Economics Honors Papers   Economics Department

2023

Hiring Discrimination in Denmark, Sweden, and Iceland: A Comparative Study of Ukrainian and Afghan Job Applicants

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Connecticut College
Economics Honors Thesis
2023
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Abstract: This paper investigates the labor market discrimination faced by job applicants from Afghanistan and Ukraine, using a correspondence test. Specifically, we examine the impact of nationality, gender, skill, and industry on positive responses from potential employers in Denmark, Iceland, and Sweden using a linear probability model. We used popular names in Afghanistan and Ukraine to create resumes that implied particular nationalities and included previous job experience in Kabul and Kyiv. Although the sample size of positive responses in Sweden and Iceland was too small to draw conclusions, employers in Denmark responded to 28 percent of the applications. For a Ukrainian, the odds of receiving a positive response were 24.98 times as large as the odds for an Afghan receiving a positive response, a uniform gap across three tertiary-level industries. Furthermore, Afghan and Ukrainian females were more likely to receive a positive callback than their male counterparts, with a 33.4 percent and 11.2 percent advantage, respectively. These results suggest that labor market discrimination based on nationality and gender is prevalent in Denmark.

1. Introduction

In the last couple years, Russia invaded Ukraine, the Taliban took over Afghanistan, and there have been countless conflicts globally that have displaced individuals. 1 in 88 individuals globally have been forced to flee their homes (UNHCR, 2022). Displaced individuals often seek refuge in host countries, which in turn are tasked with the responsibility of facilitating their integration into society. Denmark, Iceland, and Sweden are among the countries that have received displaced individuals, and this paper aims to shed light on the barriers and discrimination faced by these individuals as they navigate economic integration.

As refugee immigration has increased significantly since World War II, politicians, the media, and the public have voiced concerns about a lack of economic integration for refugee populations (Bevelander, 2020; Dempster & Hargrave, 2017). The process of economic integration in Europe is not uniform and equitable, as gender, nationality, and minority status are all related to labor market success (Bevelander, 2020; Brell et al., 2020; Lippens et al., 2023; Zschirnt & Ruedin, 2016).

The mentioned countries, which are the focus of this study, have legal structures that ease and accelerate the process of integrating those fleeing Ukraine. The structures include an expedited process for receiving protection, abundant resources, and a smoother transition to the daily life of work and school. On the contrary, individuals of Afghan origin are not provided nearly equivalent resources or public support. Because of these unequal structures, we are working to understand how Ukrainians and Afghans may be treated differently by employers in Denmark, Iceland, and Sweden. We have applied for jobs under several pseudonyms to answer this question, implying those specific ethnic backgrounds.

This paper provides an understanding of the barriers to entry for migrants of different origins, the treatment in the labor market when searching for employment, and lastly, the future hurdles for migrants to send portions of their earnings back to their home countries.

2. Government Policy Towards Asylum Seekers

This section summarizes the asylum policies in Denmark, Iceland, and Sweden. It also provides background on migration trends in the countries and addresses barriers to entry for migrants of different origins.

2.1 Denmark

Denmark has turned to nationalism, following a general European trend towards integrating immigrants through education of the host country's ideologies (Mouritsen & Olsen, 2013). Former Danish Minister for Refugee, Immigration, and Integration Affairs, Søren Pind, stated in a speech, "[F]rom 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 (Adamo, 2012, p. 2)." This is the immigration stance of the country to this day (Adamo, 2012).

In recent years, the narrative around asylum seekers in Denmark has become overwhelmingly negative (Gammeltoft-Hansen, 2017). Denmark cannot legally directly bar individuals from seeking asylum, so the government uses indirect deterrence policies (Gammeltoft-Hansen, 2017). An example of this is shorter residence permits offered to asylum seekers, shifting from the initial five years to 1 or 2 years (Gammeltoft-Hansen, 2017). Regarding targeted restrictions, Denmark introduced a bill restricting family reunification for Syrian refugees for up to three years (Gammeltoft-Hansen, 2017). In 2015, Denmark reduced social benefits for

refugees by 50 percent and ran an anti-refugee campaign in English and Arabic in four Lebanese newspapers, warning potential asylum seekers to avoid Denmark (Gammeltoft-Hansen, 2017; Taylor, 2015). In 2016, the Danish government adopted legislation, dubbed the "jewellery law," that allows Danish authorities to search and confiscate funds and assets from asylum-seekers to cover costs related to their immigration (Gammeltoft-Hansen, 2017). In 2022, the "jewellery law" is still in place, but Ukrainians are exempt from the law, allowing them to maintain possession of their valuables (Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor, 2022). In 2019, the Danish state deemed Damascus "safe," arguing that Syrians could return to their country (Jacobsen, 2022). In deeming parts of Syria "safe," Denmark is legally free to revoke the protection status for Syrian refugees (Jacobsen, 2022).

Denmark has mirrored the EU Temporary Protection Directive for Ukrainians, meaning they circumvent typical asylum procedures for only those fleeing Ukraine (Bendixen, 2022a). The exception of Ukrainians from specific laws in Denmark, such as the "jewellery law" and the typical process for asylum seekers, has made Denmark a more welcoming destination for Ukrainians than other asylum seekers.

2.2 Sweden

Sweden traditionally has a generous asylum policy, but the 2015 Syrian conflict changed the political climate and the media landscape (de La Brosse & Thinsz, 2019). Around the time of the Syrian refugee crisis, Sweden's opinion on asylum seekers seemed to swing from one extreme to the other (de La Brosse & Thinsz, 2019). The Social Democrats have dominated Sweden's political history for 71 of the past 88 years (Nord & Van Krough, 2021). However, in recent history, there have been considerable successes for the right-wing populist party, The Sweden Democrats (Nord & Van Krough, 2021).

The Sweden Democrats, the far right-wing party, have used the Syrian refugee crisis to stress the deterioration of the state in the wake of receiving Muslim refugees (Tomson, 2020). In 2015, Sweden spent €6 billion or 1.35 percent of its GDP on 162,877 asylum seekers from predominantly Muslim countries (Sisson, 2020). Because of the influx, the migration system was strained and unable to provide resources like it typically would (Sisson, 2020). The strain on the immigration system set the migrants up for failure by sending them to rural areas lacking employment opportunities (Sisson, 2020). The strain resulted in more restrictive immigration policies (Sisson, 2020). Until 2016, Sweden granted permanent residence permits to those who received protection from the state (Schengen Visa, 2021). In 2016, Sweden introduced new legislation that would instead grant temporary residence permits and add additional requirements, such as language and citizenship tests, before being able to stay permanently (Schengen Visa, 2021). The new policy falls closer in line with the other Nordic countries but starkly different from their previous, generous policy (Schengen Visa, 2021).

Sweden has opened its doors to Ukrainians like the rest of Europe (Bendixen, 2022a). If the asylum seeker is fleeing the war in Ukraine, they apply for a temporary residence permit under the Temporary Protection Directive (Swedish Migration Agency, 2022a). While waiting for the Swedish Migration Agency to process their application, they receive housing and food assistance (Swedish Migration Agency, 2022a). They wait for their application to be processed and then are granted temporary protection (Swedish Migration Agency, 2022a). It is valid until March 4, 2023, and can be extended (Swedish Migration Agency, 2022a). While Sweden has made it easier for Ukrainians to settle in their country, the disparity of treatment between Ukrainians and other asylum seekers is less than in Denmark.

2.3 Iceland

Because Iceland is a more remote island nation, it has fewer individuals seeking asylum on the island than the other countries. One of the issues in Icelandic immigration is the ethics of the Dublin Regulation (Fontaine et al., 2022). In 2003, the European Union adopted the Dublin Regulation, Dublin III (UNHCR, 2020). Its purpose is to determine which country (EU countries, Iceland, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, and Norway) is responsible for examining an asylum application – typically the state where the asylum seeker first entered the EU – and to make sure that each claim gets a fair examination (UNHCR, 2020). Those applying for international protection often arrive in Greece (Maani, 2018). They are given two options at the border: apply for asylum in Greece or be denied entry (Maani, 2018). Therefore, many seek asylum in Greece out of necessity rather than desire to stay (Maani, 2018). Some asylum seekers who reach Greece travel onward into the European Economic Area, and some go to Iceland (Maani, 2018).

In 2022, Iceland debated the ethics of deporting specific individuals (Fontaine et al., 2022). In May 2022, Iceland announced its intention to deport 300 asylum seekers living in Iceland for nearly two years after the COVID-19 pandemic (Fontaine et al., 2022). Most of the individuals would be sent back to Greece, despite reports from Amnesty International that have condemned the living conditions for asylum seekers in Greece (Amnesty International, 2016). They noted that in Greece, asylum seekers lack access to essential services and housing (Amnesty International, 2016). The Minister of Justice in Iceland denied this, stating that refugees who had received protection in Greece "have the same living conditions as Greek people do" (Fontaine et al., 2022, p. 1). The deportation of asylum seekers is controversial as Ukrainians are welcomed into Iceland while other, typically non-white and Muslim, asylum seekers are deported.

Beyond concerns about the Dublin regulation, the parliament attempted to pass a bill granting a work permit alongside a humanitarian permit for refugees (Fontaine, 2022). At this time, asylum seekers can be granted a humanitarian permit but must have an employer sponsor them to get a work permit (Fontaine, 2022). The push for a more generous immigration policy has been slowed by the opposition, despite Iceland experiencing a tourism boom which has created a need for a temporary workforce (Minelgaite et al., 2019; Fontaine, 2022). In the past, Iceland has brought in Polish workers to help meet their labor market needs (Minelgaite et al., 2019). In 2020, approximately 30 percent of the tourism industry comprised immigrant employees (Wendt et al., 2020).

2.4 Migration Trends

The national databases for Denmark, Iceland, and Sweden contain statistics on asylum applications and decisions (Statistics Denmark, 2022; Swedish Migration Agency, 2022b; Útlendingastofnun, 2022). When assessing total asylum applications as a percent of the host country's population, Iceland, the smallest of the Nordic countries, received the highest volume of asylum applications with a 0.260 percent average from 2016-2020. Sweden followed them with 0.219 percent, and Denmark with 0.072 percent. The number of applications was significantly higher in Sweden, with a 5-year average of 22211.2 applications, which is more than in Denmark (4142.8) or Iceland (909.8). As far as Ukrainians, Iceland has welcomed 2,239 individuals as of January 3, 2023, Denmark welcomed 39,756 individuals as of January 29, 2023, and Sweden welcomed 50,740 as of February 13, 2023 (UNHCR, n.d.). This data can be seen in *Graph 1*.

GRAPH 1

Comparing Previous Annual Asylum Applications to Ukrainians Granted Asylum

■ Average Annual Asylum Applications (from '15-'20)   ■ Ukrainians Granted Asylum (Feb '22-Feb '23)
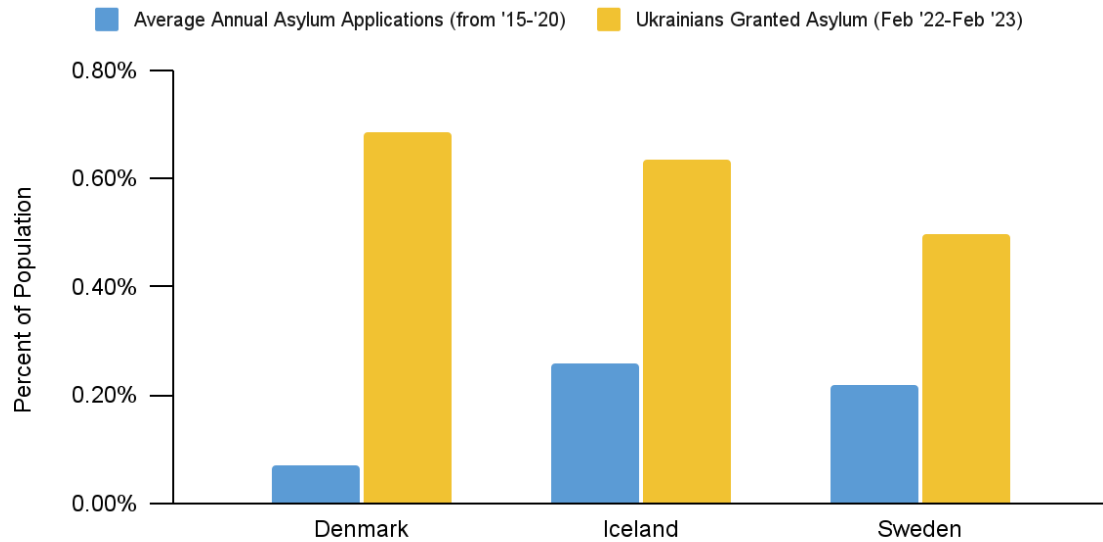
Sources: UNHCR, Statistics Denmark, Sweden Migration Agency, Útlendingastofnun

2.5 Limitations & Barriers

Beyond legal matters, education and literacy are other barriers displaced persons face. In English proficiency, Afghanistan ranks 87 out of 111, indicating low proficiency, and Ukraine ranks 35 out of 111, indicating moderate proficiency (Education First, 2022). Women in Ukraine are relatively equally proficient to men, but women in Afghanistan are significantly less proficient than men as they have "very low" proficiency (Education First, 2022). Concerning my study, "Mohamad" and "Aisha" represent a small portion of Afghans as they are fluent in English, and "Vladyslav" and "Maryia" are more likely to be representative of Ukrainians. There are many hurdles for Afghans to "catch up" to Ukrainians before the point where applicants would be applying for jobs in the Nordic countries.

3. Methodology

Many studies that assess labor market discrimination use a form of audit study known as correspondence tests (Neumark, 2018). Correspondence tests consist of researchers submitting fictitious job applications of individuals who only exist on paper to actual job postings (Neumark, 2018). A meta-analysis of correspondence studies compiled a list of different areas researchers have explored, including race and ethnicity, age, obesity and looks, gender, criminal background, sexual orientation, and disability, among other characteristics subject to discrimination (Neumark, 2018). Existing literature on correspondence tests exploring racial, ethnic, and religious discrimination is the most relevant to the treatment of Ukrainians versus Afghans. Multiple correspondence studies have determined that hiring discrimination against racial and ethnic minorities exists in Europe and the United States (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004; Riach & Rich, 2002; Zschirnt & Ruedin, 2016; Oreopoulos, 2011; Dahl & Krog, 2018; Carlsson & Rooth, 2007). In this study, randomized control trials (RCT) are used as the identification strategy, randomly assigning treatment to different groups to isolate the causal effect of the treatment on the outcome of interest.

3.1 Determining Independent Variables

3.1.1 Nationality

Migration Economics literature has established that native applicants are preferred over foreign applicants (Carlsson & Rooth, 2007; Dahl & Krog, 2018; Oreopoulos, 2011; Oreopoulos & Dechief, 2012; Lippens et al., 2023; Zschirnt & Ruedin, 2016). In Sweden, a study sent out applications with identical skills that were randomly assigned either a Swedish name or a Middle Eastern name, and those with Swedish names received fifty percent more callbacks for an interview

(Carlsson & Rooth, 2007). A similar study in Denmark found that the Danish applicant was much preferred over the Middle Eastern one (Dahl & Krog, 2018). A field experiment using thirteen thousand resumes in Canada found that resumes with Canadian work experience are 40 percent more likely to receive a callback for an interview than resumes with foreign work experience. (Oreopoulos, 2011). Oreopoulos completed a follow-up study using English-sounding names in comparison to names commonly associated with Chinese, Indian, Greek, and Pakistani individuals, and job candidates with foreign-sounding names were 20-40 percent less likely to receive a callback for an interview than those with "Canadian" names (Oreopoulos & Dechief, 2012).

The widely referenced Bertrand & Mullainathan paper titled *Are Emily and Greg more Employable than Lakisha and Jamal?* found that white-sounding names were 50 percent more likely to get callbacks from employers when compared to identical resumes with black-sounding names in the United States (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004). This further supports findings of discrimination against racial minority groups in the labor market.

While researchers have concluded that natives are preferred to foreign or racial and religious minority groups, are some minority groups preferred over others? In a meta-analysis of 738 correspondence tests between 1990 and 2015, researchers found, on average, that minority groups have 49 percent less of a chance of receiving a callback (Zschirnt & Ruedin, 2016). A separate meta-analysis of correspondence studies between 2005 and 2020 found that ethnic minority candidates received 33 percent fewer positive callbacks than their majority counterparts (Lippens et al., 2023). A key finding in the meta-analysis was that candidates with Middle Eastern names faced a 40 percent less chance of receiving a callback (Lippens et al., 2023). This finding is significant to the present study as I aim to assess discrimination against immigrants from two countries of origin.

The present study expands on existing literature and explores a difference between displaced peoples from two subgroups: those of a European country of origin and those of a Middle Eastern country of origin. The Ukrainians fleeing the violence in their country are the largest displaced group in the western world since World War II, with 8,087,015 refugees in Europe as of February 21, 2023 (UNHCR, n.d.). In Denmark, Iceland, and Sweden, Ukrainians are treated differently than other displaced persons in terms of policy, raising the question of the ease of economic integration for displaced persons of different origins.

Eight days after Russia invaded Ukraine, the European Union reacted swiftly to grant those fleeing Ukraine temporary protection (IMF, 2022). The EU has eliminated many obstacles displaced persons typically encounter for individuals fleeing Ukraine by granting them rights to residence and work and access to healthcare, education, housing, and banking services (IMF, 2022). Compared to Afghans and other displaced persons, Ukrainians have a more direct legal path to assimilation in their host country.

In the present study, employers will not see applicants, yet religion can be implied with the applicants' names and country. Furthermore, religion can be implied by the names on resumes. Afghan names are often derived from Arabic, implying a Muslim background and Ukrainian names are often associated with Christianity, as 87 percent of Ukrainians are Orthodox Christian. A 2011 study of 11 cities in Europe, two of which were Stockholm and Copenhagen, found that practicing Muslims are three times more likely to be denied a job than non-Muslims (Kulik et al., 2019). A European study found that women wearing a hijab were less likely to be hired than women who were not specifically in Denmark (Bendixen, 2022b; Kulik et al., 2019). The findings support the hypothesis that Ukrainians find employment over their Afghan counterparts, particularly in Christian Northern European countries.

3.1.2 Gender

The Nordic countries differ in the employment rates of refugees, depending on gender (Hernes et al., 2019). In Sweden, female refugees had a much lower employment rate than male refugees, with only 27 percent of female refugees employed compared to 50 percent of male refugees (Hernes et al., 2019). Similarly, in Denmark, the employment rate for female refugees was 34 percent compared to 50 percent for male refugees (Hernes et al., 2019). In contrast, in Iceland, the gender gap in employment rates was much smaller, with 62 percent of female refugees and 68 percent of male refugees employed (Hernes et al., 2019). An area less explored in correspondence studies is the gender difference in callback rates (Neumark, 2018). Recent studies (Arai et al., 2011; Bursell, 2014) suggest that foreign-sounding male names receive fewer callbacks than foreign-sounding female names in different occupations, ranging from computer specialists to drivers, accountants, high school teachers, and assistant nurses.

3.1.3 Skill

In the present study, we are curious about the impact of additional qualifications on callbacks for Ukrainian applicants compared to Afghan applicants. The Bertrand & Mullainathan paper determined that white applicants had greater returns to additional qualifications than black applicants (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004). Therefore, it demonstrated that applicants' skills mattered more when they had specific characteristics.
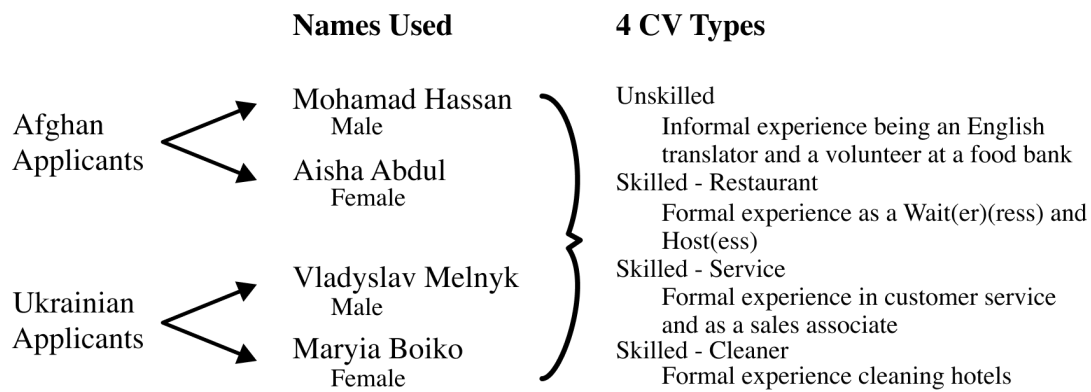
3.1.4 Industry

I applied to three types of jobs: cleaning, sales, and restaurant. The industry variable is meant to capture any specific job market effect that might accrue in these jobs.

3.2 Creating Resumes

I modeled the resumes of the fictitious applicants after Arceo-Gomez & Campos-Vázquez's paper, *Race and marriage in the labor market: A discrimination correspondence study in a developing country* (2014). The aspects of their fictitious applicants we utilized included having 0-3 years of experience, specific-sounding names, and unique emails (Arceo-Gomez & Campos-Vázquez, 2014). The 0-3 years of experience was vital in eliminating the impact of the variable of experience (Gustafsson et al., 2017; Lippens et al., 2023). We also mirrored their staggering of applications by 2-4 days and, more broadly, tailoring the resume to specific job ads (Arceo-Gomez & Campos-Vázquez, 2014).

FIGURE 1: RESUME BANK

Names Used

4 CV Types

Afghan Applicants → Mohamad Hassan (Male)

Aisha Abdul (Female)

Ukrainian Applicants → Vladyslav Melnyk (Male)

Maryia Boiko (Female)

Unskilled
  Informal experience being an English translator and a volunteer at a food bank
Skilled - Restaurant
  Formal experience as a Wait(er)(ress) and Host(ess)
Skilled - Service
  Formal experience in customer service and as a sales associate
Skilled - Cleaner
  Formal experience cleaning hotels

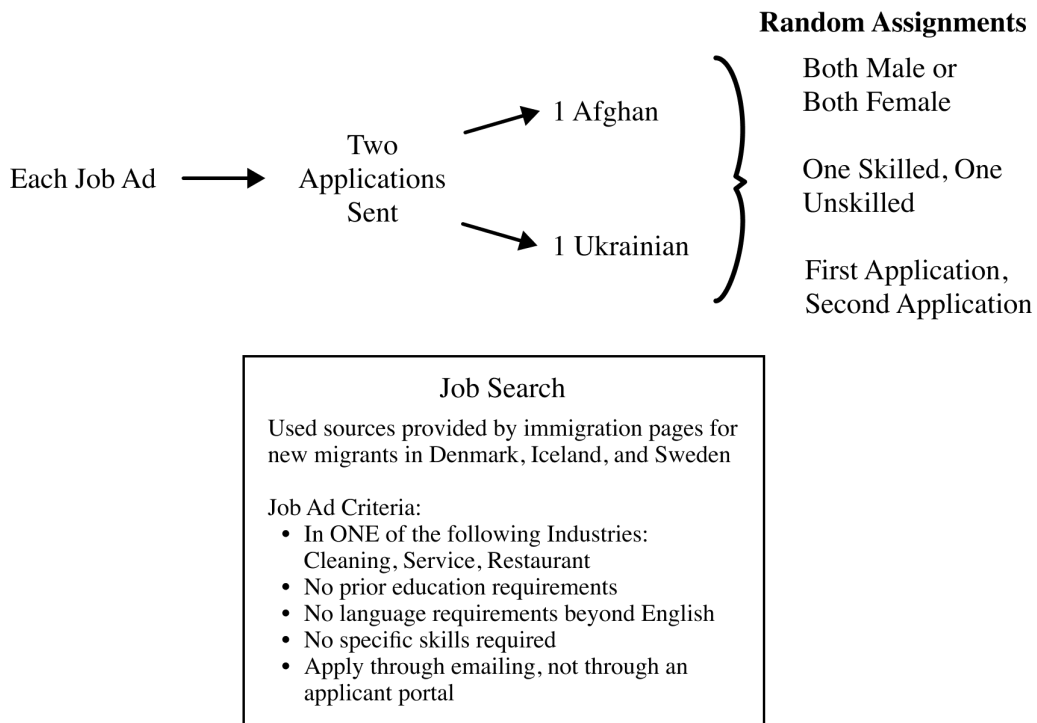|	
Language Skills	1. Native Language Fluency (Either Dari or Ukrainian) 2. English Fluency
Job Skills	A. Tailored to job ad for the Skilled (using one of the skilled resumes) B. Not tailored for the Unskilled
Previous Experience	0-3 Years
Previous Employer Company Name	Used Google Maps to locate businesses in Kyiv, Ukraine and Kabul, Afghanistan

The structure of the resume bank is depicted in *Figure 1*. The figure demonstrates what resumes were sent to employers in the present study. Four names were used for the resumes (Mohamad Hassan, Aisha Abdul, Vladyslav Melnyk, Maryia Boiko), and then four types of resumes for each applicant (Unskilled, Skilled: Restaurant, Skilled: Service, Skilled: Cleaner), resulting in 16 different resumes.

3.3 Applying to Jobs

Figure 2 shows the process for applying for jobs. For each job advertisement, two applications were sent (1 Afghan and 1 Ukrainian), and then there was a random assignment of gender, skill, and if the application was sent first or second. For example, if a job ad was searching for a Host(ess), we randomly assigned either the males or females to be the applicants. Then, because Host(ess) is in the Restaurant industry, we randomly assigned which applicant (Ukrainian or Afghan) is unskilled and which applicant is skilled. The unskilled resume is the same, no matter the industry, but the skilled resume is tailored to the specific industry (restaurant, service, cleaning).

When searching for job vacancies, I went to each country's immigration page and used the sources where they directed new migrants. In Sweden, it was Platsbanken (Arbetsformedlingen.se), in Denmark, it was Jobindex.dk and Facebook, and in Iceland, it was Alfred.is.

FIGURE 2: WHO APPLIES, AND WHERE?

Random Assignments

Each Job Ad → Two Applications Sent → 1 Afghan / 1 Ukrainian

Both Male or Both Female

One Skilled, One Unskilled

First Application, Second Application

Job Search

Used sources provided by immigration pages for new migrants in Denmark, Iceland, and Sweden

Job Ad Criteria:
- In ONE of the following Industries: Cleaning, Service, Restaurant
- No prior education requirements
- No language requirements beyond English
- No specific skills required
- Apply through emailing, not through an applicant portal

An important factor in applying for jobs is how many are available in a region. Iceland has a much smaller labor market than Denmark and Sweden; therefore, we had trouble finding jobs for which to apply. There were 67,235 job vacancies in the third quarter of 2022 in Denmark (Statistics Denmark, 2023), 142,553 in September of 2022 in Sweden (European Commission, 2021), and 6,220 vacancies in the fourth quarter of 2022 in Iceland (Statistics Iceland, 2023). Also note these numbers are for jobs in general while we were only applying to the small percentage of English-speaking jobs. We began with the intention of applying to the same number of jobs in each country, but dealing with countries with such different populations made this difficult. At the end of my data collection, I sent out 106 resumes in Denmark, 80 in Sweden, and 40 in Iceland. The number of Ukrainian and Afghan applications, male and female applications, and skilled and

unskilled applications were equal. The number of applications for each of the three industries were between 32.5 percent and 35 percent of the sample.

3.4 Handling Responses

Figure 3 is the process for applying to jobs and debriefing. The first application was sent, and the second was sent 2-4 days later. If the employer responded, an email would be sent thanking them for their time, and after data collection, a debriefing email was sent to all employers contacted during the study.

FIGURE 3: APPLYING AND DEBRIEFING
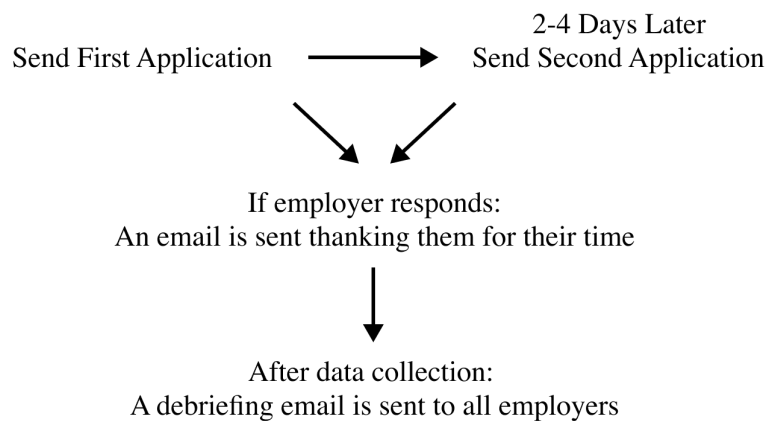
A limitation of using a correspondence test is that we can only assess discrimination in the beginning stages of the job application process. A correspondence test cannot speak to interviews or other aspects of the job search process. The good news is that, audit studies, where researchers use trained individuals to participate in interviews, have shown that much of the discrimination in the job-hiring process occurs during the first stage (Riach & Rich, 2002).

4. Analysis

In total, we sent out 226 resumes over the course of one month, from October 15 through November 15, 2022. We received positive responses from 0 of the 40 applications sent to employers in Iceland and 0 of the 80 applications in Sweden. Employers in Denmark responded to 28 percent of the applications, 30 of the 106 applications. In this section, we analyze the results collected from the Danish labor market.

Table 1 indicates the percentage of positive and negative responses from employers and what share of the positive responses were to Afghans, Ukrainians, males, females, skilled individuals, or unskilled individuals. Of the positive responses from employers in Denmark, 75 percent were Ukrainians, and 25 percent were Afghans. Afghan and Ukrainian females were more likely to receive a positive response than their male counterparts by 33.4 percent and 11.2 percent, respectively.

TABLE 1: PERCENTAGE OF POSITIVE RESPONSES RECEIVED

	Afghan	Ukrainian	All Applicants
Received a Response	0.30	0.26	0.28
Positive	0.06	0.17	0.11
Gender, Positive Response			
Female	0.67	0.56	0.61
Male	0.33	0.44	0.39
Skill Level, Positive Response			
Skilled	0.67	0.44	0.56
Unskilled	0.33	0.56	0.44
Observations	53	53	106

4.1 Linear Probability Model

A linear probability model (LPM) is a statistical model that predicts the probability of an event occurring based on a set of independent variables, in this case, nationality, gender, skill, and industry. The dependent variable is binary, meaning there are two options for responses from employers: callback or do not callback. The LPM gives estimates of the probability of a person receiving a positive response from an employer, near the center of the distribution of characteristics (the characteristics are our x's in the model). Moreover the coefficients have an intuitive interpretation. The drawback here is that the predicted values cannot be guaranteed to fall in between 0-1. What we hope is that the LPM approximates the probability of a positive callback for common values of our x's. Later we compare the results with a logistic regression and find that our LPM results match up very nicely.

EQUATION 1: LINEAR PROBABILITY MODEL

$$P(\text{positive response}) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * \text{nationality} + \beta_2 * \text{gender} + \beta_3 * \text{skill} + \beta_4 * \text{industry} + u$$

Where P(positive response) is the probability of a person receiving a positive response, β_0 is the intercept, β_1 is the coefficient for nationality, β_2 is the coefficient for gender, β_3 is the coefficient for skill, and β_4 is the coefficient for industry.

We would expect β_1 to be positive, indicating a preference for Ukrainians given the preference for Ukrainians in legal frameworks and race/religion/culture based discrimination; β_2 to

be positive, indicating a preference for females given studies have found preferences for female names among foreign-sounding names (Arai et al., 2011; Bursell, 2014); β_3 to be negative, indicating a preference for skilled CVs given the natural tendency to prefer a skilled worker over an unskilled worker; And β_4 to be zero, indicating discrimination is uniform across industries as we believe my findings would be applicable to the labor market as a whole and not a specific area.

The coefficients in *Table 2* indicate the regression results from *Equation 1*. The results we will discuss are from Denmark, as the sample size is too small in Iceland and non-existant in Sweden. The findings in Iceland are not statistically significant, but they do mirror the trends seen in Denmark's data, suggesting that a larger sample size may show results similar to that of Denmark.

In the Denmark data, the coefficients for nationality and gender are statistically significant and positive, which suggests that being Ukrainian or being female may increase the likelihood of receiving a positive response from a potential employer. This data shows that the probability that Ukrainians receive a positive response is 0.454 higher (a change of approximately 45 percentage points) than their Afghan counterparts. The probability that females receive a positive response is 0.197 more (a change of approximately 20 percentage points) than their male counterparts. The coefficients for skill and industry are not statistically significant. The R-squared values indicate that the independent variables explain between 25.3 percent and 31.4 percent of the variation in positive responses. The percentage correctly predicted (PCP) of DK Model 4 is 0.833, or 83.3 percent.

TABLE 2: ESTIMATE OF EQUATION 1 USING THE LPM

DENMARK (DK)

	DK Model 1	DK Model 2	DK Model 3	DK Model 4
Nationality	0.453***	0.453***	0.454***	0.454***
	(0.0764)	(0.0742)	(0.0741)	(0.0742)
Gender		0.199***	0.199***	0.197***
		(0.0742)	(0.0741)	(0.0743)
Skill			0.084	0.084
			(0.0741)	(0.0742)
Industry				-0.0343
				(0.0451)
Constant	0.0566	-0.0412	-0.084	-0.0497
	(0.054)	(0.0638)	(0.0741)	(0.0869)
Observations	106	106	106	106
R-squared	0.253	0.302	0.31	0.314
PCP				0.833

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

ICELAND (IS)

	IS Model 1	IS Model 2	IS Model 3	IS Model 4
Nationality	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05
	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.0502)
Gender		0.05	0.05	0.05
		(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.0502)
Skill			-0.05	-0.05
			(0.05)	(0.0502)
Industry				-0.0417
				(0.0513)
Constant	0	-0.025	0	0.0167
	(0.0354)	(0.0433)	(0.05)	(0.0543)
Observations	40	40	40	40
R-squared	0.026	0.051	0.077	0.094

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

SWEDEN (SE)

	SE Model 1	SE Model 2	SE Model 3	SE Model 4
Nationality	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
Gender		0	0	0
		0	0	0
Skill			0	0
			0	0
Industry				0
				0
Constant	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
Observations	80	80	80	80

ALL COUNTRIES (DK, IS, SE)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Nationality	0.221***	0.221***	0.221***	0.221***
	(0.0435)	(0.0431)	(0.0432)	(0.0433)
Gender		0.0998**	0.0998**	0.0998**
		(0.0432)	(0.0433)	(0.0434)
Skill			0.0285	0.0285
			(0.0432)	(0.0433)
Industry				0.00348
				(0.0282)
Constant	0.0265*	-0.0229	-0.0373	-0.0402
	(0.0152)	(0.0251)	(0.0317)	(0.0363)
Observations	226	226	226	226
R-squared	0.103	0.124	0.126	0.126

Standard errors in parentheses

*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$

4.2 Logit Model

A logit model is a statistical model used to analyze and predict binary outcomes, based on the logistic function. The logistic function is used to model a curve where the response variable can take

one of two possible values, such as success or failure, yes or no, or in our case, positive response or negative response.

Results on *Table 3* indicate that the estimates from the two regression models tell a consistent story, the signs of the coefficients are the same across the models, and the same variables are statistically significant in each model. However, the magnitudes of the coefficients are not directly comparable.

TABLE 3: THE LOGIT MODEL

DENMARK (DK)

	Logistic	Odds Ratio
Nationality	3.218***	24.981***
	(0.867)	(21.651)
Gender	0.471	1.602
	(0.727)	(1.165)
Skill	-0.157	0.854
	(0.706)	(0.603)
Industry	0.883*	2.417
	(0.478)	(1.156)
Constant	-2.759**	0.063
	(1.167)	(0.074)
Observations	56	56

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

There are two reasons for the comparison scaling to not work perfectly here. The logistic regression is geared towards diminishing marginal effects compared to the LPM which assumes constant marginal effect. And two, the rule of thumb for scaling is based on the assumption of small changes on the margin when the independent variables are continuous, here our independent variables are all discrete, and the change is the largest possible every time: a jump from 0 to 1.

The Odds Ratio is a statistical measure used to describe the likelihood of an event occurring in one group compared to another. In this study, it is the ratio of the odds of a positive response in one group (ex., Ukrainians) to the odds of a positive response in another group (ex., Afghans). For a Ukrainian, the odds of receiving a positive response are 24.98 times as large as the odds for an Afghan receiving a positive response. Plugging in predicted values of probability from the LPM coefficients (from *Table 2*) this odds ratio is reasonable. The other independent variables do not statistically significantly impact the chances of receiving a positive response. These results suggest that "nationality" is the strongest predictor of a positive outcome. "Industry," "gender," and "skill" do not have a statistically significant relationship with receiving a positive response. The likelihood ratio chi-square of 23.95 with a p-value of 0.0001 indicates that the model as a whole fits significantly better than an empty model.

5. Financial Hurdles

Once displaced persons are legally settled in their host country, many have to find ways to send money back home to their families and friends. This form of sending money, a non-commercial transfer from a foreign worker that contributes to a household income in their home country, is known as a remittance. Before the war, Ukraine received the largest amount of remittances in Europe at $18.2 billion in 2021 (The World Bank, 2022). The remittances were mainly from Poland, the largest destination for Ukrainian migrant workers (The World Bank, 2022). In 2022, due to the war, private remittances, meaning money from individuals rather than aid organizations or institutions, are expected to rise over 20 percent, despite remittance rates increasing to nearly 7 percent in 2021

(The World Bank, 2022). These high rates of transferring money result in the individuals still in

Ukraine receiving less money than they should.

GRAPH 2

Percent of Individuals with Bank Accounts
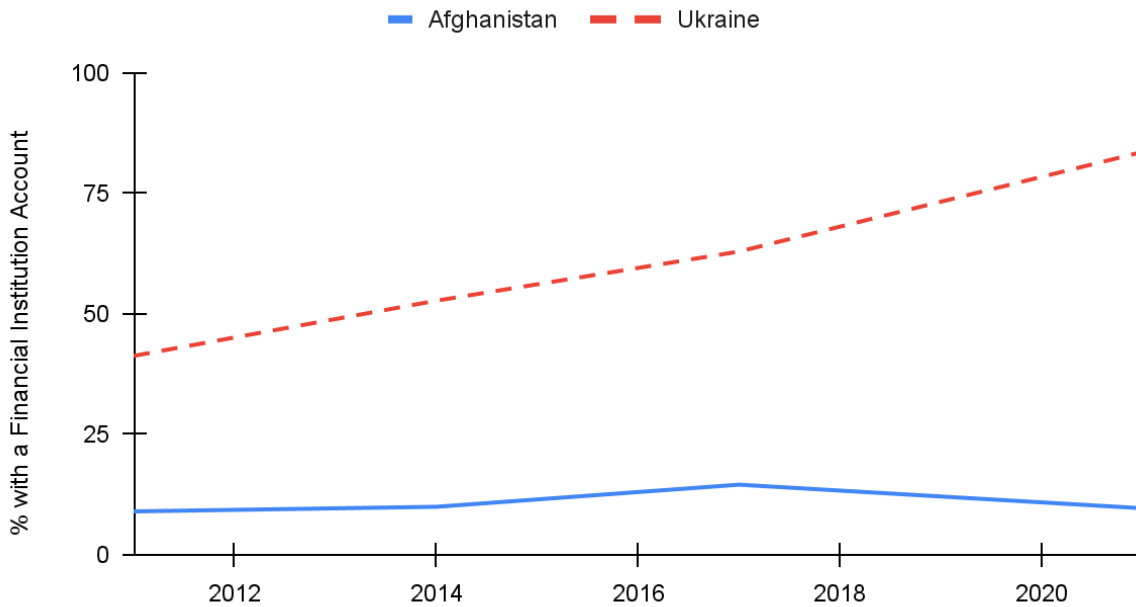
Source: World Bank

Ukraine relies more on formal banking institutions than Afghanistan, as seen in *Graph 2*.

Remittances to Ukraine are sent through digital payments, whether from companies like Paypal and

WISE or from fundraisers on GoFundMe (Sun, 2022). From 2011 to 2021, Ukrainians have become

more involved in the formal financial sector (World Bank, 2023). In 2011, 41 percent of individuals

over the age of 15 had an account with a financial institution, and in 2021, 84 percent had an account

(World Bank, 2023). In Denmark, Iceland, and Sweden, over 99.5 percent of individuals in each

country register with a formal financial institution (World Bank, 2023). These differences are

essential to consider when a displaced person moves from Ukraine to a highly banked country; they would have an easier time sending money home than their Afghan counterparts (World Bank, 2023). When Afghans move from a largely unbanked country to a highly banked country, there are extra hurdles to sending remittances (World Bank, 2023).

In Afghanistan, few individuals have bank accounts or trust in financial institutions. Afghans often receive remittances through hawala services (Ross & Barratt, 2022). Hawala is a network of individuals held together by trust that transfers money fast and discretely (Ross & Barratt, 2022). This method avoids international transaction fees, but "hawaladers" take out commissions during the process (Ross & Barratt, 2022). Since the Taliban's 2021 takeover, the demand for hawala services has increased commission fees from around 2 percent to between 4 percent and 13 percent today (The Economist, 2022). The hawala demand is due to the freefall of the Afghan economy after Western sanctions resulted in the United States freezing $7 billion in Afghan assets and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) shutting off financing (Ross & Barratt, 2022). Western sanctions have also resulted in foreign banks refusing to transfer funds to Afghanistan in fear of violating the sanctions by unintentionally funding terrorists (The Economist, 2022).

The economy's freefall means ATMs are without cash, and withdrawal limits are in place; therefore, prices for essential goods have skyrocketed (Ross & Barratt, 2022). Afghans have become more reliant on hawala because of Western sanctions enacted to stop funding to terrorist organizations. However, hawala is so unregulated that it is a system that terrorists can easily use. In short, Western efforts to curb financing terrorism have just increased the use of more discrete and unidentifiable financing methods that terrorists can use. In the process, Afghan civilians have been hurt the most as more than 95 percent of Afghans are not getting enough food (UN News, 2022). These sanctions on formal financial institutions and increased transaction fees for hawala services

cause the amount of money reaching recipients in Afghanistan to dwindle significantly from its original value.

As conflict rises within a country's borders, out-migration increases. The more citizens living outside their home country, the more remittances are sent back to the home country. The trends are visible in *Graph 3* and *Graph 4*. A caveat of remittance inflows and net migration is sanctions placed on the country in crisis. The Taliban regained control of Afghanistan in August of 2021, which resulted in Western sanctions enacted on their economy. While migration became more outward in 2021, remittances sharply declined due to the sanctions. The sanctions may effectively prevent money from reaching the hands of the Taliban. However, it also effectively prevents money from reaching the citizens who remain in the country. Future studies could investigate how sanctions impact remittances, which would further research the economic struggles of individuals fleeing conflict.
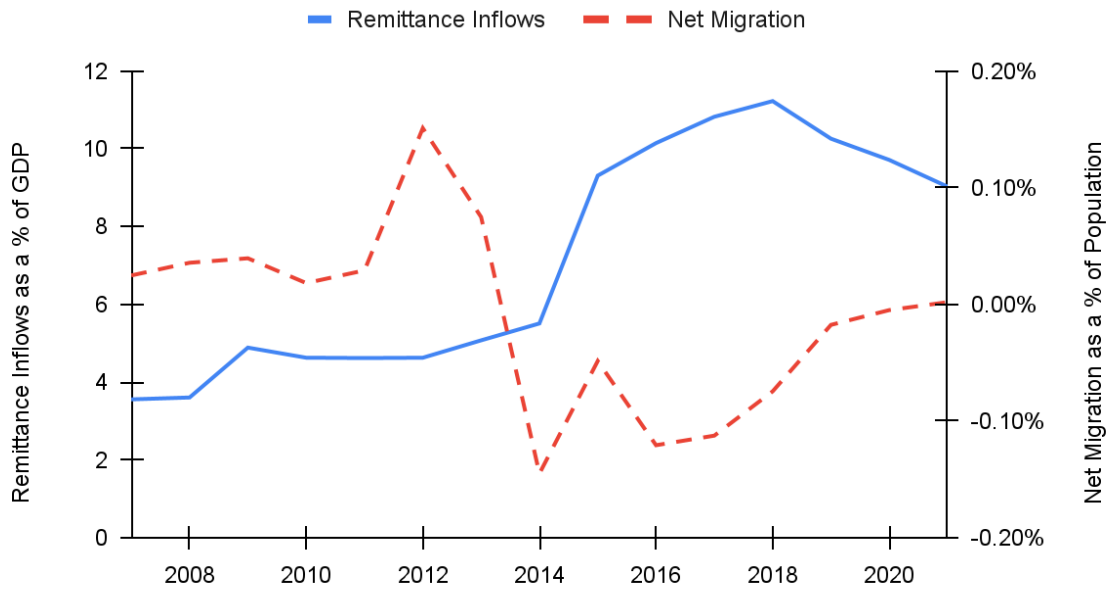
GRAPH 3

Afghanistan: Remittance Inflows and Net Migration
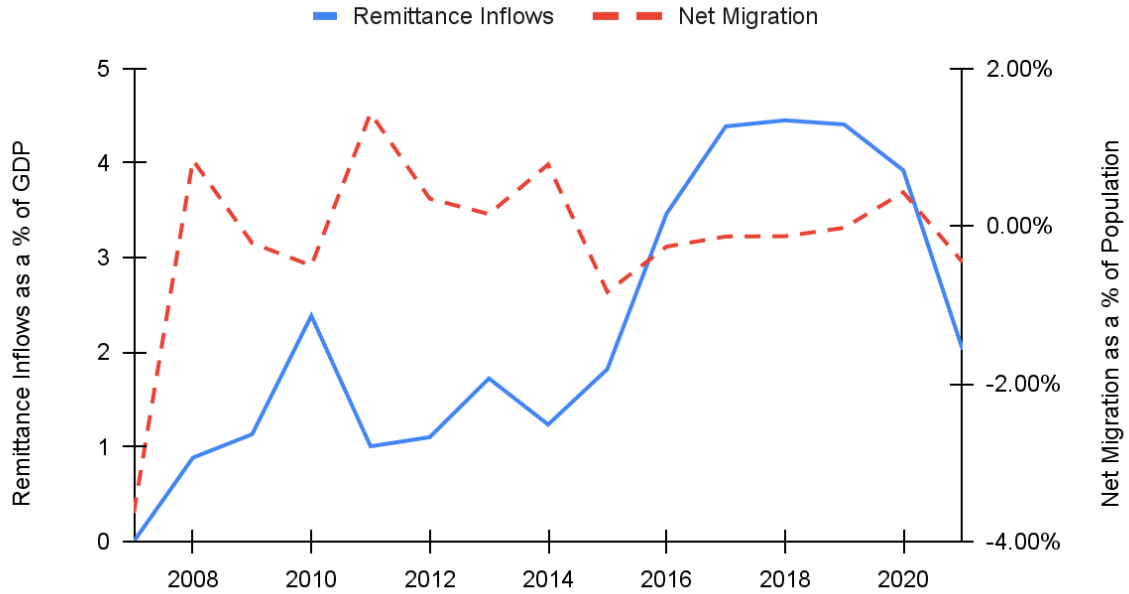
Source: World Bank

GRAPH 4

Ukraine: Remittance Inflows and Net Migration

Source: World Bank

Discrimination in the labor market impacts more than just the individual, it impacts their entire network, whose wellbeing is reliant on remittances.

6. Discussion

Ukraine and Afghanistan are both experiencing devastating conflicts resulting in individuals fleeing their homes. Compared to their Afghan counterparts, Ukrainians have a relatively smoother route to gain entry and obtain asylum in Nordic countries. Afghans have more barriers to entry ranging from legislation to geographical distances to English language skills and education. Furthermore, if Afghans can overcome these barriers to enter the country and then receive protection, they will face discrimination in the labor market in Denmark. The difference in processes for Ukrainians compared to other asylum seekers and the discrimination in the labor market can be attributed to colonial histories, religion, or other preferences of Danes, Swedes, and Icelanders. Even if Afghans can secure employment, sending remittances back home is more difficult for Afghans than Ukrainians. The struggle for Afghans and other Middle Eastern or global south migrants does not end with reaching a country of asylum, obtaining asylum, or securing employment.

6.1 Islamophobia & Colonialism

As we discussed the differences between Denmark, Iceland, and Sweden's immigration and asylum policies, we determined that Denmark has the most strict policies for asylum applicants who are not Ukrainian. Each of the countries had a history of colonialism and a history of Islamophobia. In the

case of this paper, Islamophobia is defined as "the presumption that Islam is inherently violent, alien, and inadmissible" (Beydoun, 2016, p.111). When tying together colonialism and Islamophobia, the more the colonial mindset of a country, the more islamophobic attitudes and the more restrictive asylum processes.

6.1.1 Denmark

The Kingdom of Denmark consists of Denmark and two autonomous districts, Greenland and the Faroe Islands (Jensen et al., 2017). Denmark once had colonies from Greenland and Iceland to the West Indies, West Africa, and Asia (Jensen et al., 2017). The last of the Danish colonies to be granted autonomy was Greenland in 1979 (Jensen et al., 2017). Historically, immigrants coming to Denmark were from neighboring countries, such as Sweden and Germany, but in recent years, there have been more immigrants from non-western backgrounds (Jensen et al., 2017). The shift in who was coming across the borders changed Danish policy, which can be seen particularly in response to the Syrian refugee crisis (Jensen et al., 2017; Gammeltoft-Hansen, 2017).

The policies responding to the Syrian crisis reflect the Islamophobia ingrained in Danish life, but Denmark has not always been anti-Muslim (Cengiz & Karlsson, 2021). Following the 9/11 attacks, Denmark aligned itself with the United States through active participation in the war against the Taliban in Afghanistan (Cengiz & Karlsson, 2021). The 9/11 terrorist attacks, coupled with other terrorist attacks in Europe, left a Danish distaste for Muslims (Cengiz & Karlsson, 2021).

Beyond military efforts, the Danish public media plays a role in developing Islamophobia (Jensen et al., 2017). Different media types often pit Danes and Muslims against one another, as if one could not be Danish and Muslim simultaneously (Jensen et al., 2017). Right-wing populists in Denmark have argued that Islam is a danger to the free Western world and cautioned against

immigration, as Danes' freedom would be at stake (Siim & Meret, 2016). In 2019, several news outlets reported the opinion that Muslims should be removed from Denmark (Cengiz & Karlsson, 2021). In 2022, banning hijabs from primary school was put forth, claiming that the initiative would prevent Islam from being forced on young girls by their parents (Bendixen, 2022b). A similar action took place in France in 2004, resulting in 5 percent of Muslim girls dropping out of school (Bendixen, 2022b). These actions further the idea that "Danes' attitudes towards Islam are the most negative in Europe" (Jensen et al., 2017; Cengiz & Karlsson, 2021). The hatred of the "other" fuels the distaste for differences, and Ukrainians contrast less with Danish society than Afghans do.

6.1.2 Sweden

While it can be contended that Danish imperialism persists to this day, Swedish colonialism came to an end in 1878 (Höglund & Burnett, 2019; Jensen et al., 2017). Sweden's colonial history is comparatively succinct and limited in scope when contrasted with Denmark's, but Sweden still had colonies in North America, the West Indies, and Africa (Höglund & Burnett, 2019).

It was not before 1951 that freedom of religion was a right of Swedish citizens (Berglund, 2022; Otterbeck, 2002). The separation of church and state began in 1956 and was not completed until 2000 (Berglund, 2022). Not many Swedes were in contact with Muslims, but this changed in the 1980s (Otterbeck, 2002). In the 1970s, Sweden adopted multiculturalism as an official policy as the political left pushed forward the ideas of equality, feminism, and international solidarity (Otterbeck, 2002). In Swedish schools, Christianity classes were replaced with critical comparative religion. Due to comparative religion teachings, Islam became a symbol of oppression against women and anti-democracy (Otterbeck, 2002). The positive interactions between Muslims and Swedes have increased with immigration in recent years (Otterbeck, 2002). Despite this, right-wing

parties have blamed the new Muslim immigrants for issues within Sweden, further fanning the flames of Islamophobia.

6.1.3 Iceland

Before the 1950s, there was no evidence of Muslims being in Iceland, and in 1971, there were only 7 practicing Muslims in the country (Kulik et al., 2019). As of 2018, there were 1,517 practicing Muslims (Kulik et al., 2019). Despite being so few in numbers and proving not to be 'dangerous,' the Icelandic media continues to construct Muslims as a threat (Loftsdóttir, 2011). Similarly to Denmark and Sweden, right-wing parties have harnessed the powers of Islamophobia (Þorvarðarson, 2022). In 1944, Iceland gained independence from Denmark (Hafsteinsson, 2019; Loftsdóttir, 2011). Even though Iceland was not a colonial power, and was instead a colony, the Icelandic identity incorporates a lot of Danish discourse on closely identifying with 'whiteness' (Loftsdóttir, 2011). Islamophobia is linked to the colonial discourse of "saving women," an excuse to justify prejudices and interventions throughout history (Loftsdóttir, 2011).

Swedes justify distaste for Islam by claiming it is a symbol of oppression against women; Danes use similar reasoning and have a robust and brutal colonial history, and Icelanders follow in the footsteps of their older, fellow Nordic countries. A lack of exposure to Muslims and ignorance about the religion, coupled with the media coverage of Islamic terrorist attacks, has greatly fueled Islamophobia. Globally, Islamophobia heightened following the 9/11 attacks in the United States and other Islamic terrorist attacks in the Western world.

When looking at the colonial history of the three countries, Denmark was the largest colonial power, followed by Sweden, and then Iceland, a former Danish colony. When tying together

colonialism and Islamophobia, the more the colonial mindset of a country, the more islamophobic policies and hate crimes against Muslims increase. As far as hate crimes reported to the police in 2018, 14 percent were Islamophobic in Denmark, 8 percent were Islamophobic in Sweden, and in Iceland, there were only seven hate crimes, but we were unable to find what percentage of those were against Muslims (BRÅ, 2018; FRA, 2018; OSCE, 2021).

In Denmark, an extensive colonial history paired with widespread Islamophobia, primarily rooted in ignorance, has resulted in an unwelcoming environment for non-white displaced persons. The homogenous Nordic countries prefer white, Christian Ukrainians to non-white, Muslim Afghans.

6.2 Policy Recommendations

Ukrainians should receive assistance, protection, and support from the Western world to the extent they are in 2022, but the support cannot end with Ukrainians. Every asylum seeker should receive that same standard of care regardless of nationality. Migrants are benefits, not burdens, as they contribute more in taxes and social contributions than they take in benefits, fill in gaps in the economy in lower-skilled jobs, and overall improve productivity (Dumont & Liebig, 2014). For countries like Iceland, which have a high worker demand, migration keeps the country's economy afloat.

European countries have long argued that they do not have room for more immigrants, but that has been proven wrong by the large influx of Ukrainians they have accepted. The Nordic countries fear those with backgrounds different from their own, often labeling non-European asylum seekers as terrorists, oppressors of women, and abusers of the welfare system. The media can be blamed for a part of the framing, as headlines of violence and a disregard for human life are

associated with asylum seekers. Individuals must understand that asylum seekers are leaving in fear of terrorism, not to create terrorism.

Countries cannot have open borders as the security risk is too high, but citizens should not fear the settlement of asylum seekers. Economic integration should not be the fear but the goal for all new migrants. By treating all asylum seekers with humanity and providing them with the rights to work and education, they can become productive members of society. The containment in camps and the denial of the right to work and receive education hurt the host country's economy. The faster countries allow economic integration, the faster the economy will notice its benefits.

Denmark, Iceland, and Sweden must encourage thorough and efficient processing of asylum applications as well as economic integration opportunities for all. In the long run, allowing widespread economic integration can decrease labor market discrimination. If Danes, Swedes, and Icelanders become familiar with Muslims in their society, the narrative surrounding Islam could shift. If we look for humanity in individuals, hiring discrimination will decrease.

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