



Registered offending among persons of native and non-native background

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English summary of Brå report 2021:9

Summary

The distribution of registered offending among persons of native and non-native background is often a topic of discussion. The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå) has previously published two research studies on this issue, but several years have passed since the publication of the most recent study (in 2005), which focused on registered crime during the period 1997–2001. Since 2001, immigration to Sweden has increased, and the composition of the non-native population has changed. The current study was initiated against this background, with the aim of updating and improving the knowledge base on offending among persons of native and non-native background.

Three sub-studies

The study is primarily descriptive, and comprises three sub-studies, each of which has a different focus.

The first sub-study examines the proportions of Swedish residents¹ aged 15² or over on December 31, 2014, who were registered as suspected offenders in relation to one or more offences committed at some point during the period 2015–2018. The sub-study focuses on the following questions: What proportion of persons of native and non-native background were registered as suspected offenders? What is the relative risk of being registered as a crime suspect for different groups of individuals of non-native background, viewed in relation to the corresponding risk among individuals born in Sweden to two native-born parents? How much of the risk difference can be explained by variations in the groups' age and gender distributions, and are levels of possible excess risk affected if we take account of the fact that persons of non-native background often have lower incomes and lower levels of education, and that they more often live in certain types of municipality?

The second sub-study describes the trend over time in the proportions of different groups individuals of native and non-native background who are registered as suspected offenders each year. How large a proportion of these different groups were registered as crime suspects each year during the period 2007–2018?

The third and final sub-study also focuses on trends over time, but examines how the total number of offences linked to registered suspects each year are distributed across different groups during the period 2007–2018. The

¹ Persons registered as Swedish residents by the Swedish Tax Agency.

² Fifteen is the age of criminal responsibility in Sweden. Information on persons suspected of committing offences prior to the age of 15 is not retained in Sweden's Register of Suspected Offenders.

question examined here is how large a proportion of these offences were linked to a suspect from different groups who were registered as Swedish residents at the time of the offence, and how large a proportion were linked to suspects who were non-residents.

Group classifications and offence types

The study is based on data from Brå on persons suspected of offences, and data from Statistics Sweden (SCB) on native and non-native background. Native and non-native background is classified in line with the official classification employed by SCB, which distinguishes between four different groups:

- Born in Sweden, both parents born in Sweden
- Born in Sweden, one parent born abroad
- Born in Sweden, both parents born abroad
- Born abroad

Certain analyses in Sub-studies 1 and 2 also employ a more detailed classification of persons born abroad, based on their region of birth. This same classification is also applied to the mothers and fathers of those born in Sweden to two non-native parents.

The results focus on persons suspected of any type of crime, and on eight separate offence categories: Offences against life and health (Chapter 3 of the Criminal Code³), Offences against liberty and peace (Chapter 4), Sexual offences (Chapter 6), Theft and robbery offences (Chapter 8), Fraud offences (Chapter 9), Criminal damage (Chapter 12), offences against the Road Traffic Offences Act and offences against the Penal Law on Narcotics⁴. Results are also presented in relation to four offences that involve a particularly serious violation of integrity: attempted and completed homicide⁵, rape, residential burglary, and robbery. Results are also presented in relation to assault offences.

Sub-study 1: Proportions registered as suspected offenders during the period 2015–2018

The first sub-study examines the proportions of different groups who were registered as suspected offenders at some point during the period 2015–2018.

³ For a description of the offences included in the various chapters of the Swedish Criminal Code, see: <https://www.government.se/49f391/contentassets/7a2dcae0787e465e9a2431554b5eab03/the-swedish-criminal-code.pdf>

⁴ A large majority of registered drug offences relate to the personal use of illicit substances.

⁵ The vast majority of the offences in this category relate to acts that the police have registered as attempted homicide. The number of completed homicides is much smaller than the number of registered attempted offences.

A general pattern noted in this sub-study is that the proportion registered as crime suspects is lowest among native-born persons with two native-born parents, higher among native-born persons with one non-native parent, higher still among foreign-born persons and highest among persons born in Sweden to two non-native parents. This is the case for both women and men.

The proportion of the various groups registered as suspects for any type of crime are as follows:

- 3.2 percent of persons born in Sweden to two native-born parents (4.8 percent of men, 1.5 percent of women).
- 5.9 percent of persons born in Sweden to one non-native parent (8.6 percent of men, 3.1 percent of women).
- 10.2 percent of persons born in Sweden to two non-native parents (15.3 percent of men, 4.8 percent of women).
- 8.0 percent of persons born abroad (12.2 of men, 3.9 percent of women).

Thus among those who were born abroad, or who have one or two non-native parents, the proportion who were registered as suspected offenders is greater than it is among those who were born in Sweden to two native-born parents. Being registered as a crime suspect is 2½ times as common among persons born abroad as it is among persons born in Sweden to two native-born parents. Thus in relation to this latter group, persons born abroad have a relative risk of being suspected of crime equal to 2.5. For those born in Sweden to two non-native parents, the relative risk is 3.2, which means that for this group it is slightly more than three times as likely to be registered as a suspected offender as it is among those born in Sweden to two native-born parents. Those with one non-native parent have a relative risk of almost 2.

The size of the excess risk declines when differences in age, gender and living conditions are taken into account

One question of interest is to what extent the differences noted in the proportions suspected of offences are associated with differences between the groups in their age and gender distributions and certain background factors. This sub-study has therefore also examined how the levels of excess risk are affected when the different groups' age and gender distributions, levels of education and disposable income, and the type of municipality in which they live, are taken into account. Taking age into account is important, since there are significant differences in the age distributions of the groups examined, and research shows that youths and young adults are at higher risk of offending than older individuals.

When the analysis takes these differences into account by means of statistical standardisation, the size of the excess risk of being registered as a suspected offender declines. Viewed in relation to the risk for Swedish-born persons

with two native-born parents, the relative risk for those born in Sweden to one non-native parent declines from almost 2 to 1.3. For those born in Sweden to two non-native parents, the relative risk declines from just over 3 to 1.7, and for those born abroad, it declines from 2.5 to 1.8. The reduction in the size of the relative risk is most notable when the analysis takes account of differences in the various groups' age distributions. Thus the findings show that the differences in the risk of being registered as a crime suspect are substantially reduced, but that part of the difference remains even when differences in age, gender, income, education and municipality type are taken into account.

Differences in relative risk levels between different offence types

The proportion registered as suspected offenders remains lowest among those born in Sweden to two native-born parents when the analysis focuses on different offence types. At the same time, the size of the other groups' relative risk varies between different types of crime. For the majority of the offence categories examined, the largest relative risk is found for those born in Sweden to two non-native parents. The size of this group's relative risk varies between 3.4 for road traffic offences and 5.4 for fraud offences. For those born abroad, the relative risk varies between 1.7 for road traffic offences and 3.3 for offences against life and health.

The pattern is the same for the four offence types examined that involve a particularly serious violation of integrity: attempted and completed homicide, rape, residential burglary, and robbery. Among those born abroad, the size of the relative risk for these offence types varies between 1.7 (for residential burglary) and 4.0 (for attempted and completed homicide). For those born in Sweden to two non-native parents, the relative risks are notably higher for attempted and completed homicide (11.2) and for robbery (11.5), with these being the highest levels of relative risk observed in the study. For rape offences, the relative risk is the same among those born abroad and those born in Sweden to two non-native parents (3.2).

The size of all the specified relative risks declines when account is taken of differences in the various' groups age and gender distributions, income levels etc. For example, the relative risk of being suspected of robbery or of attempted or completed homicide among those born in Sweden to two non-native parents declines from just over 11 to 3.1 for robbery and to 3.4 for attempted or completed homicide. This group's relative risk of being suspected of rape declines from 3.2 to 1.4, while for those born abroad, the relative risk of being suspected of rape declines from 3.2 to 2.2.

Differences between various regions of birth

Previous research has found differences in the proportions registered as suspected offenders *within* the group of persons born abroad, based on the region in which they were born. Another question is whether there are similar differences among persons born in Sweden to two non-native parents, based on the parents' region of birth. The results of the current study show that there is a relatively large variation in the proportion registered as suspected offenders between persons born in different parts of the world, and among those born in Sweden whose mothers were born in different regions.⁶

Among persons born abroad, the proportion registered as suspected offenders is lowest among those born in the regions: East Asia, Scandinavia outside Sweden, EU15 and Western Europe outside Scandinavia, and in the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The proportions suspected of offences are greatest among those born in the regions: West Asia, Central Asia, and different regions in Africa (North Africa, East Africa and the category Other African Countries⁷).

The general pattern for the proportions registered as crime suspects among those born in Sweden to two non-native parents, classified on the basis of the mother's region of birth, are similar. The proportions registered as suspected offenders tend to be somewhat higher among those born in Sweden to non-native parents, based on the mother's region of birth, than they are among those who were themselves born abroad in the corresponding regions. This finding is linked to the fact that the proportion of younger persons is greater among those born in Sweden to two non-native parents than it is among those who were born abroad. As has already been noted, the proportion of the population suspected of offences is greater in younger than in older age groups.

Sub-study 2: Trends in the proportions registered as suspected offenders each year during the period 2007–2018

As regards the trend over the period 2007–2018, the *number* of persons registered as suspected offenders is clearly greatest among persons born in Sweden to two native-born parents, followed by persons born abroad. The numbers of suspects among those born in Sweden to one or two non-native parents is smaller.

Viewed over the period as a whole, the number of persons registered as crime suspects each year has declined somewhat among those born in Sweden to two native-born parents, and has been stable over time among those born in

⁶ The results are very similar if the analysis is instead based on the father's region of birth.

⁷ African countries excluding North Africa and East Africa.

Sweden to one non-native parent. The number of persons registered as suspected offenders has increased among those born abroad and those born in Sweden to two non-native parents.

At the same time, there has been a decrease in the *proportion* of people registered as suspected offenders both in the population as a whole and in each of the four groups examined. The proportion of the different groups that were registered as crime suspects increased during the first years of the period under study, but then declined. Among persons born in Sweden to two native-born parents, the proportion registered as suspected offenders declined from 1.6 percent in 2007 to 1.4 percent in 2018, while among those born in Sweden to one non-native parent, the proportion of persons registered as suspected offenders declined from 3.3 percent to 2.6 percent over the same period.

Among those born in Sweden to two non-native parents, the proportion registered each year as crime suspects has declined from 5.3 to 4.7 percent, and among those born abroad from 4.0 to 3.6 percent.

The fact that the *proportions* registered as suspected offenders among persons born abroad and those born in Sweden to two non-native parents have declined, despite increases in the *number* of registered crime suspects, is due to changes in the structure of the population. The relative increase in the numbers of registered suspects in these groups have been smaller than the corresponding increases in the number of persons from these groups in the population (aged 15 or over) as a whole.

These trends are for the most part similar for men and women respectively. Viewed over the period 2007–2018 as a whole, the proportion of men registered as suspected offenders has declined in all four groups examined. For women, the proportion registered as crime suspects has been relatively stable among those born in Sweden to two native-born parents, but has decreased somewhat among women in the other three groups.

Trends over time in levels of relative risk

Throughout the period examined, the proportion registered as suspected offenders has been highest among those who were born in Sweden to two non-native parents, and lowest among those born in Sweden to two native-born parents, second highest among persons born abroad, and third highest among persons born in Sweden to one non-native parent. This is the case for both women and men.

The relative risk of being registered as a suspected offender, viewed in relation to those born in Sweden to two native-born parents, has remained relatively stable during the period 2007–2018 both for persons born abroad and for those born in Sweden to one or two non-native parents. When the

analysis takes account of between-group differences in the groups' age and gender distributions, the levels of excess risk decline to a varying extent across all three of these groups, most markedly for those born in Sweden to two non-native parents.

Trends for different offence types

Over the period 2007–2018, the trends in the proportion of the different groups that are registered as suspects in connection with offences against life and health, offences against liberty and peace, theft and robbery offences, and criminal damage, largely follow the trends described above for those suspected of any offence. For all four groups examined, the proportions registered as suspects in connection with these offences was lower in 2018 than it had been in 2007. The proportions registered as suspects in connection with fraud offences also declined across all groups, with the exception of those born in Sweden to two non-native parents, among whom the proportion suspected of fraud offences increased somewhat.

The trend for sex offences differs from that seen for the other offence categories. The proportion registered as suspects in connection with sex offences increased during the final years of the study period across all four of the groups examined, so that the levels were somewhat higher in 2018 than they had been in 2007. Another difference is that for sex offences, the proportion of registered suspects was highest among those born abroad throughout the period of the study. A third difference is that the proportions suspected of sex offences are generally considerably lower than those suspected in connection with the other offence categories examined.

As regards the excess risk of being suspected of sex offences, viewed in relation to those who were born in Sweden to two native-born parents, this excess risk was smaller in 2018 than in 2007 for both those born abroad and those born in Sweden to two non-native parents. This is due to the fact that the relative increase in the proportion of the population suspected of sex offenders has been greater among persons born in Sweden to two native-born parents than among persons born abroad and persons born in Sweden to two non-native parents. For those born in Sweden to one non-native parent, the level of excess risk was the same at the end of the period as at the beginning.

Viewed over the period 2007–2018 as a whole, the proportion suspected of road traffic offences declined in all four groups. For drug offences, however, the proportion registered as suspects instead increased across all four of the groups examined. The most notable increase was seen among those born in Sweden to two non-native parents, which is also the group in which the proportion suspected of drug offences was highest.

Homicide, rape, residential burglary, robbery and assault

As regards the proportions of the different groups registered as suspects in connection with attempted and completed homicide offences, these remained relatively stable in three of the four groups during the period 2007–2018. Those born in Sweden to two non-native parents constitute an exception, however. In this group, the proportion registered as suspects for attempted and completed homicide increased (from 0,04 percent in 2007 to 0,06 percent in 2018). Throughout the period, the proportion suspected of attempted and completed homicide was highest in this group, and second highest among those born abroad.

The trend in the proportions registered as suspects in connection with rape offences is similar to that for those suspected of sexual offences as a whole. Viewed over the entire period 2007–2018, the proportions registered as suspects in connection with rape offences increased somewhat in all four of the groups examined. The proportion suspected of rape offences has consistently been highest among those born abroad. As was the case for all sexual offences, however, the proportion of the population registered as suspected rape offenders has increased somewhat more among persons born in Sweden to two native-born parents than among persons born abroad or persons born in Sweden to two non-native parents.

Viewed over the period 2007–2018, the proportion registered as suspects in connection with residential burglaries decreased somewhat among persons born abroad and among persons born in Sweden to one or two non-native parents. The decline is most marked among those born in Sweden to two non-native parents, which was the group in which the proportion registered as residential burglary suspects was highest. The corresponding proportion remained relatively stable during the period 2007–2018 among those born in Sweden to two native-born parents.

The proportion registered as suspects in connection with robbery offences was also highest among those born in Sweden to two non-native parents. Viewed over the period 2007–2018 as a whole, the proportions suspected of robbery offences have declined somewhat across all of the four groups examined.

The proportions registered as suspects in connection with assault offences, both in general and in each of the four groups, are considerably higher than the proportions suspected of robbery, for example, but have decreased over time across all four groups. The proportions registered as assault suspects are thus lower in 2018 than they were in 2007.

In summary, the proportions of the different groups registered as suspected offenders have declined over the period 2007–2018 in relation to the vast majority of the offence types examined. Exceptions are found in the

proportions registered as suspects in connection with drug offences and sex offences, including rape. The proportion registered as suspects in connection with attempted and completed homicides has increased among those born in Sweden to two non-native parents.

Sub-study 3: Trends in the proportion of registered offences linked to suspects from different groups during the period 2007–2018

The third and final sub-study focuses on the number of *offences* linked to registered crime suspects, and describes the trend in the distribution of these offences among Swedish residents of native and non-native background, and also among persons who were non-residents at the time the offences were committed. In contrast to the presentations in Sub-studies 1 and 2, which focus on the number and proportion of *individuals* registered as suspected offenders, this sub-study thus provides a description of how large a proportion of registered offences have been linked to suspected offenders from the different groups examined during the period 2007–2018.

The total number of offences linked to registered suspects increased by 21 percent during this period (from 443,000 in 2007 to 537,000 in 2018). This increase occurred primarily during the early part of the period and culminated in the years 2010–2011. Viewed over the period as a whole, the number of registered offences linked to suspects born in Sweden to two native-born parents decreased somewhat. The numbers of registered offences linked to persons in the other groups examined have instead increased.

The *proportion* of registered offences linked to persons born abroad, persons born in Sweden to two non-native parents, and non-residents has increased, whereas the proportion of registered offences linked to persons born in Sweden to one non-native parent has been relatively stable. By contrast, the proportion of registered offences linked to persons born in Sweden to two native-born parents has decreased markedly. During the period 2007–2018:

- The proportion of registered offences linked to suspected offenders born in Sweden to two native-born parents decreased from 54.1 to 43.2 percent.
- The proportion of registered offences linked to suspected offenders born in Sweden to one non-native parent decreased from 9.2 till 8.6 percent.
- The proportion of registered offences linked to suspected offenders born in Sweden to two non-native parents increased from 6.8 to 9.4 percent.
- The proportion of registered offences linked to suspected offenders who were born abroad increased from 23.6 to 29.8 percent.

- The proportion of registered offences linked to suspected offenders who were non-residents increased from 6.3 to 9.0 percent.

The proportion of registered offences linked to suspected offenders who were non-residents was highest in the year 2016 (10.3 percent). It is likely that this peak in the trend reflects the large number of asylum seekers who arrived in Sweden in 2015.

The trend for different types of crime

The declining trend in the proportion of offences linked to suspected offenders who were born in Sweden to two native-born parents can be seen in relation to most of the crime categories included in the study. Sex offences constitute an exception, however. For this crime category, the proportion of offences linked to suspected offenders who were born in Sweden to two native-born parents has remained relatively stable, at approximately half of the total number of offences, throughout the period 2007–2018.

Persons born in Sweden to one non-native parent

For the majority of the offence types examined, the proportion of offences linked to suspected offenders born in Sweden to one non-native parent has been relatively stable throughout the study period. The proportion of offences linked to suspected offenders from this group has however decreased somewhat for offences against life and health, sex offences and criminal damage. There has also been a decrease over time in the proportion of attempted and completed homicides, rape offences, residential burglaries and robbery offences linked to suspected offenders from this group.

Persons born in Sweden to two non-native parents

An increasing trend in the proportion of offences linked to suspected offenders who were born in Sweden to two non-native parents can be seen for a majority of the offence types included in the study. The proportion of registered drug offences linked to suspected offenders from this group increased from 8 to 12 percent, for example, and the proportion of registered attempted and completed homicide offences linked to suspected offenders from this group also increased, from 12 to 18 percent. The proportion of robbery offences linked to suspected offenders who were born in Sweden to two non-native parents was relatively stable for a large part of the period examined, but over the period as a whole has increased from 17 to 22 percent. At the same time, viewed over the period 2007–2018, the proportion of theft and sex offences linked to suspected offenders from this group has remained relatively stable.

Persons born abroad

The proportion of offences linked to suspected offenders who were born abroad has increased in relation to offences against life and health, offences

against liberty and peace, criminal damage, road traffic offences and drug offences. By contrast the proportion of registered sex offences linked to suspected offenders from this group has not increased, which is also the case for theft and fraud offences. The proportions of attempted and completed homicides, rape, and robbery offences linked to suspected offenders who were born abroad have varied over the course of the period 2007–2018, but have followed neither an increasing nor a decreasing trend over time. The increase in the size of this group in Sweden’s resident population has thus not been reflected in an increase in the proportion of sex offences, attempted or completed homicides, robberies, thefts, or fraud offences linked to this group.

At the same time, the proportion of residential burglaries linked to suspected offenders who were born abroad was lower during the latter part of the period 2007–2018 compared to the early years of this period. By contrast, the proportion of registered assault offences linked to suspected offenders who were born abroad has increased (from 28 percent in 2007, to 40 percent in 2018).

Non-residents

The trend in registered offences linked to suspected offenders who were not Swedish residents at the time of the offence appears primarily to be linked to two separate developments. Firstly, an increase can be seen during the period 2007–2013 in the proportion of registered offences linked to non-resident suspected offenders, but this increase is limited to theft and residential burglary offences. For example, the proportion of registered residential burglaries linked to non-residents increased from 7.3 percent in 2007 to 32.2 percent in 2013.

This increased can be linked to reports of an increase in the activities of transnational organised crime groups focusing on thefts and burglary, which has been noted in several EU countries. The offence types described by Europol as being common among these groups, in addition to residential burglary, include organised shoplifting, robbery and offences linked to automatic cash dispensers.

Secondly, there is a later increase, which is distributed over a wider range of offence types, which coincides in time with the increased number of asylum seekers that arrived in Sweden during the period 2014–2015. This increase produced a temporary peak in the proportion of registered offences linked to non-resident suspected offenders in 2015 and 2016, which is then followed by a decrease. It can be noted, however, that the large increase in the number of asylum seekers arriving in Sweden, particularly in 2015, did not result in a correspondingly large increase in the number of registered offences linked to non-residents. The number of registered offences linked to non-residents was 32 percent higher in 2015 than in 2011. At the same time the number of

asylum seekers who arrived in Sweden was over 400 percent higher in 2015 than in 2011.

For the majority of the offence types included in the study, the proportion of registered offences linked to non-residents declined during the years 2017–2018, towards the lower levels registered during the earlier years of the period examined. The crime categories associated with transnational organised crime groups constitute an exception however. For these offence types, the proportions of registered offences linked to non-residents remained much higher in 2018 than they had been at the beginning of the study period.

Summary

In summary, the general pattern observed in the data is that the proportion of registered offences linked to suspected offenders who were born in Sweden to two native-born parents has decreased between 2007 and 2018 both for all crime, and for the majority of the various offence types examined. At the same time there has been an increase in the proportion of registered offences linked to suspected offenders who were born in Sweden to two non-native parents, suspected offenders who were born abroad, and suspected offenders who were not registered as residents at the time of the offence. There are exceptions to this pattern, however. Sex offences constitute one such exception. The proportion of sex offences linked to suspected offenders from the various groups examined was much the same in 2018 as it was in 2007.

The increase in the proportion of registered offences linked to persons born abroad and persons born in Sweden to two non-native parents can primarily be viewed as a result of the increase in the size of these two groups within the population as a whole. The increase in the proportion of registered offences linked to non-residents can in part be linked to reports of an increase in the activities of transnational organised crime groups, in part to an increase in the number of asylum seekers who arrived in Sweden, particularly in 2015.

Discussion

Summarising the central findings from the three sub-studies, these are as follows:

The *proportion of individuals* registered as suspected offenders has declined during the period 2007–2018. This is true both in relation to all registered crime and in relation to most of the individual offence types included in the study. It is also true for all of the groups examined irrespective of native and non-native background.

There are however a small number of exceptions to this general, declining trend. The proportion of individuals registered as suspected drug offenders has increased in all of the groups examined, for example. The proportion

registered as suspected sex offenders has fluctuated over the period as a whole, but has increased somewhat during the final years of the period in all of the groups examined. The proportion registered as suspects in connection with attempted and completed homicide offences has increased among persons born in Sweden to two non-native parents.

The size of the excess risk of being registered as a crime suspect, viewed in relation to the risk among persons born in Sweden to two native-born parents, has remained relatively constant during the period 2007–2018 both for persons born abroad and persons born in Sweden to one or two non-native parents.

The proportion of *registered offences* linked to suspected offenders born in Sweden to two native-born parents has declined during the period 2007–2018, whereas the proportion linked to suspected offenders born abroad and to those born in Sweden to two non-native parents has increased. This increase is for the most part explained by the fact that the size of these two groups within the resident population has increased during the period covered by the study.

Sex offences constitute an exception in this regard, however. The increase in the proportion of persons born abroad and persons born in Sweden to two non-native parents within the resident population has not been reflected in a corresponding increase in the proportion of registered sex offences linked to these two groups.

The proportion of registered offences linked to persons who were non-residents at the time the offences were committed has increased over the course of the period 2007–2018. This increase can in part be linked to reports of an increase in the activity of transnational organised crime groups, in part to an increase in the number of newly arrived asylum seekers in Sweden, particularly in 2015. During the final years of the period, there was a decrease in the proportion of registered offences linked to non-residents.

Several factors contribute to an excess risk of being registered as a suspected offender

As was the case in the Brå's previous study, from 2005, the findings show that persons born abroad, and those born in Sweden to one or two non-native parents, are more likely to be registered as suspected offenders than persons born in Sweden to two native-born parents. How, then, should we understand this excess risk?

One well-established finding from research on the causes of crime is that the risk of offending is the result of a complex interplay among a large number of different factors. These include factors linked to the individual, such as variations in levels of self-control or attitudes, but also factors linked to

various types of social relations and contexts, such as the family, the peer group, and the local community. One general conclusion from this research is that there is no particular risk factor that could be viewed as explaining an excess risk for registered offending among different groups, although age differences and differences in socio-economic conditions are important factors when different segments of the population are compared at the group level.

This study does not provide a basis for drawing definitive causal conclusions about what might explain the excess risk of being registered for crime found among persons born abroad and persons born in Sweden to one or two non-native parents. At the same time, the study shows that differences in the age distribution between the different groups is of significance, along with differences in the proportion of persons in the various groups with low levels of education and low disposable income. These are factors that generally have an impact on the risk for offending, and where the nature of the differences noted between the groups examined in this study would produce an increased risk for offending at the group level among persons born abroad and persons born in Sweden to two non-native parents. The results also show that the size of the excess risk decreases substantially when these factors are taken into account using statistical methods.

Other factors that have been posited as contributing to an increased risk for offending, and for which there is also support in the research, include parental mental ill-health, residential segregation (which has among other things been shown to contribute to worse educational outcomes among the children of non-native parents) and difficulties finding employment, which is also linked to educational achievement, but also to discrimination in the labour market.

Cultural differences have also been posited as a possible explanation for some of the difference in levels of offending among persons of native and non-native background. For persons born abroad, these explanations focus in part on behaviours that may be lawful or condoned in the country of origin, but which are criminalised in the receiving country, in part on the way in which norm conflicts may produce increased stress which, in combination with other factors, leads to an increased risk of offending. At the same time, researchers who have attempted to study this issue empirically have concluded that cultural background factors may have some effect, but that this effect is relatively weak in comparison with the significance of socio-economic factors or experiences in the receiving country subsequent to migration.

There is also research indicating that some of the excess risk may be due to selection processes that produce differences between different groups in the likelihood of offenders being registered as suspects by the police. These

processes too are likely only to explain a small part of the excess risk noted in registered crime data, but research indicates that minorities are over-represented among those stopped and subjected to police checks. This would produce an excess risk of being registered as a suspect in relation to drug or motoring offences, for example, and would also increase the probability that other offences will be detected in those groups that are more likely to be stopped by the police.

In line with the results of research on the causes of crime more generally, it is likely that the differences noted in the risk of being registered as suspected offenders between groups of native and non-native background are the result of a complex interplay among several different factors. In the context of this interplay, factors such one's own or one's parents' experiences from the period prior to and after migration, socio-economic resources, mental health, the degree of identification with different types of masculinity or honour norms, educational achievement, and access to the labour market, may all play a role to a varying extent.