

Age estimations of unaccompanied minors in Sweden 2015 - 2016

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ABSTRACT

During 2015, 35.000 minors applied for asylum in Sweden. The situation was chaotic and thousands of cases are still not finalized. Opposition to medical age estimations came from paediatricians and lawyers, and the Migration authorities left over the task to prove their identity, age included, to the asylum seekers themselves. The only competence to do age estimations was FORODONT (my private company).

Since spring 2015 until the end of January 2017 about 900 cases have been handled. Dental (800 cases) according to Mincer et al, 1993, hand (220 cases) according to Schmeling 2006, Clavicle (3 cases) in criminal cases according to Wittschieber 2014.

From the beginning, dental showed around 80% H, 15% G, F and 5% E, D. After changes of practice in the autumn of 2016 the figures changed to 56, 35, and 9%, respectively. Hand development showed 90% 18/19 yrs and 10% 16/17 yrs.

The medical report was given as the best estimate for each single structure, with their probabilities of being below 18 yrs and probabilities of stated age, and the statistical combination of the structures according to Gelbrich, 2015. The limits of the probabilities were left to the receiver of the report to set.

The result was presented to the applicant, his good man and his lawyer which then used it after their own judgement. It is unknown how many of the reports which were presented to the Migration authority.

The age estimations have now been taken over by the National Board of Forensic Medicine after request from the Migration authority. The structures to be studied are wisdom teeth radiologically and the lower distal part of femur (knee) with MRI.

A big study with some 2000 participants is to be started to confirm the reliability of the MRI.