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IMMIGRATION AND TRANSITION TO EMPLOYMENT IN SWEDEN:  
A LIFE COURSE PERSPECTIVE

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## ***Introduction***

International migration became increasingly complex at the end of the twentieth century. The collapse of the Soviet Union, conflicts in the former Yugoslavia and elsewhere in the world, together with the growing integration among European countries contributed to the escalation and abundance of European immigration in the 1990s. Despite its small population, Sweden became one of the main receiving countries of asylum seekers in Europe at that time (SCB 2006). Yugoslavia and Bosnia-Herzegovina were the two most important countries of origin and in 1993 constituted 80 per cent of all asylum seekers in Sweden. Other major migration flows came from the Middle East, mainly on family reunification grounds, and from the Nordic countries.

This large-scale wave of immigration in the early 1990s coincided with a severe recession in the Western economies. Together with Finland, Sweden was the country that suffered the most from the economic downturn, with unemployment and long-term social assistance recipiency reaching their peaks in recent history (Palme, Bergmark *et al.* 2002). Particularly hit were the many newly arrived migrants, who faced considerable difficulties in entering the labour market (Bergmark and Bäckman 2004). Additionally, the degree of ethnic conflicts escalated in Sweden as a result of increased discrimination and xenophobia, segregation and separation between foreign and native-born populations (Andersson and Bråmås 2004; de los Reyes 2000; Pred 2000; Rydgren 2004). The process of segregation in the labour market thus coincided with international migrants settling in the most excluded residential areas, the ‘distressed neighbourhoods’, which consisted of large-scale housing blocks built during the Million Homes Programme 1965–75 (Andersson 2006). Although their standard is relatively

high on an international comparison, the distressed neighbourhoods symbolise the contemporary challenges of international migration in Sweden.

Migration is the result of a complex mix of external and internal events. In addition to economic, political and other structural factors, micro-level factors of the individual migrant are crucial in the migration process. Perhaps the most important individual characteristic for migration to occur is related to age, or more broadly the life course (Fischer and Malmberg 2001; Warnes 1992). The typical migrant is young, at the stage in life when individuals leave home and establish themselves in a new place, and when several events in everyday life influence the decision to migrate. However, not only the act of out-migration, but also the process of adjustment into the new society are closely related to the individual life course. Patterns of internal residential migration, educational career, and entrance into the labour market are examples of interlinked life histories (Karweit and Kertzer 1998), which for the international migrant could take particular and often difficult shapes. Newly arrived migrants more often reside in the distressed neighbourhoods of a city, where the negative context of the neighbourhood, or 'neighbourhood effects', may impede the socio-economic careers of residents (Friedrichs 1998; Friedrichs, Galster *et al.* 2003). Viewed from a life course perspective, therefore, an individual's emigration, residential and occupational histories could be crucially interlinked.

The unfortunate coincidence of growth in the number of international migrants and the economic recession in the beginning of the 1990s made the migrants' entrance into the Swedish labour market particularly difficult. It is therefore very important to investigate the factors that shaped their employment during this particular period. The aim of this paper is to clarify the selectivity affecting the entrance into the labour market among the newly arrived

migrants from a life course perspective. More specifically, we focus on the event of entering employment from a position outside the labour market. As a way to connect residential and occupational histories of the newly arrived migrants, we are particularly interested in the effect of living in a distressed neighbourhood on getting the first job.

Our study seeks answers to the following main research questions, each related to the 1993 migrant cohort to Sweden: Firstly, what is the shape of the survival rate in getting employed? Secondly, what is the selectivity of migrants in their improvement towards employment? Thirdly, what is the impact of neighbourhood characteristics, especially living in distressed areas, on getting the first job? The paper proceeds as follows. We start by presenting the life course perspective on immigration and by introducing the data and methods of the study. We use annual Swedish population register data for the years 1993–2002, and we focus on the transition of the 1993 migrant cohort to employment during this period by fitting discrete-time logistic regression equations. This leads us to the results of the study, where we present both descriptive statistics based on life table analysis and results of the logistic regression on the differences in the transition to employment for the 1993 migrant cohort.

### ***The Life Course Perspective: Occupational and Residential Histories of Migrants***

The emergence of a life course approach and event history analysis has marked an important methodological development in population studies and analytical sciences over the past two decades (Kulu 2008). According to Giele and Elder (1998: 22), the life course refers to ‘a

sequence of socially defined events and roles that the individual enacts over time'. Individual life course trajectories are affected by a complex web of interrelations between (1) the context or location in time and space, (2) the cohort undergoing the target event, (3) the particular events and 'turning points' of an individual's life history, and (4) linked lives or the interrelations with other individuals. Individual life histories can be approached as the sum of histories in various domains in life, such as occupational, educational, residential and family histories (Karweit and Kertzer 1998).

In geography, an increased focus on the spatial dimension has been added to the study of individual biographies within the time-geographic perspective (Hägerstrand 1975). The individual reach of a place is restricted by time (among other factors); the life paths are restricted by legal domains with a spatial range; and the life paths of many individuals intersect in a certain place. In this way, the inclusion of space as a central dimension in the life course comes to the forefront regarding human mobility and migration. Within migration studies, the notion of the life course has mainly been used to explain the migration decision in respect to life events and age (Fischer and Malmberg 2001; Warnes 1992). It is widely known that young individuals who are about to leave the parents' home and settle into a life of their own, as well as, to a certain degree, older people, have a higher mobility. Other life events, like educational, employment, family and housing careers, also trigger migration (Kulu 2008).

In the case of immigration, not only the *age cohort*, but also the *migrant cohort* is important for understanding the interplay between migration and other life careers. The broader definition of the cohort as an aggregation of individuals who experience the same event within the same time interval (Ryder 1965) would include migration as a decisive life event that shapes the subsequent life trajectories of the individuals concerned. The 'socially defined

events and roles', which form the life course according to Giele and Elder (1998), change quite fundamentally as an individual migrates to a new country. From the perspective of the current paper, therefore, the event of international migration is a formative event in the individual life course which connects individual life histories with the temporal and spatial structures of contemporary Sweden. In this paper, we focus on the transition to employment, and the interlinked residential careers, within the 1993 migrant cohort between 1993 and 2002.

The employment career of international migrants is associated with many difficulties in their new society. Discrimination, lack of human and social capital, unfavourable networking, and segmentation in the labour market are some of the important obstacles that the newly arrived international migrants face in the labour market (Glazer 1975; Martin and Morrison 2003; Morrison 1990; Peck 1989). Such structures render migrants more likely than the native population to occupy vulnerable positions outside the labour market, such as unemployment and social assistance recipiency. Importantly, however, their exclusion from the labour market tends to decrease over time as the migrants adjust themselves to the structures of the host country (Brubaker 2001). We find such evidence in Sweden (Hedberg, *forthcoming*; Nekby 2002; Rooth and Ekberg 2006). Still, however, the persistence of exclusion is evident in the form of lower labour market participation for older migrant groups compared to the native Swedish population.

The second life history of particular interest in this paper is the residential one. The socio-economic and residential segregation of a city separates individuals with low disposable income and employment rates to more distressed areas, whereas more affluent individuals leave for wealthier areas (Andersson and Bråmås 2004; Bailey and Livingstone 2008; van

Lenthe, Martikainen et al. 2007). Newly arrived international migrants tend to enter the least affluent residential areas, while longer-established migrants and the native population tend to leave them. In Swedish large city regions, the proportion of people with foreign background in the distressed neighbourhoods is rapidly increasing as a result of growing immigration, and the proportion of native-born has dropped to less than fifty percent in many of these areas (Storstadsdelegationen 2006). This adds a growing ethnic dimension to the process of residential segregation (Andersson 1998).

Thus, the population composition of urban neighbourhoods is rapidly changing, and a growing body of research addresses the neighbourhood effects on the outcomes of various individual careers. The hypothesis of neighbourhood effects assumes that the socio-economic composition of the neighbourhood has an independent impact on an individual's labour-market outcomes (Friedrichs 1998; Friedrichs and Blasius 2003; Musterd and Andersson 2006). Otherwise expressed, it argues that individuals with similar personal backgrounds experience different socio-economic careers, depending on their neighbourhood. The mechanisms behind the process may be described as (1) the lack of neighbourhood resources and services, as well as a bad reputation for the area generally, (2) negative social ties and networks, which reduce the possibility of advancement in the society, (3) attitudes and behaviours within the neighbourhood which would hamper the individual's socialisation process, and (4) negative perceptions of people's own residential area, which would negatively affect their socio-economic careers. However, the empirical results of the studies of neighbourhood effects are contradictory, as not all of the analyses have been able to detect those effects (see, for example, Andersson and Subramanian 2006; Atkinson and Kintrea 2001; Bolster, Burgess *et al.* 2007; Brännström 2004; Hedberg, in process). It is still important to investigate the presence of neighbourhood effects more closely.

## ***Data and methods***

This study uses a longitudinal Swedish population register database called PLACE, which covers all individuals in Sweden. Longitudinal data are vital in life course studies, since data of the same cohort, collected at multiple points in time, give analytical power to the systematic study of individual changes over time (Giele and Elder 1998; Singer and Willett 2003). Swedish register data have been used in previous studies on neighbourhood effects in Sweden (Andersson and Subramanian 2006; Andersson and Bråmås 2004; Musterd and Andersson 2006). The main contribution of this study comes through the use of the life course approach and through the focus on the differences of the event of obtaining employment among international migrants living in distressed and other areas, controlling for other individual and area characteristics. We follow the *1993 migrant cohort to Sweden* as it proceeds to employment. Additionally, we apply more restrictions in selecting the research population. First, we focus on those international migrants who did not have a job immediately upon arrival, i.e. in the year 1993. These people comprised 85 per cent of the total 1993 migrant cohort. Second, we study migrants of working age, i.e. those aged 25–64 at the time of arrival. Third, we study migrants living in either Stockholm, the capital of Sweden, or Malmö, the third largest Swedish city (Figure 1). In this way, we contrast the capital region, where the largest absolute number of international migrants resides in Sweden, to Malmö, where the relative share of the foreign born population is the highest and where migrants have a particularly low participation in the labour market (Storstadsdelegationen 2006).



The clock for our study starts in 1993, when the migrant cohort arrives in Sweden and we begin to track the cohort's transition to employment between 1994 and 2002, using an annual metric. The quality of the metric in the data is assured, and event occurrence is obtained from data on the individuals' registered income in the Swedish Income Tax Register as in November of the respective year. Events of death and emigration were censored out from the database. We should mention, however, that the quality of emigration data of the foreign-born population is not fully assured (SCB 2006); a large proportion of migrants do not register their departure from Sweden, and so they remain in the population outside the labour market in our database (see 'missing data' in Table 1). We removed people with missing data from our database.

TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

Two central definitions of the current study in addition to the 1993 migrant cohort are employment and distressed neighbourhood. *Employment* was calculated on an individual basis through the use of annual income tax data. A requirement to be counted as employed was that the individual earned more than the basic amount geared to the price index for that year from either employment or running an own business. When individuals gained income from multiple sources, they were counted as employed only when this represented their highest source of income. A *distressed neighbourhood* is as officially defined by the Swedish government (Proposition 1997/98:165). This proposition defined 24 distressed areas with the purpose of stopping residential segregation under the area-based policy programme. The distressed neighbourhoods are classified according to their inhabitants' particularly low disposable income in the 1990s (Storstadskommittén 1997). As many as 20 of these areas are located in Stockholm and Malmö, while the other four are in the second largest city of Sweden, Göteborg (Figure 1).

FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE

Following the annual metric of time in our database, we applied discrete-time event history analysis to study migrant transition to employment. First, we constructed life tables to study the differences in survival and hazard rates of getting employed, by gender, age in 1993 (25–34, 35–49, 50–64), continents/regions of origin (West Europe, East Europe, West Asia, East Asia, North America and South America), refugee status (origin from a refugee or a non-refugee country), place of entry to Sweden (Stockholm, Malmö), and neighbourhood type (distressed versus other areas in Sweden). Second, we applied logistic regression on our data in order to analyse the effect of various individual and area characteristics on the employment event. The regression model may be written as follows:

$$\log \frac{p(Y_{it} = 1)}{1 - p(Y_{it} = 1)} = \alpha + \sum_{k=1}^K \beta_k X_{kit} \quad ,$$

where  $p(Y_{it} = 1)$  is the probability of getting employed for an individual  $i = 1, \dots, I$  during  $t = 1994, \dots, 2002$ ;  $\alpha_{it}$  is constant;  $X_{kit}$  is the value of the variable  $k$  for an individual  $i$  at year  $t$ ; and  $\beta_k$  is the parameter describing the impact of this variable, with  $K$  variables. As we are particularly interested in the effect of residence in distressed areas on getting employed, we include only this variable in the regression equation as a first step (Model 1). In Model 2, we analyse the impact of various neighbourhood variables, as in 1993, on the probability of getting a job, including living in a neighbourhood above or below median income (1302 SEK), residing in a neighbourhood with a high or low share of international migrants, and the shares of private and public housing in the area of residence. Model 3 explores the impact of migration variables, including continent of origin, refugee country, and living in Stockholm or Malmö, as well as individual characteristics of gender, age, civil status, having a child, and educational level on the transition to employment. Accordingly, Model 3 investigates the

existence of neighbourhood effects once the personal and migration-related variables are taken into account.

### ***Background statistics of the research population***

The main region of origin for the 1993 migrant cohort to Sweden was East Europe, from which the majority of refugees were from Bosnia-Herzegovina. The second largest group arrived from West Asia, mainly Iraq. West Europe was the third largest origin and included mainly migrants from Finland. In our study we were interested in international migrants who were outside the labour market at the time of arrival in Sweden, and who formed 85 per cent of the total migrant population in 1993. Thus, most of the migrants arrived without having a job waiting, which makes the study of their transition to the labour market particularly interesting. International migrants without a job were over-represented in the distressed neighbourhoods; they originated mainly from regions other than West Europe and North America (Table 2). Migrants from West Asia had a particularly low probability of being employed during their year of arrival in Sweden, as did migrants from East Europe and Africa.

TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

When simple aggregated data were considered, the main development for the 1993 migrant cohort across the ten-year study period was, as expected, an increase in employment and decrease in dependence on social allowance (Table 1). Emigration increased over time, and one-fifth of the population had departed from Sweden by the end of our study period in 2002. Individuals with missing values were also of interest. In 1994, they formed almost 20 per cent

of the population, which probably was a result of not yet being registered in the Swedish tax system. With time, however, the missing values probably also included migrants who had just never registered their departure from Sweden.

Our analysis focuses on the first entrance to the labour market in Sweden of the 1993 migrant cohort who were not employed upon arrival. Table 3 shows the duration of the first job by the year of first labour market entry. Among individuals who obtained their first employment in 1994, the majority left it within the first three years, and even in 2002 only 28 per cent kept their first job. The proportion of people who remained at their first job expectedly increased for those who obtained it in later years, as they had less time to leave it. Among migrants who obtained their first job in 1997 or after, more than 50 per cent remained in the labour market until 2002. The duration of the first job increased over time as well. While 31 per cent of the migrants entering the labour market in 1994 left their job during the first year, the comparable figure was 22 per cent for those who entered the labour market for the first time in 2001. This is probably related both to the better integration of international migrants over time and the general improvement of the Swedish economy as the recession gave way to economic growth towards the end of our study period. Overall, 63 per cent of the total 1993 migrant cohort out-of-labour-force at the time of arrival in 1993 worked shorter or longer periods between 1993 and 2002.

TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE

### ***The transition to employment in the 1993 migrant cohort***

Let us now take a closer look at the differences in the transition to employment in the 1993 migrant cohort, taking into account the data censoring, i.e. people who left the research population due to death or emigration. As we already observed, the probability of getting employed increased steadily over time; 100 per cent of the research population was outside the labour market in 1993, but when the censoring is accounted for, we observe that half of them were employed after six years in Sweden (by 1998/1999), and only 22 per cent remained outside the labour market by 2002. This general improvement of status in the labour market was, however, largely influenced by the migrants' personal and geographical characteristics. Women had a lower probability of entering the labour market compared to men; half of the women became employed one year later than men and in 2002 a total of 27 per cent of the women and 21 per cent of the men remained outside the labour market (Figure 2).

FIGURE 2 ABOUT HERE

In accordance with the life course perspective, age plays an important role in event occurrence. The oldest age-group (50–64 years in 1993) naturally diverges from the younger groups with only 40 per cent being in the labour market in 2002 (Figure 3). However, their probability of getting employed was remarkably low also in the beginning of the study period, when they were still of working age. This indicates that older people of working age do not come to Sweden with job-related motives, which is quite different from the younger people aged below 50. The probability of getting employed was the highest for the youngest age group (aged 25–34, and their differences from the middle-aged (aged 35–49) increased over

time, with 13 per cent of the young adults and 23 per cent of the middle-aged being jobless in 2002.

### FIGURE 3 ABOUT HERE

Geographic setting plays a significant role in the transition to employment among the migrants. The differences by region of origin are particularly distinct during the first years after arrival. The probability of entering the labour market is especially high for migrants from both West Europe and North America at the beginning of the study period. More than 50 per cent of the population were employed already in 1996/1997, which is two years earlier than the total migrant population. However, their later improvement was slow compared to the rest of the migrant cohort, and their final participation in the labour market was actually lower than that of other migrant groups. Thus, in 2002, 31 per cent of the West Europeans and 39 per cent of the North Americans were outside the labour market. At the other end of the spectrum, migrants from West Asia had the greatest difficulties in entering the labour market, and not until 1999/2000 were more than 50 per cent of them employed. Thus, they entered the labour market very slowly, but nonetheless made a steady and accelerating progress at the end of the study period. In 2002, 29 per cent of the migrants from West Asia were still outside the labour market, which was actually less than the West European and North American migrants. Migrants from East Europe also had a low probability of obtaining a job just after arrival, but their situation started to improve much earlier compared to those from West Asia. Consequently, only 19 per cent of the East Europeans were still not employed by 2002, which was the lowest rate of all migrant groups. Migrants from the other three regions had a relatively high probability of finding a job after entering Sweden, their hazard rate (not shown) or probability of obtaining a job staying relatively flat with a moderate upward trend

during the study period. By the year 2002, some 27 per cent of the migrants from East Asia, 26 per cent from Africa, and 20 per cent from South America were outside the labour market.

#### FIGURE 4 ABOUT HERE

The progress to employment diverged considerably across individuals coming from a refugee country and those from other countries during the first two years after arrival. There is also one year's difference between these country groups in reaching the 50 per cent employment level. Among migrants coming from a refugee country, the majority had obtained a first job in 1998/1999, whereas other groups had entered the labour market on average one year earlier (Figure 5). However, the situation of people from refugee countries improved considerably on the labour market over time, as their hazard rate shows a clear upward trend. Thus, 24 per cent of the migrants from refugee countries remained outside the labour market in 2002, which is similar to the data on migrants from other countries (23 per cent). There were some differences in getting employed between those arriving in Stockholm or Malmö, and ending up in a distressed area or another area. The majority of the migrants became employed one year earlier in Stockholm compared to Malmö (Figure 6). In 2002, some 22 percent of the migrants in Stockholm and 29 percent of those in Malmö still had no job. Similarly to people coming from refugee countries, settling in distressed<sup>1</sup> neighbourhoods was a significant disadvantage in entering labour market during the first years in Sweden, and half of them got employed in 1998/1999, which was one year later compared to the migrants residing outside distressed areas. Later, such negative neighbourhood effects diminished. Still, 27 per cent of

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<sup>1</sup> The year 1994 is considered instead of 1993, since mobility flows between residential areas were considerably higher the first year compared to all following years. In 1994, 27 per cent of the population lived in distressed areas, a share which by 2002 had decreased to 22 per cent. The investigation of 1994 probably gives a more accurate picture of the population after the first settlement pattern of international migrants, who sometimes had high mobility.

the migrants living in distressed areas did not have a job in 2002, as opposed to 22 per cent of those living elsewhere.

FIGURE 5 ABOUT HERE

FIGURE 6 ABOUT HERE

FIGURE 7 ABOUT HERE

Accordingly, the descriptive results of the life table analysis show a constant movement towards employment for the 1993 migrant cohort to Sweden. It also became evident that geographic variables, including country of origin and living in a distressed area had an impact on the transition to the first job.

To analyse the intertwined life histories of international migration, employment and residency more closely, we extended our analysis to a multivariate research setting by focussing on the effect of living in distressed areas on getting employed. Model 1 (Table 4) confirms that living in a distressed area significantly reduced the odds of getting a job. This negative effect persisted after controlling for other neighbourhood characteristics (Model 2, Table 4).

Residing in a neighbourhood with mainly private housing strongly reduced the probability of quickly obtaining employment. This result is surprising, but could perhaps be explained by family migration. A high share of international migrants in the neighbourhood and a lower-than-median income in the neighbourhood also had independent negative effects on getting employed. Before controlling for personal characteristics, we thus see significant differences between various neighbourhood types, be they the particularly distressed areas or investigated due to their general composition of housing, ethnicity and income.



## TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE

Adding personal characteristics, however, (Model 3, Table 4) rendered all the neighbourhood effects insignificant with the exception of living in a distressed neighbourhood. Furthermore, the importance of this variable decreases as well. These results mean that migration-related and personal variables rather than neighbourhood variables shaped the entrance of immigrants to the labour market. Coming from West Asia, and also from East Asia and Africa, strongly reduced the probability of becoming employed. Also coming from North America, from a refugee country, and to some degree from East Europe, had an effect on getting the first job. Living in Malmö reduced employment probabilities compared to living in Stockholm. But personal variables are most significantly related to labour market entry. Having more than 12 years of education significantly raised the chances of newly arrived immigrants getting employed, while belonging to the oldest age group (aged 50–64 at the time of arrival to Sweden) had a significant opposite effect. Women were considerably less likely to enter the labour market than men, while having a child had again a significant opposite effect.

### ***Conclusions***

When an individual migrates to a different country, voluntarily or by forced eviction, his or her life enters a different path. The individual life course, as a series of shifting events and roles, undergoes fundamental changes in many domains of life. In this paper we have focussed on the first entrance into the labour market of newly arrived migrants and on the interrelation between occupational and residential life histories. The migrants arrived in Sweden in 1993, a distinctly difficult time due to the economic recession, which was severe compared to other European countries. We then followed their progress towards employment

during the period 1994--2002. This was a period when the general situation in the Swedish labour market improved.

Looking first at the migrants' occupational history, the results show a general improvement in the labour market, but with important differences among various sub-groups. The initial entrance of migrants into the labour market was slow; not until five years after arrival in Sweden did the majority of the cohort, which was outside the labour market in 1993, obtain their first employment. Thereafter, however, the pace of entrance accelerated, and in 2002 only 22 per cent had still not reached the labour market. Labour market entry also varied depending on the migrants' personal characteristics. Men proceeded more easily to employment than women, and higher education was a considerable advantage in getting a first job. Age of arrival in Sweden was significant. Older migrants (aged 50-64) showed a slow progress towards employment; apparently, they do not come to Sweden with job-related motives, which is quite different from the younger migrants (aged 25-49). More specifically, we can argue that the younger the migrants are upon arrival the higher is their probability to get a job in Sweden. The region of emigration is also very important in entering the labour market. West Europeans have expectedly the best access to the labour market, as they quickly enter the labour market after arrival. The subsequent improvement of the total migrant cohort over time was due the increase in the labour market participation by non-Western migrants in the context of the economic growth that occurred in Sweden during the study period. Migrants from West Asia and East Europe had particularly slow entries into the labour market, but they made considerable improvements over time. Similarly, coming from a refugee country slowed down the first entry of employment, but this difference had evened out by the end of the study period in 2002.

The examination of the intertwined occupational and residential life histories adds a further dimension to the analysis of migration and the life course. According to the theory of neighbourhood effects, socio-economic careers are dependent on the residential area, independently of other factors (Friedrichs 1998; Friedrichs and Blasius 2003). So, there would be a correlation between labour market entrance and place of residence. Our results indicate that newly arrived migrants who reside in neighbourhoods with high concentrations of international migrants, low median income, and low share of private housing significantly reduced the odds of getting a job. In particular, the population of the most vulnerable areas, the distressed neighbourhoods, has low labour market participation. However, these differences disappear after controlling for various geographical and personal characteristics; only living in a distressed neighbourhood remains statistically significant but with reduced importance. The most important personal variable reducing neighbourhood effects was education. It follows that living in distressed areas to some extent is a disadvantage, while a high migrant concentration or low socio-economic status in the area *per se* does not have a negative impact on the transition to employment. Such results could lean support to the distressed area policies for integration of newly arrived migrants. However, more urgent would be a continued focus on education for newly arrived migrants in order to improve their labour market participation.

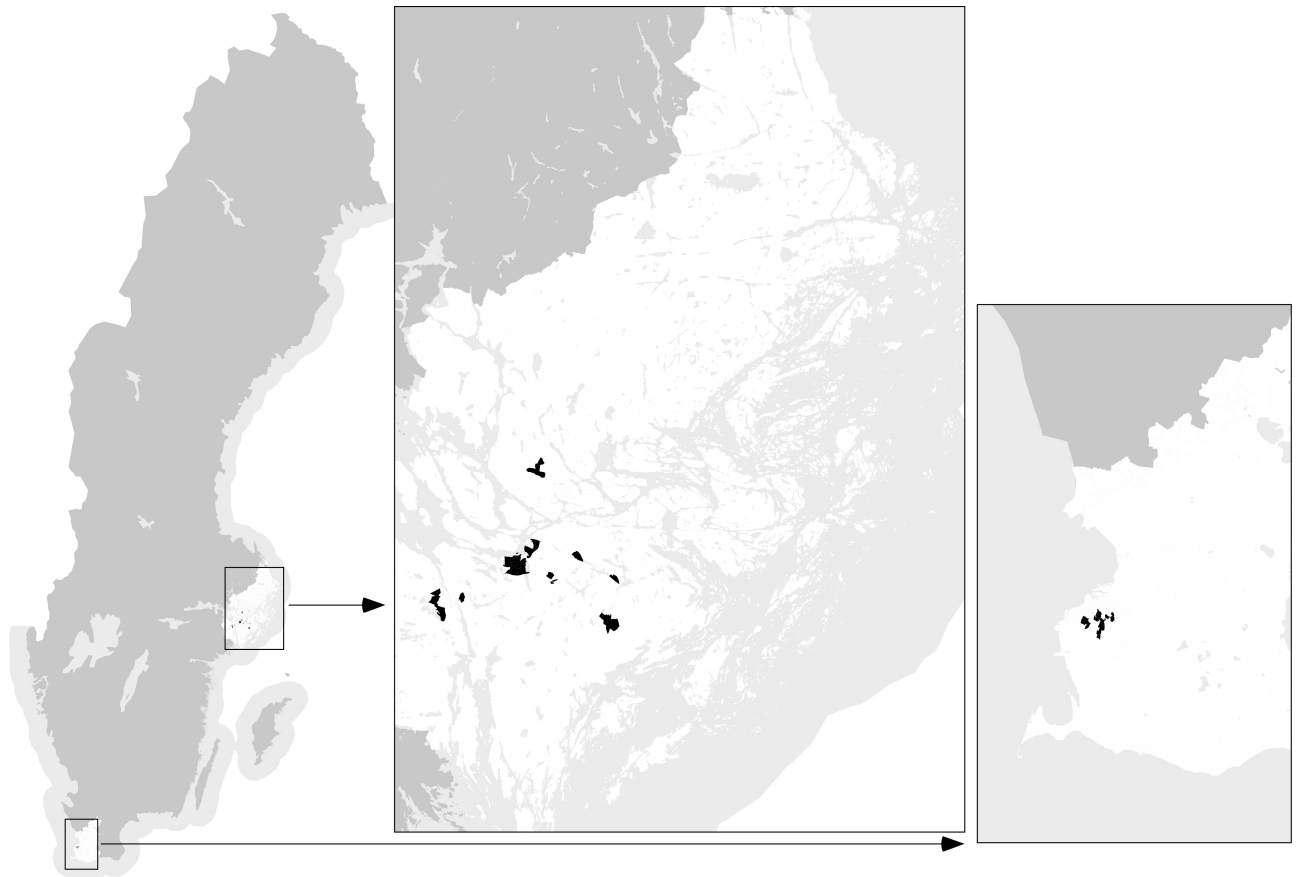
To summarise, the event of international migration seriously affects individual life histories in multifaceted ways. To elaborate on the migrants' labour market entry is only one way to reach a further understanding of the migrant experience in a new society. However, employment can often be an essential gate to inclusion in other domains of society as well. Occupational histories are often intertwined with other individual life trajectories, including aspects such as contact with the majority society, political participation, and a general sense of belonging. In

this respect, this paper yields both positive and negative future implications. On the one hand, only one-fifth of the 1993 migrants were outside the labour market ten years later. This fact could indicate that many migrants were indeed successful in the new society. On the other hand, however, the pace of transition to employment varied significantly by population sub-groups, and we could observe a particular delay among non-Western migrant groups. Half of them were not in employment after five years in Sweden and during that period exclusion from society could emerge in other social domains as well, which could be difficult to repair. Our results thus confirm that we should pay more attention to the time factor in studying the socio-economic advancement of migrants in new host societies.

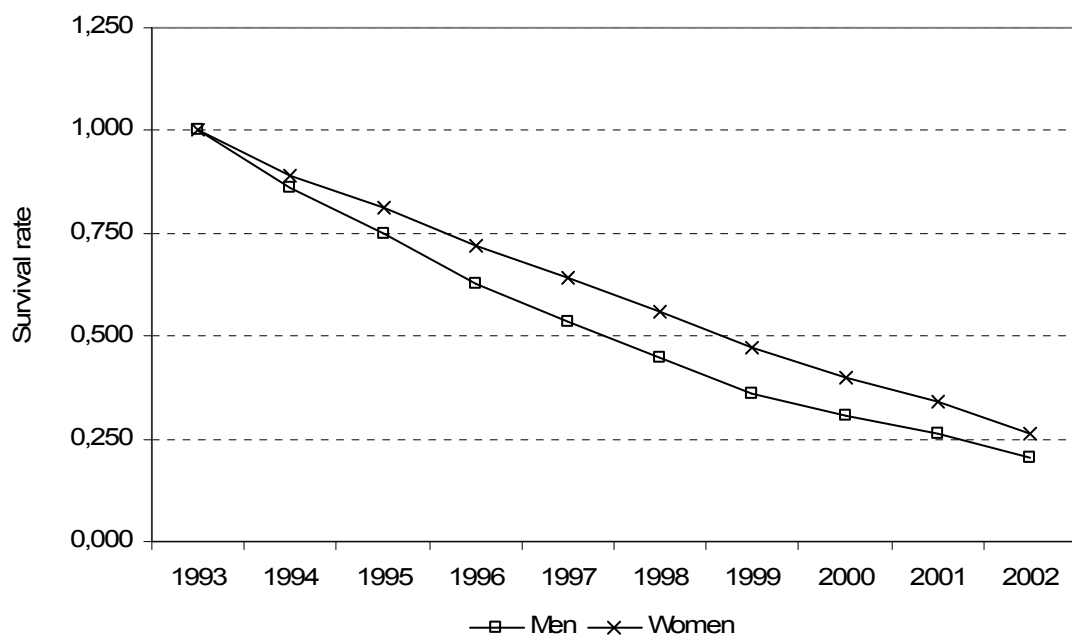
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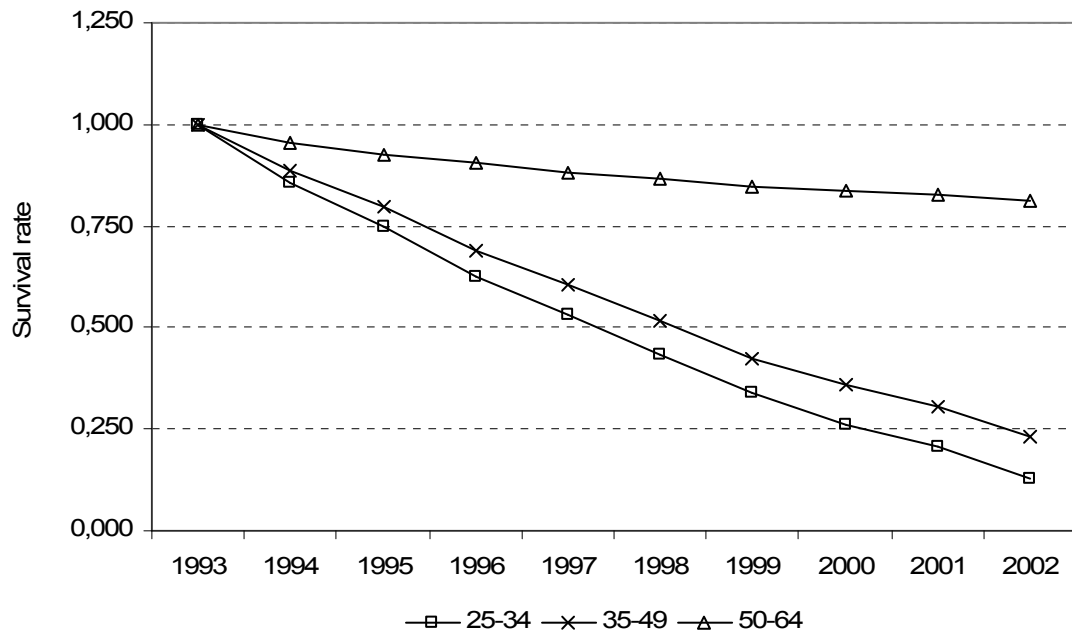


**Figure 1.** Location of Stockholm (*centre*) and Malmö (*right*) metropolitan areas (distressed neighbourhoods in black)

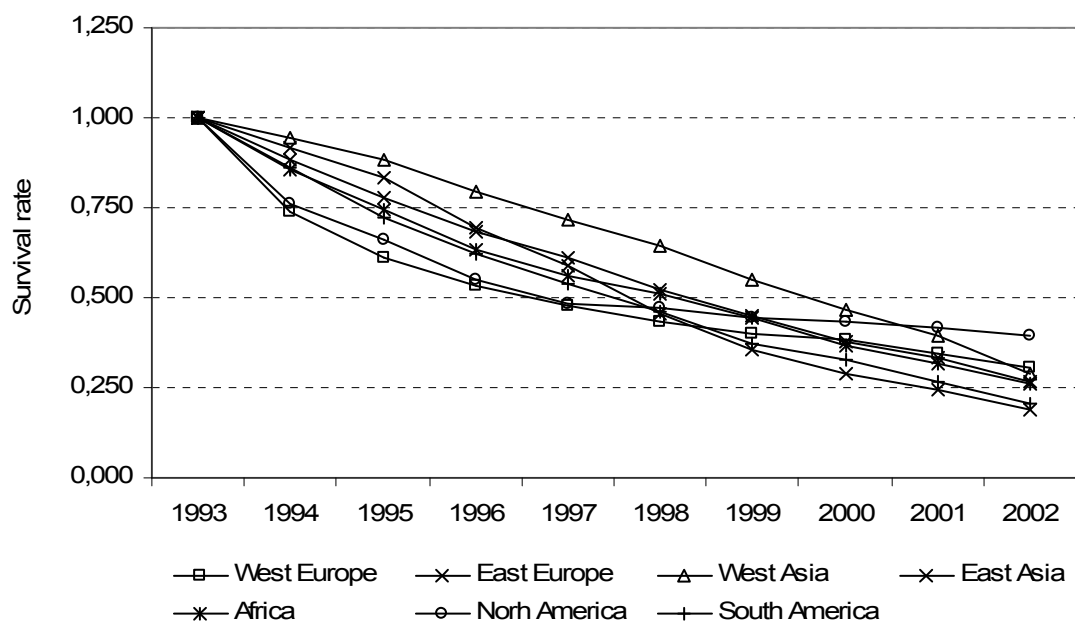


**Figure 2.** Transition to employment by gender (survival rate), 1993–2002

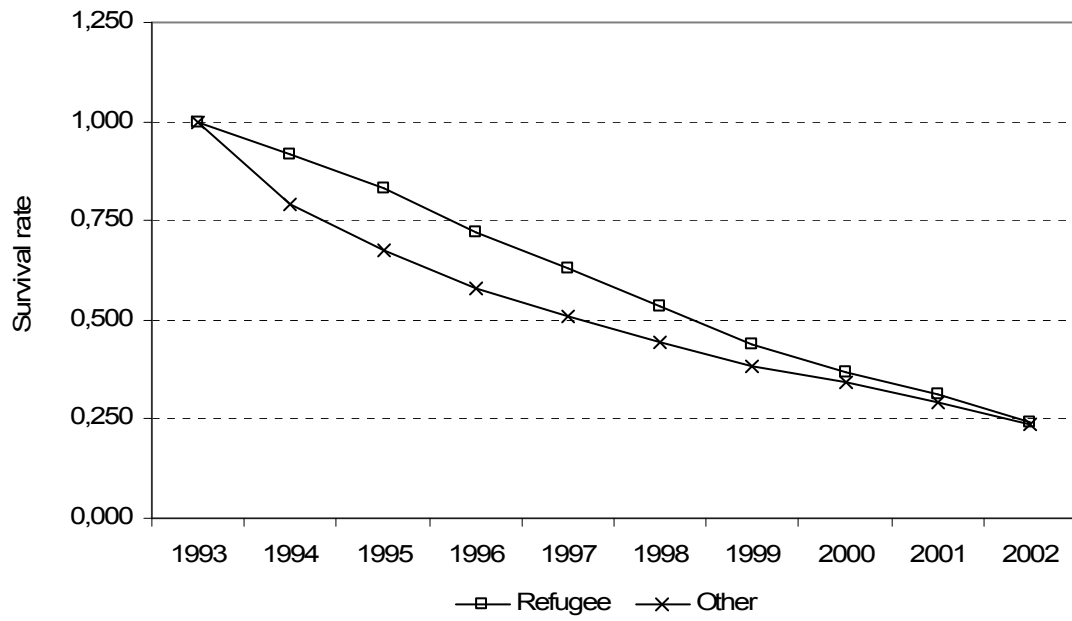




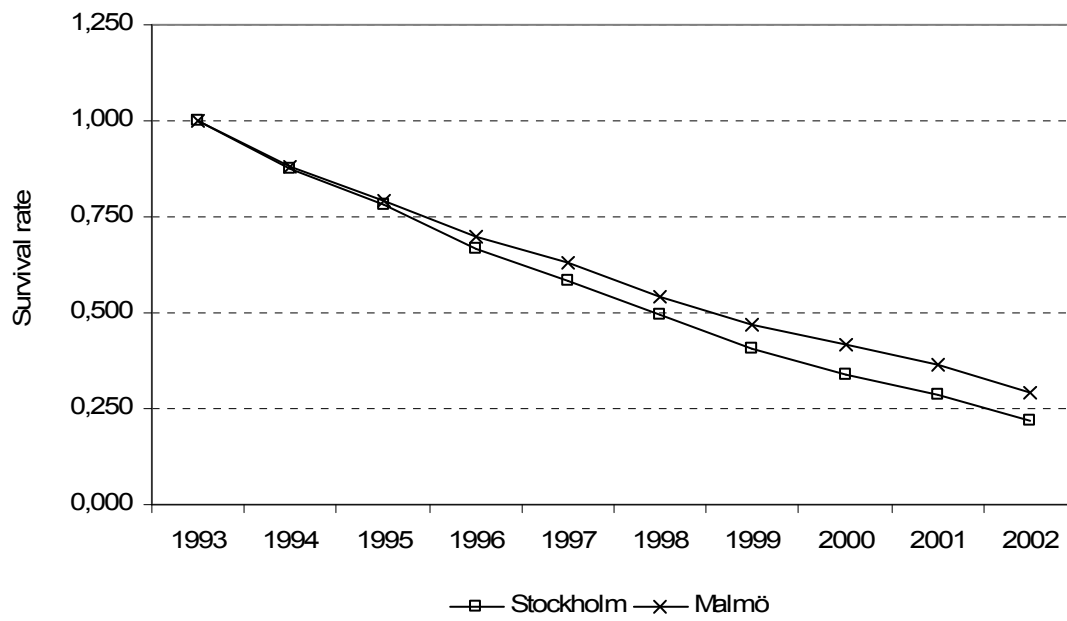
**Figure 3.** Transition to employment by age (survival rate), 1993–2002



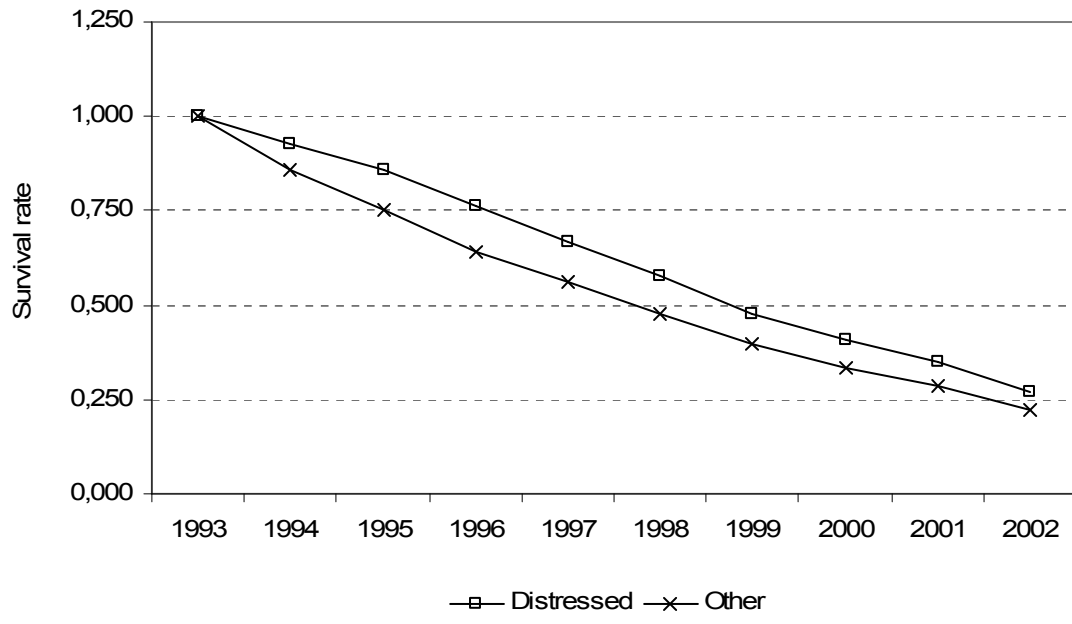
**Figure 4.** Transition to employment by region of origin (survival rate), 1993–2002



**Figure 5.** Transition to employment by refugee status (survival rate), 1993–2002



**Figure 6.** Transition to employment by city of residence (survival rate), 1993–2002



**Figure 7.** Transition to employment by neighbourhood type (survival rate), 1993–2002

**Table 1.** Share of population by employment or other status  
(% of total population; N = 6599).

	Employ- ment	Social allowance	Unemp- loyment	Student	Other incomes <sup>2</sup>	Death	Emigration	Missing data	Total
1994	12.4	47.0	0.9	1.9	15.6	0.3	3.4	18.6	100.0
1995	17.6	33.6	3.5	3.4	22.6	0.4	6.9	12.0	100.0
1996	23.4	29.4	5.2	4.4	16.0	0.5	9.2	11.9	100.0
1997	26.7	27.2	4.4	5.2	12.1	0.7	12.0	11.7	100.0
1998	32.2	22.1	4.0	5.9	9.8	0.8	13.9	11.3	100.0
1999	37.4	17.2	3.9	4.7	9.8	1.0	15.3	10.7	100.0
2000	42.3	13.9	2.8	3.4	9.2	1.2	16.4	10.7	100.0
2001	44.9	10.9	1.9	2.6	11.0	1.4	17.2	10.2	100.0
2002	46.0	6.8	2.3	2.0	13.6	1.5	18.1	9.7	100.0

<sup>2</sup> The main income comes from social benefits other than social allowances. Other incomes include age-pension and maternal leave.

**Table 2.** Distribution of 1993 migrant cohort upon arrival by employment status (%).

		Employed	Not employed	Total
Neighbourhood type (1993)	Distressed	6.5	93.5	100
	Other	17.5	82.5	100
Large city region (1993)	Stockholm	15.8	84.2	100
	Malmö	12.9	87.1	100
Refugee country	Yes	4.0	96.0	100
	No	31.4	68.6	100
Origin	West Europe	43.1	56.9	100
	East Europe	5.3	94.7	100
	West Asia	1.5	98.5	100
	East Asia	9.2	90.8	100
	Africa	5.9	94.1	100
	North America	29.3	70.7	100
	South America	7.0	93.0	100
Age (1993)	25–34	15.8	84.2	100
	35–49	15.3	84.7	100
	50–64	10.8	89.2	100
Civil status (1993)	Married	10.7	89.3	100
	Unmarried	24.0	76.0	100
	Divorced	22.2	77.8	100
	Other	4.1	95.9	100
Children (1993)	Yes	18.7	81.3	100
	No	10.4	89.6	100
Education (1993)	Low (less than 12 years)	16.8	83.2	100
	Middle (12 years)	38.9	61.1	100
	High (more than 12 years)	57.5	42.5	100
N		15.2	84.8	100

**Table 3.** Duration of first employment (years)

Year of first employment	Duration of first employment										Frequency	
	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	Number	%
1994	<b>27.9</b>	1.5	2.8	2.9	4.5	5.1	9.2	15.3	30.6		816	12.4
1995		<b>35.4</b>	2.0	2.5	3.7	4.4	6.4	14.8	30.7		593	9.0
1996			<b>46.7</b>	1.9	2.8	3.6	7.2	11.0	26.9		643	9.7
1997				<b>54.6</b>	3.9	4.4	4.1	11.0	22.0		482	7.3
1998					<b>61.2</b>	4.8	5.8	8.3	20.0		484	7.3
1999						<b>69.8</b>	5.1	10.6	14.4		451	6.8
2000							<b>70.1</b>	14.4	15.6		334	5.1
2001								<b>78.3</b>	21,7		235	3,6
2002									<b>100.0</b>		132	2,0
0										<b>100.0</b>	2429	36,8
	228	222	335	314	392	450	464	657	1108	2429	6599	100



**Table 4.** Results of logistic regression

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Time (Base: 1993)			
1994	0,856 **	0,857 **	0,806 ***
1995	1,141 *	1,143 *	1,103 *
1996	1,007	1,011	1,031
1997	1,251 ***	1,258 ***	1,353 ***
1998	1,441 ***	1,453 ***	1,684 ***
1999	1,273 **	1,283 ***	1,582 ***
2000	1,170 *	1,182 *	1,545 ***
2001	1,581 ***	1,597 ***	2,158 ***
Distressed neighborhood (Base: No)			
Yes	0,732 ***	0,757 ***	0,895 *
Dominant neighbourhood housing (Base: Rental)			
Private		0,860 ***	0,923 *
Migrant share in neighbourhood (Base: Below median)			
Above median		0,862 **	0,962
Median income of neighbourhood in 1993 (Base: Below)			
Above		1,115 *	1,023
City of residence (Base: Stockholm)			
Malmö			0,608 ***
Refugee country (Base: No)			
Yes			0,834 **
Immigration origin (Base: West Europe)			
East Europe			0,838 *
West Asia			0,577 ***
East Asia			0,716 ***
Africa			0,732 ***
North America			0,710 **
South America			0,864
Gender (Base: Male)			
Female			0,737 ***
Age (Base: 25–34)			
35–49			0,956
50–64			0,369 ***
Family status (Base: Other)			
Married			0,925 *
Child (Base: No)			
Yes			1,383 ***
Education (Base: Less than 12 years)			
12 years			2,317 ***
More than 12 years			2,590 ***