

**THE DEFEAT OF MULTICULTURALISM OVER NATIONALISM
AND RELIGION: TRANSFORMATION OF IMMIGRATION
POLICIES IN DENMARK AND SWEDEN**

Çokkültürlülüğün Din ve Milliyetçilik Karşısındaki Çöküşü: Danimarka ve
İsveç'in Göçmen Politikalarındaki Dönüşüm

ZUHAL KARAKOÇ DORA

Dr., Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi – Strateji
Geliştirme Başkanlığı, Ankara, Türkiye

Dr., Turkish Grand National Assembly -
Presidency of Strategy Development, Ankara,
Turkey

zuhal.dora@yahoo.com
orcid.org/0000-0002-3954-2208

ZAHİDE ERDOĞAN

Dr., Yurtdışı Türkler ve Akraba Topluluklar
Başkanlığı, Ankara, Türkiye

Dr., Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related
Communities, Ankara, Turkey

zahide.rdg@gmail.com
orcid.org/0000-0002-0253-9355

MAKALE BİLGİSİ / ARTICLE INFORMATION

Makale Türü /Article Types: Research Article

Geliş Tarihi /Received: 8 Ağustos 2021

Kabul Tarihi/Accepted: 14 Aralık 2021

Yayın Tarihi/Published: 30 Aralık 2021

Doi: <https://doi.org/10.14395/hid.980405>

ATIF/CITE AS:

Dora, Karakoç, Zuhale – Erdoğan, Zahide, “Çokkültürlülüğün Din ve Milliyetçilik Karşısındaki Çöküşü: Danimarka ve İsveç'in Göçmen Politikalarındaki Dönüşüm”, Hitit İlahiyat Dergisi, (Aralık/ December 2021) 20/2

İNTİHAL/PLAGIARISM:

Bu makale, en az iki hakem tarafından incelendi ve intihal içermediği teyit edildi.

This article has been reviewed by at least two referees and scanned via plagiarism software.

Copyright © Published by Hitit Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi – Hitit University Divinity Faculty,
Çorum, Turkey. All rights reserved.

<https://dergipark.org.tr/pub/hid>

The Defeat of Multiculturalism over Nationalism and Religion: Transformation of Immigration Policies in Denmark and Sweden

Abstract

Since the Treaty of Westphalia, sovereign states have combined national security with border security, as border is accepted as the line of sovereignty that separates “us” from “others”. The step of forming a European identity as a supra-identity apart from the national identities of the European countries within the borders of each state takes its roots from this perception of being “us”. Though highlighted in Copenhagen Criteria that the stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities are ensured; when we look at today’s immigration policies we see a serious deviation from this founding approach emphasizing and ensuring multiculturalism.

With labour migration in the 1960s, refugees fleeing Yugoslavia in the 1990s, and the 2015 refugee crisis, Europe’s population structure began to change. Following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the security approach has taken the place of economic considerations in migration management. The 2015 refugee crisis has become not only a border security crisis but also a crisis of European identity and welfare state protection. This paper aims to investigate the effects of religion, nationalism, and economic concerns on the transformation of immigration policies after 2015 in Denmark, which employs extreme restrictive policies, and Sweden, which has a relatively welcoming culture. The majority of the literature discusses whether those countries are religious or secular; it is expected that the study contributes to a better understanding of the impact of religion and nationalism on migration policies, as well as a discussion of its future implications.

Denmark had been extremely homogeneous with only one language and religion and no ethnic minorities, though, this homogeneous structure has begun to deteriorate with the increase in non-western immigration since the 1990s. While the Danish Law of 1983 was widely regarded as the most liberal in Europe, after 1990, equal rights were replaced by immigrant responsibility and integration. With the rise of the anti-immigrant parties in the 2001 elections, social rights were curtailed, and Danish values took centre stage. In Denmark, rules like reducing social assistance after 2015 aim to protect the welfare state, whereas rules like the ban on the burqa and the handshake in the naturalization ceremony are motivated by other factors. The Danish Prime Minister announced the zero-refugee target, the anti-immigrant far-right Danish People’s Party declared their intention to reduce the number

of all immigrants. So, a new discourse has emerged in which no form of immigration is desired. On the other hand, Sweden follows Denmark slightly behind in terms of process, but by going through literally the same processes. While positive discourse about immigrants had been dominant in Sweden, which implemented multicultural policies, the discourse turned negative with the 2015 refugee crisis. Increasing unemployment among immigrants, income inequality, and Swedish identity discussions seems to lead to a rise in nationalism and nativism in the 2022 elections, as well as a reduction in the generosity of the welfare state.

Denmark and Sweden cases show how similar welfare states with the same historical and immigration background respond differently to the refugee crisis. While the unemployment rate for foreign-born workers is high in both countries, it is more than three times higher in Sweden. Refugee crisis has made religious identity more visible and put pressure on Scandinavian welfare model as well as governments. Although integration and assimilation policies are brought to the forefront in terms of religious behaviour patterns of Muslims, the emphasis on religion is not made directly, instead, it is made through the symbols of Islam. The reason why Muslims considered as “others” mainly takes its foundation from this difference. Although they do not make religion an important part of their life, and atheism is higher than other parts of the world, in many European countries Christianity is still considered an important part of the European identity and the Church is an important part of it. According to the conclusion of this study, it is highly possible that Denmark might serve as a model to Europe, primarily to Nordic countries, and this strengthens the possibility that anti-immigrant opposition will sharpen and divide societies. The effects of radical Islam, which is gradually increasing its influence around the world, is undoubtedly huge in these politics throughout Europe; however, abandoning or deviating from policies targeting multiculturalism might cause isolation and alienation of immigrants, who are already fleeing from terrorism, and push them towards radicalization which constitutes another danger.

Keywords: International Politics, Immigrant Policy, Denmark, Sweden, Nationalism, Multiculturalism, Identity, Religion.

Çokkültürlülüğün Din ve Milliyetçilik Karşısındaki Çöküşü: Danimarka ve İsveç'in Göçmen Politikalarındaki Dönüşüm

Öz

Westphalia Antlaşması'ndan bu yana, egemen devletler ulusal güvenliği sınır güvenliği ile özdeşleştirdiler çünkü sınır "bizi" "diğerleri"nden ayıran bir egemenlik çizgisi olarak kabul edildi. Avrupa ülkelerinin her birinin kendi sınırları içindeki ulusal kimliklerinden bağımsız şekilde bir üst kimlik olarak Avrupa kimliği oluşturma adımı, köklerini bu "biz" algısından almaktadır. Kopenhag Kriterleri'nde demokrasi, hukukun üstünlüğü, insan hakları ve azınlıklara saygı ile azınlıkların korunmasını teminat altına alan kurumların istikrarı vurgulanmakla birlikte; günümüz göç politikalarına baktığımızda çok kültürlülüğü sağlayan ve ön plana çıkaran bu kurucu yaklaşımdan ciddi bir sapma olduğunu görmekteyiz.

1960'larda işgücü göçü, 1990'larda Yugoslavya'dan kaçan mülteciler ve 2015 mülteci kriziyle birlikte Avrupa'nın nüfus yapısı da değişmeye başlamıştır. 11 Eylül terör saldırılarının ardından, göç yönetiminde ekonomik kaygıların yerini güvenlik yaklaşımı almıştır. 2015 mülteci krizi sadece bir sınır güvenliği krizi değil, aynı zamanda bir Avrupa kimliği ile refah devletinin korunmasını amaçlayan bir krizdir aynı zamanda. Bu çalışma, aşırı kısıtlayıcı politikalar uygulayan Danimarka ve nispeten misafirperver bir kültüre sahip İsveç'te 2015 sonrası göç politikalarının dönüşümünde din, milliyetçilik ve ekonomik kaygıların etkilerini araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Literatürün çoğunluğu bu ülkelerin dindar mı yoksa seküler mi olduğunu tartışma odaklı olup, çalışmanın din ve milliyetçiliğin göç politikaları üzerindeki etkisinin daha iyi anlaşılmasına ve gelecekteki etkilerinin tartışılmasına katkı sağlanması beklenmektedir.

Danimarka tek dil, tek din ve azınlıkların olmadığı yapıyla son derece homojendi, ancak, 1990'lardan itibaren batılı olmayan göçün artmasıyla birlikte bu homojen yapı bozulmaya başlamıştır. 1983 tarihli Danimarka Kanunu, Avrupa'daki en liberal kanun olarak kabul edilirken, 1990'dan sonra eşit hakların yerini göçmen sorumluluğu ve entegrasyonu almıştır. 2001 seçimlerinde göçmen karşıtı partilerin yükselişi ile sosyal haklar kısıtlanmış ve Danimarka değerleri ön plana çıkmıştır. Danimarka'da 2015'ten sonra sosyal yardımların azaltılması gibi kurallar refah devletini korumayı amaçlarken, burka yasağı ve vatandaşlığa kabul töreninde el sıkışma gibi kuralların altında daha çok başka faktörlerin yer aldığı görülmektedir. Danimarka Başbakanı sıfır mülteci hedefini ortaya koymuş, göçmen karşıtı aşırı sağ Danimarka Halk Partisi tüm göçmenlerin sayısını azaltma niyetini açıklamıştır. Böylece göçün hiçbir biçiminin istenmediği yeni bir söylem ortaya çıkmıştır.

Öte yandan İsveç, Danimarka'yı süreç bakımından biraz geriden ama tam anlamıyla aynı süreçlerden geçerek takip etmektedir. Çok kültürlü politikalar uygulayan İsveç'te göçmenlere yönelik olumlu söylemler hâkimken, 2015 mülteci kriziyle birlikte bu durum olumsuz yönde değişmeye başlamıştır. Göçmenler arasında artan işsizlik, gelir eşitsizliği ve İsveçli kimliği tartışmaları, 2022 seçimlerinde milliyetçilik ve yerliliğin artmasına ve refah devletinin cömert tutumunda azalmaya neden olacak gibi gözükmektedir.

Danimarka ve İsveç örnekleri, aynı tarihsel ve göçmenlik geçmişine sahip benzer refah devletlerinin mülteci krizine nasıl farklı tepkiler verdiğini göstermektedir. Her iki ülkede de yabancı uyruklu işçiler için işsizlik oranı yüksek iken, İsveç'te bu oran üç kattan fazladır. Mülteci krizi, dini kimliği daha görünür hale getirmiş ve hükümetler kadar İskandinav refah modeli üzerinde de baskı yaratmıştır. Müslümanların dini davranış kalıpları açısından entegrasyon ve asimilasyon politikaları ön plana çıkarılsa da dine vurgu doğrudan yapılmamakta, bunun yerine İslam'ın sembolleri üzerinden yapılmaktadır. Müslümanların "öteki" olarak kabul edilmelerinin nedeni, temel olarak bu farklılıktan kaynaklanmaktadır. Dini hayatlarının önemli bir parçası yapmasalar da ve ateizm dünyanın diğer bölgelerinden daha yüksek olsa da, birçok Avrupa ülkesinde Hıristiyanlık hala Avrupa kimliğinin önemli bir parçası olarak kabul edilmekte ve Kilise bunun önemli bir parçasını teşkil etmektedir. Bu çalışmanın sonucuna göre Danimarka'nın başta İskandinav ülkeleri olmak üzere Avrupa'ya model olma ihtimali yüksektir ve bu göçmen karşıtı muhalefetin toplumlara keskinleştirip böylece ihtimalini güçlendirmektedir. Tüm dünyada etkisini giderek artıran radikal İslam'ın Avrupa genelinde devam eden bu politikadaki etkileri kuşkusuz çok büyük ancak çok kültürlülüğü hedef alan politikalarından vazgeçmek veya sapmak, halihazırda terörden kaçan göçmenlerin tecrit ve yabancılaşmalarına neden olup onları başka bir tehlike arz eden radikalleşmeye itebilecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Uluslararası Politika, Göçmen Politikası, Danimarka, İsveç, Milliyetçilik, Çokkültürlülük, Kimlik, Din.

1. Introduction

While many countries in Europe were signing labour agreements to meet their need for labour force in the 1960s, the Cold War was still going on and post-Cold War actors, specifically the terror, were not in the scene. Therefore, the criteria for admission to the country were not security-oriented, instead, it was mostly related to the human force capacity to meet the needs. EU countries, aiming at the continuation of the economic gains of the newly established Union and bringing the European identity to the forefront, as well as associating being European with multiculturalism, generally preferred to

implement multicultural policies through which immigrants could preserve their own culture but could exist separately as parallel societies. However, with the fall of the communist axis and the following massive immigration wave towards the wealthier West, migration policies started to be revised and restricted. 9/11 terrorist attacks, held by terrorists with Muslim identity, represents a terrific sharp return in relatively moderate immigration policies. With successive attacks that took place one after the other in Europe just after 9/11, Muslim immigrants were increasingly perceived as possible threats by the public. While this process which includes more security-oriented policies were still going on another threat aroused: the 2015 refugee influx. The fact that the number of refugees trying to reach the borders of Europe exceeded thousands per day came to a point of protecting the welfare and values of the European society, rather than just a border security issue.

In this period, politicians who define the European identity through religion, argue that economic prosperity should be prioritized, and/or emphasize the concern of the deterioration of the social fabric and demographic structure, started to develop new discourses that distanced them from multiculturalism, which is one of the core values of the EU. In the face of the increasing influx of immigrants despite collective precautions, it became clear that Dublin Regulation, signed among the EU countries to arrange immigration, did not have a balancing feature of fair burden-sharing and this led each European country to determine and carry out their own measures against immigration with internal regulations. The tension and anxiety created by the sudden mass migration on the European society have provoked some countries to think that the policies implemented in the previous years were insufficient and should be tightened. Denmark, known for its harsh response to the 2015 refugee crisis, has begun to implement restrictive, selective, religion-based immigration policies such as non-Western immigrant quotas and new regulations to religious symbols like burka ban or hand-shake obligation during naturalization ceremonies. In Sweden, which lags behind but exactly follows the same path with Denmark in terms of the order of implementation of policies, though many citizens welcomed the refugees -as in Denmark during previous years-, the government is under pressure by its far-right coalition partner to reverse its policy on asylum. The fact that anti-immigrant political parties in these countries increase their votes in every election explains the reason why these policies are getting tougher.

The fact that most of the actors of the mass influx were Muslims brought along the emphasis on religious identity and brought along some conceptual conflicts. One of these conflicts is that some European countries, which believe that the national identity is to be protected, put the identity of religion in

front of the identity of the nation. The claim of national identity is supposed to go through the refugees' national identity, not the religious sub-identity; therefore, putting religion before the nation is a matter worthy of discussion. So, it is important to focus on the reasons why the understanding of borderlessness (within the Union) and multiculturalism left its place to fear and panic since 2015 refugee crisis and why Europe (in general) has chosen to separate the culture that it finds contradictory to itself as a method of preserving its European identity and culture. Especially in countries that are far from being religious like Denmark and Sweden, it is necessary to analyse and distinguish whether this opposition to refugees is really anti-Islamic in these countries or is it all about an economic concern or is it a concern that the cultural texture will deteriorate due to the fact that attitudes and culture that are contrary to the EU's identity and culture are generally present in Islamic culture.

Rather than debating whether Sweden and Denmark are religious-civil-secular nationalists or not, this article examines the traces of religion and nationalism as well as economic concerns, on anti-immigrant policies. There is a substantial body of literature on the Scandinavian welfare state and immigrant integration. There have been research on immigrant integration in Scandinavian countries, which have a distinctive welfare state model.¹ Denmark's immigration policy is the most restrictive in Europe, and it has been increasing tougher since 2015, prompting discussion about whether Sweden and Norway would follow Denmark's approach.² Based on how social rights are used as immigration policy, Hagelund's³ research on the shift in political discourse in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway after the refugee crisis shows that Sweden stands out with humanitarian policies, restrictive policies are explained by international cooperation, and Denmark is the most restrictive and does not want to be a target for migrants. Goli and Rezaei⁴ investigated the link between radical Islam and failed integration in Denmark. To the best of our knowledge, there has been no study that evaluates and discusses economic or religious traces in integration policies and evaluated their link with new nationalist and multicultural policies via integration policies in Denmark and policies that are anticipated to be implemented in Sweden in the future. This study is expected to contribute to a better understanding of

¹ Grete Brochmann-Anniken HAGelund, "Migrants in the Scandinavian Welfare State the emergence of a Social Policy Problem", *Nordic Journal of Migration Research* 1(1) (2011).

² Siw Ellen Jakobsen, "Immigration to Scandinavia: Will Norwegian and Swedish Social Democrats follow the tough Danish line?", *Sciencenorway* (17 May 2021).

³ Anniken Hagelund, "After the Refugee Crisis: Public Discourse and Policy Change in Denmark, Norway and Sweden", *Comparative Migration Studies* 8/1 (2020).

⁴ Marco Goli-Shahamak Rezaei, "Radical Islamism and Migrant Integration in Denmark: An Empirical Inquiry", *Journal of Strategic Security* 4(4) (2011).

whether economy, religion and new nationalism affects the countries' integration policies and relations between the defeat of multiculturalism and economy, religion, as well as to update theory. The document analysis approach was utilized in this paper, which was based on the literature on the issue and legislative rules connected to integration. The findings show that economic concerns and the rise of new nationalism have led to restrictive immigration policies and restrictions on religious symbols not only for Muslims but also for other religions of whose cultures differ from European identity.

2. Nationalism and Religion Nexus on Migration

The relationship between religion and nationalism is generally based on Durkheim and Weber's understanding and is discussed within the framework of the secular approach, which is regarded as one of the main elements of modernity, and religion in pre-modern societies has been replaced by nationalism in modern societies.⁵ However, secular discourse in the relationship between religion and nationalism has obscured the relationship between religion and nationalism, despite the fact that religion and nationalism have many affinities.⁶ Brubaker indicates that religion and nationalism are intertwined; nationalists can use religious symbols, and religious movements can use nationalist language; and politicians can make demands in the name of God and/or nation, but this does not mean that the nationalist movement becomes a religious movement.⁷ Although the relationship between nationalism and religion is generally studied with three models: religious nationalism, secular nationalism and civic nationalism. Religion is more or less the discursive source of nationalism, and if secular and religious nationalism lie at the two extremes, civic nationalism is in the middle of them.⁸

Fetzer and Sober illustrated the shift in the religion and nationalism model by taking religious diversity and institutional segregation into account. Sweden, for example, was a religious nationalist in the 16th century but a secular nationalist in the 21st, whereas Serbia (Former Yugoslavia) was a secular nationalist in the 20th century but now follows the religious nationalist model (Figure 1).

⁵ Peter C. Mentzel, "Introduction: Religion and Nationalism? Or Nationalism and Religion? Some Reflections on the Relationship between Religion and Nationalism", *Genealogy* 4/98 (2020), 2-3.

⁶ Rogers Brubaker, "Religion and Nationalism: Four Approaches", *Nations and Nationalism* 18/1 (2012), 15.

⁷ Brubaker, "Religion and Nationalism: Four Approaches", 16-17.

⁸ J. Christopher Soper-Joel S. Fetzer, *Religion and Nationalism in Global Perspective* (Online: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 10.

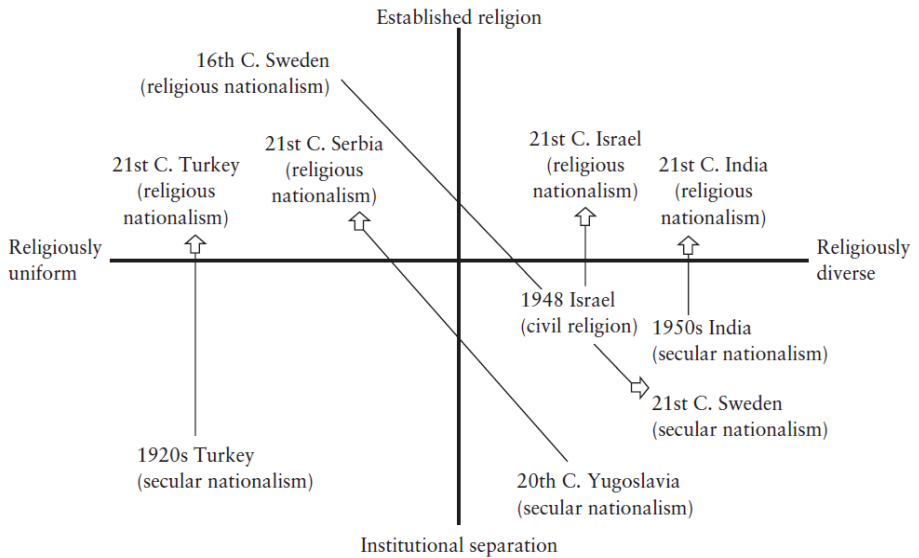


Figure 1. Change in religion–nationalism model⁹

With the rise of the “religious right” or “Christian nationalism” and the prominence of religious identity, the secular modernity approach to nationalism began to face challenges.¹⁰ Indeed, Western civilization has religious roots, and religious nationalism is now part of modern nationalism and the litmus test of national belonging.¹¹

Wimmer and Glick Schiller examines nationalism in four stages and concludes that, following the fall of the Berlin Wall, the emphasis should shift to transnational communities and long-distance nationalism rather than the nation.¹² Along with globalization, religious diversity has increased in parallel with the flows of people and the diversity in socio-cultural structures, and not only people but also beliefs have migrated and reshaped alongside people. As a result, with immigration, nation states are to take into account their citizens living abroad. Religious diversity is one of the most important issues in the self-definition of immigrants as a problem of identity, borders are now

⁹ Soper-Fetzer, *Religion and Nationalism in Global Perspective*, 23.

¹⁰ Mentzel, “Introduction: Religion and Nationalism?”, 3.

¹¹ Philip Gorski, “Religious Nationalism and Right Wing Populism: Trumpism and Beyond”, *Contending Modernities* (Access: 29 July 2021).

¹² Andreas Wimmer-Nina Glick Schiller, “Methodological Nationalism and beyond: Nation-State Building, Migration and the Social Sciences”, *Global Networks* 2/4 (2002), 312-318.

beyond the natural border, and transnational ethnic/religious affiliations and diaspora belonging should also be considered.¹³

In the 1950s and 1960s, migration from countries such as Turkey, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Portugal, and Italy, as part of the labour agreements requiring the necessary workforce to ensure economic growth, resulted in a multicultural population structure in Europe. The aforementioned migration flow brought to the European agenda issues such as immigrant and second-generation integration, assimilation, and Muslim radicalization. Integration, which includes the immigrant's resettlement in the new country, includes education, housing, health, job market access, integration into society, and eventually citizenship processes. All of these processes are inextricably linked. For example, the most pressing aspect of refugee integration is housing, and simply having the right to work is not enough; refugees should also be provided with language assistance and labour-market-ready qualifications.¹⁴

The concept of assimilation, which developed as a result of Park and Thomas' studies, is defined as the fusion of individuals and groups in a common life.¹⁵ A negative meaning was attributed to the concept due to the focus on disappearance of the immigrant's own culture¹⁶, and the understanding of immigrants protecting their own culture led to the concept of assimilation being questioned after the 1960s. Multiculturalism is the ideal of Western Liberal Democracy, and it is concerned with the politics of difference and identity, and refers to the preservation of minority groups' own identity and practices.¹⁷ While multicultural policies were prominent between 1970 and 1990, there has been a return to ideals such as shared values, identity, and even assimilation during the 1990s by abandoning multiculturalism.¹⁸ Multiculturalism included the preservation of ethnic group-specific practices such as food, clothing, and music, and it was taught in festivals, media, and schools, but it was criticized for ignoring economic and political inequalities, protecting group-specific values is dangerous, and leading to power inequality within

¹³ Laura Zanfrini, "Introduction: General Description of the Study, Key Issues, and Provisional Conclusions", *Migrants and Religion: Paths, Issues, and Lenses: A Multidisciplinary and Multi-Sited Study on the Role of Religious Belongings in Migratory and Integration Processes*, ed. Laura Zanfrini (Leiden ; Boston: BRILL, 2020), 40.

¹⁴ Zahide Erdoğan, "Birleşik Krallık'ta Mülteci Entegrasyon Politikaları ve Temel Yaklaşımlar", *Göç Dergisi* 7/1 (2020), 107-110.

¹⁵ Richard Alba-Victor Nee, *Remaking the American Mainstream Assimilation and Contemporary Immigration* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England: Harvard University Press, 2003), 19.

¹⁶ Han Entzinger-Renske Biezeveld, *Benchmarking in Immigrant Integration* (European Research Centre on Migration and Ethnic Relations, 2003), 14.

¹⁷ Sarah Song, "Multiculturalism", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Access 29 July 2021)

¹⁸ Will Kymlicka, *Multiculturalism: Success, Failure, and the Future* (MPI, 2012), 8.

ethnic groups.¹⁹ Although integration entails the obligation of immigrants to adapt to society and the states to facilitate integration, the difficulties encountered in integration are combined with anti-Muslim sentiment.²⁰ As EU regulations and international obligations require harmonization, to address the integration problem, the majority of European countries have implemented practices that are not dissimilar to one another. However, anti-Muslim sentiment has emerged in varying degrees and forms in each country.

Although anti-immigrant trend in Europe has existed for a very long time, terrorist attacks, the 2008 economic crisis, mass migration in 2015 and the rise of the far right have made the problems more visible. On the other hand, right-wing populist and national-conservative political parties such as anti-Muslim Pegida movement, far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD), the Freedom Party of Austria and the Swiss People Party have gained popularity in Europe. Furthermore, the distinction between “us” and “them” in nation states has begun to be drawn with immigrants or aliens, and Islam constitutes “the other” category associated with terrorism for the West.²¹ Meer and Modood point out that racism envisions the protection of racial minorities but excludes Muslims because it is a religiously chosen identity; thus, ethnic identities are tolerated to some extent but religious minorities are not. As a result, Muslims are viewed as a terrorist threat or disloyal group rather than a disadvantaged minority.²² Modood emphasizes that the question is whether Muslims will be treated as outsiders or included in polity.²³

Now, European countries have started to move away from inclusive and liberal policies, and some European leaders declared the failure and end of multiculturalism.²⁴ Following the sudden influx of refugees in 2015, most EU governments began to implement more restrictive policies for both voluntary and forced migration. As more refugees arrived at the borders, policymakers were forced to devise solutions as well as their own problem definitions.

Furthermore, the arrival of a large number of refugees in 2015 in such a short period of time put a huge strain on housing and social services, and as anti-immigrant sentiments and fears grew, the Nordic social welfare state model and whether social policies were adequate to manage this migration

¹⁹ Kymlich, *Multiculturalism: Success, Failure, and the Future*, 4-5.

²⁰ Song, “Multiculturalism”.

²¹ Nasar Meer-Tariq Modood, “Refutations of Racism in the ‘Muslim Question’”, *Patterns of Prejudice* 43/3-4 (2009), 335-354.

²² Meer-Modood, “Refutations of Racism in the ‘Muslim Question’”, 335.

²³ Tariq Modood, *Multiculturalism and Integration: Struggling with Confusions* (European University Institute Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, 2011), 10-11.

²⁴ *BBC News*, “Merkel Says German Multicultural Society Has Failed” (17 October 2010).

came under scrutiny.²⁵ But, it seems that economic concerns with religion and nationalism has an important role shaping the restrictive turn towards immigrants in Sweden and Denmark and legitimized differently in each country.

3. Europe's Perception of Migration Threat

Since the early times of human history, Europe has been the centre of attraction for the migrants due to its geopolitical location. With the evolve of civilizations, it became one of the most important lands both economically and politically on the earth. Thanks to its good use of the elements of technology and its ability to update itself by keeping up with the needs of the age, it has managed to survive and maintain the level of civilization despite all destructions of power in its political history. The Westphalian Peace not only put an end to the ongoing wars in Europe, but also introduced a new international system that laid the foundations of today's European Union. Since the Peace, which launched the order of nation-states with full sovereignty both internally and externally, keeping the security of borders has been the key element in establishing national security and, as a result, "nation" and the "others" have become focal points while addressing security policies.²⁶

Following the Westphalian Peace, nationalization has become an important tool in European politics with the national identity coming to the fore in state structuring. The attempt of the states, having been tired of wars which worn out not just human capacities but also wealth, to become unitary and struggle with 'real enemies', even sometimes with imaginary ones, especially with religious incentives, has been an important part of the history of Europe.²⁷ The establishment of lasting peace in continental Europe, thus, focused on the preservation of the European identity. The step of forming the European identity as a supra-identity apart from the national identities of the European countries within the borders of each state was taken with the attempt to transform the economic partnership (European Economic Community) into a regional power (EU). In the principles of the EU, accepted in 1993 and called the Copenhagen Criteria which was further strengthened by Madrid Agreement in 1995, it is highlighted that member states ensure the stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities.²⁸ These criteria, which bring the understanding

²⁵ Hagelund, "After the Refugee Crisis", 5-6.

²⁶ Zuhale Karakoç Dora, "International Migrants as a Matter of Security: Open Door Policy and Syrians in Turkey", *Güvenlik Bilimleri Dergisi* 9/2 (2020): 504.

²⁷ Christopher Brooks, *Western Civilization: A Concise History Volume 3: Religious Wars* (Print PDF: NSCC, 2020).

²⁸ European Union, "Accession Criteria (Copenhagen Criteria)" (Access 03 August 2021).

and emphasis of promoting multiculturalism along with also reveals a perspective that forms the basis of EU norms. However; when we consider that the EU was established during Cold War years when the member states were generally dealing with regular and controlled migration and that these criteria were put forward during the period of migration from Eastern Europe towards the West upon collapse of communism, the reason why Europe, who have been exposed to uncontrolled human influxes since the 2000s, has not been able to carry these criteria from discourse to practice would be understood. The irregular mass migration that began following the civil war in Syria and reached its peak in 2015 has become the symbol of Europe's transition from policies emphasizing multiculturalism to stricter policies emphasizing nationalism and European identity.

Lack of solidarity among EU countries, lack of a common response system against arising challenges and sharp changes in humanitarian and political issues has revealed the failures in common border control and refugee sharing and caused the crash of Dublin Regulation which has never been fully proven to work.²⁹ When Dublin Regulation was practically proved to be unfair among member states, the governments started to take their own precautions by either re-strengthening borders or strengthening the rules for migrants to be allowed in their countries. With mass human flow towards Europe stemming from political instability in the Middle East, the religious identity of the migrants (mostly Muslims) became more visible on European territories due to their increasing numbers and migrants started to be engaged with their religious identities.³⁰ In many Western member states, resistance to immigrants increased while anti-immigrant political parties increased their popularities and votes.³¹ Denmark and Sweden are among these countries where far-right parties with objections to Muslim immigrants gained more seats and became a part of governing coalitions with mainstream parties.³² In the political discourse of these major right-wing populist parties, cultural and religious objection to Muslim migrants is increasing every passing day³³ while their supporters increase in the same rate.

²⁹ Susan Fratzke, *Not Adding up: The Fading Promise of Europe's Dublin System* (Migration Policy Institute Report, March 2015).

³⁰ Zuhul Karakoç Dora, "Religio-Centric Migrant Policies of Eastern Europe", *Journal of Divinity Faculty of Hitit University* 19/1 (2020): 50.

³¹ Eirik Christophersen, "Hour of Reckoning for European Refugee Policy" (Access 03 August 2021).

³² Annabelle Timsit, "Things Could Get Very Ugly Following Europe's Refugee Crisis", *the Atlantic* (27 October 2017).

³³ Shadi Hamid, *The Role of Islam in European Populism: How Refugee Flows and Fear of Muslims Drive Right Wing Support* (The Brookings Institution, February 2019).

Mainly, religion-based policy-making processes started to show up after 9/11 attacks. With following and increasing terrorist attacks held by Islamic originated members of terrorist organizations, the emphasis on multiculturalism began to fade gradually and the culture of living together in peace began to be handled with a more sceptical approach began to appear at the earliest years of this century. During post 9/11 period, when the sceptical approach in the European society was still ongoing, the sudden mass migration, whose numbers exceeded millions in a very short time, made the Muslims more visible and started to strengthen the feeling of their being different from the European both in daily life habits and in their cultural understanding including their appearance, triggering the nationalist perspective. The number of Muslim refugees who have been trying to cross the borders of the EU is even higher than the population of many European countries undoubtedly played an important role in the transformation of these concerns into harsh politics. Although the EU used the primary means of solving the refugee influx outside its own territory by signing a readmission agreement with Turkey, many governments in Europe began to see removing their countries from being an attractive destination for refugees as a longer-term solution. Integration, assimilation and deterrence policies are based on the idea of preserving national (and of course European) identity in the long run while balancing the economy in favour of their own citizens.

4. Denmark and Sweden Cases: New Nationalism or Economic Concerns?

The Nordic region includes five sovereign states of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden, as well as three autonomous territories. Integration and immigration policies have become important issues in the Nordic countries, as they have in other European countries. The five Nordic countries are referred to as Scandinavian welfare states, and according to Andersen, the Scandinavian countries' universal "social democratic regime-type" welfare state is primarily based on social democratic reforms.³⁴ With the 2015 refugee crisis, many countries have begun to implement restrictive immigration policies or change their regulations especially limiting the social rights of asylum seekers. However, there are no "one-size-fits-all" immigration policies, but a more restrictive attitude toward immigrants is becoming more prevalent. Sweden and Denmark's immigration policies have been tightened several times in recent years since 2015.

The concept of migration management emerged with the aim of controlling labour migration and has always been political, and states act with the motives of protecting national security, the job market, the national

³⁴ Gosta Esping-Andersen, *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (UK: Polity Press, 1990), 27.

community and the welfare state.³⁵ In this regard, while Sweden and Denmark have somewhat similar considering welfare state type, economies and migration histories, their immigration policies differ significantly. Since 1864, Denmark has been a remarkably homogeneous country with a single religion and language, with no ethnic minorities and after 1864 “‘Danish’ has become ideologically defined as an ethno-linguistic-religious-cultural concept”.³⁶ Within the context of religious freedom, the state and church are not separate in Denmark, and religious communities are separated as “acknowledged” or “approved” communities, but this does not imply acceptance of pluralism.³⁷

Guest workers from Turkey immigrated to Denmark, known as a liberal Scandinavian welfare state, in the 1960s and 1970s, and refugees from the former Yugoslavia immigrated in the 1990s. While immigration from other Western countries to Denmark was significant between 1880 and 1980, non-western immigration has increased since 1990, and the country’s homogeneous structure has begun to change.³⁸ As of 2021 second quarter Denmark population is 5.843.347 and immigrants and their descendants comprise approximately 14% (820.638) of the Danish population. Around 64% of the migrants are from non-Western countries.³⁹ Different groups such as international students, family members, guest workers, refugees migrate to Denmark and Muslims are not homogeneous, particularly non-Western and Muslim immigration is a matter of discussion.⁴⁰

The *Danish Alien’s Act*, introduced in 1983, is known as the “most liberal” law in Europe. Although the government stopped labour migration due to increase in unemployment rates in 1973, migration was not a political issue, but with the increasing integration problems at the end of the 1980s, migration became an issue of political and public debate.⁴¹ Cultural diversity was initially implicitly advocated by politicians in Denmark, and native language education and religious education policies are examples of this.⁴² Refugees of

³⁵ Bjarney Friðriksdóttir, *What Happened to Equality? The Construction of the Right to Equal Treatment of Third-Country Nationals in European Union Law on Labour Migration* (Leiden ; Boston: Brill Nijhoff, 2017), 13.

³⁶ Niels Kærgård, “Social Cohesion and the Transformation from Ethnic to Multicultural Society: The Case of Denmark”, *Ethnicities* 10/4 (2010), 473.

³⁷ Tina Gudrun Jensen, “The Cartoon Affair and the Question of Cultural Diversity in Denmark”, *E-Cadernos CES* 3 (2009), 67–68.

³⁸ Kærgård, “Social Cohesion and the Transformation”, 474.

³⁹ Statistics Denmark, *Immigrants and Their Descendants* (2021).

⁴⁰ Kærgård, “Social Cohesion and the Transformation”, 476.

⁴¹ Niels Wium Olesen-Astrid Elkjær Sørensen-Thorsten Borring Olesen-Rosanna Farbøl, “Danish Immigration Policy, 1970-1992”, *nordics.info Aarhus University* (Access 24 July 2021).

⁴² Per Mouritsen-Tore Vincents Olsen, “Denmark between Liberalism and Nationalism”, *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36/4 (2013), 692.

Iran-Iraq War, Sri Lanka, and Yugoslavia brought the problems to light in the 1980s and 1990s, and the liberal discourse of equal rights has now given way to the responsibility of immigrants, self-sufficiency, and integration.⁴³

The 2000s was the period when immigrants were perceived as a threat with the events of 9/11 and the restrictions on Muslims began to become clear. Anti-immigration right wing Danish People's Party, the election winner in 2001, began to implement restrictive policies, such as the obligation to accept Danish values, limiting the social rights of immigrants, and Muslims became "others" in Denmark.⁴⁴ Now, Denmark is a country that adopts an ethnonational approach and more restrictive policies, and applies a dual welfare model, in which social benefits are restricted for newcomers.⁴⁵

Although Islamic terrorism caused little damage in Denmark, discomfort with Islam began to grow after the publication of a caricature of the Prophet Muhammad in 2005 with the rise of new nativism⁴⁶ or new nationalism. Nativism is an American origin concept and means prioritizing the rights of settled elements such as language, religion and nation against immigrants and protecting their rights.⁴⁷ From this point of view, it can be said that Denmark's policies are clearly aimed at protecting the rights of the residents, thus it is nativist or a new kind of nationalist.

Majority culture preference, avoidance of coercion, privatization are the elements of the Danish policy of tolerance, and Danish governments emphasizes Danish language and Christianity as the main pillars.⁴⁸ Although Denmark does not openly accept multicultural policies, diversity management and integration have always been at the forefront of the political debates.⁴⁹ Denmark has experienced a mismatch between multiculturalism and assimilation, and restrictions on acquisition of citizenship and cultural rights have pushed the country closer to assimilation since 2000.⁵⁰

⁴³ Mouritsen-Olsen, "Denmark between Liberalism and Nationalism", 694–95.

⁴⁴ Mouritsen-Olsen, "Denmark between Liberalism and Nationalism", 692.

⁴⁵ Hagelund, "After the Refugee Crisis", 5.

⁴⁶ Rasmus Brygger, "Opinion | Something Is Unspoken in the State of Denmark", *The New York Times* (12 March 2017).

⁴⁷ Rafał Riedel, "Nativism versus Nationalism and Populism-Bridging the Gap", *Central European Papers* 6/2 (2018), 19.

⁴⁸ Mahama Tawat, "Multiculturalism: Is Denmark a Den of Intolerance and Sweden a Land of Political Correctness?", *LSE Religion and Global Society* (blog) (12 June 2018).

⁴⁹ Nils Holtug, "Danish Multiculturalism, Where Art Thou?", *Challenging Multiculturalism: European Models of Diversity*, ed. Raymond Taras (Edinburg: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 190.

⁵⁰ Jensen, "'The Cartoon Affair'", 67.

In the winter of 2015, Denmark took measures such as reducing social assistance for asylum seekers, making family reunification difficult, lowering integration supports, and not granting permanent residence permits.⁵¹ These measures can be interpreted as attempting to protect the welfare state as well as economic considerations. But, the ban on the burqa in 2018, the requirement to shake hands at the naturalization ceremony, and the enrolment of immigrant children in school to learn “Danish values”⁵² are all motivated by mainly reasons out of economic considerations. Denmark’s latest anti-immigrant policy is to send rejected asylum seekers to the Lindholm Island. The Danish People’s Party, supports the idea of sending the unwanted immigrants to Lindholm Island and the party spokesperson stated that “We want to reduce the number of all foreigners in Denmark, not just refugees and asylum seekers, but people who come to work or go to school”.⁵³ It demonstrates that the anti-immigrant discourse is not limited to asylum seekers or refugees and that a new discourse has emerged claiming that the country does not want all types of immigration, including international students who are typically a source of income.

Besides, Denmark has passed a regulation regarding the detention of asylum seekers in a third country outside the EU and signed a migration agreement with Rwanda.⁵⁴ It means that Denmark will implement more selective immigration policies and will try to keep asylum seekers out of Danish territory. Beyond the elements included in the definition of refugee like persecution, it can be said that the decision is motivated by the desire to select immigrants of a certain religion and education level while excluding others for economic or security reasons. Furthermore, Mette Frederiksen, Denmark’s Prime Minister, declared that the country’s target is to accept no asylum seekers.⁵⁵ It represents a significant and radical shift in asylum policies, as well as a challenge to the global refugee protection system.

Danish language as a symbol of national belonging, emphasis on similarity and distrust of diversity, homogeneity and egalitarianism, democracy, welfare society, and Lutheranism are all prominent features of the country.⁵⁶ In Denmark, integration policy has expanded beyond socioeconomic integration and took on a new form with stricter citizenship policies. Integration is

⁵¹ Hagelund, “After the Refugee Crisis”, 11.

⁵² Lisa Abend/Vordinborg, “An Island for “Unwanted” Migrants Is Denmark’s Latest Aggressive Anti-Immigrant Policy”, *Time* (16 January 2019).

⁵³ Abend/Vordinborg, “An Island for “Unwanted” Migrants”.

⁵⁴ *BBC News*, “Denmark Asylum: Law Passed to Allow Offshore Asylum Centres” (3 June 2021).

⁵⁵ European Commission, “Denmark: Lowest Number of Asylum Seekers Ever” (Access 27 July 2021).

⁵⁶ Mouritsen-Olsen, “Denmark between Liberalism and Nationalism”, 696–697.

now linked to difficult tests with an emphasis on deep national history and culture, welfare dependency, loyalty, Danish language, volunteer work, and active citizenship.⁵⁷ Furthermore, the new full-time job rule⁵⁸ demonstrates that Denmark's immigration policies are becoming increasingly restrictive.

In Denmark, anti-discrimination policies are based on the principle of equal rights and opportunity, and equal treatment means that everyone receives the same treatment, and the liberal concept of equal rights and opportunity has given way to nationalism.⁵⁹ Therefore, embracing Danish values is necessary to have equal rights, and the national approach is also prominent here. Haugen⁶⁰ concluded that being a Danish is directly linked to religion, the "culture war" is linked to being Danish and Christian and that it should be defended against non-Christians and non-Danish enough, religious freedoms are associated with Christian Lutherans, and that Muslims are often viewed as a unique group.

Despite similarities in welfare state regulations, Sweden has a liberal approach that embraces cultural diversity until refugee crisis, has accepted a large number of refugees, and its citizenship policies are inclusive.⁶¹ Hedetoft explains the differences between the two countries as follows⁶²: Unlike Denmark, which is homogeneous, closed, exclusionary, assimilationist, institutionally rigid, self-sufficient, and accepts single citizenship, Sweden is multicultural, open, inclusive, accepting differences and new groups, multiple citizenship, accountability, and political correctness. Furthermore, Sweden is a civic secular country and well known as a safe haven for refugees, and the concept of "Swedish exceptionalism" is a part of national identity.

Sweden, like Denmark, faced labour migration in the 1950s-1960s, Bosnian refugees with the disintegration of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, and since 2016, it has reduced its generous regulations to the EU's minimum.⁶³ Post-colonial immigrants and guest workers were able to preserve their own culture and values as a result of multicultural policies, and parallel communities arose. As a result, the communities have parallel cultures in the same society and there is no mixing, which has sparked debate about multiculturalism. As of

⁵⁷ Mouritsen-Olsen, "Denmark between Liberalism and Nationalism", 700.

⁵⁸ European Commission, "Denmark Tightens Rules for Citizenship Once Again" (Access 1 August 2021).

⁵⁹ Mouritsen-Olsen, "Denmark between Liberalism and Nationalism", 704.

⁶⁰ Hans Morten Haugen, "The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark and the Multicultural Challenges", *Politics and Religion* 4, (2011), 494-496.

⁶¹ Hagelund, "After the Refugee Crisis", 5.

⁶² Ulf Hedetoft, *Multiculturalism in Denmark and Sweden* (Danish Institute For International Studies, 2006), 3.

⁶³ Migrationsverket, "History" (Access 31 July 2021).

2020, the population of Sweden is 10.379.295, and the number of people with a migrant background is 2.686.040 and the rate of immigrant origin in the total population is 25.9%.⁶⁴

The foundations of Swedish integration policy are based on the multicultural citizenship policy of 1975, with reforms based on an equal welfare system, universal liberal citizenship, and an inclusive multiculturalism policy.⁶⁵ Sweden has implemented policies within the framework of the welfare state policies since the 1960s that foresee the integration of immigrants into the labour market from the first day and support the protection of immigrants' ethnic identity, language, and culture.⁶⁶

In the 1980s, it became clear that protecting immigrants' ethnic identities made integration difficult, and with the legal regulations in 1985 and 1997, the immigration and minority policy left its place only to the immigration policy, and individual integration of immigrants, rather than collective integration was prioritized.⁶⁷ With these policies, Sweden has begun to move away from multiculturalism. Access to social services, right to stay in the country and citizenship are important parts of the integration of migrants. The requirements for becoming a Swedish citizen include having lived in the country continuously for 5 years, being over the age of 18, and behaving well (not having tax debts, not being involved in a crime, etc.).⁶⁸ Citizenship tests which has been applied in Denmark are not yet implemented in Sweden. A proposal by the Swedish government would make the language test mandatory for those seeking naturalization, but the change would not take effect until 2025.⁶⁹

As of the end of 2015, there were 162.877 asylum seekers in Sweden, with 51.338 Syrians, 41.564 Afghans, and 20.857 Iraqis occupying the top three positions which are predominantly Muslim asylum seekers.⁷⁰ The number of Muslim refugees has grown, and the terms Muslim and immigrant have

⁶⁴ Statistiska Centralbyrån (SCB), "Summary of Population Statistics 1960–2020" (Access 28 July 2021).

⁶⁵ Carl-Ulrik Schierup-Aleksandra Ålund, "The End of Swedish Exceptionalism? Citizenship, Neoliberalism and the Politics of Exclusion", *Race & Class* 53/1 (2011), 47.

⁶⁶ Karin Borevi, "Multiculturalism and Welfare State Integration: Swedish Model Path Dependency", *Identities* 21/6 (2014), 710-711.

⁶⁷ Borevi, "Multiculturalism and Welfare State Integration", 714.

⁶⁸ Migrationsverket, "Citizenship for Adults" (Access 1 August 2021).

⁶⁹ David Nikel, "Sweden Considers Language Exam Requirement For New Citizens", *Forbes* (16 January 2021).

⁷⁰ Migrationsverket, "Inkomna Ansökningar Om Asyl 2015- Applications for Asylum Received 2015" (Access 31 July 2021).

begun to be used interchangeably. The Swedish Migration Agency estimated in 2015 that the two-year cost of asylum seekers would be of \$8.41 billion.⁷¹

While a negative discourse on migration, integration and refugees has increased in many European countries since 1990s, positive discourse continued in Sweden until 2015.⁷² Sweden followed a humanitarian approach by welcoming refugees until September 2015, the increased number of refugees arriving in Sweden revealed the need for regulatory changes, and the issue of migration has become an important issue in the 2018 elections.⁷³ Refugee rights were restricted with retroactive measures implemented in November 2015, permanent residence permits were converted to temporary permits, a self-sufficiency rule was introduced for the future within the scope of family reunification, and language and orientation courses were initiated by allocating extra budget to municipalities.⁷⁴ Despite the fact that these measures show that Sweden has begun to abandon the humanitarian approach, they appear to have been taken for clearly economic reasons, as opposed to Denmark.

According to a statement made by Prime Minister Stefan in 2018, Hagelund⁷⁵ emphasizes that the measures taken in relation to refugees are intended to restore people's trust in society and to ensure that the welfare state functions properly. As the 2022 elections approach, the rise of the far-right anti-immigrant Sweden Democrats party, increasing income inequality, and discussion of the link between unemployment and immigrants, Sweden's identity crisis may result in the curtailment of generous welfare state and asylum policies, as well as an increasing wave of populism and nativism.⁷⁶

While Swedish integration policies are generally based on a voluntary type of national identity construction, integration in Denmark is based on a deterministic notion of nationalism with a historically constructed national identity based on newcomers' integration into Danish life.⁷⁷ On the other hand, Kriegbaum Jensen⁷⁸ points out that in Sweden, Denmark and even

⁷¹ Daniel Dickson-Johan Ahlander, "Soaring Asylum Numbers Force Sweden to Cut Costs, Borrow More", *Reuters* (22 October 2015).

⁷² Andrea Rea et al., *The Refugee Reception Crisis in Europe: Polarized Opinions and Mobilizations* (Bruxelles: Éditions de l'Université de Bruxelles, 2019), 76.

⁷³ Hagelund, "After the Refugee Crisis", 7.

⁷⁴ Hagelund, "After the Refugee Crisis" 8.

⁷⁵ Hagelund, "After the Refugee Crisis" 9.

⁷⁶ Carlotta Serio, "Sweden's Identity Crisis and the Rise of the Far Right", *Global Risk Insights* (2 January 2021).

⁷⁷ Kristian Kriegbaum Jensen, *Scandinavian Immigrant Integration Politics: Varieties of the Civic Turn*, (Aarhus: Aarhus University, PhD Dissertation, 2016), 14.

⁷⁸ Kriegbaum Jensen, *Scandinavian Immigrant Integration Politics*, 32.

Norway, politicians emphasize common values when defining a nation, but the difference between these countries is which values are prioritized and how they are understood.

When it is compared Danish and Swedish policies after 2015, it can be seen that the Danish policies adopt the dual welfare model, which increases polarization and complicates integration. On the other hand, it is believed that Sweden has begun to abandon the humanitarian approach in favour of one that seeks to facilitate integration while also ensuring the smooth operation of the welfare state. It is clear that both countries are concerned about refugees taking advantage of the welfare system.

The table below shows that while there has been a noticeable decrease in the migration movement towards Denmark, which took quick and drastic measures after the refugee crisis in 2015, Sweden has started to be preferred more than pre-2015.

Inflows of Foreign Population into Countries											
Thousands											
Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Denmark	37,0	32,0	33,4	34,6	35,5	41,3	49,0	58,7	54,6	49,0	45,3
Sweden	83,3	83,8	79,9	75,9	82,6	95,4	106,1	113,9	143,0	125,0	114,4

Figure 2. Inflows of foreign population into Denmark and Sweden.⁷⁹

However, when we look at the figures, we can see slightly different results than the immigrants perceive. In the table below, we see the Swedish and foreign employment rates for 2019 in Denmark and Sweden. According to these figures, we see that the gap between native born and foreign born employment rates in Denmark, where immigrants are exposed to harsher policies, is narrower than in Sweden, and the unemployment rate is also lower than in Sweden. This might point to a difference between political discourse and actions in Sweden.

Country	Employment Rate (2019)		Unemployment Rate (2019)	
	Foreign Born	Native Born	Foreign Born	Native Born
Denmark	65.7	76.3	8.4	4.7
Sweden	65.8	80.7	15.5	4.5

Figure 3. Employment and unemployment rates by place in Denmark and Sweden.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), "OECD International Migration Database: Inflows of Foreign Population" (Access 02 August 2021).

⁸⁰ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), "Employment, Unemployment and Participation Rates by Place of Birth and Sex" (Access 02 August 2021).

Although integration and assimilation policies are brought to the forefront in terms of religious behaviour patterns of Muslims, the emphasis on religion is not made directly, instead, it is made through the symbols of Islam. The reason why they are considered as “others” mainly takes its foundation from this difference. Although they do not make religion an important part of their life, and atheism is higher than other parts of the world, in many European countries Christianity is still considered an important part of the European identity and the Church is an important part of it. The following tables express this ironic contradiction.

	Rate of Non-Religious Persons	People Think Religion Not Important in Daily Life
Denmark	61%	80%
Sweden	73%	82%

Figure 4. Rate of non-religious persons in Denmark and Sweden.⁸¹

	Rate of Population Registered to Lutheran Church
Denmark	75% ⁸²
Sweden	55% ⁸³

Figure 5. Rate of Population Registered to Lutheran Church.

Although more than half of both communities define themselves as irreligious, more than half of both communities are officially affiliated with the Church. This explains the situation of revealing the identity of religion against the national identity embodied in the form of “being Danish” and “being Muslim”, which is encountered especially in Denmark. What is emphasized here is not Christianity, it is the approach that identifies being Christian with being European and this is what identity is built on. Moreover, the proportion of Muslims in the total population both in Denmark and Sweden is 2% while the majority is composed of Christian Lutherans.⁸⁴

Both countries’ national identity policies differ as well, with the Swedish model promoting cultural diversity since the 1970s, whereas in Denmark, immigrants can participate in the welfare state on an equal basis with natives if they adopt Danish values and traditions.⁸⁵ As a result, one of the most important issues concerning immigrants, particularly in Denmark, is the place of

⁸¹ World Population Review, “Most Atheist Countries 2021” (Access 02 August 2021).

⁸² Denmark, “Religion and Identity”(Access 05 August 2021).

⁸³ Sweden, “Religion in Sweden”(Access 05 August 2021).

⁸⁴ Pew Research Center, “Interactive Data Table: World Muslim Population by Country” (Access 02 August 2021).

⁸⁵ Borevi, “Multiculturalism and Welfare State Integration”, 712.

religion and religious practices within Danish national values, whether Islam and Islamic practices are appropriate with the Danish values or not. According to Holtug⁸⁶, the debate over the regulation in 2009 prohibiting judges from wearing clothing containing religious symbols centred on Muslim headscarves, and thus generally stemmed from opposition to practices related to the Muslim religion, rather than all religions.

While regulations such as language and citizenship test envisaged by Denmark demonstrate a nationalist approach that requires having Danish values, rules such as not receiving social assistance for more than four months in the previous five years demonstrate an economic approach. The fact that Sweden does not even require a language test for citizenship is a continuation of the multicultural approach, but the regulation that will go into effect in 2025 indicates that multiculturalism has also ended.

It is critical to define the problem when developing policies, and because migration policies affect many areas, including access to services, social assistance, and citizenship, policies should be designed to cover all of these areas. From this vantage point, it is clear that Sweden is attempting to solve the problem through individual socioeconomic integration while moving away from multicultural policies, whereas Denmark has long followed a nationalist approach that emphasizes Danish values.

Another important factor influencing immigration policies is party politics, particularly since the rise of the anti-immigrant right wing. The rise of the far right and nationalism appears to have had a greater influence on Danish policies. Although the social democrat approach and multiculturalism in Sweden have not yet lost their effects, the 2015 refugee crisis put the government under pressure, and Sweden has begun to implement relatively more restrictive policies.

5. Conclusion

The cases of Sweden and Denmark show how the countries having the common migrant history and similar economic structure have seen the immigration issues and refugee crisis, and how this influenced their policy decisions. While Denmark has been pursuing policies aimed at assimilation and the preservation of Danish language and homogeneity in society, Sweden prefers multicultural policies aimed at the preservation of different ethnic identities and languages. However, Swedish policy has resulted in cultural segregation, while Danish policy has resulted in excessive restrictions on

⁸⁶ Nils Holtug, "Nationalism, Secularism and Liberal Neutrality: The Danish Case of Judges and Religious Symbols", *Les Ateliers de l'éthique/The Ethics Forum* 6/2 (2011), 111.

immigrants and unsuccessful assimilation. This causes immigrants to shift their route towards where they hope they will be more accepted and welcomed.

Sweden's secular approach limits the influence of religion on politics to a large extent while Denmark's approach takes its basis mostly from otherization of other religions. Here a question arises: Why being Danish is compared to being Muslim? If this is the case, then there is an erroneous approach here -as a national identity could be compared with another national identity and a religious identity is compared with a religious identity. Considering the above mentioned data in which people can define themselves as both atheist and Christian, it can be claimed that Christianity has turned into a matter of identity rather than being a religion, and therefore the identity of religion is put in front of the identity of the nation. It is also possible to take the fact into account that social and economic concerns are expressed through religion as part of an identity which is more visible in daily life.

In fact, Sweden is currently implementing the policies that Denmark had already tested many years ago but abandoned due to its unsuccessful results. Sweden now tries and strives to get positive results from already tested politics of Denmark. The fact that Sweden is going through the same old policy-making processes that emphasize multiculturalism and that have failed, does not mean that Sweden will fail in the same way, but the current situation reveals that it will not operate much differently. The most obvious sign of this is that the anti-immigrant political parties in Sweden increase their votes in each election and even the moderate coalition partners have started to approve relatively drastic measures. This is an alarming indication that the public's support for such policies tend to increase.

The fact that marginalizing policies will increase hatred with a domino effect and produce arguments that can rationalize more rigid policies in the future should not be ignored. In this respect, it is highly possible that Denmark might serve as a model to Europe, primarily to Nordic countries, and this strengthens the possibility that anti-immigrant opposition will sharpen and divide societies. The effects of radical Islam, which is gradually increasing its influence around the world, is undoubtedly huge in these politics throughout Europe; however, abandoning or deviating from policies targeting multiculturalism might cause isolation and alienation of immigrants, who are already fleeing from terrorism, and push them towards radicalization which constitutes another danger. It would be useful to explore the consequences of this religion-based shift in integration efforts and abandonment of multicultural policies, particularly in terms of marginalization and exclusion.

References

- Abend/Vordinborg, Lisa. "An Island for "Unwanted" Migrants Is Denmark's Latest Aggressive Anti-Immigrant Policy". *Time* (16 January 2019). <https://time.com/5504331/denmark-migrants-lindholm-island/>
- Alba, Richard-Nee, Victor. *Remaking the American Mainstream Assimilation and Contemporary Immigration*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England: Harvard University Press, 2003.
- BBC News. "Merkel Says German Multicultural Society Has Failed" (17 October 2010). <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-11559451>
- BBC News. "Denmark Asylum: Law Passed to Allow Offshore Asylum Centres" (3 June 2021). <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-57343572>
- Borevi, Karin. "Multiculturalism and Welfare State Integration: Swedish Model Path Dependency". *Identities* 21/6 (2014), 708–723. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1070289X.2013.868351>.
- Brochmann, Grete-Hagelund, Anniken, "Migrants in the Scandinavian Welfare State the emergence of a Social Policy Problem", *Nordic Journal of Migration Research* 1(1) (2011), 13-24. <https://doi.org/10.2478/v10202-011-0003-3>
- Brooks, Christopher. "Western Civilization: A Concise History Volume 3: Religious War". Print PDF: NSCC, 2020. <https://pressbooks.nsc.ca/worldhistory/front-matter/174/>
- Brubaker, Rogers. "Religion and Nationalism: Four Approaches*". *Nations and Nationalism* 18/1 (2012), 2–20. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-8129.2011.00486.x>
- Brygger, Rasmus. "Opinion | Something Is Unspoken in the State of Denmark". *The New York Times* (12 March 2017). <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/12/opinion/something-is-unspoken-in-the-state-of-denmark.html>
- Carlotta Seriola. "Sweden's Identity Crisis and the Rise of the Far Right" *Global Risk Insights* (2 January 2021). <https://globalriskinsights.com/2021/01/swedens-identity-crisis-and-the-rise-of-the-far-right/>
- Christophersen, Eirik. "Hour of Reckoning for European Refugee Policy". Access 03 August 2021. nrc.no/shortland/fr/hour-of-reckoning-for-european-refugee-policy/index.html
- Denmark. "Religion and Identity". Access 05 August 2021. <https://www.denmark.dk/people-and-culture/religion>
- Dickson, Daniel- Ahlander, Johan. "Soaring Asylum Numbers Force Sweden to Cut Costs, Borrow More". *Reuters* (22 October 2015). <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-sweden-forecast-idUSKCN0SG0I220151022>

- Entzinger, Han- Bieveveld, Renske. *Benchmarking in Immigrant Integration*. European Research Centre on Migration and Ethnic Relations, 2003. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/e-library/documents/policies/legal-migration/pdf/general/benchmarking_final_en.pdf
- Erdoğan, Zahide. "Birleşik Krallık'ta Mülteci Entegrasyon Politikaları ve Temel Yaklaşımlar". *Göç Dergisi* 7/1 (2020), 95-120. <https://doi.org/10.33182/gd.v7i1.676>
- Esping-Andersen, Gosta. *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. UK: Polity Press, 1990.
- European Commission. "Denmark: Lowest Number of Asylum Seekers Ever". Access 27 July 2021. <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/news/denmark-lowest-number-of-asylum-seekers-ever>
- European Commission. "Denmark Tightens Rules for Citizenship Once Again". Access 1 August 2021. <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/news/denmark-tightens-rules-for-citizenship-once-again>
- European Union. "Accession Criteria (Copenhagen Criteria)". Access 03 August 2021, http://www.eur-lex.europa.eu/summary/glossary/accession_criteria_copenhagen.html
- Fratzke, Susan. "Not Adding Up: the Fading Promise of Europe's Dublin System". Migration Policy Institute Report, March 2015. migrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/publications/MPIe-Asylum-DublinReg.pdf
- Friðriksdóttir, Bjarney. *What Happened to Equality? The Construction of the Right to Equal Treatment of Third-Country Nationals in European Union Law on Labour Migration*. Leiden ; Boston: Brill Nijhoff, 2017.
- Goli, Marco- Rezaei, Shahamak. "Radical Islamism and Migrant Integration in Denmark: An Empirical Inquiry", *Journal of Strategic Security* 4(4) (2011), 81-114. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5038/1944-0472.4.4.4>.
- Gorski, Philip. "Religious Nationalism and Right Wing Populism: Trumpism and Beyond". *Contending Modernities*. Access: 29 July 2021. <https://contending-modernities.nd.edu/theorizing-modernities/religious-nationalism-and-right-wing-populism-trumpism-and-beyond/>
- Hagelund, Anniken. "After the Refugee Crisis: Public Discourse and Policy Change in Denmark, Norway and Sweden". *Comparative Migration Studies* 8/1 (2020), 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-019-0169-8>
- Hamid, Shadi. *The Role of Islam in European Populism: How Refugee Flows and Fear of Muslims Drive Right Wing Support*. The Brookings Institution, 2019. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/the-role-of-islam-in-european-populism-how-refugee-flows-and-fear-of-muslims-drive-right-wing-support/>

- Haugen, Hans Morten. "The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark and the Multicultural Challenges". *Politics and Religion* 4, (2011), 476–502. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755048311000447>
- Hedetoft, Ulf. *Multiculturalism in Denmark and Sweden*. Danish Institute For International Studies, 2006. https://pure.diis.dk/ws/files/46285/hedetoft_multiculturalism_dk_sweden.pdf
- Holtug, Nils. "Danish Multiculturalism, Where Art Thou?". *Challenging Multiculturalism: European Models of Diversity*. ed. Raymond Taras. 190–215. Edinburg: Edinburgh University Press, 2021.
- Holtug Nils. "Nationalism, Secularism and Liberal Neutrality: The Danish Case of Judges and Religious Symbols". *Les Ateliers de l'éthique* 6/2 (2011), 107–25. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1008034ar>
- Jakobsen, Siw Ellen. "Immigration to Scandinavia: Will Norwegian and Swedish Social Democrats follow the tough Danish line?", *Sciencenorway* (17 May 2021).
- Jensen, Tina Gudrun. "The Cartoon Affair and the Question of Cultural Diversity in Denmark". *E-Cadernos CES* 03 (2009). <https://doi.org/10.4000/eces.176>
- Karakoç Dora, Zuhail. "Religio-Centric Migrant Policies of Eastern Europe". *Journal of Divinity Faculty of Hitit University* 19/1 (2020): 35-62.
- Karakoç Dora, Zuhail. "International Migrants as a Matter of Security: Open Door Policy and Syrians in Turkey". *Güvenlik Bilimleri Dergisi* 9/2 (2020): 501-524.
- Kærgård, Niels. "Social Cohesion and the Transformation from Ethnic to Multicultural Society: The Case of Denmark". *Ethnicities* 10/4 (2010), 470–87. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468796810378323>
- Kriegbaum Jensen, Kristian. *Scandinavian Immigrant Integration Politics: Varieties of the Civic Turn*. Aarhus: Aarhus University, Forlaget Politica Department of Political Science, PhD Dissertation, 2016
- Kymlicka, Will. *Multiculturalism: Success, Failure, and the Future* (MPI, 2012).
- Meer, Nasar-Modood, Tariq. "Refutations of Racism in the 'Muslim Question'". *Patterns of Prejudice* 43/3–4(2009), 335–354. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00313220903109250>
- Mentzel, Peter C. "Introduction: Religion and Nationalism? Or Nationalism and Religion? Some Reflections on the Relationship between Religion and Nationalism". *Genealogy* 4/98 (2020), 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.3390/genealogy4040098>
- Migrationsverket. "Citizenship for Adults". Access 1 August 2021. <https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/Private-individuals/Becoming-a-Swedish-citizen/Citizenship-for-adults.html>

- Migrationsverket . “History”. Access 31 July 2021. <https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/About-the-Migration-Agency/Migration-to-Sweden/History.html>
- Migrationsverket. “Inkomna Ansökningar Om Asyl 2015-Applications for Asylum Received 2015. Access 31 July 2021. <https://www.migrationsverket.se/download/18.7c00d8e6143101d166d1aab/1485556214938/Inkomna%20ans%C3%B6kningar%20om%20asyl%202015%20-%20Applications%20for%20asylum%20received%202015.pdf>
- Modood, Tariq. *Multiculturalism and Integration: Struggling with Confusions*. European University Institute Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies ACCEPT PLURALISM 7th Framework Programme Project, 2011. <https://www.medra.org/servlet/MREngine?hdl=10.3280/MM2012-002010>
- Mouritsen, Per-Olsen, Tore Vincents. “Denmark between Liberalism and Nationalism”. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36/4 (2013), 691–710. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2011.598233>
- Nikel, David. “Sweden Considers Language Exam Requirement For New Citizens”. *Forbes* (16 January 2021). <https://www.forbes.com/sites/davidnikel/2021/01/16/sweden-considers-language-exam-requirement-for-new-citizens/>
- OECD, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. “OECD International Migration Database: Inflows of Foreign Population”. Access 02 August 2021, <https://www.oecd.org/els/mig/keystat.htm>
- OECD, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, “Employment, Unemployment and Participation Rates by Place of Birth and Sex”. Access 02 August 2021. stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=MIG_NUP_RATES_GENDER
- Olesen, Niels Wium – Sørensen, Astrid Elkjær – Olesen, Thorsten Borring–Farbøl, Rossanna, “Danish Immigration Policy, 1970-1992”, *nordics.info Aarhus University*. Access 24 July 2021. Pew Research Center, “Interactive Data Table: World Muslim Population by Country”. Access 02 August 2021. <http://www.pewforum.org/chart/interactive-data-table-world-muslim-population-by-country/>
- Rea, Andrea et al. *The Refugee Reception Crisis in Europe: Polarized Opinions and Mobilizations*. Bruxelles: Éditions de l’Université de Bruxelles, 2019.
- Riedel, Rafał. “Nativism versus Nationalism and Populism - Bridging the Gap”. *Central European Papers* 6/2 (2018), 18–28. <https://doi.org/10.25142/cep.2018.011>
- Statistiska Centralbyrån (SCB). “Summary of Population Statistics 1960–2020”. Access 28 July 2021. <http://www.scb.se/en/finding-statistics/statistics-by-subject-area/population/population-composition/population-statistics/pong/tables-and-graphs/yearly-statistics--the-whole-country/summary-of-population-statistics/>

- Schierup, Carl-Ulrik- Ålund, Aleksandra. "The End of Swedish Exceptionalism? Citizenship, Neoliberalism and the Politics of Exclusion". *Race & Class* 53/1 (2011), 45–64. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306396811406780>
- Song, Sarah. "Multiculturalism". *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2020 Edition). Ed. Edward N. Zalta. Access: 29 July 2021. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2020/entries/multiculturalism/>
- Soper, J. Christopher- Fetzer, Joel S. *Religion and Nationalism in Global Perspective*. Online: Cambridge University Press, 2018. <https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/religion-and-nationalism-in-global-perspective/theory-of-religion-and-nationalism/DB4F3BE0D5704C972D64FB18C814308D>
- Statistics Denmark. *Immigrants and Their Descendants* (2021). <https://www.dst.dk/en/Statistik/emner/befolkning-og-valg/indvandrere-og-efterkommere>
- Sweden. "Religion in Sweden". Access 05 August 2021. <https://www.sweden.se/life/society/religion-in-sweden>
- Tawat, Mahama. "Multiculturalism: Is Denmark a Den of Intolerance and Sweden a Land of Political Correctness?" *LSE Religion and Global Society* (blog) (12 June 2018). <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/religionglobalsociety/2018/06/multiculturalism-is-denmark-a-den-of-intolerance-and-sweden-a-land-of-political-correctness/>
- Timsit, Annabelle. "Things Could Get Very Ugly Following Europe's Refugee Crisis". *the Atlantic* (27 October 2017). <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/10/qa-sas-ha-polakow-suransky-immigration-europe/543537/>
- Wimmer, Andreas- Glick Schiller, Nina. "Methodological Nationalism and beyond: Nation-State Building, Migration and the Social Sciences". *Global Networks* 2/4 (2002): 301–334. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1471-0374.00043>
- World Population Review, "Most Atheist Countries 2021". Access 02 August 2021, <http://www.worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/most-atheist-countries>
- Zanfrini, Laura. "Introduction: General Description of the Study, Key Issues, and Provisional Conclusions". *Migrants and Religion: Paths, Issues, and Lenses: A Multidisciplinary and Multi-Sited Study on the Role of Religious Belongings in Migratory and Integration Processes*. ed. Laura Zanfrini. 3-52. Leiden, Boston: BRILL, 2020.

