

The Challenges of Recent Migrations to Scandinavia

Andres Quiroga Roldan (1361796)

Department of Scandinavian Studies

University of Washington

May 2017

Written in with the kind guidance of Professor Christine Ingebritsen.

Introduction

Scandinavians have historically taken great pride in their strong and smoothly functional welfare states, and their countries' humanitarian approach towards global politics. Nordic nations are often seen as bastions of human rights and liberal utopias. Their systems are based upon one simple principle: one receives help from the state when needed, and gives back when able to. For example, Scandinavians enjoy tuition-free education all the way through university, and then pay all those costs back in taxes once they have a stable job. If a person is laid off or handicapped and cannot work for some time, the government will take care of him or her on the unspoken promise that he or she will contribute again to society once he or she is in conditions to return to work. And while it has not always been this way, all four Scandinavian countries adopted this socioeconomic model – also known as the Nordic Model – during the late nineteenth century and strengthened their welfare state throughout the twentieth century.

For centuries, Nordic states have been by and large demographically and ethnically homogenous, and it was this consistency in religion, traditions, language, history, and political philosophy amongst their populations that had allowed them to build strong political and economic structures founded significantly upon trusting one another. However, that began to change during the past four decades. Denmark, Norway, and Sweden have been receiving hundreds of thousands of refugees and immigrants from across the globe – including Vietnam War refugees, persecuted South Americans, a large number of Yugoslavian refugees and, most recently, war refugees from the Middle East. This

sudden and substantial influx of newcomers is now proving to be quite a challenge for governments across Scandinavia as well as the rest of Europe. Along with the governments, the migrants themselves are finding it particularly hard to assimilate into mainstream Scandinavian society due to several factors. Meanwhile, ethnic Scandinavians are not necessarily finding it easy to adjust to a quickly evolving and increasingly multicultural society, either. Just like in the rest of Europe, far-right, anti-immigration politics have been on the rise in Scandinavia. For the purposes of this study, we will study the rise of the Danish *Dansk Folkeparti* (The Danish People's Party), a far-right, nationalistic political party in Denmark, which currently finds itself in support of the country's governing coalition (Folketinget, 2015); as well as on the rise of Sweden's own far-right populist party, the *Sverigedemokraterna* (the Sweden Democrats, from here on).

Interestingly, Sweden has historically approached immigration with a more compassionate and open attitude than its fellow Scandinavian nations. In fact, according to Sweden's Statistiska Centralbyrån (2017), 17.8% of Sweden's total population in 2016 was made up of foreign-born persons, a number higher than the 13.7% of the United States' total population that is made up of foreign-born people (Gomez, 2015). Nevertheless, Sweden has not been able to escape the spread of far-right and anti-immigration politics that has been troubling Europe. However, despite the surge in voters leaning in favor the Sweden Democrats, Swedes have remained relatively moderate when compared to the rest of Europe, and in particular when compared to Denmark. Denmark, on the other hand, has been slowly but steadily closing its doors to newcomers, and this

process has accelerated significantly over the past ten years (Gammeltoft-Hansen & Malmvig, 2016). While Sweden had more than 150,000 non-EU, first-time asylum applicants in 2015, Denmark only had about 20,000 of the same applicants that year, despite Sweden's total population being short of twice as large as Denmark's (European Commission Eurostat, 2016).

Denmark and Norway both have quite similar approaches to immigration and asylum policy, and both countries have taken in a relatively low number of refugees and immigrants. Iceland has a very small population, and due to its distance from mainland Europe, the number of refugees and immigrants the country has taken is almost insignificant. For these reasons, this research will focus primarily on Denmark and Sweden. This paper aims to analyze and compare the policies Denmark and Sweden have enacted regarding immigration and, most importantly, the integration – or lack thereof – of newcomers over the past few decades. This paper primarily focuses on how each country's policies affect immigrants and refugees from the Middle East, as they form an overwhelming majority of the immigrant population in Northern Europe. We will also briefly discuss how this all plays out in the ongoing Syrian Refugee Crisis, and how the Danish and Swedish governments are responding to it.

1. Immigration to Denmark and Sweden since the 1970s

As mentioned in the introduction, up until the 1970s, Scandinavian societies were ethnically very homogenous. In 1980, only 1.7% of the total population of Denmark was of foreign background (that is, foreign-born or born in Denmark to two foreign-born parents), according to Danmarks Statistik

(Statistics Denmark) (2017). By the year 2000, this number had already risen to 7.1%. And by the first day of 2016, 12.3% of the entire Danish population was of foreign background (Danmarks Statistik, 2017). Until the mid-1970s, there were only a few thousand immigrants from non-Western nations (particularly from Turkey, Yugoslavia, and Pakistan) in Denmark. The number of people of foreign background in Denmark grew from about 153,000 in 1980, to more than 415,000 in 2001 (Danmarks Statistik, 2017). However, this increase in the influx of people consisted almost entirely of newcomers from non-western countries. The number of immigrants and descendants from western countries remained at around 100,000 (Nannestad, 2004). Immigrants and refugees from non-western countries therefore make up for two thirds of the foreign population in Denmark, with most of these people being war refugees from the Middle East (Danmarks Statistik, 2017). Similarly, Sweden had not really seen significant numbers of immigrants or refugees coming in from non-western countries until the late 1970s. During the 1980s, however, the number of asylum-seekers skyrocketed. These people were fleeing wars and/or political persecutions – most of them arrived from the Balkans, Iran, Iraq, or Chile (Sweden.se). The number of immigrants and refugees arriving in Sweden grew even faster in the 2000s, mostly due to the Iraq War, as well as to Sweden opening its borders to join the Schengen Agreement. The number of asylum permits granted by Sweden almost tripled between 2010 and 2014 (Statistiska Centralbyrån, 2017). The country's population grew by more than 100,000 in 2014 alone due to the Syrian Refugee Crisis, making Germany the only country that accepted more refugees than Sweden (Statistiska Centralbyrån, 2017) (Sweden.se, 2017). This influx of Middle

Eastern newcomers, most of whom are of Muslim faith, into the Nordic region has intensified the debate and political discourse regarding immigration in Denmark and Sweden, just like in the rest of Europe.

Until the 1970s, Scandinavian politicians and the general public largely ignored the topic of immigration, as it was not very significant at the time. Almost all foreigners living in Scandinavia were either from a different Scandinavian country, or from elsewhere in Western and Northern Europe (most of them from Germany or Poland). Since Western and Northern Europeans share many similar cultural values as Scandinavians, it was simply assumed that they would learn to embrace the Danish or Swedish lifestyle, and they would therefore integrate into either society with no major difficulties. They did, indeed, and so immigration was not an issue that was brought up in political discussions. However, this rapidly began to change after the influx of immigrants started growing, both in numbers, speed, and most importantly, in ethnic and cultural diversity during the 1980s (Green-Pedersen & Krogstrup, 2008).

Immigration was essentially a non-issue in Scandinavian politics during the 1980s, too. During the 1984 parliamentary elections campaign cycle in Denmark, immigration was discussed less than one percent of the time political issues were being discussed in the media (Green-Pedersen & Krogstrup, 2008). In 2001, however, along with welfare, immigration was at the top of the voters' list of political priorities (Goul Andersen, 2003). Similarly, Sweden saw a rise in conversations about immigration begin in the 1980s. The debate only grew in the 1990s, when the New Democracy Party (*Ny Demokrati*) made immigration the foremost issue on its agenda, and gained some popularity in part due to the huge

increase in asylum applications that decade due to the Yugoslav Wars (Green-Pedersen & Krogstrup, 2008). The issue of immigration, however, was largely ignored by the 'establishment' parties in Sweden at the time. New Democracy eventually declared bankruptcy in 2000, and it would take ten years after that for a far-right, populist party (the Sweden Democrats) to win parliamentary seats (Statistiska Centralbyrån, 2015). Currently, immigration and the Refugee Crisis are undoubtedly the most important topics in European political discourse, as virtually every European government is having a great deal of trouble trying to accommodate so many refugees, while at the same time keeping their nations safe from the threat of the terror attacks that have become increasingly frequent across the continent over the last few years. Denmark and Sweden are no exceptions to the heated political discourse on immigration, and both countries have been in the spotlight of media attention over the last couple of years due to controversial policies regarding refugees and asylum-seekers (Delman, 2016) (Lifvendahl, 2016).

II. Effects of contemporary immigration on Danish and Swedish societies

Since Scandinavians had always been accustomed to being surrounded by like-minded people, it should not be shocking that the wave of immigration during the latter half of the twentieth century took them by surprise. At the beginning, the Danish and Swedish governments, as well as the public, seemed to have a moderately hopeful and positive attitude towards immigration, and hence welcomed, in proportion, more refugees than many other European states. But

without much hands-on experience on the issue, they optimistically hoped and believed that these newcomers – who were neither Scandinavians nor Western Europeans – would assimilate to Danish and Swedish culture and lifestyle, just like all the other immigrants had been doing in the past. However, they completely failed to take into account that the cultural backgrounds from which these new immigrants and refugees were coming were substantially different and that they would therefore have a much harder time trying to adjust to Danish and Swedish culture than European or North American immigrants would.

It is understandably difficult for Middle Easterners to get used to societies like the ones in Western Europe or Scandinavia, and much of this has to do with faith and how much power religion holds in everyday life and politics. Denmark and Sweden are notoriously secular societies, where people enjoy many more civil liberties, including freedom of religion, than people in Muslim societies do. This sudden exposure to such different cultural norms (for example, openness to homosexuality, or different levels of freedom of speech) presented, and continues to present many challenges to the newcomers' tolerance. This cultural shock could take years to overcome, especially when the two cultures in play are so immensely different from one another. Unfortunately, many see this as something of an 'incompatibility' between Western culture and Islamic culture, and this concept is very well used and exploited in far-right, anti-immigration political rhetoric (Sakki & Pettersson, 2015), which will be discussed later in this essay.

III. Danish and Swedish policies on multiculturalism and the integration of immigrants and refugees

While several European countries (e.g., Germany, France, Italy, Spain, etc.) adopted and embraced policies that would promote multiculturalism and the integration of its immigrants, Scandinavian countries took the approach of assimilation (Hedetoft, 2003). This means that instead of allowing and encouraging the integration of several different cultures and embracing the idea of a diverse and *multicultural* society, such as France, for example, Danes and Swedes wanted immigrants and refugees to assimilate to Scandinavian society and live just like ethnic Scandinavians. Of course, this is much easier said than done, and it has proven to be extremely difficult for immigrants to break into Swedish and Danish societies and fully integrate into them – in particular for those with a non-western background.

Denmark is a special case when it comes to immigration and multiculturalism, as it is considered to have some of Europe's most stringent and restrictive asylum and immigration policy sets (Gammeltoft-Hansen & Malmvig, 2016). Of the seven countries studied (of which Denmark and Sweden are a part) by the Think Tank on Integration in Denmark (2004), Denmark has the strictest rules for family and spousal reunification, and it is where immigrants and refugees must wait the longest to be granted permanent residency – usually a minimum of seven years (Think Tank on Integration in Denmark, 2004). There is no constitutional, legislative, or parliamentary affirmation of multiculturalism in Denmark, and therefore multiculturalism has not been adopted in the Danish educational system. This means that there are no school courses dedicated to

foreign religions, meaning that Christianity remains the only taught religion in Danish public schools (Holtug, 2012). Until September 2015, Danish immigration law also required one to possess surrender any other nationalities in order to become a Danish citizen and therefore enjoy any welfare or other benefits that come along with the citizen status (Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet, 2016). Another Danish immigration policy that exemplifies the government's push for assimilation is that once already accepted into Denmark, refugees must live in a place assigned by the government for a couple of years in order for them to get used to "the Danish way of life." This approach, however, has not had the desired results, as many immigrant families were placed in small, rural municipalities scattered throughout the country (Westerby & Ngo-Diep, 2013). This allows them little to no interaction with people who are familiar with their culture, and due to cultural differences, they are often misunderstood by rural, ethnic Danes, who were never very used to diversity either. After the three years of economic and integration support they receive from Danish municipalities, most of these immigrant and refugee families move to larger cities, like Copenhagen, Aarhus, and Odense, looking for more like-minded people who they can relate to and interact more easily with.

Sweden's case presents a different set of challenges. However, the accumulation of some of these challenges has contributed to spatial segregation between native Swedes and immigrant communities. Whereas Denmark's family reunification policies are some of the most stringent in Europe, Sweden's are considered moderate, falling along the lines of most other European nations. In a stark contrast from Denmark, Sweden grants permanent residency to all its

accepted refugees ahead of their arrival in Sweden, and Swedish citizenship tends to be available to its refugees after about four years – a relatively short wait period (Westerby & Ngo-Diep, 2013). However, where Sweden’s integration troubles begin is in the sheer number of newcomers the country has accepted within a very short period of time, having taken proportionally more refugees than any other country within the last five years (Milne, 2017) (Sweden.se, 2017). Furthermore, Sweden’s current resettlement policies rely heavily on each municipality’s willingness to take in refugees – more than half of them do. However, supply for affordable private housing, and space in public housing has decreased dramatically throughout the country in recent years (Westerby & Ngo-Diep, 2013). This, combined with the explosion in demand for it to accommodate the new tens of thousands of new Swedes has made it quite challenging for both local governments and the Swedish national government to place refugee families evenly across the country. The little available housing has tended to be in dense, suburban housing projects originally built in the 1960s and 70s for a program called the Million Program, which was implemented to meet the soaring housing demands in Sweden at the time (Sweden.se). However, these large apartment complexes on the outskirts of Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö were largely ignored by the Swedish population, as most people wished to live closer to the city center, and were therefore abandoned for the most part. After immigration took off again during the 1990s and 2000s, the Swedish government placed many refugees in these housing projects, still relatively disconnected from major urban centers, and very much isolated from mainstream Swedish society.

The result of this was an accumulation of immigrants in small, dense, suburban pockets around larger cities – a sort of *ghettoization* around both countries' largest cities (Baskerville, Jürgens, Lord & Overton, 2012). Examples of Danish ghettos are the Mjølnerparken and Tingbjerg areas around Copenhagen; with Rinkeby (near Stockholm), and Rosengård (near Malmö), as its most notorious Swedish counterparts. Virtually all residents in these neighborhoods are of a non-western origin, and an overwhelming majority of them are of Middle Eastern background. With their own grocery stores, restaurants, and other services, these suburbs essentially operate as independent mini-economies located on the outskirts of larger urban areas. The founder of the nationalistic *Dansk Folkeparti* (the Danish People's Party), Pia Kjaersgaard, even likened these ghettos to "parallel societies," referring to how marginalized these communities are from the broader Danish social spectrum (Baskerville, Jürgens, Lord, & Overton, 2012). Unfortunately, this ghettoization and spatial segregation of immigrant communities is just a sample of a broader pattern in contemporary Danish and Swedish society: the severe marginalization of immigrants in both countries. It is a problem that is now creating unwanted and perhaps unexpected repercussions, mostly surging from resentment of the immigrant community towards native Danes and Swedes for their perceived discrimination against them. However, this is not just a problem in Scandinavia; it is taking place all over Europe as well as in the United States.

IV. The Muhammad Cartoon Crisis, the 2015 Copenhagen shootings, and the Rinkeby riots

Earlier in this essay we mentioned that many members of the public, as well as politicians perceive contemporary Scandinavian values as 'incompatible' with Islamic values (Mouritsen & Hovmark Jensen 2014), a discourse greatly exploited in far-right, anti-immigration rhetoric (Sakki & Pettersson, 2015). An event often pointed out as an example of this in Scandinavian extreme-right political discourse is the Muhammad Cartoon Crisis. In 2005, Jyllands-Posten, Denmark's second largest newspaper, published a series of cartoons depicting the Prophet Muhammad, a strong taboo in Muslim culture. One of the cartoons illustrated Muhammad with a bomb in his turban. Another one pictured him with a broken halo on top of his head, looking like satanic horns (Ward, 2006). Any artistic illustration of the Prophet, however benign, is considered a blasphemy as per Islam. The Muhammad cartoons triggered massive protests in several Middle Eastern cities, leaving dozens of people dead and many more injured. Nordic embassies in the Middle East were also damaged during these protests, as thousands of infuriated Muslims showed their displeasure about the cartoons (Jorgensen, 2015). Saudi Arabia and Libya recalled their ambassadors back from Copenhagen and were joined by several other Middle Eastern governments in condemning the cartoons (Ward, 2006). The Muhammad Cartoon Crisis set forth a heated debate across all of Europe about where to draw a line between satirical blasphemy and freedom of speech. Many European leaders saw the cartoons as an attempt to undermine Islam and ridicule it. However, Danes fiercely defended the publications using freedom of expression as their chief argument. Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen, whose government at the time of the events relied heavily upon support from the Dansk

Folkeparti, even famously declined to hold a meeting with Danish Islamic leaders to discuss the issue, claiming that he had no right to intervene in a dispute regarding freedom of speech (Jorgensen, 2006), and that free speech “is not negotiable.” The European Union backed Denmark in this controversy (Ward, 2006).

Unfortunately, the struggle between the principle of freedom of speech and fundamentalist Islam did not end there, and instead ignited a larger conflict across Europe. Ten years after the Jyllands-Posten incident, in January 2015, twelve people were shot dead during a terrorist attack against targeting cartoonists at the Charlie Hebdo magazine in Paris (Bilefsky & de la Baume, 2015). The magazine had previously published cartoons of Muhammad, too. One month later, a Danish-born Muslim man shot two people to death in what later confirmed as a terror attack in Copenhagen. The incident was presumably an attempted murder of Lars Vilks, a Swedish cartoonist who had drawn a cartoon of Muhammad as a dog (Higgins & Eddy, 2015). The Copenhagen shootings fueled further anti-immigration sentiments amongst Danish voters. However, the shootings also reignited other immigration-related discussions, like the country’s poor record of integrating its immigrants and refugees into its mainstream economy and society.

Sweden has not been free from similar incidents, either. In 2010, 2013, and, most recently, in February 2017, Sweden saw scenes of civil unrest in suburban neighborhoods around Stockholm, most of which were predominantly populated by immigrants, and Muslims, in particular. The 2010 riots in Rinkeby allegedly began after a group of youths were denied entry to a school dance and

presumed it was a racially motivated decision (BBC, 2010). Similar unrest occurred in several suburbs three years later after Swedish police officers shot a Portuguese immigrant to death in the Husby neighborhood. The incident was seen as an act of racially-charged police brutality (Peck & Saul, 2013). Similar scenes repeated themselves last February, again in Rinkeby, after police officers made a drug-related arrest in the neighborhood (Bearak, 2017). Most recently, four people were killed and fifteen were injured after an Uzbek-born ISIS militant hijacked a truck and drove it into a crowd in central Stockholm in April 2017 (Chan, 2017). Due to this event's recentness, its repercussions on the immigration debate are yet to be studied and analyzed.

V. A shift to the right in Scandinavian politics

As mentioned earlier in this essay, immigration was never really an issue that was discussed in Scandinavian political discourse until the 1980s and 1990s (Green-Pedersen & Krogstrup, 2008). It was during the latter that the topic began to be politicized, with the foundation of Pia Kjaersgaard's nationalistic Dansk Folkeparti and a growing skepticism from native Danes towards non-western immigrants and refugees, who were failing to assimilate to Danish culture like previous groups of immigrants had done in the past. This skepticism was fueled by the high rates of unemployment and low educational levels amongst immigrants (Mouritsen & Hovmark Jensen, 2014), something mainly caused by the low opportunities of education immigrants and refugees had been given prior to moving to Scandinavia (Milne, 2017). However, the "othering" of immigrants in Denmark and Sweden was also pushed by several other factors.

This shift to the right became quite evident in Denmark in 2001, when the Liberal Party (*Venstre*) won the general elections and formed a coalition government with the Conservatives. Another remarkable fact about that election was that the Dansk Folkeparti won nine seats in the Folketing, while the incumbent governing party, the Social Democrats, lost eleven seats (Statistik Danmark). By the time the 2001 elections took place, the issue of immigration had become the most discussed topic in Danish political discourse (Goul Andersen, 2003). The decade of the 2000s saw a further rise in right-of-center politics, especially when it came down to immigration. As pressure from the voters to immigration policies was rising, the Social Democrats quickly endorsed many policies that the Liberal-Conservative coalition had put forth with some support from the Folkeparti.

In 2011, the Social Democrats reclaimed the government with Helle Thorning-Schmidt becoming Denmark's first ever female prime minister. But by this time, the Social Democrats had already adapted to many of the tough immigration policies the previous right-leaning governments had enacted. The Folkeparti had amassed 12% of the votes in 2011 (Statistik Danmark, 2017) (Lidegaard, 2015). Four years later, Denmark caught international media attention when voters chose to return to the Liberal Party. This time, however, the Liberals' only option to control the government was with the support of the notoriously xenophobic Folkeparti, which had managed to get 21.1% of the popular vote, making it the second largest party that year (Lidegaard, 2015). The 2015 Folketing elections were particularly salient in modern Scandinavian

politics, as they came at the very midst and peak of the Syrian Refugee Crisis, and the country's response to it would greatly depend on those elections.

Sweden's own extreme-right party, the Sweden Democrats, has also enjoyed a recent surge in popularity – albeit not as much as the Dansk Folkeparti. The first evident example of Swedish voters moving towards right-wing populism came in 1991, when the *Ny Demokrati* (New Democracy) won 6.7% of the total vote in that year's Riksdag elections (Statistiska Centralbyrån, 2015). By 1994, however, *Ny Demokrati* had disintegrated and lost its seats in parliament (Aylott, 2011). In 2002, the Sweden Democrats won 1.4% of the vote, and doubled that four years later, registering 3% of the total votes in 2006 (Statistiska Centralbyrån, 2015), but was unable to meet the threshold for parliamentary representation on both occasions. They had to wait until 2010 to try to break that barrier, and they succeeded by again doubling their numbers in just four years, accumulating 5.7% of the popular vote. And once again, by 2014, their numbers had doubled, this time to amount to a shocking 12.9% of the total vote, making them Sweden's third-largest party (Statistiska Centralbyrån, 2015).

However, despite the rapid rise in popularity of the Sweden Democrats, it lags considerably behind the Danish Folkeparti. Several factors may come into play here. Media attention has likely played a role in why the Folkeparti is growing faster than the Sweden Democrats. Whereas the Swedish mainstream media has largely agreed upon keeping the tab on their coverage of the Sweden Democrats, the Danish media was quite generous in giving the Folkeparti a platform for them to discuss their controversial points of view (Rydgren, 2005). The Danish media also consciously or subconsciously portrayed immigration with

subtle negative and/or exclusionary connotations (e.g., referring to immigrants as “foreigners,” or referring to third-generation Danish-born people as “immigrants”), which very likely affected the public’s perspective on the issue (Rydgren, 2004) (Rydgren, 2005) (Moore, 2010).

Furthermore, the restrictive policies and unusually long waiting periods for obtaining full Danish citizenship may be causing delays in having immigrants’ and refugees’ voices be heard in the form of votes. Immigrants in Sweden on average wait about three fewer years to obtain full Swedish citizenship, and enjoy permanent residency prior to arriving in the country (Westerby & Ngo-Diep, 2013). This could therefore largely impact the number of foreign-born persons able to vote in Swedish general elections, as compared to those in Denmark. It would be fair to assume that immigrants and refugees would by and large vote against the likes of the Sweden Democrats or the Folkeparti. Besides that, but still focusing on number of voters, Sweden currently has a much larger proportion of its population being from a foreign background than Denmark does, and this would likely add even more votes in favor of more immigrant-friendly parties and politics.

VI. Responses to the Syrian Refugee Crisis

While millions of Syrians and Iranians were fleeing their hometowns from the Islamic State (ISIS) towards Europe, Sweden held a quite important general election that would undoubtedly shape how the country would respond to the Syrian Refugee Crisis. Current Prime Minister of Sweden Stefan Löfven’s Social Democrats won the popular vote in 2014 and formed a minority government with

the Green Party (Statistiska Centralbyrån, 2015). Although Swedish voters largely rejected the idea of a powerful far-right Sweden Democrats, the party's numbers were still significant and are still evidence of a surging rise in populism in Sweden. One year later, Denmark was holding what was arguably one of their most important elections in recent history. The 2015 elections were overwhelmingly focused on two issues: immigration and welfare. Still shaken from the Copenhagen shootings a few months earlier, and fearful of the threat refugees posed to their much-beloved welfare state model and national identity, Danes elected the Venstre-Folkeparti coalition, in a major shift to radical right-wing politics.

The 2014 and 2015 elections in both countries did indeed shape each nation's response to the Refugee Crisis. Ever since Lars Løkke Rasmussen took office as the new Prime Minister, the Danish government has been aggressively working on policies that would limit the number of refugees the country would take. Danish authorities have since tightened control along Denmark's southern border with Germany, something that had not happened since the signing of the Schengen agreement (Tange & Dickson, 2016).

Of the many further restrictions imposed recently in Denmark regarding immigration and asylum, the one that caught the most attention from worldwide media was a bill the Danish Parliament passed in January 2016. The new law requires refugees to own assets at a total value of no more than 10000 kroner in order to qualify for government assistance. Therefore, this allows Danish immigration officers to confiscate valuables from refugees if their aggregate value amounts to more than 10000 kroner - about 1,470 USD

(Delman, 2016). This law drew much condemnation from around the world. An editorial from the New York Times called the Danish government out, claiming that “this approach cannot be the norm,” and deemed the law “an act of selfishness.” Earlier in 2015, Denmark had already caught some attention by placing an ad on a Lebanese newspaper informing that refugee benefits were being cut to half. In other words, the Danish government essentially asked would-be refugees to not even try to go to Denmark in the first place (Taylor, 2015). With these two actions, Denmark seems to have lost a reputation for humanitarianism it had long cherished so much, and it will be difficult for the Danes to restore it, especially amid the Refugee Crisis.

Having a more left-leaning governing coalition, Sweden largely kept in place its core policies and laws regarding immigration. However, they did find themselves forced to reduce dramatically the number of asylum-seekers they could take after 2015 (Statistiska Centralbyrån, 2017). Passport control has since been performed on trains, ferries and roads connecting Denmark and Sweden, just like Denmark has been doing along its southern border– something that had not happened since Sweden joined the Schengen Agreement (Tange & Dickson, 2016).

Conclusion

Until the 1980s, immigration was a topic seldom discussed in Scandinavian politics. However, as an increasing number of war refugees desperately needed a new home, Nordic countries like Denmark and Sweden were eager to welcome some. Confident of their reputation as humanitarian

world leaders, and based on their previous experiences with immigration, Denmark and Sweden were optimistic that the new wave of refugees they were welcoming would blend into Scandinavian society relatively quickly and without any major obstacles. Unfortunately, however, Danes and Swedes failed to take into account that it would be much more difficult for non-western immigrants to adapt to Scandinavia than it would be for, say, Germans or Dutchmen.

A lack of long-term solutions regarding housing and accommodation of refugees, as well as poor provision of resulted in a severe marginalization and subsequent ghettoization of these communities. This marginalization, combined with a failure by Scandinavian governments to incorporate diversity and multiculturalism in policy, and a historically negative connotation to the term *immigrants*, started backfiring with events like the riots in Rinkeby, or the Muhammad Cartoon Crisis in 2005. Troubles only grew from there on, and resulted in the loss of two lives in the Copenhagen shootings of 2015 and four more in Stockholm in April 2017. This failure to integrate immigrants and refugees into mainstream society also began frustrating ethnic Danes and Swedes, who have since been turning to populist, anti-immigration parties such as the Sweden Democrats or the Dansk Folkeparti in increasing numbers.

Denmark's shift to the political right has been much more obvious and speedy than that of Sweden. Historically, Danes have always been much more conservative than Swedes when it comes down to immigration – especially since the 1990s. However, Swedish populism is starting to catch up, with the Sweden Democrats steadily doubling their votes every four years since 2002. Meanwhile, the Folkeparti finds itself in a position of immense power, and has been able to

push through some aggressive anti-immigration legislation since winning 21% of the general vote in the Danish elections of 2015, earning their country a poor humanitarian reputation. While Sweden's reputation as a humanitarian superpower has not been as badly tarnished as Denmark's, Swedes still have work to do, primarily in being able to provide more permanent homes to all the new refugees they took in over the past three years, and to provide them enough resources and opportunities for them to integrate into Swedish society; all the while trying to avoid forming new isolated ghettos in the outskirts of larger cities, and the political repercussions that may cause.

Bibliography

1. Andersen, J. (2003). The general election in Denmark, November 2001. *Electoral Studies*, 22(1), 186-193. Retrieved from <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0261379402000227>.
2. Aylott, N. (2011). Parties and party systems in the North. In *The Madisonian Turn: Political Parties and Parliamentary Democracy in Nordic Europe* (pp. 297-328). University of Michigan Press.
3. Baskerville, W., Jürgens, N., Lord, S., & Overton, B. (2012). In the Ghetto or Out of Society? A Review of the Debate Surrounding the "Ghetto Plan." *Humanity in Action*. Retrieved from <http://www.humanityinaction.org/knowledgebase/385-in-the-ghetto-or-out-of-society-a-review-of-the-debate-surrounding-the-ghetto-plan>.
4. BBC (2010, June 09). Immigrant youths riot in Sweden, burning down school. *BBC News*. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.com/news/10276738>.
5. Bearak, M. (2017, February 21). Riots erupt in Sweden's capital just days after Trump comments. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/02/21/riots-erupt-in-swedens-capital-just-days-after-trump-comments>.
6. Bilefsky, D., & de la Baume, M. (2015, January 8). Terrorists Strike Charlie Hebdo Newspaper in Paris, Leaving 12 Dead. *The New York Times*, pp. A1. <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/08/world/europe/charlie-hebdo-paris-shooting.html>
7. Chan, S. (2017, April 14). Suspect in Stockholm Attack was an ISIS Recruit, Uzbek Official Says. *The New York Times*, pp. A9.
8. Crouch, D. (2014, December 13). The rise of the anti-immigrant Sweden Democrats: 'We don't feel at home anymore, and it's their fault.' *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/dec/14/sweden-democrats-flex-muscles-anti-immigrant-kristianstad>.

9. Danmarks Statistik. (2017). *Folk2: Population 1. January by sex, age, ancestry, country of origin and citizenship (1980-2017)*. Retrieved from <http://www.statbank.dk/10024>.
10. Delman, E. (2016, January 27). How Not to Welcome Refugees. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/01/denmark-refugees-immigration-law/431520/>.
11. European Commission Eurostat (2016). *Number of (Non-EU) asylum seekers in the EU and EFTA Member States, 2014 and 2015 (thousands of first time applicants)*. Retrieved from [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:Number_of_\(non-EU\)_asylum_seekers_in_the_EU_and_EFTA_Member_States,_2014_and_2015_\(thousands_of_first_time_applicants\)_YB16.png](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:Number_of_(non-EU)_asylum_seekers_in_the_EU_and_EFTA_Member_States,_2014_and_2015_(thousands_of_first_time_applicants)_YB16.png).
12. Folketinget (2015). *Resultatet af folketingsvalget 2015* [Results of Parliamentary Elections, 2015]. Retrieved from <http://www.ft.dk/aktuelt/nyheder/2015/06/valgidaag.aspx>.
13. Gammeltoft-Hansen, T., & Malmvig, H. (2016). The Ugly Duckling: Denmark's Anti-Refugee Policies and Europe's Race to the Bottom. *The Huffington Post*. Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/thomas-gammeltofthansen/denmark-refugee-europe_b_9574538.html.
14. Gomez, A. (2015, September 28). U.S. foreign-born population nears high. *USA Today*. Retrieved from <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2015/09/28/us-foreign-born-population-nears-high/72814674/>.
15. Green-Pedersen, C., & Krogstrup, J. (2008). Immigration as a political issue in Denmark and Sweden. *European Journal of Political Research*, 47(5), 610-634. Retrieved from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1475-6765.2008.00777.x/full>.
16. Hedetoft, U. (2003, October 30). How Denmark faces immigration. *Open Democracy*. Retrieved from https://www.opendemocracy.net/people-migrationeurope/article_1563.jsp

17. Higgings, A., & Eddy, M. (2015, February 16). Terror Attacks by Native Son Rock Denmark. *The New York Times*, pp. A1.
18. Holtug, N. (2012). Danish multiculturalism, where art thou? In *Challenging Multiculturalism: European Models of Diversity* (pp. 190-215). Edinburgh University Press. (http://www.humanityinaction.org/files/503-NielsHoltugDanish_Multiculturalism.pdf)
19. Jorgensen, I. (2006, March 21). Timeline: How the cartoon crisis unfolded. *Financial Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.ft.com/content/d30b0c22-96ee-11da-82b7-0000779e2340>.
20. Lidegaard, B. (2015, June 21). Denmark's Far-Right Kingmakers. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/22/opinion/denmarks-far-right-kingmakers.html?_r=0.
21. Lifvendahl, T., (2016, September 03). How Sweden became an example of how not to handle immigration. *The Spectator*. Retrieved from <https://www.spectator.co.uk/2016/09/how-sweden-became-an-example-of-how-not-to-handle-immigration>.
22. Milne, R. (2017, March 26). Sweden's immigrants struggle with jobs and integration. *Financial Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.ft.com/content/838d60c2-0961-11e7-97d1-5e720a26771b>.
23. Moore, H. (2010). Immigration in Denmark and Norway: Protecting Culture or Protecting Rights? *Scandinavian Studies*, 82(3), 355-364. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org.offcampus.lib.washington.edu/stable/pdf/25769037.pdf>.
24. Mouritsen, P., & Hovmark Jensen, C. (2014). Integration Policies in Denmark. *INTERACT – Researching Third Country Nationals' Integration as a Three-way Process – Immigrants, Countries of Emigration and Countries of Immigration as Actors of Integration*. INTERACT Research Report 2014/06. Retrieved from http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/32020/INTERACT-RR-2014_06.pdf.

25. Nannestad, P. (2004). Immigration as a challenge to the Danish welfare state? *European Journal of Political Economy*, 20(3), 755-767. Retrieved from <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0176268004000308>.
26. Peck, T., & Saul, H. (2013, May 24) Stockholm riots: Clashes grip suburbs as violence flares for fifth night. *The Independent*. Retrieved from <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/stockholm-riots-clashes-grip-suburbs-as-violence-flares-for-fifth-night-8629621.html>.
27. Rydgren, J. (2004). Explaining the Emergence of Radical Right-Wing Populist Parties: The Case of Denmark. *West European Politics*, 27(3), 474-502. Retrieved from <http://www-tandfonline-com.offcampus.lib.washington.edu/doi/abs/10.1080/0140238042000228103>.
28. Rydgren, J. (2005). Is extreme right-wing populism contagious? Explaining the emergence of a new party family. *European Journal of Political Research*, 44(3), 413-437. Retrieved from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1475-6765.2005.00233.x/full>.
29. Sakki, I., & Pettersson, K. (2016). Discursive constructions of otherness in populist radical right political blogs. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 46(2), 156-170. Retrieved from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ejsp.2142/full>.
30. Statistiska Centralbyrån. (2015). *Från Fem Till Åtta Partier i Riksdagen: Valresultat Över Tid* [From Five to Eight Parties in Parliament: Election Results Over Time]. Retrieved from <http://www.scb.se/hitta-statistik/sverige-i-siffror/val-och-partier/valresultat-over-tid>.
31. Statistiska Centralbyrån. (2017). *Population Statistics: Foreign-born persons in Sweden by country of birth, age and sex. Year 2000-2016*. Retrieved from <http://www.scb.se/en/finding-statistics/statistics-by-subject-area/population/population-composition/population-statistics>.
32. Sweden.se (2017). *Sweden and Migration*. Retrieved from <https://sweden.se/migration>.
33. Tange, A., & Dickson, D. (2016, January 04) Denmark and Sweden are cracking down on passport-free travel. *Business Insider*. Retrieved from

- <http://www.businessinsider.com/r-danes-swedes-impose-new-border-checks-in-fresh-blow-to-open-frontier-europe-2016-1>.
34. Taylor, A. (2015, September 07). Denmark puts ad in Lebanese newspapers: Dear refugees, don't come here. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/09/07/denmark-places-an-advertisement-in-lebanese-newspapers-dear-refugees-dont-come-here/?utm_term=.5f242718ae36.
 35. The Think Tank on Immigration in Denmark (2004). Immigration and Integration Policies in Denmark and Selected Countries. *Ministry of Refugee, Immigration, and Integration Affairs*. Retrieved from <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/index.cfm?action=media.download&uuid=29C9FAEC-E680-85E6-0E0E616E8C069F2C>.
 36. Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet. (2016). *Statborgerskab*. Retrieved from <http://uim.dk/arbejdsomrader/statsborgerskab/in-english>.
 37. Ward, J. (2006, January 31). Cartoons of Prophet Met with Outrage. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/01/30/AR2006013001316.html>.
 38. Westerby, R., & Ngo-Diep, S. (2013). Welcome to Europe! A comprehensive guide to resettlement. *International Catholic Migration Commission Europe*, 147-157; 252-262. Retrieved from http://www.resettlement.eu/sites/icmc.ttp.eu/files/ICMC%20Europe-Welcome%20to%20Europe_0.pdf.