



universität
wien

MASTER THESIS

Titel der Master Thesis / Title of the Master's Thesis

„What Makes a Dane? The Complications of the
Ever-Evolving Question of Cultural Assimilation in
Denmark “

verfasst von / submitted by

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angestrebter akademischer Grad / in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
of

Master of Advanced International Studies (M.A.I.S.)

Wien 2022 / Vienna 2022

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt

A 992 940

Postgraduate programme code as it appears on the
student record sheet:

Universitätslehrgang lt. Studienblatt

Internationale Studien / International Studies

Postgraduate programme as it appears on the
student record sheet:

Betreut von / Supervisor:

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diplomatische
akademie wien
Vienna School of International Studies
École des Hautes Études Internationales de Vienne

On my honour as a student of the Diplomatische Akademie Wien, I submit this work in good faith and pledge that I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance on it.

This work is dedicated in its entirety to Thomas and Kathy Maehtle. The memory of my loving father and his passion for scientific work which guided me through my research and the unyielding support of my mother have inspired and supported the completion of this thesis.

Abstract (English)

The Danish case has become the paradigm of restrictive immigration in Western Europe. Danish immigration has gradually become one of the strictest in the EU, with a predominant narrative being circulated that the increasing restrictions are due to the countries efforts to encourage integration into the country for the benefit of both the immigrant and the impact on the culture of Denmark. Tightening restrictions in Denmark have led to significantly more permanent residence applications of third country nationals being denied, and where the Danish government would describe these denied applications to be a failure on the part of applicants, many immigrants have said that Denmark's requirements are unreasonable and exceptionally difficult to achieve. Concern about gaps between Danish immigration policies and immigrants' abilities to meet requirements bring up the question of whether or not policy failure is occurring in Danish immigration legislation. This thesis examines what research has been done on the developing policy restrictions in Denmark by reviewing the role of the government and politicians, news media, and immigrants, to determine where gaps in Danish immigration policies are occurring and how they are impacting the cultural assimilation of the immigrant. Survey data and personal interviews with migrants have been compiled with current accessible information on Danish immigration requirements and government statements in order to identify where policy failure is occurring. Results from the research have provided a qualitative understanding of the policy failure occurring as immigrants attempt to gain permanent residency in Denmark. Denmark is an attractive location for migrants due to the security and benefits permanent residency provides but fails to integrate immigrants into society under long term premise due to fears of multiculturalism. Thus, the research question for this thesis is: What are the explicit difficulties of the assimilation process of migrants and refugees into Western societies – distinctly looking at the Danish case?

Abstract (German)

Dänemark ist zum Paradigma für restriktive Einwanderung in Westeuropa geworden. Die dänische Einwanderungspolitik hat sich allmählich zu einer der strengsten in der EU entwickelt, wobei die vorherrschende Meinung ist, dass die zunehmenden Beschränkungen auf die Bemühungen des Landes, die Integration in das Land sowohl für Einwander*innen als auch für die dänische Kultur förderlich zu gestalten, zurückzuführen sind. Die Verschärfung der Beschränkungen in Dänemark hat dazu geführt, dass deutlich mehr Anträge von Drittstaatsangehörigen auf Daueraufenthalt abgelehnt wurden. Während die dänische Regierung Versagen der Antragssteller*innen als Grund für die Ablehnungen nennt, klagen viele Zuwander*innen über zu hohe Anforderungen für einen positiven Bescheid. Die Besorgnis über die Diskrepanz zwischen der dänischen Einwanderungspolitik und der Fähigkeit der Einwander*innen, die Anforderungen zu erfüllen, wirft die Frage auf, ob in der dänischen Einwanderungsgesetzgebung ein Versagen der politischen Richtlinien vorliegt. In dieser Arbeit wird untersucht, welche Forschung zu den sich entwickelnden politischen Beschränkungen in Dänemark bereits durchgeführt wurde, indem die Rolle der Regierung, der Politiker*innen, der Medien und der Einwander*innen überprüft wird. Dadurch wird festgestellt, wo Lücken in der dänischen Einwanderungspolitik auftreten und wie sie sich auf die Integration der Einwander*innen auswirken. Für die Arbeit wurden Umfragedaten und persönliche Interviews mit Migrant*innen sowie aktuell zugängliche Informationen über dänische Einwanderungsbestimmungen und Regierungserklärungen genutzt, um herauszufinden, woran die dänische Einwanderungspolitik genau scheitert. Die Forschungsergebnisse haben ein qualitatives Verständnis für das Versagen der politischen Richtlinien, das auftritt, wenn Zuwander*innen versuchen, einen dauerhaften Wohnsitz in Dänemark zu erlangen, aufgezeigt. Dänemark ist aufgrund der Sicherheit und der Vorteile, die eine dauerhafte Aufenthaltsgenehmigung bietet, ein attraktiver Standort für Migrant*innen. Eine erfolgreiche und nachhaltige Integration der Zuwander*innen in die dänische Gesellschaft scheitert jedoch an der Angst vor Multikulturalismus. Die Forschungsfrage für diese Arbeit lautet daher: Welchen Schwierigkeiten stehen Migrant*innen und Geflüchtete während der Integration in westliche Gesellschaften gegenüber - mit besonderem Fokus auf Dänemark?

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I. Introduction

Migration has become a pressing topic as a result of the 2015 migration crisis, and the political tone in Europe has shifted significantly. In Denmark specifically, they have cracked down on immigration policies over more than two decades. In 2021, Denmark's prime minister Mette Frederiksen, stated that the country has a goal of eventually accepting 'zero asylum seeker applications' (*The Local dk*, 2021). The statement indicates that Denmark's goal is to effectively limit the total amount of immigrants received in Denmark through a restricted asylum application process that will discourage applicants from seeking permanent residence in Denmark. This thesis seeks to provide an empirical analysis of how integration and immigration requirements in Denmark are impacting refugees and migrants from a comparative perspective through past published research, government statements and legislature, the politicization of news media, and the progression of immigration restrictions in Denmark. The perspective of immigrants attempting to apply for permanent residence will be included through anonymous personal statements taken from social media discourse and an anonymous survey. The Danish case is of great importance to understand the restrictions occurring towards the permanent residence and asylum application process in the whole of Europe. Denmark's push to restrict immigration into the country not only sets a precedent for how other EU member states may begin to implement restrictions, but also puts a significant strain on other neighboring countries who would assume responsibility for diverting the flows of both migrants and asylum seekers.

It is important to clarify that while we are looking at the impact of official immigration and integration requirements of the State on migrants and refugees, the end goal of those seeking to immigrate to Denmark is not necessarily citizenship through the attainment of a Danish passport, but rather achieving permanent residence and cultural assimilation. Throughout this research, assimilation will be defined as the "outward manner of the immigrant who becomes less distinguishable from people of the immigration country" (Johnston, 1963:295). Other terms to be referenced throughout this work are the distinction between migrants and refugees. As defined by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, an international migrant is "any person who is outside of a State of which they are a citizen or a national, or, in the case of a stateless person, their

State of birth or habitual residence” (*Migrants And Refugees*, n.d.). The term migrant is used as a neutral term to describe a group of persons who share a lack of citizenship attachment to their host country. A refugee, however, is strictly defined under international law as “a person who is fleeing persecution or conflict in his or her own country of origin” (*Migrants And Refugees*, n.d.). Refugees are entitled to the full protection of refugee law, including protection from expulsion or return to situations of persecution where their life and freedoms are at risk. Migrants experience with permanent residence requirements will be the primary focus of the study conducted in this research, however, refugees will be included in research from the standpoint of assessing the assimilation process in Denmark.

Due to the influx of immigrants from non-Western countries in recent years, migrants and refugees attempting to assimilate into Western European states and cultures are facing a very high standard of assimilation requirements in order to fit into a category of individual which would qualify for permanent residence. Emilsson identifies how the Danish Case progressively developed from the 1970’s onward, where initial requirements for immigrants was language training for newly arrived migrants with mother-tongue instruction being maintained in schools (Emilsson, 2015). In the early 2000’s new immigrations laws were introduced that were considerably more restrictive than what was previously required. Ersbøll identifies how conditions for obtaining permanent residence and citizenship now require intensive immigration tests, as well as language and citizenship tests (Ersbøll, 2010). There is an apparent disparity between the perceptions of migrants and refugees on the basis of the State’s requirements and their personal efforts to fulfill them in relation to the governments publicized interpretation of migrants’ overall lack of effort to meet these conditions. This will be investigated by looking at government discourse transpiring in Denmark from the late 1990’s into the 2000’s when immigration restrictions began to tighten considerably to present conditions where Denmark is now known as one of the most unfriendly countries towards migrants in the whole of the EU. This information will be held in comparison to the personal accounts of migrants and asylum seekers attempting to assimilate into the country.

Three narratives will be analyzed in order to assess the gap between the policy requirements currently developing in Denmark and migrants’ ability to meet them. This

will be done by identifying the narrative of the government, the immigrant, and the narrative of news media. These three variables are necessary to gather a comprehensive understanding of how the State and the media have developed a symbiotic relationship where politicized media frames reflect the ideals of the government, often in opposition to the narrative of the migrant. Each of these variables plays an important role in determining where Denmark's policy failures lie in terms of providing an inclusive and successful integration process for receiving third country migrants. In order to identify where these failures might be, this thesis will distinguish how government statements and evolving legislature on migration in Denmark is interconnected with the impact of news media in the campaign to dominate the narrative on immigration in Denmark, and what the results of this relationship have concluded for the immigrant's experience.

The demands coming from the Danish Immigration Service range from requiring a certain level of language skills in the country's national language, as well as specific educational requirements, and job independence (*Ny i Danmark*, 2022). These requirements individually can be seen as daunting and very difficult for individuals that have little means to assimilate into the culture of a new country as is, but they remain the minimum requirements in order to gain permit residency. With this knowledge, it can be hypothesized that many refugees and migrants attempting to fulfil these government mandates may struggle to meet the expectations of Denmark. The Danish government in turn has also been outspoken with the narrative that many migrants do not make the effort to assimilate into the culture fully. The Queen of Denmark notably said "It's not a law of nature that one becomes Danish by living in Denmark. It doesn't necessarily happen" (October 23, 2016). Thus there is a massive standoff between the migrant or refugee and the receiving country about what is enough to determine if a migrant has earned their residence in a country or not. The definition of a 'Dane' will be explored in this research from a legal perspective, as well as the cultural and political standpoint.

II. Literature Review

The literature being reviewed in this section identifies previous studies relating to the gap between immigration policy in Denmark and immigrants' ability to meet the demands due to roadblocks in Danish immigration policy which include political agendas, news media representation, and cultural adversity.

The refugee crisis has made immigration a prime topic of conversation not only in the EU but internationally, and previous studies will be applied to reference the current accessibility of permanent residence and security in Denmark. "Governments, the news industry, and public opinion in Europe have been increasingly preoccupied with refugees seeking access to Europe" (d'Haenens & Joris, 2019:8). The rising issue with public opinion regarding immigrants is due to media depictions of both refugees and migrants, thusly, news media must be considered a factor in the study as it pertains to the narrative of both the Danish government and refugees and migrants. Public opinion is split, shifting towards being generally negative towards migrants as well as misinformed or uninformed (d'Haenens & Joris, 2019). This issue compiled with the fact that policies and politicians have bordered between being ineffectual at best and hostile at worst in the face of a very difficult problem and people with genuine and sometimes life-threatening needs. The framing towards both migrants and refugees is one that shifts the tone for how the public sees the issue at hand. Whether that framing is one that supports the narrative of migrants and empathizes with a difficult situation, or one that frames them as a collective villain threatening the economic prosperity, safety, or cultural values of the receiving country is decided by both news media and politicians. A significant influence in the way that migrants and refugees are being received by country nationals in the West has to do with the reluctance to share one's country with 'outsiders' such as the additional refugees. As of 2015, the primary concern of European nationals was immigration, followed by terrorism and the economic situation. This is a rapid change in public perception of immigrants from prior studies in 2014 where immigration was ranked fourth in concerns of EU citizens (d'Haenens & Joris, 2019).

News media's presence since the migration crisis has become a major factor in the narrative of both the State and migrants and refugees' experiences with assimilation

requirements and the tightening of immigration laws. Since the start of the migration crisis in 2015, news media coverage on discourse between both the State and immigrants has grown immensely. The media's choice to use their influence to interpret the gravity of the political and humanitarian crisis has often led to different outlets choosing to emphasize political frames which coincide with the current government's agendas. "Frame building" defined by Hänggli (2012) is the process in which the frames of political actors are passed to journalists and thusly produce media content (Rodelo & Muñiz, 2019). The way that the media has chosen to frame the migration crisis can either shift public perception to a more positive or empathetic light, or it can direct the public to the view that migrants are a threat to their safety, jobs, economy, and culture. Media frames include the presence or absence of certain key words, stock phrases, stereotyped images, sources of information, and sentences that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgments (Entman, 2003). The frames can result in more empathy in people consuming the media by exhibiting the challenges or hardships migrants and refugees are going through or may do the opposite by focusing on the political or economic drain that migrants may be imposing on receiving countries.

Two concrete issues associated with immigration are the economy and multiculturalism, in which the media appears to be increasing concerns about immigration to the perception of the public. Hänggli argues that political actors consider media content as an arena where differing political groups attempt to impose a desired discourse or interpretation of the problem (2012). This argument is further substantiated by noting that it is political actors who introduce the most prominent frames into public discourse' news media representation of non-EU immigrants holds a potentially very powerful public opinion-forming impact on consumers (Hänggli, 2012:3). Fürsich extrapolates on how mass news media contributes to the voluntary and forced mobility of people, which identifies the general struggle to be the defining and situating of the 'Other'(Fürsich, 2010). News media can either choose to connect people or to sharpen differences by stressing 'otherness'. It is in this role that Fürsich identifies the media as having the power to define the boundaries of a community which can be considered apart of one nation and often excludes the minorities as the 'Other'. This mentality is coupled with the frame building of politicians and the government that creates a rigid dialogue for minorities and immigrants in receiving countries such as Denmark. The ability for media representations to produce shared cultural meaning leads to problematic representations which may have negative

consequences for political and social decision making and can be implicated in sustained social and political inequalities, making news media an impactful and powerful tool in the representation of immigrants hoping to assimilate into another country and culture (Fürsich, 2010).

Media representation plays a key role in the negative attitude towards multiculturalism. Successful integration and acceptance on behalf of the receiving country is dependent on the number of immigrants that a country has been receiving and whether that number is enough to instill feelings of fear or question the impact of an influx of another culture on a receiving country. However, it is generally quite difficult for people to estimate the number of immigrants in a country accurately. There is substantive research however, that indicates that the size of an immigrant population would affect the people's immigration attitudes. The attitude towards migrants is not so often impacted by actual migration numbers, rather by the way that the news media reports on immigration (van Klinger et al., 2015). What people see in the media, and how it is purported to impact their own lives, whether it be through the job market, living accommodation, or religious identity can shift the entire appearance of a group of people and make immigrants out to be more threatening than they truly are.

The main finding of the media framing occurring in the countries which are being compared in the literature revolves around the contestation of solidarity with people in need as an accepted yet contested norm in practice (Brändle et al., 2019). Solidarity contestations have become a primary focus in news media which is playing a central role in public opinion-formation with their ability to enable political debate and encourage citizens to become involved in the government. The issue of migration as its framed in the media has become a significant focus relating to culture framing. The text also brings up the question of what shape solidarity contestation in the EU takes when filtered through available news media. The research done in this paper shows that state actors are generally more dominate of mainstream media discourses. The media framing taking place especially in immigration dialogue is portrayed as issues which would require governmental decision making.

Media coverage during the migration crisis focuses on political conflict, implications of domestic economy, and emphasizing assumed challenges about integration which indicates a crisis situation to the public narrative. The research that details the effect

of claims covered in the media emphasizes claims that fall under the category of intervention, verbal and non verbal, that are made in a public sphere by any actor, which bears on the interests, needs or rights of refugees and asylum seekers. The impact which claims in media had on solidarity relates to their tone, whether it be neutral, or trending towards negative or positive impact. Claims that are entirely neutral are represented as mostly negative and this is where Denmark falls in the findings. Each of the other countries compared indicated slightly more positive tones with Greece's average tone holding at 0.01, Italy at 0.10, and Germany with 0.09 which indicate a slightly more positive tone (Brändle et al., 2019). The literature surmises that solidarity contestations reflect political stalemates and national 'going alone' during the refugee crisis; while also reflecting a symbiotic relationship between politicians and the news media in the construction of public 'crisis'.

A literature review conducted by Meltzer et al. on the way the media effects the public's attitudes towards migration and mobility in the EU determined the ways that media framing can impact the public's perception of immigrants in host countries within the EU. The literature identifies how media serves an important role in the perception of the public on migrants due to the fact that many individuals do not have personal experiences with migrants and thus rely sometimes solely on the media's depiction to fill this perception. A number of studies on media's influence to the public confirm that media does affect individuals political attitudes (Strömbäck et al., 2021). Many believe that for most people, news media is the most important source of information on EU topics. News is not only a transmitter of reality but is also often biased in a specific direction. Examples of negative media depictions include when reporting on crimes there is a massive overrepresentation of foreigners (Strömbäck et al., 2021). According to Vliegthart and Boomgaarden (2007), immigration related news coverage does not reflect real world developments but instead picks up on key events that guide further media attention. This can be in the form of violent acts against asylum seekers or assaults committed by migrants which can heighten different portrayals in the news media. A major driving factor in how the media impacts consumers perception is through perceived threats. Part of the political forces that drive people to different opinions on migrants are based largely in threat to cultural life in Europe and economic stability and opportunity. Framing in the media plays a significant role in the portrayal of perceived threats in that the representation of different groups values and norms significantly drive public opinion.

This driving factor known as ‘otherness’ pushes the narrative that immigrants are significantly different to the citizens of the receiving state, and thusly not only bringing their own cultures with them upon arriving in the country, but also erasing or compromising the culture that they are being taken into. This exact concern has sparked a political discussion known as the ‘end to multiculturalism in Denmark’. The direction of language regarding immigrants from news media and politicians in Denmark shows a desire for things to remain as they are, as well as to adopt more restrictive immigration and integration policies. Søren Pind became the Minister of Integration in 2011 and made headlines across news media outlets by firmly stating

“I really don’t want to hear any more about integration. Please stop - the right word must be assimilation. There are so many cultures and people can go elsewhere and engage with them if they want” (Pind, 2008) (Holtug, 2013:190).

Denmark has some of the most restrictive policies on immigration in Europe, which is a massive shift from where it initially stood as one of the most welcoming European states. This transition has also led to what is now known as the ‘Danish Paradox’(Holtug, 2013). Due to harsh policies on immigration, Denmark is often perceived as being hostile to immigrants, however, several studies indicate that Danes are no more hostile or intolerant than other peoples in Europe. A trend line shows that Danes are becoming more positive to immigrants (Holtug, 2013). With this information at hand, we must differentiate between what is the narrative of the State and their influence on Danish nationals in comparison to the narrative of refugees and migrants.

One take on what the appropriate approach towards integration might be with migrants and refugees in mind stems from the multicultural policies which have been identified by Kymlicka and Banting, including constitutional, legislative or parliamentary affirmation of multiculturalism, at the central and or regional and municipal levels (Kymlicka & Banting, 2006). The adoption of multiculturalism in the school curriculum. The inclusion of ethnic representation/sensitivity in the mandate of public media. Exemptions from dress codes, Sunday closing legislation, and so on either by statute or by court cases. Allowing dual citizenship. The funding of ethnic group organizations to

support cultural activities. The Funding of bilingual education or mother-tongue instruction. Affirmative action for disadvantaged immigrant groups. The Municipality of Copenhagen introduced a 'policy of inclusion' according to which 'diversity is a strength' and 'Copenhageners must be treated equally, but not necessarily identically' (Municipality of Copenhagen 2011: 6). Some of the schools with many Muslim identifying children chose to give the kids a day off for Eid-al-fitr (Quillian, 1995).

2007 Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen publicly stated that "If we are to maintain the high level of social cohesion that is so important for the progress and stability of Denmark, it is necessary that we continue to meet one another as human beings and citizens of Denmark in the public sphere – not as representatives of different religions" (Quoted in Heinskou et al., 2007) (Holtug, 2013:196).

This sentiment has been echoed in the extreme as of late with reference to the new integration policies. Ethnic diversity drives down social cohesion. Social cohesion is necessary in highly multicultural societies in order to avoid religious and political conflicts, which make assimilation such a high priority for Danish government. Parallel societies and crime are also considered risks to social cohesion that assimilation requirements are attempting to battle in order to maintain the level of solidarity required between citizens for maintaining the Danish welfare state. This has resulted in a struggle over which values are conducive to social and political stability, and which values define what it means to be Danish. "Democratic citizenship is more inclusive than conservative nationalism in that the common identity it presupposes is less thick, and more accommodating towards difference" Christensen & Lindhardt 2007:2013) (Holtug 2013: 198). The approach that the Danish government has taken as of late is one that can be seen as less than accommodating. Some of the latest measures adding to the already strict immigration process include the new point system for permanent residence permits and the immigration test for family reunification applicants. Another requirement is language proficiency for immigrants in Denmark.

Søren Pind affirmed that these immigration measures have been taken not only to better guide the immigrant through the integration process, but also to limit the multiculturalism that comes with the induction of third country nationals into another society.

“From now on it must be clear that Denmark only accepts foreigners who adopt and respect Danish values, norms, and traditions, while all the others may as well stay away. My approach is that when people choose to come to Denmark, and want to become citizens, it is of course because they want to become Danish, not because they want to change Denmark. In my view it is the multicultural that makes it all crack (...). Contrary to opposition parties, I do not see the great value in the multicultural society” (Adamo 2012:2).

Denmark, at least on a political and state level, has in recent years made it clear how they deem someone to be integrated into Danish society. Immigrants at this current time are facing stricter and stricter requirements to assimilate into Danish culture, and the stigmatization of multiculturalism and migrants is detrimental to the goal of a cohesive society while migrants still attempt to assimilate. Especially with the new targeting of ‘non-Western’ immigrants, a migrant may feel very Danish and have completed all the necessary steps of assimilation, but still be targeted by natives who do not support the notion of a multicultural society.

The new point-based system is not the only new form of strict legislation to note in Denmark. The country has also instigated a tightening of family reunification laws which have led some party members to resign. As of 2016, new laws were passed to restrict access to family reunification for Syrian refugees for up to three years, and the implementation of a jewelry law under which personal valuables were confiscated from refugees to pay for their stay (Stokes-Dupass, 2017). In 2018 the government began measures that targeted ‘non-Western residents’ in underprivileged areas. Crimes committed within or near a ‘ghetto’ would result in harsh penalties. These changes in restrictions and policy implementations are directly targeting a group of people based on their ethnicity in the hopes of controlling what the Danish government feels is dangerous to the society. These actions are also decreasing desirability for residence in Denmark as it grows to be an inhospitable environment for immigrants.

Culturalism is a driving factor in how immigration legislation and politics are shaped. Culturalism is defined as conceiving cultures as reified, static, and homogeneous

across bounded groups. The pivotal points surround immigration and national culture are mutually constituted in policies, state institutions, media, and everyday perceptions surrounding key categories pertaining to borders, illegality, and law (Buciek et al., 2006). This way of thinking, aimed at preserving the country's culture and language, in many cases does not consider the fact that culture is often times more fluid than any one person can define. In the case of migrants, many decades of immigration have not proven to come anywhere close to eroding the Danish culture. However, their influence is still visible through ethnicity, religion and languages and as such may be perceived as a threat not only to the culture of Denmark, but to the conservative governments which wish to maintain a hold over the predominantly white and Christian people. Many modes of cultural politics are contextually stimulated by anxieties revolving around cultural loss (Vertovec, 2011). The concern of many countries, especially currently immigrant receiving countries in the West, is that immigrants will erode the national culture. The issues surrounding migration stimulate, manifest, and reproduce cultural politics. Culture can be seen as a political issue and policies can be considered a cultural field. Migrant's cultures have been perceived as objects of political concern. Migrants are often "both celebrated and denigrated for weaving diverse cultural heritages into the national fabric" (Coutin 2003: 508).

"Politicians and other public figures often praise the immigrants for 'enriching' the national culture. At the same time, they may worry about arranged marriages or Islam as impediments to national cohesion" (Eriksen 2006: 15)

Reichersdorfer, Christensen, and Vrangbæk identified how accountability is conceptualized as an institutional mechanism which obliges actors to explain conduct to different forums. The authors have identified five types of accountability which are as follows: political, administrative, legal, professional and social accountability (Reichersdorfer et al., 2013). The text makes a point to reference the demands from the public as well as internal and external peers as factors which impact the efforts of public administrative works of political and administrative leaders and civil servants. The text notes that immigration is a political minefield due to conflicting values, path dependencies, and political threats ('t Hart and Wijkhuijs, 1999: 160). The authors research questions revolve around which accountability mechanisms can be observed during critical events in the immigration field in Denmark, Norway, and Germany. Why and how accountability

mechanisms are activated and by whom, and which types of consequences are applied (Reichersdorfer et al., 2013).

Immigration is considered an empirical field which is highly politicized and therefore not thoroughly investigated. The literature applies a mixed case design to three political administrative structures that differ across the three countries. The empirical research contains expert interviews, governmental databases, selected newspaper articles and peer reviewed articles in administrative and political science journals. As for the research the study conducts on Denmark, the authors give brief context into why the Danish case can be considered unique, referencing it as a 'Danish state-less gate'. Where Danish immigration law from 1983 was once the most liberal in all of Europe, from 1995 policies have gradually changed to reflect the voter support for the anti-immigration Danish People's Party (DDP) and immigration issues have become of high importance on the political agenda in Denmark (Reichersdorfer et al., 2013).

In the period from 2001 to 2011, the influence of the DDP ensured that Danish immigration policy became the strictest of any of the Nordic countries and has seen a significant decrease in applications for citizenship and asylum as a response. The organization of the migration field was traditionally organized by different directorates within the Ministry of Justice. In the early 1990's migration was transferred to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Danish Refugee Aid delivered practical integration services until 1999 once a major reform made local governments responsible for the implementation of integration policies. From the period of 2001 to 2011 the migration field within the central administration was organized in the Ministry of Integration, where Danish Immigration Service (DIS) maintained responsibility for the administration of migration rules such as the Danish Alien Act. In 2006 the DIS was reformed following an initiative from the minister. The authors also note that there is a formal court like body that is known as the Refugees Board of Appeal (RBA) which is relatively autonomous and court like in cases where the DIS denied asylum or access to the country. The Case that was analyzed through this research occurred at the start of 2011 with the public understanding that state-less Palestinians who had entered Denmark as children but were now coming of age had been denied Danish citizenship (Reichersdorfer et al., 2013).

“The administration crisis broke once a member of the parliament’s standing committee on citizenship tipped off a reporter at a newspaper because the MP was puzzled about a remark made by the Minister of Integration in response to a question from another MP on the issue of granting citizenship to 35 people who were formerly stateless” (Reichersdorfer et al., 2013:280).

This information led to members of the Socialist People’s Party to wonder who was responsible for the violation of international conventions and the refusal to grant citizenship to stateless Palestinians. The interpretation of the Danish ‘state-less gate’ is seen against the backdrop of the highly politicized nature of the immigration field in Denmark. The case is referenced back to political accountability in the form of questioning by the anti-immigration DPP about granting citizenship to state-less Palestinians who had grown up in Denmark. The minister tried to defuse the questions by claiming that she was simply correcting an existing faulty practice, but further public and parliamentary debate about various levels of accountability on the part of the state escalated the crisis. Social media accountability relations played a leading role in illuminating and escalating the crisis. The Danish case in this research illustrates a combination of parliamentary scrutiny in the relevant subcommittee and media attention served as the triggering factors for social and political accountability dynamics. The media attention that the Danish case received increased social accountability for the interaction and thusly connects media as having a major role in accelerating the issue in the public sphere.

Brändle conducted a study on European solidarity during the refugee crisis as a comparative investigation of media claims in Denmark, Germany, Greece and Italy. The outcome of the study determined that “the ‘refugee crisis’ contributed to a solidarity gap between inclusive liberal-cosmopolitan and exclusive communitarian attitudes in the EU” (Brändle et al., 2019:2). The literature addresses the refugee crisis of 2015 and 2016 which fueled discussions on European solidarity and began a public conversation in the media about immigration and political conflict. ‘Dublin rules’ are taken into account as the way the burden sharing policy impacts the EU in relation to forced migration (Brändle et al., 2019). The literature mainly focuses on empirical studies on the issue of migration in the media and how framing is contributing to the perpetuation of stereotypes in debates about migration. The argument as demonstrated by Mortensen and Trenz indicates that media coverage has impacted and strengthened anti-immigration sentiments. Additionally, the

literature goes on to show that there is a significant difference in coverage which persists across countries. Brändle goes on to discuss that refugees are being framed in the media as ‘objects’ of solidarity throughout different national news discourses. Denmark is represented as a transit country for refugees with the final destination Sweden. While both Denmark and Germany are considered to be attractive destinations for migrants with considerably high immigration numbers, this can be correlated to their stable economies and high level of living standards. What keeps Denmark listed as a transit country however is its restrictive citizenship and immigration regime. The Danish case is unique due to a very restrictive government, restrictive immigrations policies, and exponentially exclusive state actors relating to refugee solidarity which has been counter balanced by inclusive societal actors.

Groups who hold similar values as the in-group are viewed more positively than groups who are more noticeably different to the native. Group images change attitudes and behavior by triggering an emotional reaction in the public (Brader et al., 2008). Language, religion, and clothing are different factors that can be used in affiliation with ethnicity to create out-group hostility by the media. Cultural threats are considered to be symbolic threats rather than realistic threats and the media is the driving force in determining the public perception (Stephan et al., 2005). Economically, media can influence individuals to form zero sum beliefs the perception is that immigrants take away money, jobs, and houses from members of the host community and this perception causes immigrants to be perceived as competitors in a static market where the goods that they may be receiving are no longer available to natives (Esses et al., 1998). When the media focuses on these types of issue they create a perception that immigrants are threats to the host countries culture, economy, and even considered physical threats due to media coverage of terrorism or crimes committed by immigrants (Stephan et al., 2005).

Perceived culture threats predict anti-immigrant attitudes and potentially support for radical right parties to a substantially higher extent than perceived economic threats might indicate (Lucassen & Lubbers, 2012). The literature determines that overall media issues trigger perceived economic competition with immigrants that leads to support for restrictive immigration policies and attenuated support for policies that empower immigrants (Costello & Hodson, 2011). From the evident literature it is clearly indicated that the media can manipulate the public perception in either a positive or negative way

depending on framing. If framed in a positive light, the media tends to focus on the benefits that different cultures bring to host countries such as food, art, and successful entrepreneurs that secure jobs in the host community. The problematic impact, however, is that the impact of the media portrayal of threats that immigrants might pose in comparison to the media portrayal of possible enrichment through immigrants is not fully comparable in the influence it has over the public towards positive or negative association. Ultimately, the issue with negative media framing is the dehumanization of immigrants which allows for consumers to separate individuals that fall under the category of immigrant from what they perceive as those entitled to human rights (Strömbäck et al., 2021). Media holds significant power through the framing of immigrants to host countries. The decision by news media can either encourage hostilities by facilitating perceived threats or by actively targeting them and stressing commonalities between social groups to improve the attitude of natives towards immigrants in the host country.

III. Historical Background

This chapter incorporates important historical background that will provide necessary information as to how the immigration process in Denmark has evolved over the last two decades. For Denmark, there is a narrative of solidarity which concerns immigration during the booming years specifically the 1970's. Denmark's recruitment policies opened the borders to a large number of migrants. During this period, a high demand for temporary workers in the labor market was not perceived as immigration but rather as "guest workers". The oil crisis in 1973 caused for the recruitment policies to abruptly stop (Duru et al., 2018). This resulted in migrants continuing to stay rather than return to their country of origin. This occurred in part because returning home was not an option for many also in part due to the quality of living in Denmark due to its supportive welfare state. Immigration was thusly embraced as promoting a vision of a tolerant and diverse society while also separately being defined as a social problem.

A. Denmark's Regression

It is important to account for the progression of Denmark's political atmosphere from a very migrant friendly country to its current state of increasingly strict immigration laws. The historical relevance of immigration in Denmark impacts the cultural politics of the current political situation as it continues to evolve. Immigration in Denmark initially included economic migrants and integration focused on guest workers who began to arrive in the country and the intent was that immigrants should fill gaps in the labor market, where they experienced the required level of integration until it was time for these economic migrants to return to their country of origin. This approach was additionally supported by policies attempting to limit immigration while integrating foreigners into what has been perceived as the 'Danish way of life' (Holtug, 2013). Part of the motive to tighten immigration restrictions came from the effort to avoid Denmark becoming a refugee magnet. The restriction reduced social benefits for immigrants and more restrictive rules for citizenship and permanent residence; More difficult language and knowledge tests on Danish politics, history, and culture have been implemented. The accusation of dealing with crime, educational underachievement, unemployment, and illiberal practices of some

immigrants have followed suit. The liberal conservative government has defended the policy restrictions as being tough but fair (Holtug, 2013). Two main elements have played a role in the implementation of the limited Danish policies; Calculations indicating that non-Western immigrants are costly for welfare states has been a talking point on immigration for a considerable period of time. Economists and politicians worry that immigrants are undermining the basis of the Danish welfare state. The second factor is growing Danish discontent with what have been viewed as too lenient policies in the past. These developments have not produced a climate conducive to multicultural policies. Some scholars have labelled the currently existing policies as assimilationist.

B. Economic Migration to Migration Crisis

From the period of booming economic migration in the 1970's to the migration crisis in 2015, the next step has been an implementation of multiple new and stricter laws for both migrants and refugees. A new law enabled in 2021 allows for Denmark to deport asylum seekers outside Europe while their applications are being still processed. The vote passed with 70 in favor to 24 opposed. Under this new law, asylum seekers would be flow to a third country that may not have any connection to where they originate from. One location possible is Rwanda, where Denmark may plan to open an asylum processing facility. While the legal implications of this are still unclear, Denmark undoubtedly remains responsible to ensure the rights of the individuals who would be transferred to this type of camp are protected. This political move comes after the government announced its intent to limit 'non-Western' immigrants. This also follows a decision made in April of 2021, to revoke residency permits of some Syrian refugees on the grounds that it is supposedly safe to return to Damascus.

2020 experienced a 57% decline from the year prior and is the lowest that has been seen since the 1990's (Pace, 2021). The prime minister says the goal is to reduce the number of asylum applicants to zero. This is an aggressive shift from Denmark's previous reputation regarding migration and asylum seeking. Denmark was the first country to sign the UN Refugee Convention in 1951 which core principle is 'non-refoulement'. That

refugees should not be returned to a country where they would face serious threats. In present day there is talk from Danish politicians to violate this principle and reform the convention. 'Non-Western immigrants' is the new term to dominate integration debates in Denmark. The clear intent to limit immigrants based off location, culture, or religion and send them back to a country deemed safe by Danish migration authorities after the people in question have attempted to assimilate into the culture after leaving the fear of persecution behind brings many different legal aspects of asylum seeking into question.

C. Culture Clash

Part of the discourse around 'non-Western immigrants' and preserving Danish culture and heritage revolves around the question of what heritage is and what is perceived in present day as cultural identity. Many immigrants from ex-Yugoslavia were brought to Denmark during the booming area of the steel industry. The immigrants undoubtedly contributed to the development of the areas where they migrated to in Denmark such as the town of Northern Zealand. The Danish notions of *Kulturmiljø* is the more material notion of heritage (Buciek et al., 2006).

Yugoslavs in Denmark are represented in the narrative of immigration in a different light than many Yugoslav immigrants actually perceive their positions. There are potentials as well as limitations when it comes to integrating immigrants into the *Kulturemiljø*, but the goal for many is to make the narratives of immigrants visible within it. This is of key importance to the narrative being pushed from politicians today. From where many immigrants stand, they are integrated into Danish culture and have assimilated and participated accordingly. This concept of 'Danish culture' is being significantly limited to those who are ethnically Danish, while there are many 2nd generation immigrants who may identify just as much with Danish culture and contribute to Danish society in part through their parents' efforts to assimilate upon entering Denmark. The argument that immigrants are diluting the Danish culture is one that clashes with the factual history of how Denmark has thrived in passing decades.

IV. The Gap Between Immigrants and Denmark

Chapter IV consists of an extensive development of the slowly forming gap between immigrants and immigration policy in the Danish State from the perspective of the immigrant, which has been conducted for the purpose of this research via anonymous interview and a survey. Numbers from the survey will be compared to results from the 2005 OECD study to highlight how the immigration restrictions are continuing to impact immigrants attempting to apply for permanent residency. Part of the qualitative data utilized in this thesis comes from Facebook discourse and a public questionnaire sent out to members of the Facebook page “Permanent Residence in Denmark” which primarily includes non-EU nationals seeking advice on the ever-changing immigration policies, as well as a few immigration lawyers. The page is very active with questions and information as people without an EU passport or permanent residency navigate an extensive bureaucratic system. The survey conducted included a set of 20 questions with relevance to the Danish immigration system and people’s personal experiences. The survey pool included between 15-17 respondents with two opting out of specific questions.

A. Personal Statements and Application Outcomes

For transcripts of each interview, please refer to Appendix C.

1. Interview No. 1

One of the individuals who responded to the survey also gave further insight to the complication’s immigrants face in Denmark. The respondent will be referred to as Interview No. 1 for the purpose of anonymity. The interview was conducted through Facebook messenger and gave some insight into their struggles as a third country national attempting to gain permanent residency in Denmark (Personal Communication, 04.15.2022). Interview No.1 disclosed that their initial attempt to apply for residency was rejected three years ago. When asked for further information, they communicated that the first application was done with the advice of a lawyer based on the ‘fast tracked’

immigration rule where an individual can apply for permanent residence after having been living and working in Denmark for at least four years. Interview No.1 relocated to Denmark for a PhD program and afterward decided to pursue an academic career. After the completion of their PhD, they took a remote position sponsored by Finland while physically residing in Denmark. Interview No. 1 explained that their application required for them to have worked in Denmark for four consecutive years full time. While they technically met these requirements, 6.5 months of their employment was in Finland. In the requirements for the application however, a stipulation indicates that if the employment done outside of Denmark is still within the EU, then the time abroad will count if there was a previous employment in Denmark and if there is a connection between the previous job abroad and the next job in Denmark.

Ultimately, the application was denied on the basis that Interview No.1 was unemployed in Denmark prior to their Finnish employment. Interview No.1 clarified that the unemployment was a two-week period that occurred due to delays by the Finnish authorities to process their work permit, leading them to start their job two weeks later than planned. Despite trying to make this clerical error apparent to immigration authorities, further issues were taken with the fact that the immigration authorities decided there was no link between their Finnish employment and their Danish employment, despite the fact that both positions were at universities doing similar research and teaching on the same topic. Interview No.1 disclosed that the only significant difference was in the job title of each position. Because of this stint of employment in Finland which came at the end of their four years of employment requirement, the denial has required them to start over and complete another four years of work before being eligible to apply again. Due to this regulation, at the time of communication, Interview No.1 was currently waiting for the response to their family reunification application submitted earlier this year in order to stay in Denmark with their spouse who is a native Dane. The family reunification permit was applied for three years after the initial application was denied.

2. Interview No. 2

Interview No.2 also responded to inquiry via Facebook messenger with their own experience with the Danish immigration office as a third country national and will be referred to as Interview No.2 throughout this text for the purpose of anonymity. Interview No.2 explained that after living in Denmark for more than 6 years, they applied based on the four-year working rule and received a positive answer within the time frame indicated on Denmark's immigration website.

Interview No.2 extrapolated on the process of applying for permanent residence in Denmark by confirming that they were required to take a language and Permanent Residency test. Interview No.2 admitted that the tests were not very difficult by their standards, after having already obtained a master's degree from both Pakistan and Sweden (Interview No.2, Personal Communication, 04.15.2022). They did note that depending on one's personal situation with job opportunities or the ability to take time off, these requirements may be more difficult. Many of the individuals applying for permanent residence in Denmark are not fortunate to have obtained higher education or flexible working hours during the process of completing the application. Interview No.2 also said that the primary issue in Denmark currently is the constant change in immigration laws that are difficult for non-natives to anticipate.

Each of the interviews gave personal insight to both positive and negative outcomes of permanent residence applications in Denmark although they both had relatively similar backgrounds in reference to education level and experience with both the Danish and Scandinavian immigration authorities. Each interview outlined the difficulties that immigrants face when applying for permanent residence in a country with constantly evolving and restricting immigration laws.

3. Survey Results and OECD Study

For Survey Results, please refer to appendices A and B.

Survey questions were kept closely in line with the research question in an attempt to identify from the perspective of the immigrant, what the major gaps in immigration policy and cultural assimilation struggles are in Denmark. The responses were conducted anonymously through Google Forms and consist of multiple choice and free response answers relating to the process of applying for permanent residency, personal background, education, and multiculturalism.

The results indicated that 9 out of 15 respondents did not have a positive experience with Danish immigration services. When asked if the applicants were able to meet Permanent Residency application requirements easily, 13 out of 17 respondents said no. 12 of 17 respondents also indicated that the application process was not straight forward. On average, applicants received a response on their application anywhere between 8 and 10 months after completion. Out of the pool of respondents, 6 out of 17 respondents had their application denied.

When asked how the media portrays immigrants in Denmark, 10 out of 15 responded with negative, 3 out of 15 responded with neutral, and 2 out of 15 responded with positive. News media portrayal will be dealt with later in the text as it pertains to political framing and the perception of immigrants in the media. 7 out of 15 respondents said that native Danes are not culturally welcoming, while 6 out of 15 said they are sometimes welcoming. Multiculturalism in Denmark has become part of the agenda of politicians when making public statements on what it means to protect Danish culture and encourage assimilation rather than integration. 10 out of 15 respondents said that the application process has not discouraged them from attempting to remain in Denmark, however 5 out of 15 said it has affected their interest in remaining in the country. A majority of 14 out of 15 respondents said they were not themselves, nor were they affiliated with refugees or asylum applications. With minimal information on the asylum application process coming from the survey, it is difficult to ascertain a personal perspective on the immigration process in Denmark, however, official information concerning the process of applying for asylum will still be detailed further in the text. 6 out of 15 stated that they did have a Danish partner while 9 out of 15 said they did not. 5 out of 17 of respondents said their applications were

related to family reunification. A majority of permanent residence applications are typically connected to family reunification either through a spouse or children.

The OECD published a study in 2005 articulating the regressive changes in permanent residence application outcomes which show a similar trend as what was ascertained from the survey conducted for this dissertation. From 1996 to 2001, the amount of family reunification permits denied jumped from 895 to 2,043 (OECD, 2005). Additionally, approximately 80% of immigrants received university education in Denmark, and 28% of immigrants are fluent in Danish (OECD, 2005).

From the free responses conducted in the survey for this research, reasons for applying varied substantially between individuals. Some indicated Danish values, the right to vote in Denmark, family and marriage, as well as security. It must be noted that the research conducted draws from a very small and concentrated group of individuals which cannot be securely verified.

Confirmation on the experience with language, history, and work requirements leads to the assumption that the requirements of the Danish immigration office are indeed hefty, and the outstanding complaint from the community is the level of transparency between the government legislation and those it is directly affecting. It appears that many applications such as Interview No.1's are denied based on technicality rather than legitimate failure to comply with regulations and requirements. The responses provide insight into the daily struggles of individuals dealing with immigration laws in Denmark which can be held in direct comparison to the government issued statements, speeches, and statistics that are published to the public. The largest quantity of respondents came from India, with Iran, Ethiopia and the United States following. Multiple other countries such as Poland, Nepal, and Sudan also participated.

Similar to both interviews conducted, 9 out of 17 respondents to the survey stated that they had received education in Denmark, while 13 out of 17 responded that they had a

working knowledge of Danish and 100% of respondents confirmed that they had the ability to work while living in Denmark. On average, people responding to the survey have lived in Denmark between 7-8 years. Interview No.1's experience with immigration authorities regarding their Permanent Residence application is based on technicalities which plague bureaucratic institutions. 6 out of 17 respondents indicated that their applications had been denied at least once by immigration authorities in Denmark.

V. Policy Developments and News Media's Impact

This chapter deals with public statements given by political elites, which set the tone for how Danish immigration policy has been evolving from the period of 1999 until the mid 2010's. More recent reforms from the mid 2010's will also be analyzed as well as how news medias politicized framing has impacted the representation of immigrants in receiving nations.

1. Public Statements

Public Statements by political elites also impact the progression of conservative legislation for immigration laws in Denmark. Danish politics have become largely focused on issues relating to immigration and how tolerance, culture, and economic burden play a role in Denmark and Danish politics and society. In 2010, party leader of the Danish People's Party Pia Kjaersgaard stated

“There has been a reluctance against coupling the working ability of people of immigrant background to the lack of welfare. But I think we should let the genie out of the box and not be afraid to say that there is a connection” (quote in Henriksen & Nyhus, 2010) (Jensen et al., 2009:19).

2. Danish Integration Policy

Danish Integration Policy relies on objectives stated in the Integration Act in order to ensure that immigrants and refugees are given the opportunity to utilize their abilities and resources to become contributing and involved citizens in Danish society. This is listed as an effort of integration outlined by Jensen et al., which include:

- a) Is based on the responsibility of each individual foreigner to integrate into Danish society (Amended to the act in August of 2010)
- b) Assist to ensure that newly arrived foreigners can participate in the life of society in terms of politics, economy, employment and social, religious and cultural activities on an equal footing with other citizens
- c) Assists in making newly arrived foreigners self-supporting as quickly as possible through employment
- d) Imparts to the individual foreigners an understanding of the fundamental values and norms of Danish society (Jensen et al., 2009)

Various input on the laws and the integration policy indicate that the points are actually contradictory in their direction as they emphasize cultural sameness while also emphasizing equal rights, equal opportunity, and self-reliance. In August of 2010, two more points were added to the Integration Act. The first included a purpose that newly arrived foreigners are conscious of the fact that successful integration is a condition to obtain permanent residence permit. The second emphasizes the responsibility of each individual foreigner to integrate into Danish society (Jensen et al., 2009.). The point system was introduced to the Aliens Act in August of 2010. The new system allowed for foreigners to apply for permanent residence after four years of legal presence in Denmark where the previous requirement was seven years. In addition to the four years rule, foreigners are expected to meet certain demands with reference to work, Danish language skills, economic self-support, and active participation in society (Law on changes of the Aliens Act, law no.572). Individuals who succeed in meeting these demands are rewarded with permanent residence permits, however those who fail can expect to be penalized by a reduction in welfare payments, incentives to pressures to resettle in their countries of origin, and diminished hopes for permanent residence (Hedetoft, 2006) (Jensen et al., 2009).

The Integration Act coincides with the Integration Program that is offered to newly arrived refugees/immigrants. This has certain stipulations for refugees and immigrants reunited with a family member in comparison to immigrants entering Denmark for study or work purposes. Family reunification applicants are offered an extensive *Integration*

Program while those intending to enter the country under work or study permits are offered a less extensive called *Introduction course*. Before the law reform in 2010, the Integration Act did not apply at all to immigrants entering Denmark with a work permit (Jensen et al., 2009). The program includes Danish language tuition, and a number of efforts are intended to assist with economic independence for refugees and immigrants in Denmark. Additionally, a course on Danish society, history and culture has been added to the program due to a recent law change. Municipal authorities monitor the program with a binding contract signed by immigrants for the first three years of the immigrant's stay in Denmark. Along with the contract, the refugee or immigrant must also sign a 'Declaration of integration and active citizenship in Danish society' (Jensen et al., 2009).

The purpose of the declaration is according to the Ministry of Refugees, Immigrants and Integration Affairs in 2006 "to make the values of Danish society visible to the individual foreigner and to make the foreigner conscious of the fact that Danish society expects the foreigner to make an effort in order to become integrated as a participating and contributing member of society on equal footing with other citizens". (Jensen et al. 2009:7)

The policies put in place to help integrate foreigners are being politicized with a heavy focus on cultural threats and their impact on Danish democracy. The Danish government outlined a strategy in 2003 which stated: "a number of integration problems that can be tracked back to the circumstance that many people with foreign background for obvious reasons have other conceptions of right and wrong than the conception prevalent in Denmark [...] It goes without saying that the difficulties pointed at not always are of a character that can be removed by law changes and administration. Rooted habits and views of immigrants and refugees or of Danes cannot be changed by legislation. Legislation can however be important since it by this means is possible to express the commonly accepted conceptions of values that should characterize society" (Danish Government 2003: 12) (Jensen et al. 2009:8)

From the time between 2001 to 2010, 13 significant changes can be noted in the Aliens and Integration Acts. In addition to the changes, legislation pertaining to obtaining Danish

citizenship has been tightened several times in recent years. Eva Ersbøll, a researcher at the Danish Institute of Human Rights describes the changes to the acts as a ladder with a new step added each time you reach the top (Ersbøll, 2010). In 2002, the rule concerning *de facto* refugees was abolished. Permanent residence permits would not be issued until seven years of legal presence in Denmark, family reunification laws were tightened by the '24 years rule' which intended to cut down on the number of forced marriages and family reunification for individuals seeking permanent residence. By 2004, it became possible to 'fast track' permanent residence permits to integrated foreigners. As of 2006, the Integration contract was introduced and new rules making it easier to expel criminal foreigners were put into effect. In 2007 conditions to obtain a residence permit were tightened through requirements such as an integration test.

3. Regressive Reforms

Nielson Arendt, Dustman, and Ku (2022) discuss the most recent reform changes that have been occurring in Denmark. Specific focus is taken on post-arrival policies of immigrants and immigrant refugees and how the continuously changing reforms have impacted immigrants looking to assimilate into Denmark with permanent residency. The paper takes a specific focus on refugees and how the Danish reforms have been impacting their stays both long and short term. Employment is a large factor in integration success for immigrants, and in many countries refugees are not allowed to work at all during the processing of their applications. Up until 2013, this was also the case for Denmark. The 2013 reform known as Act no. 430 (2013) asserted that from this point on, refugees would be allowed to work during the assessment period in cases where the assessment period took more than six months (Nielsen Arendt et al., 2022). As referenced above, in order to be allowed to work during the assessment period, applicants must apply to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and sign a document stating they will voluntarily leave Denmark if their application is rejected. These requirements made little impact on the number of refugees who became employed when their applications passed six months of processing time due to the complications that come from the expectations of the Ministry. For refugee applications, once the application process is completed, the application will either be rejected or refugee status will be granted as temporary residence typically for a two year

period with the option to reapply for an extension. The 1979 integration program was installed with the intent to “secure the support that is necessary for the refugee to be able to cope on equal terms as natives” (Danish Refugee 1996) (Nielson Arndt et al., 2022:6).

Denmark saw major reform with the installation of the Danish refugee policy which was implemented in 1999, this included a reform of the integration program as well. One of the major goals of the reform was to improve Danish language training, thusly increasing the integration program from 18 months to 36 months. Incentives to participate in the program also added financial sanctions which included 20% of welfare benefits for those who chose not to participate and making permanent residency conditional on participation in the program (Nielson Arndt et al., 2022:8). Additionally, the reform also restricts resettlement for applications during the integration program, citing that if a refugee moves to a new municipality without the municipalities consent to pay for the outstanding costs of the integration program, they would potentially lose their welfare benefits. Restrictions on immigration continued into the early 2000’s.

In 2002, the length of stay required to apply for permanent residency was increased from three years to seven with the additional requirement that language proficiency be documented in coordination with passing a basic language test (Nielsen Arendt et al., 2022). In 2007, two more requirements were added, now referred to as the “*Integration Exam*” with the purpose of strengthening labor market integration by “sending a strong signal of the importance of employment and to learn the Danish language” (Nielsen Arendt et al. 2022:9). A program known as Start Aid was abandoned in 2012 when transfers increased to the pre 2002 level, but transfers were reduced for refugees once again in 2015 with the start of a new scheme referred to as “integration benefits”. Reductions in benefits were smaller than when under Start Aid and amounted to anywhere between 10%-40% for both single persons under 30 and couples with children (Nielsen Arendt et al., 2022). The Integration program was reformed once again in 2016 with the goal in mind to expedite entry into the labor market with a “work first” policy in mind. Refugees were expected to actively search for jobs and participate in on-the-job training within one month after settling in Denmark as a way to address refugees “equally”. These requirements were exempted from certain refugees if they were not assessed as being job ready or if they didn’t speak

Danish. The reforms to permanent residency requirements in 2002 include new requirements which were noted as raising the likelihood of women and the 'low skilled' being enrolled in general education (Nielsen Arendt et al., 2022). That effect may also have to do with the fact that the reform reduces the probability of obtaining a residency permit more for low skilled groups.

A 2007 reform required for applicants to have at least 2.5 years of full-time employment in Denmark and have passed the Danish language test at a high level than was required before, along with the 7-year requirement of residence in Denmark in order to gain permanent residency in Denmark. Researchers conclude that imparting requirements that could be perceived as too severe has the possibility to discourage individuals who may naturally fall under low achieving from responding to any incentives which may lead to having the opposite of the desired effect on performance for this group of applicants. Start Aid also had many negative effects due to the reduction on household income affecting refugee households by 40% on average (Nielsen Arendt et al., 2022). This reduction brought many households below the poverty line increased criminal activity of refugees and their children. Dustmann et al., (2017) determined that a main reason for poor success in integration of immigrants into receiving countries labor markets is directly associated with the indecisiveness of receiving nations about the duration and permanence of the stay especially when dealing with refugees which fails to provide refugees with a clear perspective of what to expect. This confusion often leads to lack of incentive for individuals to invest time into skills and leads to performing below economic potential. Arendt shows that a country asserting demanding permanent residency requirements can provide certain incentives like security and long-term economic benefit. However, a stipulation occurs where this theory only succeeds when individuals believe that the new requirements can be fulfilled without too large costs.

4. Problem Framing

Media framing plays a subtle but key role in the Danish case in regard to how the public sees the immigration reforms taking place and the migrants that these reforms are directed at. Political discourse and affiliation with news media outlets largely dictates the

frame that will be taken by news media in reporting on specific issues. Entman describes the way framing is utilized as a general tool in the political sphere. He indicates that frames in the news as “a part of the reporting processes for three different classes of objects: political events, issues, and actors” (Entman 2003:23). News media provides a certain perspective for viewers and consumers to develop a specific opinion on the issue being presented. Problem framing in media has become a very popular form of news media entertainment and reporting as it draws on the ability of the outlet to present a problem to the public and then present a moral assessment of the issue and a determination of which actors are “good” or “bad” in this frame.

Media framing plays an important role in political communication and news media information as it imparts important information to citizens about current political conversations, possible threats to the community and the State, and develops a certain premeditated perspective for citizens which often directs their political opinion in line with the party that the media outlets are most closely aligned with. Entman notes that awareness on how media framing effects individuals’ opinions on the public impacts their ability to form observe a counter frame. Entman notes that the average citizen will have a considerable difficulty developing an interpretation which is separate from the frame they are being presented (Entman, 2003). David Altheide addresses an important aspect of framing by delving into the ‘problem frame’ with relation to fear production in the news media. Altheide identifies a problem frame as something compatible with format and entertainment needs used by the news media as a secular version of a morality play. This frame correlates with an abundance of news media reports and messages relating to immigrants not just in Denmark but as a general rule in democratic societies. The role of the problem frame is present in many news media outlets not just presenting immigration policies or immigrants themselves as problems, but promoting problems which are introduced to the public geared toward entertainment, voyeurism, and the “quick fix” (Altheide, 2018).

5. Immigrants Representation

“The problem frame promotes a discourse of fear that may be defined as the pervasive communication, symbolic awareness and expectation that danger and risk are a central feature of the effective environment.” (Altheide, 2018: 648).

This information is important to factor in the Danish case as the overall tone for native Danes receiving immigrants is largely manipulated by the presence and framing of news media outlets. Altheide also notes that media logic primarily use formats that have been adopted by many organizations, including state agencies who also serve as major news sources for news media, further influencing the way news is imparted to the public by manipulating frames to portray certain political realities. Immigrants have become a “problem frame” for many news outlets internationally, in turn generating fear in the native public. Many times this frame may also rely on a specific story telling nature, universal morality, and cultural resonance. Conversely, suffering, misfortune, distress, and inconvenience are included in contemporary news, but these factors alone are not considered the “problem” (Altheide, 2018).

These factors are considered to be part of the narrative that something is wrong, so while they may be included as certain contextual evidence, the ‘problem’ remains the same, which in the Danish case is the influx of immigration portrayed in the media. Hallya Lahav and Marie Courtemanche discuss the way public perception of immigration can change under conditions of heightened threat, and how different frames affect attitudes towards immigration, especially when civil liberties and other cross cutting interests are at stake. Perceptions of threat that are perpetuated by the media include physical insecurity, threats to national community and identity all accompany a general intolerance and rejection of immigrants (McLaren, 2003) (Lahav & Courtemanche, 2011). The author identifies that framing is key due to the fact that immigration fears are often more subjective than objective. Migration concerns are often less related to numbers of migrants as much as elite and mass reaction to them (McLaren, 2003) (Lahav & Courtemanche, 2011).

VI. Immigration Requirements in 2022

Chapter VI deals with the current Danish immigration laws that are public information and guide applicants through the process of applying for permanent residence and asylum. A condensed version of the current requirements to be considered for permanent residence in Denmark is included in the following section as a reference to what the Danish Immigration Service view to be ‘basic requirements’ in order to fully comprehend the gap between current requirements and the average migrant’s ability to meet the standard expectations of the State. All of the information has been ascertained from the official website of the Danish Immigration Service (*Ny i Danmark*, 2022).

A. Basic Requirements – Permanent Residency

Requirements as posted on the official Danish immigration website which serve as the guiding principles for individuals seeking to apply for permanent residence in Denmark and Asylum. These rules are based off of the most current version of Danish Immigration legislature. The requirements listed below are the ‘basic requirements’ as of April 2022 to apply for permanent residence in Denmark.

1. Stipulations Laid Out in Danish Immigration Legislature

You must be over the age of 18, and you must still be able to meet the requirements of your current residence permit.

You must have 8 years legal residency in Denmark uninterrupted.

You may not have been convicted of certain crimes.

You may not have any overdue public debts.

⇒ These debts include: Social Service benefits that you are required by law to repay, child support paid in advance, day care payment, overpaid housing benefits, housing subsidy loan, taxes and levies

You cannot qualify for permanent residence if you have received certain forms of social benefits within four years of applying for a permanent residence permit. Nor may you receive them until the time when the permanent residence permit is granted.

You must accept a declaration of residence and self support.

You must be employed at the time the Immigration Service reaches a decision about your application for a permanent residence permit.

You may not have worked against the establishment of your identity.

You must pass the Danish language test 2.

You must have been employed for at least 3 years and 6 months.

You must have been employed full time for at least 3 years and 6 months during the 4 years prior to the date the Immigration Service reaches a decision about your application for permanent residence.

In order to apply for permanent residence after 4 years of legal residence in Denmark, you must meet at least 2/4 of the supplementary requirements. Another supplementary requirement is to pass the Danish 3 language test.

You must pass the active citizen exam or have displayed active citizenship.

⇒ This counts as a supplementary requirement.

⇒ An additional supplementary requirement is to have an annual taxable income of DKK 301,679.04.

The fee for permanent residence application is approximately 648 euros (The Danish Immigration Service, 2022) (*Ny i Danmark*, 2022).

2. Conditions

Residency: You must be a resident in Denmark at the time that the Immigration Service reaches a decision regarding your application for permanent residence. If applying for permanent residence as a family reunified spouse, your partner must meet additional continuous requirements for qualifying as your sponsor.

Residence Permits: During the entire period, you need to have had a residence permit issued under the terms of Aliens Act sections 7-9 f, sections 9 i-9 n or section 9 p (residence permit granted on the grounds of family reunification, asylum, studies or work etc.). In

some cases, you can qualify for permanent residency after 4 years if you also meet all 4 supplementary requirements. One way to meet the 8-year residence requirement is by holding the same residence permit for an entire period. This requirement can also be met if you have been issued multiple residence permits during your period of residence. You cannot combine periods of time based on multiple relationships and if you remarry or start a new relationship and are granted a new residence permit based on the relationship, your period of legal residence starts anew.

Incarceration: If you were sentenced to less than six months incarceration or if the sentence was suspended, you will be temporarily ineligible for a permanent residence permit. If you were sentenced to more than six months incarceration, you are permanently ineligible for a permanent residence permit. Temporary periods of ineligibility range from 6 years to 30 years.

Outstanding Debts: You may still receive permanent residency if you have been granted an extension to repay an outstanding debt. However, the amount owed must not exceed DKK 124,714.35. You cannot be granted permanent residence if you have overdue public debts, even if you have been allowed to repay your debt in a set number of installments.

Employment: You must be employed in a non-terminated, permanent position. Can prove that you will continue to be employed, are self-employed. You will not be considered employed if at the time the Immigration Service reaches a decision about your application for a permanent residence permit you are: employed in a position with wage subsidies, perform unpaid work, enrolled in an educational programme including internships which are a part of the programme, work as a substitute hired through a temporary employment agency, work fewer than 15 hours per week, work for a company that is in the process of liquidation, are self-employed and your company is in the process of liquidation. You do not need to have been employed continuously for 3 years and 6 months. You may have been employed for one year, unemployed for 6 months, and then worked full time again for 2 years and six months. A supplementary requirement allows you to apply for permanent residency if you have worked for four years during the past 4 years and 6 months.

Point System: You must score an average of 6 or higher on the 13-point scale. A supplementary requirement includes passing the Danish language test 3 (The Danish Immigration Service, 2022) (*Ny i Danmark*, 2022).

3. Additional Requirements

To submit a residence permit on the grounds of work or study, you must also apply for an extension on your current residence permit together with the application for the permanent residence permit. This must be done even if your current permit is not about to expire. If you submit your application for a permanent residence permit or an extension to your current residence permit after your current permit expires, the application is considered late and you will be in Denmark illegally. The Immigration Service will most likely reject your application. If you are staying in Denmark illegally, you risk being reported to the police, being deported and temporarily banned from entering Denmark or any other Schengen country.

Those who can be granted an exemption from the requirements include individuals with a disability and pensioners and early age pensioners. Pensioners may be granted permanent residence in Denmark if they are able to meet 1 of the supplementary requirements (The Danish Immigration Service, 2022) (*Ny i Danmark*, 2022).

B. Basic Requirements – Asylum Seekers

1. Stipulations According to the Aliens Act

Asylum can be granted according to one of the following three sections of the Aliens Act

a) Qualifiers

Your situation must be applicable under the UN Refugee Convention. This is the case if;

⇒ You have a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, and you are outside the country of your nationality. If these conditions apply to your situation you will be granted a residence permit under the terms of Aliens Act section 7(1).

You can also be approved as a refugee with protected status if returning to your home country would mean you face capital punishment, torture, or inhumane or degrading treatment – Aliens Act section 7(2).

You can be approved as a refugee with temporary protected status if you face capital punishment, torture or inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment if you return to your home country, and if these risks stem from severe instability and indiscriminate violence against civilians in your home country – Aliens Act section 7(3) (The Danish Immigration Service, 2022) (*Ny i Danmark*, 2022).

b) Application Process

If you do not have a residence permit, you can apply for asylum by showing up in person at a police station in Denmark.

If you already have a residence permit in Denmark, you can apply for asylum by showing up in person at the police in the district where you live.

If approved, you will be granted a time limited residence permit with a view to temporary residence in Denmark. Your right to reside in Denmark terminates when you are no longer in need of protection.

If you are granted convention status, you will be granted a residence permit that can be extended for up to two years at a time. If you are granted protected status, you will be granted a residence permit for up to a year. If you are granted temporary protected status, you will be granted a residence permit for up to a year at a time. If you are granted

temporary protected status, special rules apply for when your family can apply for family reunification (The Danish Immigration Service, 2022) (*Ny i Danmark*, 2022)..

2. Conditions

a) Requirements

If you come from a country where the risk of persecution is minimal, you will normally be required to live at a centre with a canteen where free meals are served and you will not receive any form of cash benefits.

⇒ You are required to abide by the education and activity contract you have agreed to with your asylum centre. If you need to leave Denmark because your application for asylum has been rejected, you are required to provide the police with the information to assist them to obtain the necessary travel documents. Failure to cooperate with the staff about your accommodation or during the deportation process can result in you being placed on the food allowance programme and or moved to a departure center.

If you are a newly arrived asylum seeker, you will be required to take an introduction course at the reception centre. The course provides an introduction to Danish language, culture, and society (The Danish Immigration Service, 2022) (*Ny i Danmark*, 2022).

b) Defraying Costs

The police are permitted to search you and your baggage to determine whether you are carrying cash or other valuables that can be used to defray the costs incurred by the Immigration Service when housing you at an asylum centre or accommodation centre. The police are authorized to seize such valuables (The Danish Immigration Service, 2022) (*Ny i Danmark*, 2022).

VII. MIPEX

MIPEX takes on an important role in this research by ascertaining a confirmation of the quantitative work which has been conducted for this thesis. MIPEX uses a tool covering eight policy areas to identify citizenship criteria. The index gives a substantial insight into what requirements migrants and refugees are facing and these requirements are used to identify aspects of polarization in minorities integrating into Western society. This index is relevant to rely on as it correlates to the research by comparing requirements to attain citizenship or permanent residence in Denmark with the most relevant polarization affects that might negatively impact migrants and refugee's experiences, such as education or job opportunities. Aspects of polarization may include education, migrant mobility, internal and external labor mobility, and housing (*MIPEX*, 2020).

MIPEX findings from 2019 have recorded the changes in policies in Denmark and how this has affected migrants' ability to utilize the full benefits of the Danish immigration system. MIPEX notes that while most countries in the EU have improved immigration policies over the past five years, Denmark has significantly reeled in their immigration policies and reverted their efforts towards integration for migrants. MIPEX finding show that in comparison to 2014, immigrants in Denmark are now facing greater insecurity and greater barriers to accessing rights. One of the most significant changes which impacted migrants negatively was the abolishment of the entitlement to Danish nationality by declaration of young person's born and raised in Denmark from immigrant origins. This became a highly politicized shift in Denmark's immigration structure as it showed that restrictions towards immigration may really be intended to limit the ability of immigrants to pursue Danish nationality. MIPEX recorded one positive change through government measures to address the educational situation of migrants. But the negative changes reported are far more impactful. Among the most alarming changes are restricted access to social security and assistance, requiring in-country language level for family reunification, measures to bring migrants into the teacher work force have fallen, while residence periods for permanent residence permits have increased. Economic resources for permanent residence permits have also decreased, and citizenship for immigrant children has been revoked. Additionally, the cost and availability of interpreters have also vastly decreased. MIPEX concluded that Denmark scored 49 points out of MIPEX 100-point scale.

The information indicates that while Denmark offers many benefits to immigrants, it offers nearly as many obstacles. The approach Denmark takes toward integration is referenced to as “Temporary Integration”, which means that foreigners will benefit from some basic rights and access to support for equal opportunities but do not enjoy long term security in order to settle permanently within the country (*Denmark | MIPEx 2020*, n.d.) Denmark is listed as one of the most insecure countries that practices temporary integration and non-EU citizens are left insecure in Denmark with a score of 17 out of 100, which is nearly the most insecure country in all 56 countries covered by MIPEx. Denmark scored a 25 out of 100 on family reunification, 42 out of 100 on permanent residence, 41 out of 100 on access to nationality, and 51 out of 100 on anti-discrimination policies. The overall results of the MIPEx analysis shows that Denmark is a country which, while investing in some policies that may look attractive to migrants, is not actually investing in the success of migrants who attempt to integrate and culturally assimilate into the country. These policy reforms have been occurring on a consistent basis for decades now, continue to decline Denmark’s reputation as an immigrant friendly country and only serve to further limit both the success of permanent residence applicants and decrease the number of future migrants who may look to build a permanent life in Denmark.

VIII. Analysis

1. Policy Gaps

When reviewing the research from the perspective of immigrants and their personal experiences in comparison to the laws and reforms that the Danish government has enacted over the past two decades, we can identify multiple parallels where attempts on the part of the immigrant to achieve permanent residency may be dashed by the rapidly changing and tightening reforms in Denmark. Interview No.1 provides insight into how restrictive and selective the application process for permanent residency in Denmark is. The immigration laws and reforms made available to the public by the Danish Ministry communicate that permanent residency can be achieved by establishing oneself as a self-sufficient individual who is capable of participating in the Danish economy, maintaining a stable income, have a strong command on the Danish language and a grasp of Danish culture and history. This is of course ensured through the many legal requirements and exams that are required of those applying for permanent residency in Denmark.

Where interview No.1 fell short in their application process was not in her ability to assimilate into Danish culture. Having a fluent command of Danish, completing their PhD at a Danish university, and marrying a native Dane, these requirements should be easily met. According to the official website on Danish immigration, the legal reforms on permanent residence in Denmark have put into place now state that an applicant must be currently employed and must have maintained employment for no less than 3 years and 6 months. This requirement comes with many stipulations one such being, you must work a minimum of 30 hours per week, or the equivalent of 120 hours per month. In Interview No.1's case, they were employed for the required duration of time, but the application was denied under the context that she was technically unemployed for a two-week period. As interview No.1 explained, this was due to an administrative issue on the part of their transitional job which caused them to start two weeks late, but they technically transitioned from one job to the other without being officially unemployed.

As referred to in chapter V, in reference to Jensen et al., individuals who fail to meet the application requirements can expect to have their hopes of permanent residence to be diminished (2009). Interview No.1's situation is slightly different given that they are married to a native Danish resident separate from their own qualifications to stay in the country given their educational and professional achievements. At this time, interview No.1 will attempt a different residence permanent under family reunification with their spouse in order to remain living and working in Denmark. The requirements and exceptions listed for different application processes are vast and hold many qualifiers as to what may lead to an exception in the application process or what may disqualify applicants from being valid contenders. In Interview No.2, they indicated that they were lucky to receive a positive response and achieve permanent residency from Denmark after applying under similar circumstances to Interview No.1. However, even though Interview No.2 was successful in their application process, they acknowledged that the requirements are constantly changing and being updated, and the integration process as well as the language and knowledge tests may be very taxing for those who are limited in their resources by having to prioritize work or other necessities during the integration process. As documented in the research, in less than a decade, 13 significant changes have been made to the Aliens and Integration act which have directly impacted the application and immigration process of most migrants (Consolidation of the Act on Integration of Aliens in Denmark, n.d.). The process has been convoluted and grown more and more demanding with each new reform that has come to pass.

2. Improving Integration or Restricting Multiculturalism

Speculation about whether the process of immigration in Denmark has been restricted in order to help immigrants integrate into society or if the reforms are intended to restrict multiculturalism has become a hot topic debate both within Denmark and on an international scale as many countries look to scale back on immigration and asylum applications. Many of the reforms put forth have been specifically targeted at limiting foreigners such as the 24-year rule which limits immigrants from applying for permanent residency through family reunification when one of the spouses is under the age of 24 in an effort to reduce forced marriages. The reform can be perceived as a cultural slight

towards minorities who may rely on arranged marriages though the ministry insists that the law is only to prevent marriage with the intent to receive permanent residence in Denmark (Ersbøll, 2010).

“The Immigration Service may also consider the role your families had in the marriage. But just because your parents or your spouse’s parents were involved in arranging your marriage does not make it a forced marriage” (The Danish Immigration Service, 2022).

Changes to welfare benefits that immigrants and refugees integrating into society are entitled to has also fallen under the debate of whether they incentivize immigrants to integrate more quickly into society or if they are intended to discourage immigrants from the process altogether. This correlates to the survey statistics which indicate that 13 out of 17 respondents felt that the application requirements were not easily met. The study by Nielson Arendt indicates that this may be a dangerous impression from immigrants that achieves the opposite of what Denmark is attempting to achieve with the ongoing reforms to immigration (2022). The survey results indicate that many applicants for permanent residency do not believe that the requirements are very attainable and as such some of them may believe the costs to fulfill the requirements are too high and begin to perform below the level necessary to assimilate into Danish society. When it comes to the Danish case, evidence of the strict immigration reforms are not necessarily measuring up to the incentives of security or economic prosperity.

Through statements by the Danish Peoples Party which have indicated that many members feel immigrants to be an economic strain on the State, the harsher restrictions can also be viewed as a way of limiting access to permanent residence for third country nationals and committing acts of discrimination against immigrants who may not have the resources to conform with the tightening restrictions. Just as Interview No.2 said when recounting their own experience with the language and Danish knowledge test, while for them the requirements were easily attained, they already have two master’s degrees, one of which from Denmark, speak the language and has the resources that allowed them to prepare for the exams. Many immigrants attempting to complete these requirements do not

have this type of support, making the requirements somewhat unattainable especially individuals under the poverty line.

3. News Media – Portraying a Threat

News media has impacted the experience of immigrants attempting to integrate and gain permanent residency in Denmark. Responses to the survey can be used as an example of the perception that immigrants are obtaining from news media. When asked if the media portrays immigrants in a negative light was overwhelmingly high. Only 2 out of 15 respondents indicated that the news media in Denmark framed immigrants in a positive light. The results of ‘problem framing’ in the media in Denmark can be ascertained from the survey response to how culturally welcoming Danes are to immigrants (Altheide, 2018). 7 out of 15 respondents said they felt that native Danes are not culturally welcoming and 6 out of 15 respondents said native Danes are only culturally welcoming sometimes, which can be directly correlated to being presented in news media as a problematic presence in Denmark.

News media in Denmark is portraying immigrants in Denmark as a ‘problem’ with the potential to threaten not only the economy and safety of Denmark, but also the vastly valued culture of Denmark. This concern has been echoed by the Danish Peoples Party as well as the Queen of Denmark with her comments on Danish citizenship for non-native Danes (2016). The presence of news media outlets in Denmark who have aligned with the narrative of the current political agenda and are promoting fear in native Danes are not doing so off of scientific evidence or number of immigrants but rather largely based off of objective negativity towards multiculturalism and fear-based assumption of crime rate increases and economic strain. News media plays a crucial role which cannot be ignored in the discussion of how it influences both policy and policy failures in Danish immigration as it often represents the goals and strategy of the current political agenda in the country.

Members of the Danish Peoples Party have made their political opinion on immigration very clear over years of public statements in the media. Søren Pind's comments about throwing out integration in favor of assimilation only further aligns the connection between the media and current political party with the continuously increasing restrictions on immigration having to do less with setting immigrants up to be self-sufficient and successful in Denmark but rather to exclude a large majority of immigrants who may further dilute the Danish 'culture' and cause strain on the Danish economy. (2011) Danish politicians have not shied away from using media as a form of influence in the attempt to restrict access to permanent residency, and even the prime minister's public announcement to create an immigration structure where Denmark received zero asylum applications do everything but indicate that the increased restrictions for permanent residence are in the best interest of the applicant and the country but rather further incriminate Denmark's tendency to lean towards discrimination. The media is only serving to highlight and expose this venture on behalf of politicians in office, though the affect it is having on the local population make it difficult for regular Danes to consume another opinion. The role news media is playing in the Danish case is a significant and impactful one as reasons for reforms continue to become more and more restrictive.

4. Costs and Benefits Under Restrictive Requirements

Immigration requirements for permanent residence in Denmark are some of the most restrictive and vast of any EU country at this time. Whether the requirements and reforms are valid in comparison to the risks that the country takes on as a receiving country and the benefits that immigrants gain from receiving a positive response from the application process is relative to each applicant. The increasingly restrictive immigration policies in Denmark show how the country is favoring a hierarchical system which decides which immigrants are worthy of the benefits that come with permanent residence in Denmark (Jørgensen and Thomsen, 2016) However, when reviewing the goal of the reforms as stated by Denmark, where the policy gaps seem to be taking place is under technicalities and lack of access to adequate support for the high expectations the requirements have introduced.

The cost of permanent residence in Denmark is extremely high both in time invested by the applicant as well as in fulfilling all educational and integration requirements that have been installed by the State. Interview No.1's case serves as a good example of where policy failure may be occurring. By maintaining strict decisions on applications for permanent residence of an individual who may represent an ideal candidate for permanent residence in Denmark, the decision to deny her application rings to the tune of policy failure more than a strict immigration process. If even the most qualified of applicants cannot receive permanent residency based off technicalities, then what can be said for applicants of less fortunate means? This question aside, the Danish government has made it clear that failure to meet requirements will produce punishment in the form of financial restrictions and limited possibility of receiving permanent residence in Denmark in the future. This example makes it difficult to defend the immigration system in Denmark as being extensive but rewarding as the country would like to be perceived.

IX. Conclusion

The explicit difficulties of assimilation for immigrants and refugees in Denmark stem from anti-multiculturalism and policy failure. Extensive requirements from the Danish Immigration Service, an overall anti-immigrant and anti-integration stance from Danish politicians being supported by politicized framing from news media outlets in Denmark are all entities which are highlighting the lack of interest Denmark presently has in creating a sustainable environment for immigration and assimilation. The survey results and interviews conducted in this research indicates that the increase in denied permanent residence applications is not stemming from the immigrant's lack of interest in complying with requirements, but rather a lack of ability to meet the extensive and inconsistent requirements that are currently in place. Literature covering the tightening of immigration restrictions in Denmark from 1999 into the early 2020's gives a clear line of how immigration policies in Denmark have been rapidly constricting in comparison to most other EU countries.

The information provided by MIPEX identifies how the benefits migrants may attain from long term residence in Denmark is met narrowly with the same number of obstacles in their way of achieving permanent residence. The policies that are directed at limiting the number of immigrants and refugees that Denmark receives each year are identified as reforms put into place to better prepare immigrants and refugees to assimilate into Denmark and assert their ability to be self-supporting. However, when these policies are compared to the statistics ascertained from the survey "Permanent Residence Requirements Questionnaire", it is evident that there is a significant gap between the cultural assimilation that the strict reforms are allegedly attempting to accomplish and the results that can be expected from migrants that have attempted to fulfill the requirements of the permanent residence applications.

'Basic requirements' listed on the official website for the Danish Immigration Service alone represent lofty expectations that the government is imposing upon individuals which are at times directly associated with the discrimination of certain minority groups of immigrants. The requirements include extensive conditions and

exceptions which leave little room for those who may not have the means to successfully complete the basic requirements for residency as was surmised by one of the personal communications of Interview No.2. The findings of the personal interviews shed light on what type of application can be denied or approved for permanent residence in Denmark and further exposes just how strict the reforms have become. Danish Immigration Services appear less than interested in complying with extenuating circumstances or assisting in achieving such imposing requirements. In fact, immigrants and refugees' choice to apply for permanent residence generally leaves the individual exposed to greater insecurities due to limited success with reapplication after denial, withdrawn financial support from the state, and sometimes even legal confirmation of deportation after an application is denied.

The requirements have potentially had an undesirable effect on the productivity and initiative of immigrants attempting to apply for permanent residence in Denmark, and further solidifies Denmark's true intention to limit immigration by any means necessary. Further studies on the Danish case and how immigration reform is intended to continue impacting non-EU nationals within the State should assist in the identification of what the goal of the policy reforms actually are. The current statement of Denmark is that the reforms are in place to better serve both the immigrant and the State by investing in cultural assimilation to preserve the history and values of the country while giving immigrants the tools to successfully integrate into Danish society. The reality of the policies indicates an attack on non-EU nationals who do not reflect the religious affiliations, culture, or economic propensities of the Scandinavian society. This dissertation has identified through a comparison of existing reforms and immigration regulations with personal stories and statistics provided by current Danish immigrants, that regardless of intent, there is a clear policy failure occurring within the Danish Immigration Service. Further studies must be conducted in order to identify if the trend of unsuccessful applications, unclear instruction and high-risk requirements continues as a standard of dealing with immigration in Denmark.

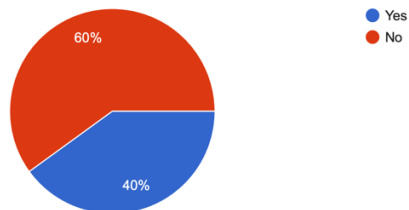
X. Appendix

Survey Results:

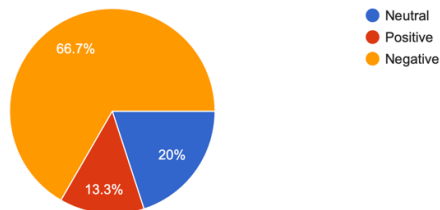
This survey was conducted through an open questionnaire asking a series of 20 questions related to immigration and the permanent residence application process in Denmark. The survey was posted to the private Facebook group “Permanent Residence and Citizenship in Denmark”. Responses to the survey were tracked through Google Forms and remain anonymous. Two individuals opted out of several questions resulting in a variation in the number of responses from 15-17.

1.1. Appendix A: Graphs

Have you had a positive experience with Danish Immigration services?
15 responses

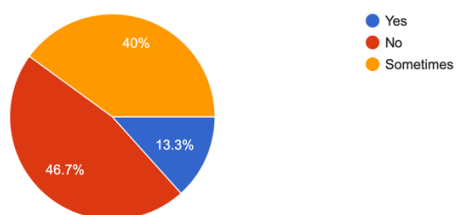


How do you feel the media portrays immigrants in Denmark?
15 responses



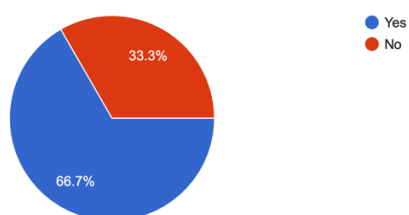
Do you believe that native Danes are culturally welcoming?

15 responses



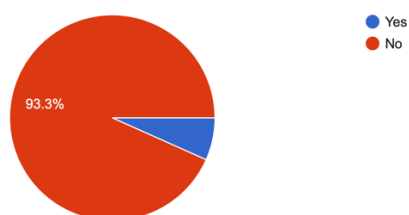
Has the application process discouraged you from remaining in Denmark?

15 responses



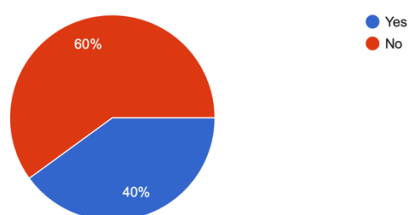
Are you or do you have any affiliation with refugees or asylum seekers?

15 responses



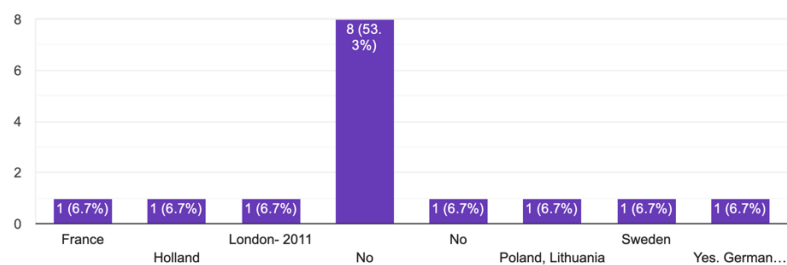
Do you have a Danish partner?

15 responses



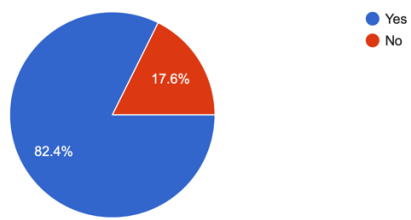
Have you lived in any other EU countries, if so which ones?

15 responses



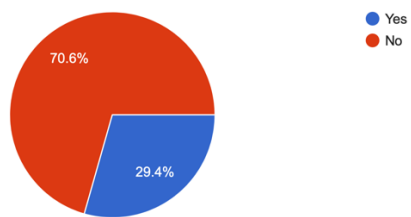
Did you apply for Permanent Residence in Denmark?

17 responses



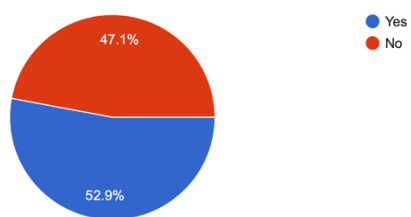
Do you have family in Denmark? Is your application related to family reunification.

17 responses



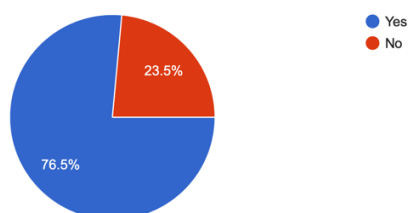
Have you recieved any education in Denmark?

17 responses

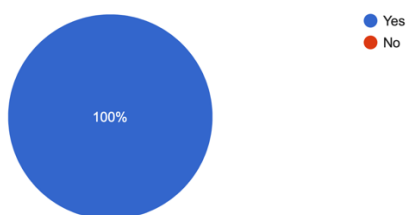


Do you speak Danish/Has the State given you the opportunity or required you to learn Danish?

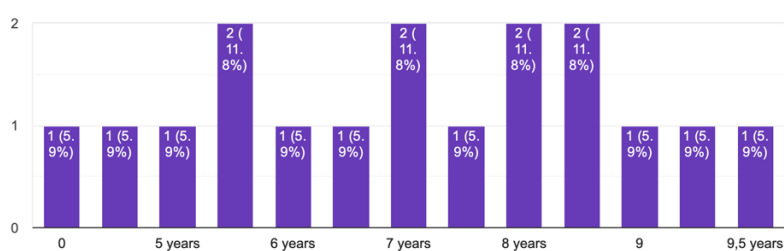
17 responses



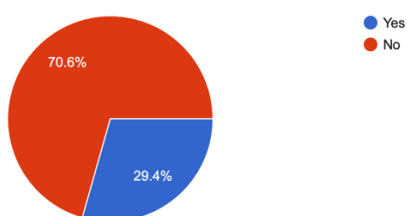
Do you have the ability to work in Denmark?
17 responses



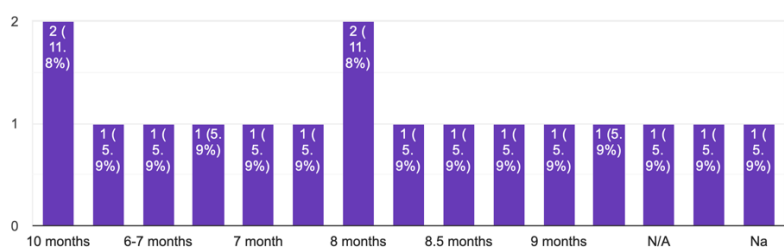
How long have you been living/working in Denmark?
17 responses



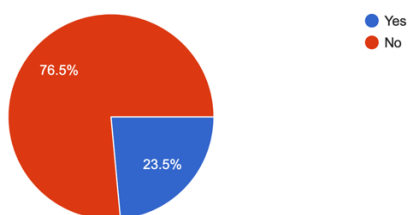
Was the permanent residence application process in Denmark straight forward?
17 responses



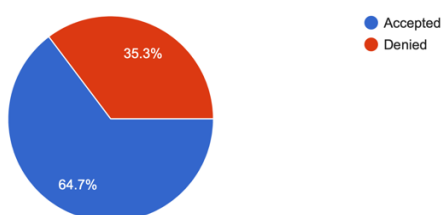
How long did it take you to receive an answer on your application?
17 responses



Did you feel like the application requirements were easily completed?
17 responses



Was your application accepted or denied?
17 responses



1.2. Appendix B: Open Response

What is your reason for applying for permanent residence?

A necessary step towards citizenship
Live and work in Denmark
Family
To make sure I can stay in Denmark
To be able to get Danish citizenship
Security
Work Flexibility
None
Because I have made a living here with my Danish husband
To live in peace without worrying
Settling in Denmark; obtaining a more permanent legal status
Less bureaucracy. Being able to get EU health blue card, being able to start my own IT business in EU, being able to benefit from the high tax I have been paying so far
Used to like Danish Values
Tired of extension and it's costs
Student

What is your original nationality?

USA	
	2
Iran	
	2
India	
	3
Ethiopia	
	2
Sudan	
	1
Nepal	
	1
Pakistan	
	1
Polish	
	1
Asia	
	1
N/A	
	1

1.3. Appendix C: Interview Transcripts

Interview No.1

April 15, 2022, 7:00PM

You sent

Hi [REDACTED], thank you for replying to my post! I am doing a study at the diplomatic academy of Vienna about the gap between policy requirements and migrants ability to meet them in Denmark. I would potentially publish some of your story in the research if that is okay with you. Anything you are comfortable sharing about your experience with the application process and the outcome I would be interested in. Where you are from, what your personal reason for relocating is, and how you found the ability to meet requirements of the application process in Denmark.

Interview No.1

Hi, thanks for getting in touch with me. I actually got one permanent residency application rejected 3 years ago and I applied for a new one this year, waiting for a decision. I can tell you more, if you're interested

You sent

Yes I would like to hear anything you are willing to tell me. I am especially interested in the reason they rejected the application

Interview No.1

I relocated to do my PhD in Denmark and after that I decided to pursue an academic career. So basically after my PhD I got a job in Finland, then left it and got another one in Denmark and applied for PR. To qualify, I needed to document 4 years of full-time employment. 6.5 months of this employment were in Finland. However, it is stated in the requirements that if an employment is abroad, it can still count towards PR, if e.g. there was employment in Denmark prior to that and if there is a connection between the jobs abroad and the previous and the next jobs in DK

I talked to a lawyer, he said it's a gray zone but worth a try. So I gave it a try. They decided that I was not employed in DK prior to my Finnish employment because I had been unemployed in DK for two weeks. And the reason why I was unemployed those two weeks was because Finnish authorities had delayed the processing of my Finnish work permit, so I started the job two weeks later than planned. Also, the immigration authorities decided there was no link between my Finnish employment and the Danish ones. Although they were all at universities, doing pretty much the same research and the same teaching. Only the job titles were different. And of course, all this time I was actually living in Denmark, even when I worked in Finland. I hope this makes sense. Let me know if you have further questions

Also, since the Finnish employment was at the end of my four year stay in DK, to qualify for the 4 year rule again I needed 4 more years of employment, which brought me to 8 years

You sent

This is all very interesting, thank you for the information!

<https://forms.gle/MiPpt2isAUwo3JNH8>

If you would be interested in filling out this form it would be very helpful

Interview No.1

I did, based on my previous application. The current one I'm waiting to hear from is a family reunification one.

Yes, I also needed to do that to be able to keep myself employed.

You sent

Do you have family in Denmark? Or a partner?

Interview No.1

Yes, my husband is Danish but I met him here

You sent

Do you have children? And were you married in Denmark?

Interview No.1

I don't have children, I got married in Denmark

You sent

Okay. Thank you very much for your time and answering these questions. I wish you the best of luck with your application!

Interview No.2

Apr 15, 2022, 7:22 PM

You sent

Hi [REDACTED], thank you for replying to my post! I am doing a study at the diplomatic academy of Vienna about the gap between policy requirements and migrants ability to meet them in Denmark. I would potentially publish some of your story in the research if that is okay with you. Anything you are comfortable sharing about your experience with the application process and the outcome I would be interested in. Where you are from, what your personal reason for relocating is, and how you found the ability to meet requirements of the application process in Denmark.

Interview No. 2

Hej, it's gonna be a little messy to write generally about such things, if you have specific questions or have make a questionnaire, it will be easier for both of us.

You can now call each other and see information like Active Status and when you've read messages. I have applied on fast track, 4 years rule, even that I have been living in dk at that time for more than 6 years. I received positive answer within the time they mentioned on website. For me, language and PR test was not very difficult as I had master's degrees from Pakistan and Sweden. But when job requirements, language, PR test and have limited possibility to pause the job or take vacations, it gets harder. The biggest issue here in DK is the ever changing rules. You never know what's gonna happen next. I was on green card.

You sent

Okay, this is all very helpful information thank you!

<https://forms.gle/MiPpt2isAUwo3JNH8>

Here is a questionnaire if you would like to fill it out

Have you received an answer on your application yet?

Interview No. 2

Yes I got pr

You sent

I'm happy to hear it! I really appreciate you taking the time to talk to me. If you have time to fill out the form that would be very helpful

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