migrants appear to be Ugandan Asians who preferred marriage with men originating from East African countries. During the whole period many women have also married partners from Middle Eastern countries and particularly from Iran, Iraq and Bahrain. Even if religious affiliation is not mentioned in the statistics, one can hypothesize that these women belong to Shia Muslim families within the Ugandan Asian community. Another tendency among Indian women is the preference for spouses originating from South Asian countries, such as Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Since the 1990s women have increasingly married Sweden-born men, but it is uncertain to what extent the figures refer to native Swedes and second generation Indian born in Sweden. The female divorce rates also indicate that an increasing number of Indian-born women began to separate from their Indian husbands at the end of 1980s, and from their Sweden-born husbands from the 1990s (see table 17). One can only speculate on the reasons behind this trend, but possible explanations might be that divorces have nowadays less stigma attached and also that the immigrant situation has given women more freedom to bow out of marriages with which they are not satisfied. It is also possible that some are *pro-forma* marriages arranged to aid the women and their families to obtain legal residence status in Sweden and Europe.



Studies on Punjabi families in Sweden illustrate that migration and transnational marriages can, for women, become avenues for improving their position and status in social and religious life.⁵¹ First generation women explain that they are gaining new independence and social freedom in Swedish society, partly because they have entered the labor market and partly because they share the family economy and responsibilities with their husbands. When visiting the Punjab many of them experience a need to readjust to other gender roles, duties and expectations with which they no longer feel comfortable. Even if both women and men of the first generation may critically reflect upon some of their cultural practices, they still make attempts to preserve traditions and adjust themselves, to a very great extent, to the social pressure of families and friends. A more radical social change occurs with the second generation brought up in Sweden. With transnational lifestyles they tend to take up critical stands towards gender roles, identifications with castes, and many social practices of their parents, and favor ideas about social equality and human rights.

Transnational links and circular migration

At the present there exists no comprehensive study of how different migrant groups are effected by migration and settlement in Sweden and in what ways they negotiate various social and cultural components, including caste, clan, authority, generation, and concepts of “home”. On a general level, however, it is clear that Indians have built up several social and cultural networks of solidarity that are based on ideas of a shared regional, national or religious identity, and are networks that operate both locally and transnationally. Many families seem to maintain strong transnational links with kinship members, friends, and co-devotees in India and in other countries through a wide range of cultural practices. Indian homes in Sweden particularly become venues for divergent cultural influences that are transmitted through people, artefacts, and modern media, such as satellite TV and digital recordings of social events sent from relatives abroad. Many families regularly visit India and sometimes send their children for longer study or cultural visits to learn the language and culture of their home country. Indian migration today has become more circular, involving several in and out movements. Between 2000 and 2010 on average 397 Indian citizens emigrated from Sweden each year. Many of these were presumably students and temporarily employed workers, but also other migrants who decided to move back to India.⁵² More studies are required to examine in what ways and to what extent this mobility affects the flow of remittances, encourages developments in India and in Sweden, and creates social and economic advantages for the individuals involved.

4. Legal Framework

Sweden today imposes regulated immigration with policies laid down by the Swedish parliament and international conventions. The principal legislation governing Swedish immigration policy is the Aliens Act (2005/716) and the Aliens Decree (2006/97),⁵³ as well as the EU conventions regarding free movement, asylum and labor.⁵⁴ Created in 1968, the Swedish Migration Board is the governmental administrative authority which operates under the Ministry of Justice and that is

⁵¹ Kristina Myrvold, “The Swedish Sikhs: Community Building, Representation and Generational Change”, in Knut A. Jacobsen and Kristina Myrvold (eds), *Sikhs in Europe: Migration, Identities and Representations* (Farnham, Surrey, 2011); Kristina Myrvold, “Sikher och sikhism: med gurun installerad på en tron och svenska poliser i turban”, in Daniel Andersson and Åke Sander (eds.), *Det mångreligiösa Sverige: ett landskap i förändring* (Lund, 2009).

⁵² *Statistiska centralbyrån*, “Invandrare och utvandrare efter medborgarskapsland, tid och tabelluppgift”, available at www.scb.se.

⁵³ See: *Sveriges Riksdag*, Svensk författningssamling, Utlänningslag (2005:716), available at: http://www.riksdagen.se/webbnav/index.aspx?nid=3911&dok_id=SFS2005:716&rm=2005&bet=2005:716; *Sveriges Riksdag*, Svensk författningssamling, Utlänningsförordning (2006:97), available at: http://www.riksdagen.se/webbnav/index.aspx?nid=3911&dok_id=SFS2006:97&rm=2006&bet=2006:97

⁵⁴ *Migrationsverket*, “EU och migration”, available at: <http://www.migrationsverket.se/info/217.html>.

responsible for asylum, immigration, residence and citizenship. In the 1970s Sweden adopted an official policy of integration of immigrants and refugee groups and has since then made several legislative and administrative changes in relation to this policy. After the country became a member of the EU in 1995 and after it was increasingly exposed to the effects of globalization and mobility, previous national perspectives on immigration and asylum policy were transformed and these questions are now viewed as international and “cross-border” issues.⁵⁵

Immigration and integration policies

With its general welfare policies as the base, the Swedish government adopted multi-cultural goals in the mid-1970s and implemented several reforms to improve the integration of immigrants into Swedish society, many of which still apply, with some small changes, today. Important reforms included, for example, the right to interpretation and translation assistance, the right to Swedish language training for adult immigrants, the right to a basic pension and improvements in social services, state grants to immigrant organizations and religious groups, and the introduction of a shorter qualifying period for naturalization. Two significant improvements were the franchise reform of 1975, which granted foreign nationals with residence permits voting rights in the local and regional elections, and the home language reform of 1977, according to which the municipalities were to provide immigrant children with instruction in their home languages at all stages in school. The general integration policy adopted in this period was based on the objectives of equality, free choice, and interaction in mutual tolerance. Differences in social, civic and political rights between native Swedes, foreign-born Swedish citizens and immigrants with foreign citizenship were to be kept at the minimum, while immigrants and minority groups were encouraged to preserve and develop their cultural heritage and community life.⁵⁶

A second major policy for the reception of immigrants and refugees was the “whole-of-Sweden” policy which was gradually implemented from the 1980s. As refugee immigration intensified and the country faced, at the same time, a recession, it became clear that the position of immigrants on the labor market was weak. In comparison to native Swedes, immigrants had higher rates of unemployment and welfare dependency, and they suffered discrimination in their working life. There was also some spatial segregation with the foreign-born concentrated in areas with a lower proportion of indigenous inhabitants.⁵⁷ In an attempt to counteract this development, Sweden enforced a policy that was designed to encourage municipalities to share the responsibility of immigrant and refugee reception and thereby to spread the new immigrants throughout the country. As a result, the administration for reception of refugees was, in the mid-1980s, transferred from the National Labour Market Board to the Swedish Migration Board and all the Swedish municipalities.⁵⁸ Another result was the establishment of *The Equality Ombudsman* in 1986, a government agency working against various types of discrimination, and the implementation of a reform against ethnic discrimination in working life in 1999.⁵⁹

Another important development was the change in detention policy in 1997. Prior to this year the Swedish Federal Police were responsible for detention and hired private contractors to ensure its daily operation. As more refugees and asylum seekers arrived in the 1990s detention management was severely criticized in the media, by human-rights watch dogs and others when cases of mistreatment and forced detention surfaced. In response to public debates, the government introduced a new policy

⁵⁵ Regeringskansliet, “Migration and asylum policy”, available at: <http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/3083>.

⁵⁶ Karin Borevi, “Svensk invandrarpolitik under (om)formulering”, *Politica*, vol. 30/2 (1998).

⁵⁷ Karin Borevi, “Svensk invandrarpolitik under (om)formulering”, *Politica*, vol. 30/2 (1998).

⁵⁸ Robert A. Murdie and Lars-Erik Borgegård, “Immigration, Spatial Segregation and Housing Segmentation of Immigrants in Metropolitan Stockholm, 1960-95”, *Urban Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 10 (1998), pp. 1869-1888.

⁵⁹ Kristina Myrvold, “Sikher och sikhism: med gurun installerad på en tron och svenska poliser i turban”, in Daniel Andersson and Åke Sander (eds.), *Det mångreligiösa Sverige: ett landskap i förändring* (Lund, 2009).

by which administrative responsibility was handed over to the Swedish Migration Board and detention practice came to be regulated in social service terms. Detention was still considered inevitable in for verifying the identity of irregular migrants, but it was not to be viewed as a criminal procedure, nor did it limit the civil rights of detainees more than necessary.⁶⁰

Perhaps the most important legislative change in the 2000s have been the new rules for labor migration that entered into force in 2008 and that aim to facilitate the recruitment of labor from third countries by relaxing the criteria for issuing work visas. According to the general outline, employers in Sweden, who are unable to meet their labor needs with employees from EU/EEA countries, can, instead, employ third-country nationals, provided that the Swedish Migration Board approves the terms of employment (salary, insurance, etc.) and ensures that they are in accordance with the conditions applying to Swedish employees. Other amendments include the time limit for work permits, which now can be granted for the duration of the job or for two years, with the possibility for an extension and, after four years, a permanent residence permit. Furthermore, visiting students and some asylum seekers are able to apply for work permits without having to leave the country.⁶¹

The objectives of the policy, as publicly presented, are to respond to shortages in the labor market and to vitalize the Swedish economy with new knowledge and experiences embodied in these workers from abroad. From another perspective it can also be seen as an attempt to maintain national control over immigration. Sweden adopted the 2009 EU directive on work permits for highly-skilled non-EU citizens, or the so-called “Blue Card”, but began revising its immigration policy, while negotiations between the member states were still going on. The Swedish rules for labor immigration became considerably more generous than the EU directives as they aim at all workers in third countries and not only highly-skilled workers. The implementation of the EU directive would thus only entail a few amendments, in addition to the national policy as it exists now.

Today Indians constitute a large part of new labor migrants and occasionally the Swedish Migration Board has made special exceptions for this group. As a means to control the terms of employment, the Migration Board needs to seek an opinion from the Swedish labor unions before approving applications for a work permit. In an attempt to speed up the bureaucratic process, a certification system was introduced and granted the board authorization from some labor unions in targeted sectors. The labor union *Swedish Engineers*, for example, authorized the Migration Board to approve work permits for engineers working for three of the largest Indian companies in Sweden.⁶² Consequently hundreds of Indians lived and worked in Sweden, but were formally employed by the companies on foreign contracts. In 2011, however, the *Swedish Engineers* ended the agreement as they had found the certification system too insecure in protecting their members from work discrimination.⁶³ In autumn 2011 the Swedish Migration board introduced yet another certification system according to which Swedish companies, fulfilling certain quality requirements, can be authorized to manage all contacts between labor unions and employees in third countries by themselves and thereby they can take over some responsibilities that were earlier under the purview of the migration board. This is yet another attempt to facilitate the fast recruitment of laborers in specific sectors.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ See the information provided by *Swedish Migration Board*, www.migrationsverket.se; Grant Mitchell, “Asylum Seekers in Sweden”, *New International Bookshop* (August 2001), available at: www.fabian.org.au/940.asp; Michael Winiarski, “Rymningar ökar från låsta förvar av asylsökande.”, *Dagens Nyheter* (16 October 2004).

⁶¹ *Regeringskansliet*, “New Rules for Labour Immigration”, available at: <http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/10/72/00/2a13eb93.pdf>.

⁶² These largest companies are *Tata Consultancy Services Sverige AB*, *HCL Technologies Limited* and *Larsen & Toubro Infotech*.

⁶³ Peter Larsson, “Därför bryter vi samarbetet med Migrationsverket”, *Svenska Dagbladet* (June 1, 2011).

⁶⁴ Stockholm TT, “Snabbkö för invandrad arbetskraft”, *Svenska Dagbladet* (September 30, 2011), available at: http://www.svd.se/nyheter/inrikes/snabbko-for-invandrad-arbetskraft_6514404.svd.

As well as student and labor migration, family reunification has constituted an important share of Indian immigration in Sweden. According to Swedish law, a close relative eligible for a permit on the grounds of family ties is a child under the age of 18 with the parents living in Sweden or someone who has married or who is planning to marry, or entering into a registered partnership, or cohabitation with a person residing in Sweden. Only in exceptional cases can unmarried children above 18 years of age and parents of Swedish residents obtain permits on family grounds if the family members have lived together outside of Sweden.⁶⁵ In 2010 the government restricted the rules for family reunification by introducing a supply requirement for relatives residing in Sweden. These relatives must now have enough income to meet their relatives' livelihood and housing costs. However, the rule does not apply to relatives with Swedish citizenship, foreigners who have lived in Sweden for four years, or to refugees and migrants granted residence permits for humanitarian reasons.⁶⁶

Citizen policies

Swedish integration strategies have been characterized by a liberal citizen policy. The Swedish Citizenship Act (2001/82) is based on the principle of descent which means that the nationality of parents determine the citizenship of the child.⁶⁷ If born or adopted into a family in which one parent is a Swedish citizen the child will obtain Swedish citizenship. Special rules apply to children of immigrant parents with other nationalities or stateless children who still can become citizens if they have obtained permanent residence permits and if they have lived in the country from three to five years. The naturalization process in Sweden requires permanent residence permits and duration of residence in the country, which for Nordic citizens is two years, for refugees and stateless persons four years, and for other immigrants five years. Immigrants who have been married to, living in a registered partnership with, or cohabiting with a Swedish citizen for at least two years can apply for citizenship after three years of residence. Naturalization also presumes a "decent" way of living in Sweden, which in practice means that the applicant should not have been convicted for a crime or can only be granted citizenship after a sentence has been served.⁶⁸ What basically differentiates Swedish citizenship from permanent residence permits is the right to obtain a Swedish passport, to access certain work sectors (such as the police and the professional army), and the right to be a candidate for and vote in the parliamentary elections. Like many other European countries, Sweden was suspicious of dual citizenship during the twentieth century, but began to change its policies at the turn of the century and eventually accepted the principle in 2001.

Statistical data on Indians in Sweden clearly indicate that many have made use of relatively easy access to Swedish citizenship. From 2000 to 2010 on average 191 Indian citizens were granted Swedish citizenship each year, and the majority of them, 59.5 percent, were women.⁶⁹ Many of the new citizens are presumably first generation Indians, considering that second generation children who are born in Sweden normally obtain Swedish citizenship irrespective of their parents' nationality. The number of applicants has also doubled in the past years, probably in response to the implementation of the Overseas Citizen of India Scheme in 2005 by the Indian government.⁷⁰ As Sweden was included in

⁶⁵ *Migrationsverket*, "Requirements to be granted a residence permit", available at: http://www.migrationsverket.se/info/3419_en.html.

⁶⁶ Karl Dalén, "Bostad och arbete krav för anhöriginvandring", *Dagens Nyheter* (April 15, 2010).

⁶⁷ *Sveriges Riksdag*, "Svensk författningssamling, Lag (2001:82) om svenskt medborgarskap", available at: <http://www.riksdagen.se/webbnav/index.aspx?nid=3911&bet=2001:82>.

⁶⁸ *Migrationsverket*, "Du ska ha bott i Sverige viss tid", available at: <http://www.migrationsverket.se/info/499.html>.

⁶⁹ A large proportion of Indian female applicants are presumably are adopted children who gained Swedish citizenship upon their arrival. *Statistiska centralbyrån*, "Antal personer i riket som fått svenskt medborgarskap efter medborgarskapsland och kön. År 2000-2010", available at: www.seb.se.

⁷⁰ *Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India*, "Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI)", available at: <http://mha.nic.in/pdfs/intro.pdf>.

this scheme and allowed dual citizenship, Indians with Swedish citizenship were eligible for OCI status. According to the Indian Embassy in Stockholm, many Indians choose to change their citizenship to Swedish in order to become holders of Swedish passports since this opens up new work opportunities within the Schengen zone and also means the possibility of visiting Great Britain and other countries without visa requirements. With the new scheme for dual citizenship, the number of applications for OCI, NRI or PIO status is also increasing.⁷¹ Thus, if Indian immigrants in the past became Swedish citizens but had to give up their original citizenship, the current regulations facilitate new kinds of exchanges and mobility. As a migrant-receiving country currently looking for ways to fill labor-market needs in certain sectors, Sweden has adopted a positive stance towards an open and more spontaneous circular migration. The government has presented circular migration as an opportunity to transfer knowledge, experience and resources that can “help inject new energy into the country’s economy and social capital” and “increase the diversity of household incomes, provide a buffer against risks, facilitate education and investments in health and are a source of capital to establish small businesses.”⁷²

5. Media Perception of the Indian Community

During the twentieth century, popular images often portrayed India as a developing and aid recipient country, certainly rich in cultural knowledge and traditions, but blighted by poverty and social problems. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, this picture has partially been replaced by optimism with the country’s economic transition. News items published in national Swedish newspapers in the past years have followed global market interests and focused on economic and technical developments of the country. India has been presented as the “sleeping giant” who has recently woken up to rapid economic growth.⁷³ However, much of the media coverage continues to place social problems in the foreground, sometimes from an ethno-centric perspective which presumes a conflict between “traditional” Indian cultural values and “modern” Western thought.⁷⁴ Documentaries in India broadcast by Swedish Television have, for example, highlighted social inequalities related to poverty, caste, and gender in the shadow of the country’s economic and technological move forward.⁷⁵

Previous studies have suggested that collective representations of South Asian migrants often lean toward “oriental” discourses by presenting the groups as an exotic “other” and in exclusively religious terms.⁷⁶ In comparison with other immigrant groups, and especially the larger Muslim immigrant community, Indians have received marginal attention. While conflicts related to Muslims and

⁷¹ Interview with Dibyender Gangopadhyaya, *Embassy of India*, Stockholm, August 1, 2011.

⁷² *Regeringskansliet*, “Migration”, available at: <http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/14293>.

⁷³ Jan Nylander, “Framtiden finns in Indien”, *Sveriges television* (December 30, 2009), available at: http://svt.se/2.118349/1.1831082/framtiden_finns_i_indien.

⁷⁴ See for example: Malin Mendel Westberg and Leif Näslund, “Misshandlas för jeansens skull”, *Sveriges television* (November 3, 2010), available at: http://svt.se/2.22584/1.2221746/misshandlas_for_jeansens_skull; Johan Myrsten, “Stor utmaning väntar IT-guru”, *Svenska Dagbladet* (July 6, 2010), available at: http://www.svd.se/naringsliv/stor-utmaning-vantar-it-guru_6297492.svd; Johan Myrsten, “Var fjärde fattig trots snabb tillväxt”, *Svenska Dagbladet* (August 4, 2005), available at: http://www.svd.se/naringsliv/var-fjarde-fattig-trots-snabb-tillvaxt_1060607.svd; Johan Myrsten, “Kastsystemet är förbjudet men lever kvar”, *Svenska Dagbladet* (August 2, 2005), available at: http://www.svd.se/naringsliv/kastsystemet-ar-forbjudet-men-lever-kvar_1060441.svd.

⁷⁵ *Sveriges television*, “Indien: ett land i förändring”, available at: http://svt.se/2.119844/1.1825154/indien_-_ett_land_i_forandring.

⁷⁶ See for example, Knut A. Jacobsen and Kristina Myrvold, *Sikhs in Europe: Migration, Identities and Representations* (Farnham, Surrey, 2011). As Vertovec observes, the national politics of recognition and struggles over representation in pluralistic societies seem to privilege religion and also require migrants to actively reflect on what their religion is. Vertovec, Steven, “Hindus in Trinidad and Britain: Ethnic Religion, Reification, and the Politics of Public Space”, in Peter van der Veer (ed.), *Nation and Migration: The Politics of Space in the South Asian Diaspora* (Philadelphia, 1995).

Islamophobic tendencies in society have engrossed numerous newspaper columns,⁷⁷ the media have socialized ideas of the Indians as a fairly harmless community whose beliefs and practices Swedish society can learn from. The popularity of new spiritual movements and health trends has nurtured “oriental” images of India as a treasure-chest of ancient knowledge that can aid ordinary Swedes in their search for more harmonious and healthier life-styles.⁷⁸ Likewise the fashion industry, especially the well-known clothing company “Indiska” (Indian), has stimulated enticements to the exotic Orient and has quite successfully brought Indian crafts and furnishing to Swedish homes.⁷⁹

Indians as the religious “other”

What has been typical of media coverage on Indians in Sweden is the precedence of religious categorization, partly because “oriental” images tend to cast Indians as a “religious other” and also because religion and ethnicity have been key categories in governmental efforts to counter xenophobic attitudes by legal means.⁸⁰ The religious rights of immigrants groups have been a central theme in various public discourses on integration processes. Due to their external symbolic behavior, such as wearing the turban and carrying a ceremonial dagger (*kirpan*), Sikhs especially have attracted media attention. The Sikh dagger is not subject to the national knife law because it has been deemed a symbol serving religious needs and not a sharp knife to be used in acts of violence.⁸¹ When Sikhs have ended up in disputes over religious symbols in school and at work the newspapers have typically voiced a governmental position and reported how the *Equality Ombudsman* and others have intervened and criticized various authorities for maintaining regulations that prevent ethnic and religious diversity.⁸² Partly as a result of these interventions, the National Police Board also decided, in 2006, that Swedish policemen can wear a turban if the size and color is properly adjusted to the uniform. In public discourses on integration Sikhs have recurrently appeared as an explicit example of this diversity. The male Sikh turban has, in fact, been presented as a signifier representing all Swedish Sikhs and, more broadly alongside the female Muslim *hijab*, functioned as a metonym of the religious

⁷⁷ Göran Larsson, “Muslimer och islam: tolkningar mellan segregation och integration”, in Daniel Andersson and Åke Sander (eds), *Det Mångreligiösa Sverige: Ett landskap i förändring* (Lund, 2009).

⁷⁸ Colette van Luik, “Ayurveda - urgammal indisk hälsovetenskap”, *Sveriges television*, available at: http://svt.se/2.15856/1.710191/ayurveda_-_urgammal_indisk_halsovetenskap; Hanna Younes, ”Svetyogan gör dig smal – men knappast upplyst”, *Sydsvenskan* (March 6, 2010), available at: <http://www.sydsvenskan.se/malmo/malmokronikor/article635536/Svetyogan-gor-dig-smal---men-knappast-upplyst.html>; Anders Haag, “Buddha och Brahman har hittat till Sverige”, *Svenska Dagbladet*, 2010-03-02, available at: http://www.svd.se/nyheter/idagsidan/existentiellt/buddha-och-brahman-har-hittat-till-sverige_4352287.svd.

⁷⁹ *Indiska* was created in 1901 by the female entrepreneur Mathilda Hamilton who lived for seven years in the Himalayas at the end of the nineteenth century. The company has now more than 80 shops in Sweden, Finland and Norway. See the company’s website: <http://indiska.com>.

⁸⁰ A law that was passed in 1999 against ethnic discrimination in working life and in 2008 exchanged with a general law against discrimination emphasizes people’s equal rights and opportunities regardless ethnicity, religion and beliefs. *Sveriges riksdag*, “Svensk författningssamling; Lag (1999:130) om åtgärder mot diskriminering i arbetslivet på grund av etnisk tillhörighet, religion eller annan trosuppfattning”, available at: <http://www.riksdagen.se/webbnav/index.aspx?nid=3911&bet=1999:130>; *Sveriges Riksdag*, “Svensk författningssamling; Diskrimineringslag (2008:567)”, available at: <http://www.riksdagen.se/webbnav/index.aspx?nid=3911&bet=2008:567>.

⁸¹ *Sveriges Riksdag*, ”Svensk författningssamling, Lagen (1988:254) om förbud beträffande knivar och andra farliga föremål”, available at: <http://www.riksdagen.se/webbnav/index.aspx?nid=3911&bet=1988:254>.

⁸² Katrin Krantz, “Försvaret tillåter turban”, *Svenska Dagbladet* (May 12, 2005) available at: http://www.svd.se/nyheter/inrikes/forsvaret-tillater-turban_412255.svd; Erik Sidenbladh, ”Religiös symbol knivig fråga för DO”, *Svenska Dagbladet* (May 4, 2002), available at: http://www.svd.se/nyheter/inrikes/religios-symbol-knavig-frag-for-do_51839.svd; Tidningarnas Telegrambyrå, “Soldat får bära turban”, *Expressen* (September 11, 2003) available at: <http://www.expressen.se/1.47452>; Tidningarnas Telegrambyrå-Dn, ”Sikh får bära dolk i skolan”, *Dagens Nyheter* (May 27, 2002), available at: <http://www.dn.se/nyheter/sverige/sikh-far-bara-dolk-i-skolan-1.84314>.

rights of all minorities in an increasingly multiethnic society.⁸³ Characteristic of these media discourses is the projection of more heterogeneous and normative images of the Indian “other”, while the social and cultural diversity of the Indian population in Sweden has remained invisible. More recently, Indian computer specialists have made headlines in several local and national newspapers, being depicted as the “typical labor migrants” in Sweden.⁸⁴ As Sweden’s economic interests and immigration policies have transformed, the stereotype of the Indian as a more religious and exotic element in the Swedish cultural landscape has thus been accompanied by images of the skilled and technologically advanced worker from abroad.

6. Religious Centers and Cultural Associations

While Swedish discourses on integration often privilege religion and have sometimes required migrants to actively reflect on their belonging, religion has also become a key element for organizing collective activities within the Indian community and for creating representation and visibility in society. In Sweden today there are around forty officially registered Indian associations of different sizes, and more than twenty on-line groups for cultural, student and youth exchanges (see table 18).⁸⁵ Indians have undoubtedly invested considerable effort in maintaining the traditions of the homeland by establishing various social infrastructures. Many of the registered associations have religion at their base and serve as organizational foundations for temporary and permanent places of worship, while the cultural associations are either pan-Indian or organized by the members’ regional origins in India.

The first Hindu and Sikh migrants followed a typical pattern, according to which they begin by congregating in private homes to conduct religious worship and ceremonies. When a group of co-devotees within a geographical area has become large enough and collected funding they search for premises to rent and transform into a place of worship which they can attend more regularly. Through donations they finally buy a property or a house and construct a permanent place of worship with weekly or monthly meetings. Gradually, they have adapted the “congregational structure” of Swedish society by registering the members and in some cases by introducing membership fees.⁸⁶

⁸³ Tomas Bengtsson, “Polisen får bära turban och huvudduk”, *Aftonbladet* (March 9, 2006) available at: <http://www.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/article359793.ab>; Mattias Wising, “Poliser får bära turban”, *Svensk Polis* (March 9, 2006) available at: <http://www.svenskpolis.se/sv/Artikelarkiv/Artiklar-20061/mars20062/polisfarbaraturban/>; Mattias Wising, “Turban kontra Bollmorahättor”, *Svensk Polis* (March 28, 2006), available at: <http://www.svenskpolis.se/sv/Artikelarkiv/Artiklar-20061/mars20062/bollmorahatta/>. More occasionally the newspapers have reported on the public opinion, which has proved more skeptical to a more widespread use of religious symbols in workplaces. See: Johanna Melén, “DO: Motståndet handlar om ovana”, *Aftonbladet* (March 9, 2006) available at: <http://www.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/article359791.ab>; Aaron Israelson, ”Sju av tio företag säger nej till slöja”, *Nyheter 24* (February 10, 2010), available at: <http://nyheter24.se/nyheter/inrikes/294589-sju-av-tio-foretag-sager-nej-till-sloja>.

⁸⁴ Camilla Aronsson, “Indiska dataspecialister efterfrågas mest”, *Svenskt Näringsliv* (April 5, 2011), available at: http://www.svensknaringsliv.se/fragor/arbetskraftsinvandring/indiska-dataspecialister-efterfragas-mest_129959.html; Karin Moberger, “Indiska it-konsulter i Sverige”, *Sveriges television* (July 20, 2009), available at: http://svt.se/2.22620/1.1622311/indiska_it-konsulter_i_sverige; Josefine Hökerberg, “Ny utlänningslag öppnade dörrarna för indiska dataspecialister”, *Dagens Nyheter* (August 18, 2009), available at: <http://www.dn.se/sthlm/ny-utlanningslag-oppnade-dorrarna-for-indiska-dataspecialister>.

⁸⁵ Many of these are registered at: *Immigrantinstitutet*, “Lokala invandrarföreningar”, available at: <http://www.immi.se/organisationer/lokala-foreningar>.

⁸⁶ As Martikainen observes, congregational structures are often based on Christian models and norms for religious organization and are alien to many immigrants, but still important for the “structural adaptation” to the host society. Toumas Martikainen, “Religious Diversity beyond the Cosmopolis: Immigration and the Religious Field in the City of Turku, Finland”, *Religion*, 39 (2009): pp. 176-181.

Table 18. Indian Associations in Sweden

Religious	Cultural	Online Groups (in selection 2011)
<p>Hindu</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Association Shanatoni, Uppsala - Bangiya Sanatan Samaj, Upplands Väsby - Gujarati Hindu Mandal, Stockholm - Hare Krishna Mandir (ISKCON), Gothenburg - Hare Krishna Mandir (ISKCON), Grödinge - Hare Krishna Mandir (ISKCON), Järna - Hare Krishna Mandir (ISKCON), Stockholm - Hindu Association in Sweden, Stockholm - Hindu Culture Maintain Centre/Sweden Ganesh Temple, Enskede - Hindu Mandal, Mariestad - Hindu Mandal, Trollhättan - Hindu Mandir, Mariestad - Hindu Mandir, Borås - Hindu Mandir Society, Stockholm - Hindu Union, Jönköping - Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh Sweden, Vällingby - Samba Sada Shiva Dham, Väddö -Shree Sanatan Swaminarayan, Mariestad - Vishwa Hindu Parishad Sweden, Bromma <p>Sikh</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gurdwara Bibi Nanki Ji, Upplands Väsby - Gurdwara Sangat Sahib Association, Tullinge - Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Angered -Sikh Cultural Association, Hisings Kärra -Sikh Cultural Association Lund/Malmö, Malmö 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Asian Culture Society, Mariestad - Indian Association, Askim - Indian Association, Stockholm - Indian Association, Skåne - Indian Cultural Association, Järfälla - Indian Cultural Association, Helsingborg - Indian Women Club, Jönköping - Indo-Swedish Association, Stockholm - International Tamil Association, Stockholm -Hindustan Club, Lidingö - Punjab Cultural Society of Sweden, Stockholm - Punjabi Cultural Association, Huddinge - Punjabi Social and Sports Club Association, Angered - North Indian Cultural Entertainment in Sweden Association, Botkyrka -Rasa Indian Dance, Vårby -South Asian Cultural Organization, Stockholm - Sweden India Film Association, Stockholm - Swedish Indian Association, Stockholm - Swedish Indian's Association of Sweden, Stockholm - Uganda Asian Association, Ljungby - Uganda Asian Cultural Society, Borås <p>Students and Youth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Association of Indian Students in Linköping - Association of Indian Students KTH, Stockholm - Swedish Organisation of Sikh Students, Stockholm <p style="text-align: center;">Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sweden-India Business Council, Stockholm 	<p>Adopted Children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adopted from India, Facebook (58 members) - We are adopted from India, Facebook (118 members) <p>Cultural</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indian Lions of Sweden, Orkut (45 members) - Indian Women in Sweden, Orkut (17 members) - Indians @ Sweden, Orkut (44 members) - Indians in Göteborg, Orkut (140 members) - Indians in Ronneby, Orkut (8 members) - Indians in Sweden, Orkut (3021 members) - Indians in Sweden, Facebook (648 members) - Indians in Västerås, Orkut (72 members) - Tamils in Sweden, Facebook (185 members) <p>Students and Youth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Association of India Students, Lund University, Facebook (92 members) - Indian Students Association Sweden, Yahoo (171 members) - Indian Students in Mid Sweden University, Yahoo (28 members) - Indian Students in Dalarna, Yahoo (121 members) - Indian Youth Association, Facebook (91 members) - Indians at Chalmers, Yahoo (119 members) - Indians in Mid Sweden University, Orkut (39 members) - Indians in Sweden, Yahoo (219 members) - Sweden's Young Dharmis and Ashvanis, Facebook (212 members)

Hindu organizations and temples

The first Hindu organizations were created in the early 1970s by refugee groups from East Africa. In 1973 Ugandan Hindus residing in the towns of Mariestad, Trollhättan and Borås created religious associations called *Hindu Mandal* and established temples in rented apartments and basement premises. The following year Hindus in the town of Jönköping similarly created an organization called the *Hindu Union* and later constructed a temple in an apartment. These temples were typically pan-Hindu with various gods and goddess in the Hindu pantheon represented and worshipped in the temple rooms. As many Ugandan Hindus were Gujaratis, popular deities in Gujarati Vaishnavism, such as Ambaji or “the respected mother” and goddesses protecting specific family lines, were also represented. The temple in Trollhättan was initially shared with Punjabi Sikhs and accommodated

images of Guru Nanak and the Golden temple in Amritsar. But in the 1980s the Sikhs withdrew and created their own association.⁸⁷

In the early 1990s Hindus in Mariestad bought a property and constructed a completely new temple. The leading members of the Hindu community in this area belonged to the Vaishnavite Swaminarayan tradition, which is closely associated with Gujarati identity and culture, and derived financial support from this movement. The new temple was consequently dedicated to its founder Sri Swaminarayan, who is considered to be a manifestation of the Hindu god Krishna. The establishment of the new temple, however, highlighted differences in religious and cultural orientation and caused fissures in the local Hindu community. In response, families who did not share the ideals of the Swaminarayan movement, but advocated a more pan-Hindu ecumenism created a smaller all-inclusive Santana dharma temple in a rented basement in the same town.⁸⁸

A large number of the early Hindus in Stockholm had North Indian origin. In the 1980s they created an association with the goal of purchasing a property and of constructing a pan-Hindu temple. In 1998 this plan was carried out and the association opened a non-sectarian temple called *Hindu Mandir* in Helenelund in the northern part of Stockholm. Nine years later a Ganesha statue in white marble, weighing three hundred kilogram, was transported from India and ritually installed in the temple. The religious activities in the temple are today run by the association *Hindu Mandir Society* which organizes various educational activities, such as courses in Sanskrit, classical music and dance and study visits, providing Swedish-born children as well as the broader public with information about Hindu religion and culture.

Hindus in Sweden have also sought religious affinity with co-devotees of other nationalities. In absence of collective places of worship some Hindus in Stockholm have visited and used the temples established by Hindu converts belonging to ISKCON. Though diaspora Hindus have generally not subscribed to the specific teachings of this movement, they have visited the places of worship to venerate god Krishna and share devotion with others in a sacred space. Similarly, South Indian Hindus have participated in religious activities organized by Tamils from Sri Lanka, who in 2000 inaugurated a Shivaite temple, *Sweden Ganesha Temple*, in Stockholm. The temple is run by the *Hindu Cultural Maintain Centre* which like other associations aims to impart knowledge of Hinduism and different versions of Hindu culture.⁸⁹ The association *Bangiya Sanatan Samaj* in Upplands Väsby has likewise served Hindus from India's West Bengal and Bangladesh and has organized Bengali festivals. Linguistic and cultural similarities between Hindus in the Swedish diaspora have thus tended to bridge national differences and have created religious affinity and places in which to meet.

With the growing number of Hindus associations, some Indians have also identified a need to coordinate activities at the national level, partly for the purpose of gaining state recognition and grants. *The Swedish Commission for Government Support to Faith Communities* is a governmental body providing financial support to religious communities other than the protestant Church of Sweden, on condition that the religious group has organized itself nationally and has registered more than 3000 members.⁹⁰ In an attempt to meet these requirements the *Hindu Society in Sweden* was created in 2001 as an umbrella organization with the purpose of representing and looking after Hindu interests in

⁸⁷ Eva Rosén-Hockersmith, "Hinduer och Hinduism: förnya(n)de tolkningar av den eviga ordningen", in Daniel Andersson and Åke Sander (eds.), *Det mångreligiösa Sverige: ett landskap i förändring* (Lund, 2009), pp. 172-179.

⁸⁸ Eva Rosén-Hockersmith, "Hinduer och Hinduism: förnya(n)de tolkningar av den eviga ordningen", in Daniel Andersson and Åke Sander (eds.), *Det mångreligiösa Sverige: ett landskap i förändring* (Lund, 2009), pp.179-181.

⁸⁹ Eva Rosén-Hockersmith, "Hinduer och Hinduism: förnya(n)de tolkningar av den eviga ordningen", in Daniel Andersson and Åke Sander (eds.), *Det mångreligiösa Sverige: ett landskap i förändring* (Lund, 2009), p. 185.

⁹⁰ *Nämnden för statligt stöd till trossamfund*, available at: <http://www.sst.a.se/inenglish.4.7f968fc211eeec933de800011945.html>

Sweden. Support from local Hindu associations, however, turned out to be weak and consequently the organization was not able to create a nationwide platform.⁹¹

Sikh organizations and gurdwaras

Sikhs are concentrated primarily in Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö where they have established four public *gurdwaras*. In an early phase, during the 1980s, Sikhs in Stockholm rented a weekend cottage or an apartment in the suburbs before purchasing a property with a small house in Tullinge, south of Stockholm. Because of space problems the congregation built a larger detached house, which became the first collective *gurdwara* in Sweden, *Gurdwara Sangat Sahib*, and was formally inaugurated in 1997. In order to provide a place of worship for Sikhs residing in the northern part of Stockholm a second *gurdwara* was established in 2002 in a purchased and renovated summer cottage outside Upplands Väsby. The Sikhs in this area decided to name the *gurdwara* after Guru Nanak's sister, *Gurdwara Bibi Nanki Sahib*, since most of the active members in the congregation were women.

In the western part of Sweden Sikhs there initially celebrated festivals together with Hindus in Trollhättan and at other places, but in the 1980s created a separate organization, the *Sikh Cultural Association*, for preserving and representing Sikh values. For many years the members of the association rented apartments at different places in Gothenburg which functioned as provisional *gurdwaras*. In the early 2000s they purchased a closed-down plastics factory in Hammarkullen outside the city and renovated the industrial hall into a two-storey *gurdwara*. The building named *Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha* was inaugurated in 2002. Similarly, during the 1980s Sikhs in Southern Sweden organized themselves into the *Sikh Cultural Association Lund and Malmö* and for many years rented different types of rooms and halls for religious services with assistance from local authorities. In 2006 the congregation purchased a cellar apartment in a residential area of Malmö and renovated it into an assembly room and *gurdwara*.

Importance of collective place-making

When the pioneering Hindu and Sikh migrants explain their reasons for constructing religious associations and places of worship, they often emphasize the importance of transmitting religion, language, and culture to their children. The religious congregation is considered as constituting an important space in which the second generation can gain the required social and cultural capital for maintaining the values, practices and identities of the homeland. The Hindu temples and Sikhs *gurdwaras* are attributed as having functions far beyond religion and provide important social spaces in which individuals residing at different places can gather to speak their native language, build social networks and retain links with co-devotees in other countries.⁹² Although many of the associations have struggled with internal conflicts over management and differences in religious and cultural orientations, the disagreements have generally not resulted in severe factional schisms.

This collective “place-making” with religion as the base has also been one important strategy to improve status in the new country by creating public recognition and representation in Swedish society. Many of the Hindu and Sikh associations have been active in inter-faith dialogues and regularly invite educational, religious, and political representatives for study visits. Key persons of the organizations have repeatedly figured in public discourses on religious pluralism. The construction of temples and *gurdwaras* has created a new spatial visibility for Hindus and Sikhs and has ultimately contributed to an increased awareness of their religion and their presence in Sweden.

⁹¹ Eva Rosén-Hockersmith, “Hinduer och Hinduism: förnya(n)de tolkningar av den eviga ordningen”, in Daniel Andersson and Åke Sander (eds.), *Det mångreligiösa Sverige: ett landskap i förändring* (Lund, 2009), pp. 188-189.

⁹² Helen Rose Ebaugh and Janet Saltzman Chafetz, *Religion and the New Immigrants: Continuities and Adaptations in Immigrant Congregations* (Walnut Creek, Lanham, New York, Oxford, 2000).

Cultural organizations

Another strategy to create representation and to bridge religious differences in a heterogeneous group of people with a shared Indian origin has been the creation of various cultural organizations. Already in the early 1970s the Ugandan Asians in Western Sweden distinguished their religious from cultural activities and created a separate cultural association for sport activities and celebrations of festivals that were shared by Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs alike. Similarly, other Indian migrants groups have in various parts of the country created more pan-Indian associations for arranging sport activities, fairs, and festivals that are shared with members of different faiths. One of the largest cultural organizations is the *Indian Association Stockholm* which started in 1975 and which has branches in several Swedish towns. The association aims to promote integration of Indians into the Swedish society by organizing various national festivals, cultural programs, and educational activities, and by publishing news from India and the Indian diaspora in a magazine called *Samband*, which means “connection” both in Swedish and in Hindi.⁹³

With their growing weight in society, Indians have also taken initiative to protect the interests and rights of Indians in Sweden. Founded in 2003 the *Swedish Indians' Association* (SIA) has, over the years, functioned like a watch-dog which has critically monitored activities of governmental bodies and which has quite successfully protested against the commercial exploitation of Indian religious and cultural symbols: for example, when Scandinavian airlines used the goddess Kali in an advert for vodka in their flight magazine or when a Swedish shoe company was selling sandals with images of the goddess Lakshmi.⁹⁴ After years of negotiation with Swedish authorities the association managed to construct and inaugurate the first Hindu memorial park at a Christian cemetery in Tyresö outside Stockholm in 2007 and two years later another for the Sikhs.⁹⁵ On a symbolic level these events marked a new presence and phase in the integration process. Rather than bringing the ashes of deceased family members to India for immersion into rivers, they can now spread the ashes in the nearby Baltic Sea and commemorate their departed in areas within a Christian church-ground that have been transformed into sacred spaces for their own religions.

7. Socio-cultural Integration of the Indian Population

Although there is no intercultural study analyzing the cultural differences that Indians with various backgrounds experience when arriving in Sweden, disparate sources in the media and on various social network sites indicate that for many the landscape, the cold climate and seasonal changes make the strongest impression. The cleanliness and the organization of public spaces, the social welfare system and Swedish ideals of equality are generally liked. More problematic is widespread individualism, Swedish bureaucracy, the costly standard of living and practical problems of finding Indian food, spices and other things for managing everyday life.⁹⁶

⁹³ *Indian Association, Stockholm* at: <http://www.iastockholm.org/about.html>.

⁹⁴ As SIA writes on its website: “Immigration of Indians to Sweden is nearly 50 years old. For them integration means preserving their cultural and religious identity and combining it harmoniously with Swedish traditions and norms. They want to enrich the Swedish society by being integrated into it but do not want to be assimilated and get lost into it.” See *SIA.Sweden* at: <http://siasweden.weebly.com/>.

⁹⁵ SIA, “Den första Hinduisk ceremoni plats och minneslund i Norden” (August 6, 2007), available at: https://groups.google.com/group/sia-swedishindians-federation/browse_thread/thread/79077b1d9da02c4f?hl=sv#; SIA, ”

Opening ceremony of the place for last rites of the Sikhs” (March 9, 2009), available at: https://groups.google.com/group/sia-swedishindians-federation/browse_thread/thread/3859d652a1b6d199?hl=sv#; Johan Arkert, “Helig mark för hinduer på multireligiös begravningsplats”, *Mitt i Tyresö* (July 7, 2007), available at: <http://arkiv.mitti.se:4711/2007/29/tyreso/MITY05A20070717TYV1.pdf>.

⁹⁶ See for example: Rebecka Guzman, “Mumbai och Kungsholmen har mycket gemensamt”, *Computer Sweden* (June 26, 2010); Prasad Phirke, “My Likes & Dislikes in Sweden”, *Samband* (Oct-Dec. 2007).

For those who intend to stay and work in the country perhaps one of the greatest challenges is the Swedish language. As a part of the Swedish integration model, children to immigrant parents with another native language learn Swedish as a second language in primary and secondary school until they have developed sufficient linguistic skills to manage their studies and everyday life. Statistics of pupils attending classes in Swedish as a second language in both public and private schools show, for example, that the most common mother tongues among Indian children are Punjabi, Hindi, and Gujarati. From 1997 to 2006, for example, on average 144 pupils with Punjabi, 104 with Hindi, and 95 with Gujarati mother tongues participated in Swedish as second language classes. Other languages represented were Bengali and Tamil, shared with Bangladeshi and Sri Lankan pupils. A few children also had Bihari, Marathi, Malayalam, Kannada and Telugu as their mother tongues.⁹⁷

Sweden also provides basic language training, so called *Swedish for Immigrants*, for newly-arrived adults. The purpose of this education, operating at the municipal level, is to develop functional skills in Swedish in order to be able to actively participate in society and working life. It remains uncertain to what extent adult Indian immigrants have made use of and completed this training. But adults face a greater challenge in learning the new language than their children, who are quickly integrated into the Swedish schools and often assume new roles as interpreters for parents.

Another challenge for first generation Indians is the cultural divide that has arisen between themselves and their children, who are being socialized in another context. As language differences often constitute a dividing line between the generations, many families have invested considerable efforts in teaching the children their native languages. The parents remain the most significant agents for a linguistic education that takes place primarily in the home environment. As a part of the Swedish integration system, municipalities are also providing “home-language education” so that children can learn the native language of their parents while attending school. In practice, the language programs have functioned well in many places, whereas in others it has been difficult to collect the minimum of pupils required to set up a language course (five pupils within a municipality). Gujaratis and Punjabis seem to have been the most active in making use of the language training at Swedish school, with more than half of their children participating.⁹⁸

Many of the Indians in the first generation have been career-oriented and often social status within the migrant community is judged based on the educational success of their children. Over the years several graduation parties have been organized for the Swedish-born children and have functioned as symbolic events to prove the family’s successful integration into the society. The young also seem to opt for higher education. In year 2010, for example, 50 persons born in India and 77 Swedish-born persons with two Indian-born parents were enrolled in higher education and altogether constituted 2 percent of all students of foreign origin. The gender distribution indicates that a somewhat higher degree of women choose higher education. The same year 66.0 percent of the Indian-born students and 61.0 percent of the Swedish-born with Indian parents were women.⁹⁹

Internationally the Swedish system has often been presented as a model of how immigrants and minorities can be incorporated into the political system and guaranteed opportunities to mobilize their issues and interests in local politics. The franchise reform of 1975 granted immigrants with foreign citizenship the right to vote and to stand as candidates in municipal and regional elections, while the parliamentary elections were restricted to Swedish citizens. In practice, however, immigrants have often differed markedly from the rest of the electorate. Their turnout is low and they are poorly represented in political terms. In the 2010 election, for example, only 34.2 percent of the electorate with citizenship in

⁹⁷ Statistiska centralbyrån, “Elever med annat modersmål än svenska/Sv2 i samtl. skolor (alla huvudmän) efter region, språk, berättigade/deltagare m.m. och tid”, available at: www.scb.se.

⁹⁸ Statistiska centralbyrån, “Elever med annat modersmål än svenska/svenska som andraspråk i samtliga skolor (alla huvudmän) i riket efter språk, årskurs, berättig./deltag. och kön. År 1997-2006”, available at www.scb.se.

⁹⁹ Statistiska centralbyrån, “Utbildningsstatistik årsbok 2011, Tabeller” (2010), available at: http://www.scb.se/statistik/_publikationer/UF0524_2010A01_BR_00_UF0110TAB.pdf.

an Asian country voted in the municipal elections, as compared with 84.2 percent of all eligible voters in the country. Similarly, the turnout for the Asian group was only 33.6 percent in the county council elections, while the figure for the total voting population was 83.6 percent. By contrast, 71.4 percent of Asian-born voters with Swedish citizenship participated in the parliamentary elections.¹⁰⁰

Despite the low turnout in local and regional elections, there are a few Indians who have been candidates and still fewer who have been elected as members of the county councils.¹⁰¹ In 2010 at least 67 persons with Asian origin were nominated for the county council elections, most of them representing the Social Democratic Party, the Moderates, the Green Party and the Left-Wing Party, but only five of them were elected. The nominations for parliamentary elections were more extensive and included a total of 153 candidates who had Asian origins and belonged to different political parties (except for the xenophobic Sweden Democrats), although none of the eleven elected were Indians.¹⁰² The representation of Indians has thus been low in local and national politics and this is not specific to this immigrant group, but rather it is typical of the foreign-born in general. In the Swedish parliament, for example, only 8 percent of the elected members were born in countries other than Sweden, while foreign-born persons constitute 19 percent of the total population.

In general terms Indians seem to have succeeded fairly well in their economic, social and cultural integration into the Swedish society, while their political participation has been more restricted. Before coming to any further conclusions, however, it is crucial to conduct more sociological and anthropological research on various aspects of the immigration and integration of different migrant groups within the more heterogeneous community. As the Indian population in Sweden has grown larger, empirically-based studies are needed in order to understand how people with different social and cultural backgrounds mobilize efforts to understand difference, negotiate identities and adapt to the Swedish society on their journey to becoming full members of a multi-cultural society.

¹⁰⁰ *Statistiska centralbyrån*, "Kommunalfullmäktigevalen 2010. Röstningsförhållanden efter kön och medborgarskapsland"; Landstingsfullmäktigevalen 2010. Röstningsförhållanden efter kön och medborgarskapsland"; Riksdagsvalet 2010. Röstningsförhållanden efter kön och födelsegruppsland".

¹⁰¹ In 2006 Swapna Sharma from Bihar was elected as a candidate for the Social Democratic party in Sollentuna county. See the magazine *Samband*, vol 23 Oct-Dec (2006), p. 21. Malkyat Singh from Punjab was, in the 2010 county council elections, a candidate for the same party in Lund.

¹⁰² *Statistiska centralbyrån*, "Kandidater i kommunfullmäktigval, antal samt andelar i procent efter tid, kön, tabelluppgift och medborgarskapsland"; "Kandidater i landstingsfullmäktigval, antal samt andelar i procent efter tid, kön, tabelluppgift och medborgarskapsland"; "Kandidater i riksdagsval, antal samt andelar i procent efter tid, kön, tabelluppgift och födelseregion"; available at: www.scb.se.

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