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# The immigration debate in the Scandinavian press 1970-2016

An especially complex and multifaced phenomenon, immigration provides major dilemmas and challenges which makes immigration a good test of how modern democracies are able to debate difficult public issues (Gripsrud, 2019). In public deliberation of such issues, not only the quality of arguments but also the range of voices and perspectives are important (Habermas, 1962). In such debates, the liberal press is expected to play a particularly important role as a platform for diverse public debate and encourage the participation of citizens (McNair, 2000). By providing a systematic study of the immigration issue in the Scandinavian press from the birth of modern immigration in the start of the seventies to the recent situation, this chapter provides some insights into how the national public spheres and their press has responded to this test. A common finding in European literature is that migrant groups are under-represented, and coverage of them often negative and conflict-centered, which has been argued to lead to negative attitudes to immigration, stereotypical cognitions of immigrant groups, and affect the political system and relevant policies (Boomgaarden & Vliegthart, 2009; Eberl et al., 2018; Hall, 1978b). Has the role of the press in Scandinavian immigration debate been any different? How has this changed historically, and has the press performed differently in the three countries?

Our first question is *the salience of the immigration issue*. When did immigration become a major issue for debate in Scandinavian newspapers, how has this fluctated with larger migration trends and major events in these five decades, and has its salience been different in the three countries? Our next question is what kind of pictures, to quote Walter Lippman (1922), the Scandinavian press has put in our heads. What *categories of immigrants* have been in the focus in these debates, and *what kind of themes and framings have dominated?* Has the press output e.g. been more focused on the plight of the immigrants or the problems for the host countries and their native population? What kinds of negative and positive consequences of immigration have been emphasised? There are good reasons to think that the press' handling of this issue could be different in Scandinavia. Mass immigration started late here. Immigrants came to relatively affluent and egalitarian welfare states, with relatively small political cleavages, and the countries immigration policies have been less restrictive than in many other European countries (chapter X, Hagelund). We also know that anti-immigration sentiment has been relatively low here (chapter X, Hovden and Mjelde). Furthermore, the three countries have relatively similar and distinct media systems (Brüggemann et al., 2014). Historically regulated by a welfare logic of quality news as a welfare good which should be readily available to the entire population (Syvertsen et al., 2014), the three countries are all characterized by high newspaper circulation, a historically strong party press that has shifted towards neutrality, large structural press subsidies, and vital public service broadcasters (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). Surely such Scandinavian particularities must be expected to have some bearing both on the public debate and on the press coverage of the immigration issue.

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Another question *regards national differences and differences between the newspapers*. While admittedly quite similar in a European perspective, the Scandinavian countries has somewhat different immigration histories (e.g. immigration started earlier and have been much higher in Sweden), and also immigration policies. Swedes are also generally more positive to immigration than the Danish in opinion polls, and immigrant-critical political parties appeared much later in Sweden (Mjelde & Hovden 2019). There are also differences in their press structure. Sweden has more than seventy dailies and another eighty non-daily newspapers, and Norway, the smallest of the three countries, has almost eighty daily and hundred and thirty-five non-daily newspapers. Denmark, in contrast, has just thirty newspapers, all but one dailies. Denmark is also arguably the media system who, through increasing commercialization, have shifted most from a Democratic Corporatist towards the Liberal model (Nord, 2008; Ohlsson, 2015) Allern et. al, 2021. Adding the impact of major national events - e.g. the Mohammed cartoons published in Denmark in 2005, there are many reasons to expect press coverage of the immigration issue to differ in the three countries. Here, several Scandinavian studies (e.g. Madsen 2004; Eide et al., 2008; ) seem to suggest that the issue in Danish press is generally being more negatively framed than the Swedish press, and the Norwegian press somewhere in the middle. Is this also the case in our data? The press, however, is not an apparatus, but a field of struggles and differences (Bourdieu, 1998). Media outlets have varying ownership, journalists, audiences, and political and editorial profiles. Left-leaning and intellectual newspapers and broadsheets are, for example, in many European countries found to provide more humanitarian and less populist accounts of migrants than right-leaning and tabloid newspapers (Benson, 2013; Chouliaraki et al., 2017; Masini et al., 2017). In addition, routines, beats and genres<sup>i</sup> have their own additional bearings on the shape of the news (Reese, 2001). For such reasons, we will also pay attention to differences between the national newspapers: Do they largely follow the national trends, and do they bring different perspectives on the issue?

A more overarching question is here the presence of *discursive shifts*. Has coverage of the immigration issue through its history been concerned with largely the same themes and framings, just repeated by each new wave of immigrants, or can we identify major developments? Three reasons suggest that we should expect the latter to be the case. The first is that the phenomena itself is clearly not the same today as it was in the seventies. The lone male work immigrants in the early 1970s, often from Southern Europe, has been supplemented (and largely replaced) with whole families of immigrants, usually with refugee backgrounds, with a wide variety of ethnicities and religions. Also, second- and third-generation immigrants, and the return of work immigrants, especially after the EU expansion in 2004, have complicated the picture. The second reason is the routinisation of the handling of immigration. When the first large numbers of work immigrants arrived in Oslo in the summer of 1971, there was no immigrant policies in place. Over time the handling of the issue has been intensely debated and codified in laws, regulations and institutions, both nationally and internationally. Partly for such reasons, themes which were very important before (e.g. immigrant workers' rights) have largely faded from public debate. The third reason is changes in the press itself. In the semicentury of our study, the Scandinavian media systems have changed dramatically. The state monopoly on broadcasting in the seventies has gradually been supplemented with a large commercial media sector, and foreign media now have a stronger presence. The party press has largely been replaced with a neutral press, and following the digital revolution in the commercialization of communication, the Scandinavian press also has experienced more concentration in ownership, significant financial problems due to loss of advertising, leading to editorial cuts and staff reduction. Politicians have also through social media significantly increased their options to get public attention without journalists as gatekeepers. The effect of the last change has been demonstrated in the many instances where posts on immigration issues in social media by Scandinavian politicians have occupied political debate and the news agenda for weeks. The combined effect of the changes in the news institutions for the coverage of immigration debate are harder to guess. While there exist no systematic comparison of the three countries for this whole period, many studies (e.g., Eide et al., 2020; Eide & Simonsen, 2007; Figenschou & Beyer, 2014; Gripsrud, 2018; Hagelund, 2003; Horsti, 2008; Madsen, 2004; Tøgeby & Gaasholt, 1995; Yilmaz,

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2016; Strömbäck, Andersson & Nedlund, 2017) do indicate some shift in the immigration debate from a more worker- and rights-oriented debate towards a stronger concern with the cultural consequences and the sustainability of the welfare state. An important question here then is if such a shift can be seen also in our data, and if so, if this shift appears with the same strength and at the same time in the three countries. A final question regards *the press' democratic role as a platform for diverse public debate and the participation of citizens* on this complicated issue. Have the press in Scandinavia given ordinary people a voice in the debate sections, or has it been a more exclusive forum for newspapers' own columnists, the experts and political elites (cf. Figenschou & Beyer, 2014)? And to what degree has the regular news coverage, debate columns and the letters of the editor contributed with different perspectives through their themes and framings - and has this varied in the three countries?

In this report, the majority of attention will be given to the *SCANPUB press coverage of immigration in Scandinavia 1970-2016 study*, a representative content analysis of yearly coverage in seven newspapers for almost fifty years. We will first, however, look briefly at another study, the *LSE Media and Migration project*, a case study of the European newspapers coverage of the Syrian "refugee crisis" in a few crucial months of 2015, which provides us with a unique view of how the Scandinavian press handled the complex subject and dilemmas of immigration in a larger European perspective.

## A shared moment

While immigration is, by definition, an event that crosses national borders, immigration discourse in the Scandinavian news - and this is probably true in most countries - has a dominantly national character, being concerned with national events, institutions and agents. No doubt this has much to do with both the central role of national governments in handling this challenge inside its jurisdictional borders, and the nation- and language-specific character of its press. While the circulation of themes are, as we will return to later, often informed by and concerned with debates and events in other countries, countries' debates are usually somewhat *out of sync with* each other, with some debates starting later (or not at all) in some countries, a specific group or theme can be very important in one country but not the others, etc. This is not so surprising, given the many national differences in the immigration phenomena as discussed earlier (the volume of immigration, the characteristics of the immigrants, the role of national events, the different rhythms of the national elections etc.). Sometimes, however, immigration affects countries more or less simultaneously and in similar ways. Such historical events can shift us into a common time (Bourdieu 1988) and lead to a more synchronized debate across (and also inside) nations. A type of natural experiments, they offer a case for national comparison of what themes and framing dominate in the press and, through this, if more indirectly, how the national public spheres reacted to the same events. For the immigration issue, the "refugee crisis" of 2015 offered just such a moment.

Triggered by a full-blown civil war, in which the atrocities committed by the Assad regime and the savagery of the neighboring, self-pronounced Islamic State combined to produce the largest international refugee streams since the Second World War, the Syrian migration crisis presented the European community with large humanitarian, logistical, financial and security challenges. The events of 2015 were marked by a series of extraordinary events which came to public attention and demanded a political response. The April coverage followed a dramatic increase in Mediterranean migrant drownings since the beginning of the year, compared to the same period in 2014, including the massive April 18 accident, in which up to 700 migrants drowned off the coast of Libya as they were trying to cross to Europe. The September coverage similarly followed a period in which refugees continued to reach EU borders in record numbers, including a high of 107,500 in July (BBC, 2015). The September 2 drowning of the three-year-old Syrian boy Alan Kurdi made global headlines, upon which German chancellor Angela Merkel said she would not set an upper limit on the number of refugees Germany would receive. The November coverage followed the series of terrorist attacks in

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Paris on November 13, killing 130 civilians. The fact that some of the terrorists had entered Europe in the flow of migrants contributed to much focus on security measures and border control.

In Scandinavia, the Syria crisis and the drownings in April were an important part of the daily news, but the local effects of the crisis were then still minor. This changed in September when Syrian refugees started arriving in greater numbers. One notable incident was the September 9 stopping by Danish police of a train with a few hundred Syrian migrants on their way to Sweden and Norway from Germany, which ended with some of the Syrians refusing to leave the train and others roaming the streets chaotically. A number of Scandinavian newspapers later featured photos of Syrian refugees trying to walk across the country to reach Sweden and Syrian refugees crossing into Norway from Russia on bicycles to circumvent a law that prohibited border crossing on foot. For many Scandinavians, the images of such scenes not seen since World War II were shocking reminders of the gravity of the crisis, and the first time its effects were felt on a large scale in Scandinavia, leading to large demonstrations and intense public debate.

### **Text box 1: The LSE Media and Migration study**

The purpose of the LSE M&M project (Chouliaraki et al., 2017) was to sample and gauge news press coverage of the Syrian migration crisis in 2015 for three time periods assumed to be particularly formative for the thematization and framing of news coverage: A period in July following three months of intense coverage of the refugee crisis, including the mass drownings in the Mediterranean Sea in April and May; the death of Syrian toddler Alan Kurdi (September); and the Paris attacks (November). M&M collected 20 articles from each newspaper for ten weekdays following the initial events in each of the three periods, in total 60 for the entire period and 120 for each country, based on five criteria: first-page placement, non-editorial, weekday publication, relevance to the refugee crisis, and length. The codebook covered both texts and photographs, focusing on mentions of reasons for the refugee arrivals, frames, who speaks (i. e., mentions and quotes), who receives attention (policies/measures to aid the refugees or protect Europe/host countries), terminology, and the use of emotional language. In total, twenty European newspapers from nine regions (the Czech Republic, European Arabic-language media, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Serbia, UK and Ireland), emphasizing quality press but also adding left- and right-leaning newspapers, resulting in a sample of 1200 articles.

To this sample, SCANPUB added six Scandinavian newspapers (N=474) using the same codebook and sample guidelines of newspapers, articles, and periods (with a difference that the May/April period was substituted by July): The broadsheets *Aftenposten* (N), *Dagens Nyheter* (S), and *Jyllandsposten* (D), and the tabloids *VG* (N), *Aftonbladet* (S), and *Ekstra Bladet* (D). Three daily national newspapers were added to provide a broader thematic and political range: The financial newspaper *Dagens Næringsliv*, the strongly leftist – formerly Maoist – newspaper *Klassekampen* (both Norwegian), and *Politiken*, a Danish broadsheet newspaper with social-liberal leanings. The total dataset included 1674 articles. For more details, see Chouliaraki et al., (2017), Hovden et al. (2018) and Hovden & Zaborowski (2019).

The *LSE Media and Migration project* (text box 1) tracked the mediation of these events of 2015 in twenty European newspapers. It found that the European press tended to treat the refugees either as vulnerable or dangerous outsiders, and that "[p]ress coverage that promoted hate speech and hostility towards migrants and refugees was systematic and persistent in a proportion of the press", particularly, but not exclusively, in some of the Eastern European press. Moreover, the humanitarian perspective became much less prominent over time, as security concerns and fear largely replaced the focus on human suffering. Refugees were more talked about than heard themselves, typically "[r]epresented in images as silent actors and victims", and female voices were hardly heard at all. The backgrounds of the refugees and the context of their plight received scant coverage (Chouliaraki et al., 2017). How did the Scandinavian press compare to this? Adding six Scandinavian newspapers and reanalyzing the combined dataset resulted in the map in Figure 1. Taking into consideration forty-six

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Figure 1: The European space of newspaper articles covering the “refugee crisis” of 2015 (Hovden & Zaborowski, 2019)



The first divide (the vertical in the figure) oppose discourses of *humanitarianism* to discourses of *securitization*, opposing Europe's responsibilities towards the refugees to the government's responsibilities to protect their people. The first type of texts (in the lower part of the map) focuses on the plight of the refugees, the large scale of the tragedies ("Shocking images of drowned Syrian boy show tragic plight of refugees", The Guardian 4.9), and the moral imperative to help and discuss practical measures to help and protect the immigrants. Volunteers, NGOs, and immigrants are themselves often parts of the stories as sources, and present in the photographs. The second type of texts (in the upper part), instead focuses on security measures ("Refugees will be vetted", Telegraph 16.11), the need to "restore control" (e.g., keeping the borders closed and well-manned), the possibility of terrorists posing as refugees, and sources from the military and police are common. The humanitarian stories were more common in the earlier part of the year (the time of the mass drownings). After the Paris attacks, the second type of story becomes more prevalent. The second divide (the horizontal in the map) separates stories about *big politics* from specific *events*. In the first stories, governmental and transnational political agents are central sources, and economics, asylum politics, and geopolitics are common themes.

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Table 1. Mentioning of negative and positive consequences of migration of Syria refugees in the European press in 2015.

	NEGATIVE				POSITIVE			
	Economic	Geopolitical	Cultural	Moral	Economic	Geopolitical	Cultural	Moral
Sweden	14%	8%	8%	3%	2%	1%	1%	46%
Denmark	25%	18%	11%	5%	6%	5%	4%	32%
Norway	18%	21%	14%	10%	6%	3%	1%	29%
Ireland	20%	27%	12%	6%	2%	0%	1%	40%
Greece	22%	13%	21%	12%	10%	0%	10%	46%
Germany	37%	12%	21%	7%	9%	1%	4%	33%
Czech Republic	9%	34%	23%	18%	4%	0%	4%	18%
UK	29%	30%	27%	12%	6%	5%	5%	35%
France	34%	47%	22%	14%	1%	1%	1%	26%
Hungary	33%	40%	26%	23%	2%	2%	6%	21%

Margins, controlled for month and newspaper genre.

While the coverage of the migration crisis in the Scandinavian newspapers generally follows the same events and themes as the rest of the European press, the Scandinavian press offers a somewhat different framing of the crisis. Together with Greece, which received most refugees traveling by boat and experienced their sufferings directly, the Scandinavian press offered the most humanitarian-focused narratives and least often mentioned negative consequences of their arrival (Table 1). Compared to Sweden and Norway, Danish newspapers were more likely to mention negative consequences and protective measures and less likely to discuss positive consequences or measures to help the refugees. Swedish newspapers more often discussed positive consequences than Norwegian and Danish ones, but Norwegian papers were less likely than both to mention negative economic consequences. The "crisis" thus appeared slightly different in the media coverage in the three countries: In Denmark as a combination of economic, cultural, and security problems, in Norway less often as an economic problem, and in Sweden less often as a problem overall, with an emphasis on the moral imperative to help. Norwegian newspapers were less likely than both Swedish and Danish papers to discuss protective measures. Were these differences in press coverage in 2015 just an effect of the Syria case's different impact on the three societies, or does it express more persistent national differences in the the three countries' presses' handling of the immigration issue? To answer such questions, we need to look at longer historical patterns of press coverage in Scandinavia.

## From wanderers to strangers

The *SCANPUB press coverage of immigration in Scandinavia 1970-2016* study (text box 2) cover six newspapers and includes more than two and a half thousand regular news articles, six hundred columns and a thousand letters to the editor (N=4419). The study prioritizes the most read and agenda-setting national newspapers in the period, one broadsheet and one tabloid in each country, following expectations that the newspapers' market base and traditional audiences would affect its priorities and style, including the broadsheets *Aftenposten* (N), *Dagens Nyheter* (S), and *Jyllandsposten* (D) and the tabloids *VG* (N), *Aftonbladet* (S), and *Ekstra Bladet* (D). These six newspapers were sampled every year for the SCANPUB study (1970-2016). In addition, a seventh newspaper, *Politiken* (D) was added as a supplementary and possibly contrasting case in Denmark, sampled only for each fifth year (N=99). While these newspapers were chosen to suggest major historical trends and national differences, it should be noted that the very idea of a "representative" national sample of newspapers is somewhat problematic. The organic character of the public sphere means that newspapers usually cater to somewhat different groups, with different political leanings and themes of interest. This problem however, is likely lower in a study of Scandinavia than it would be in many other European countries. The three countries are small, homogenous and relatively egalitarian societies, with small

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political cleavages, and their political systems favour consensus politics by a representative distribution of power (Heidar et al., 2013). Their press is also little politically differentiated, mostly dominated by largely neutral omnibus newspapers, and with small differences between tabloids and broadsheets (Eide, 1997). While the included newspapers clearly represent seven *distinct* cases (Table 2), the above factors, together with the persistent national differences and marked historical shifts found in the material makes us believe that our sample of newspapers provides a valid - if perhaps slightly magnified<sup>iii</sup> view - of the press debate on immigration in Scandinavia.<sup>iv</sup>

### **Text box 2: The SCANPUB content study of press coverage of immigration in Scandinavia 1970-2016**

For any researcher concerned with making systematic and reproducible inferences from texts, a comparative and historical content study of the immigration debate in the Scandinavian press over fifty years is an immensely challenging prospect. Aside from the sampling of newspapers, the main challenge is the relevance and comparability of the texts chosen for analysis. The immigration issue is constantly changing, not least due to the shifting patterns and forms of immigration. The discourse on immigration is also always deeply embedded in a wide range of older and neighboring discourses and themes: the treatments of Jews, the Sami, and the Rom people, national cultures and identity, racism, nationalism, changing neighborhoods, crime, poverty, changing social, moral and cultural trends, religion, populism, foreign aid, workers' rights, the future of the welfare state, and so forth. Isolating the research object of immigration debate fully from these neighboring discourses is neither possible nor desirable. Some restrictions to the material, however, have been made to focus the analysis. These included a limitation of articles to modern (post-war) immigration and immigrants relevant to the Scandinavian countries (excluding, e.g., debates on the situation of the Sami people and debate of racism and segregation in the USA and South Africa). Also, it was not enough that immigrants were represented in the article, but the articles had to be related to a larger discourse on immigration (excluding, e.g., most sports-related articles). The corpus and analysis is thus not primarily concerned with how immigrants and «others» have been *represented*, but how modern immigration in Scandinavia as *an issue for debate* has appeared in the press. Also, articles below 200 words and letters to the editor below 50 words were dropped.

To create a representative sample of articles from each year, constructed-week sampling was used, starting with the first Monday of the year and selecting every subsequent 15th day, excluding Sundays; in total, four constructed weeks, equalling 24 days per year. This way, the articles were systematically spread over weekdays and months in 6768 issues. Of the relevant articles identified, every second one was coded (N=4419). To these more general methodological challenges (where we have not even talked about the challenges of studying three different nations), we must add the incomplete state of newspapers' digital archives. For a consistent methodology, the research assistants had to read the full newspapers – in whatever available form (physical, digital, microfilm) – when selecting relevant articles while following broad guidelines. Mechanic approaches to the problem of selecting relevant texts – e.g., using the presence of specific words – on a complex issue like immigration appeared to us to require a much too great sacrifice of validity for a dubious return of reliability. The final codebook included over 80 variables, whereby many categories were based on impressions from initial readings of the collected texts. For further methodological details on the research design and data collection, see Hovden & Mjelde (2019a). The general trends are discussed in more detail in Hovden & Mjelde (2019b), and the main MCA and cluster analysis is discussed further in Hovden (2020). A specific discussion of letters to the editor can be found in Hovden & Mjelde (forthcoming), and the presence of populism in the press is the subject for Mjelde & Hovden (2019).

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Table 2. The Scandinavian newspapers in the SCANPUB content study.

Newspaper	Country	Format	Political Affiliation	Ownership (main)	Est.	SCANPUB 1970-2016 (N)
<b>Jyllandsposten</b>	Denmark	Broadsheet	Liberal conservative	Jyllands-Postens Fond	1871	<b>818</b>
<b>Ekstra Bladet</b>	Denmark	Tabloid	Trad. Centre-Left	Politiken Fonden	1904	<b>589</b>
<b>Aftenposten</b>	Norway	Broadsheet	Liberal conservative	Schibsted	1860	<b>667</b>
<b>VG</b>	Norway	Tabloid	Trad. Centre-Left	Schibsted	1945	<b>667</b>
<b>Dagens Nyheter</b>	Sweden	Broadsheet	Liberal	Bonnier AB	1864	<b>864</b>
<b>Aftonbladet</b>	Sweden	Tabloid	Social Democrat	Schibsted	1830	<b>715</b>
<b>Politiken</b>	Denmark	Broadsheet	Socialist liberal	Politiken Fonden	1884	<b>*99</b>

## The rise of the immigration issue

Figure 2<sup>v</sup> shows that the newspaper coverage of the immigration issue rose markedly from the mid-eighties, but peaked earlier and at a higher level in Sweden and Denmark<sup>vi</sup>. Here the major spikes appear to follow the international events which have led to major streams of refugees and work immigrants to the Scandinavian countries (Figure 3), such as dissidents from Eastern Europe in the 1970s, refugees from the Vietnam War (1955-75), the political revolutions in Chile (1973), Iran (1979) and Turkey (1980), the Yugoslav wars (1991-2001), and the Syrian Civil War (2011-). Another important event was the inclusion of the Scandinavian countries in the EU's common labor market from 1994, which led to a rise of work immigrants (and with the eastward expansion of EU in 2004, a marked rise of workers coming from eastern Europe). The nature of these groups matters. The early work immigrants were, for example, perceived as temporary residents. Later the communities had to face that most immigrants were here to stay, a transition from wanderers to strangers (Simmel, 1950), which meant that integration into the social group became a more pressing issue. In similar ways, the changes from the dominance of work immigrants to asylum seekers (a trend later somewhat reversed) and entrances of new ethnic groups brought new challenges, themes, and responses, and the same goes for changes in the resident immigrant population. E.g., the increase of second and third immigration migrants, the rise of many prominent public figures with immigration backgrounds, and health-related challenges of the aging immigrant population are just some examples.

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Figure 2: Number of press articles on immigration for the six newspapers. Total and numbers for each country.

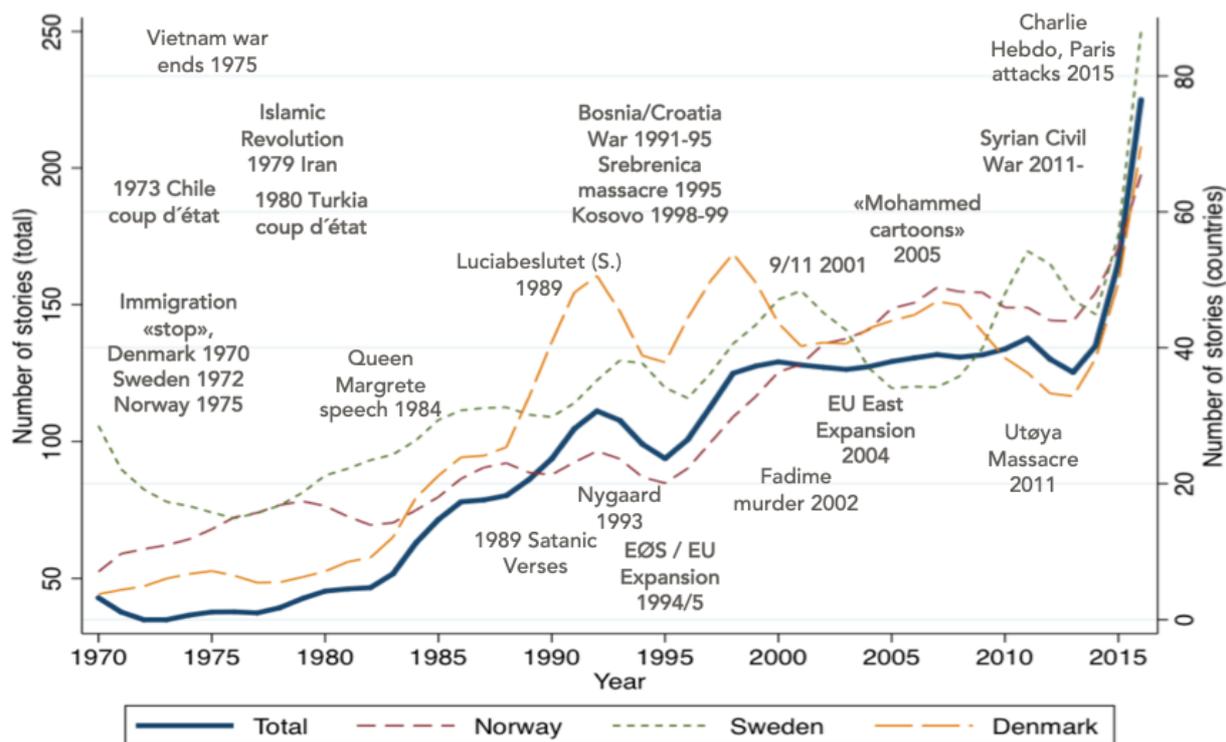
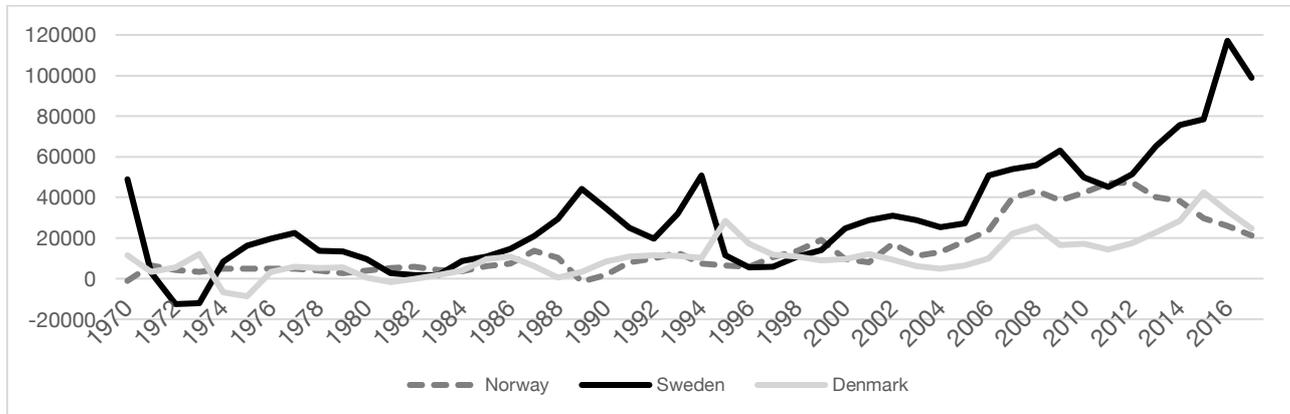


Figure 3. Net immigration in the three countries, 1970-2017



The volume of the immigration debate, however, is clearly not driven only by migratory patterns. Many other events and issues became public controversies, often being linked to Islam or immigrants' culture, like various attacks by militant Islamic groups (e.g., the shooting of the Norwegian publisher of *Satanic Verses* in 1989, 9/11, the assassination attempt, and protests following the publishing of caricatures of Mohammed in Denmark in 2005, the Paris attacks in 2015), crime (one of the most debated being the murder of Fadime Şahindal in Sweden in 2002), debates about the use of religious symbols and social customs (e.g. the use of veils, and serving of alcohol and pork by public institutions) and so forth. But there are also examples of entirely different and unique events which spurred debate, like the Queen of Denmark's criticism of her people's treatment of immigrants in her new year's speech in 1984. In our broad account, many such details will be lost in establishing the more general patterns of this discourse.

## From workers to muslims?

Who were the immigrants debated in the Scandinavian press? Here one must first note that such debate has often been *by proxy*: One in five<sup>viii</sup> articles in Sweden and Norway (but fewer in Denmark) mainly concern immigrants located outside the nation. While many of these articles treat the large movements of refugees in mainland Europe with uncertain destinations (which may or may not be Scandinavia), many also engage with national immigration debates elsewhere, with Germany, France, and the UK as the most important countries of reference, together with other Scandinavian countries. The latter is particularly common in the 1970s in Norway, which then had much fewer non-European immigrants than Denmark and Sweden, and who eagerly observed the debates of challenges which many, no doubt, soon expected to be their own.

As noted initially, immigration debate in the press is clearly strongly influenced by the specific groups arriving and the general composition of the immigrant population (Figure 4 and 5), but there is no direct link between their number and their salience. The volume of the debate largely follows the arrival of large and new groups of immigrants, where initially dominant groups in the discourse over time fade away (e.g. Ex-Yugoslavians) in spite of still being sizable immigrant groups, and new groups, like the Somalis and later the Syrians, enter the public focus. Articles in the 1970s were usually about "foreign workers", but following the moratorium on work immigration in the 1970s and the surge in refugee arrivals in Western Europe in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the foci of the debates shifted to discussions about "refugees" and "asylum seekers", and more generally "immigrants". While references to specific identities outnumber all other categories, this share has been steadily declining from two-thirds in the 1970s to about half after 2000, likely reflecting the increasing heterogeneity of the immigrant populations. In the Scandinavian press, the dominant picture of the immigrant in the debates has been—and very much still is—a young male. While the imbalance has decreased over the years, articles in the press in the 2010s were still twice as likely to refer to a male than a female immigrant.

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Figure 4. Most mentioned countries of origin in the Scandinavian press, weighted by country.

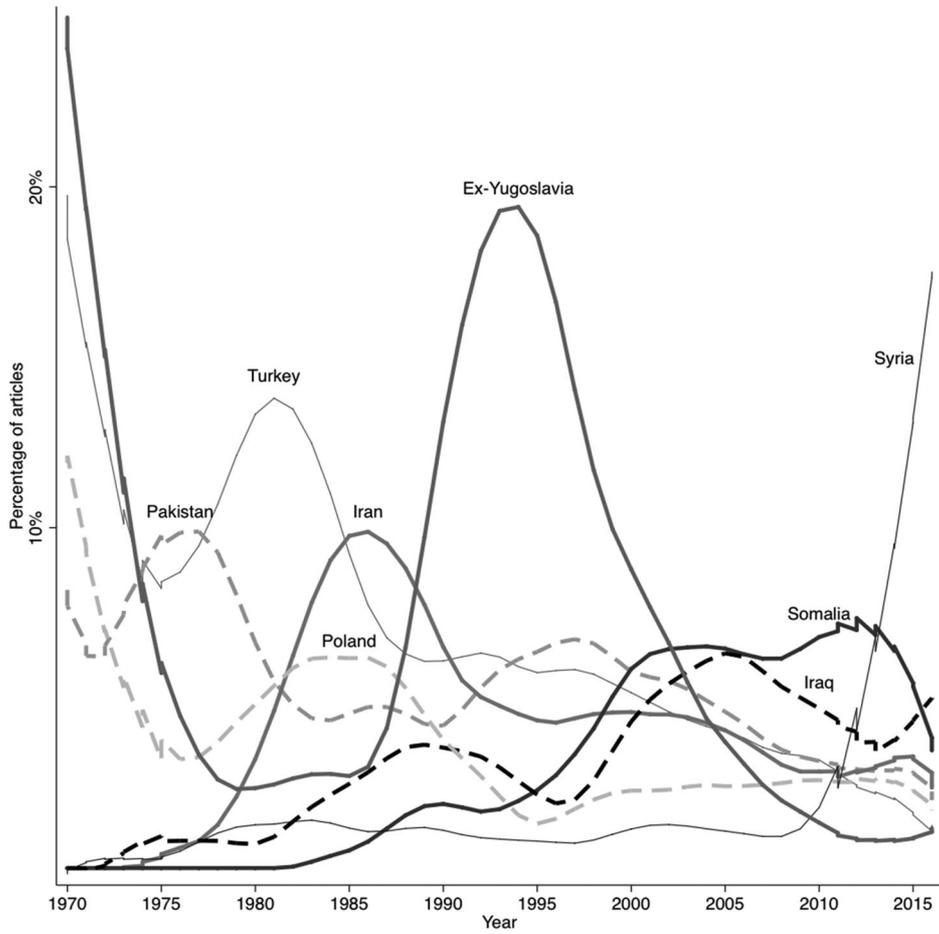


Figure 5. Categorizations of the immigrants in the Scandinavian press, weighted by country.

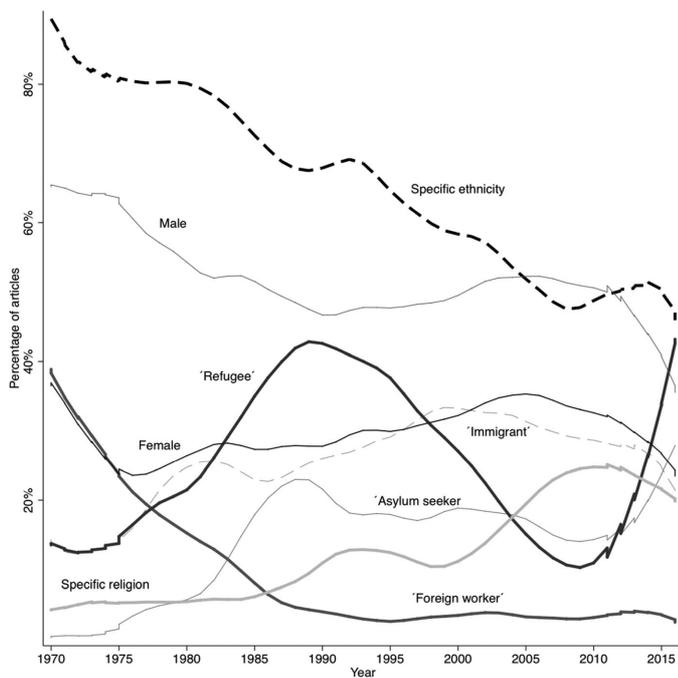
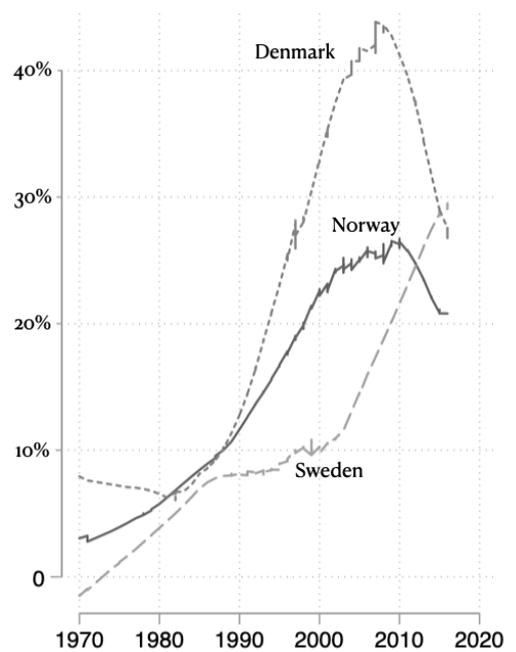


Figure 6. Mentions of "Islam" in newspapers in the three countries.



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Also notable is the rise of specific religious identities (Figure 6), with Islam being the only one to receive some mention. Around 15 percent of all articles in each country on average mention Islam, and there has been a sharp rise in such mentions since the 1990s in all three countries. After 2010, a quarter of all Norwegian and Danish items and one in five Swedish articles explicitly mention Islam. While this appears to somewhat support the claim that the immigration issue in Scandinavian debate has changed from a debate about workers to a debate about Islam (Yilmaz, 2016), this trend appears earlier in Denmark and Norway, and with more force in the Danish press. In Sweden, Islam appears not to have become a central theme until a decade later.

## Themes and voices

Many themes are more or less constant in the Scandinavian discourses on immigration. The arrival and return of immigrants, cultural traditions, social issues, and crime related to immigrants are examples of this; they appear just as often in the press coverage in the 2010s as they did in the 1980s. However, the prominence of some issues has changed (Figure 7 and 8). Workplace participation and work conditions, for example, became a much less common issue in all three countries after the 1970s. For several subjects there are marked national differences. Integration policy is mentioned in nearly half of all Danish articles, but only a third of the Swedish, and in less than one in five Norwegian articles. Likewise, whereas articles related to immigrants' use of welfare services are found in nearly a third of all Danish articles, only one in ten of Norwegian and Swedish ones address this. Immigrants' cultural and social customs is another topic that has received less attention in Norway and Sweden, although as in the case of integration policy, with some increase in recent decades. The handling of immigration by the political system is also a more common theme in Denmark, but also increasingly so in the 2010s in Sweden as well, likely related to the emergence of the anti-immigrant Sweden Democrats as a party to be reckoned with. Racism, on the other hand, more clearly a common subject in Sweden, found in a third of all Swedish articles, but only one of seven Norwegian and Danish ones, and has become less important in all three countries. Multiculturalism (not shown in the figures) is another theme more frequent in Sweden, but this has

The immigration debate in the Scandinavian press also become more prominent in the other two countries over time, as well. Together, this suggests major differences in the way these countries have debated the immigration issue.

Figure 7. Most often mentioned themes in articles in the Scandinavian press, weighted by country.

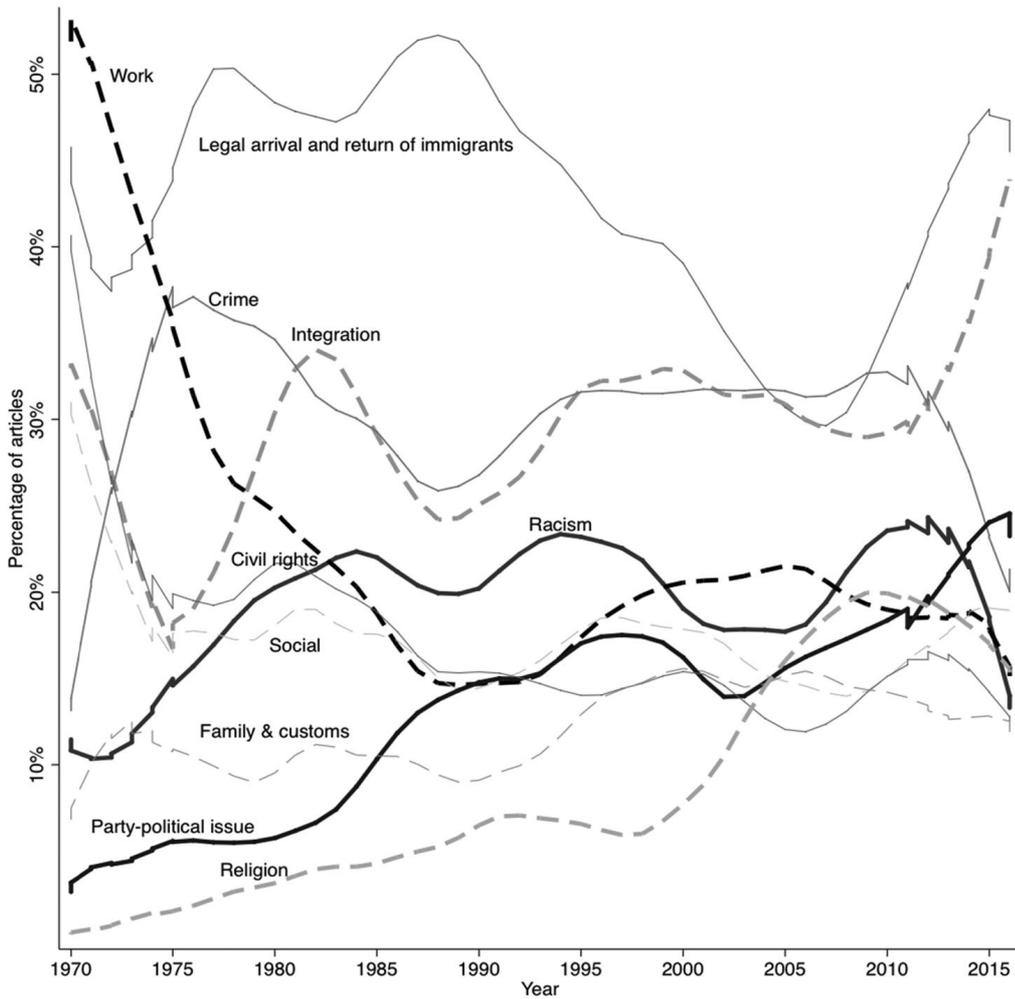
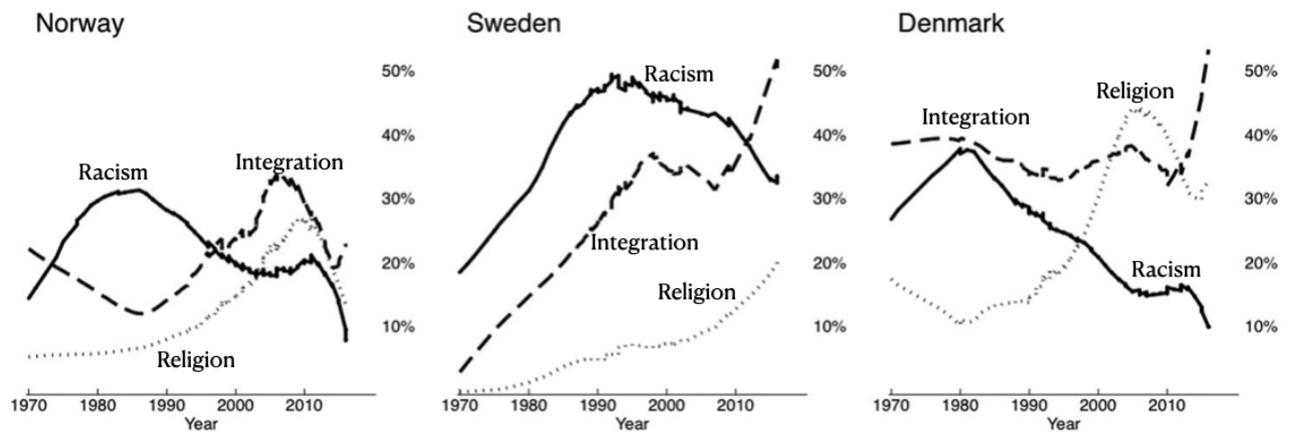


Fig 8. Presence of Racism, Integration and Religion as a theme in the articles, by country.



The voices in the debate have also changed. Most striking is the simultaneous rise of national politicians and the decline of the civil service as sources, supporting arguments about an increasing

### The immigration debate in the Scandinavian press

politicization of the issue, and there is also a increase of expert voices and increasing references to the media commentariat (Figure 9). Again there are interesting national differences. Immigrants are more often quoted than national politicians in Sweden, and politicians are quoted more often than national civil servants (figure 10). In Denmark and Norway these sources have been more equally quoted, although with a clearly increasing focus (in particular in the Danish press) on national politicians. Whereas immigrants have become more cited in Norway, such citations have declined sharply in Denmark.

## The immigration debate in the Scandinavian press

Figure 9. National sources in the Scandinavian press, weighted by country.

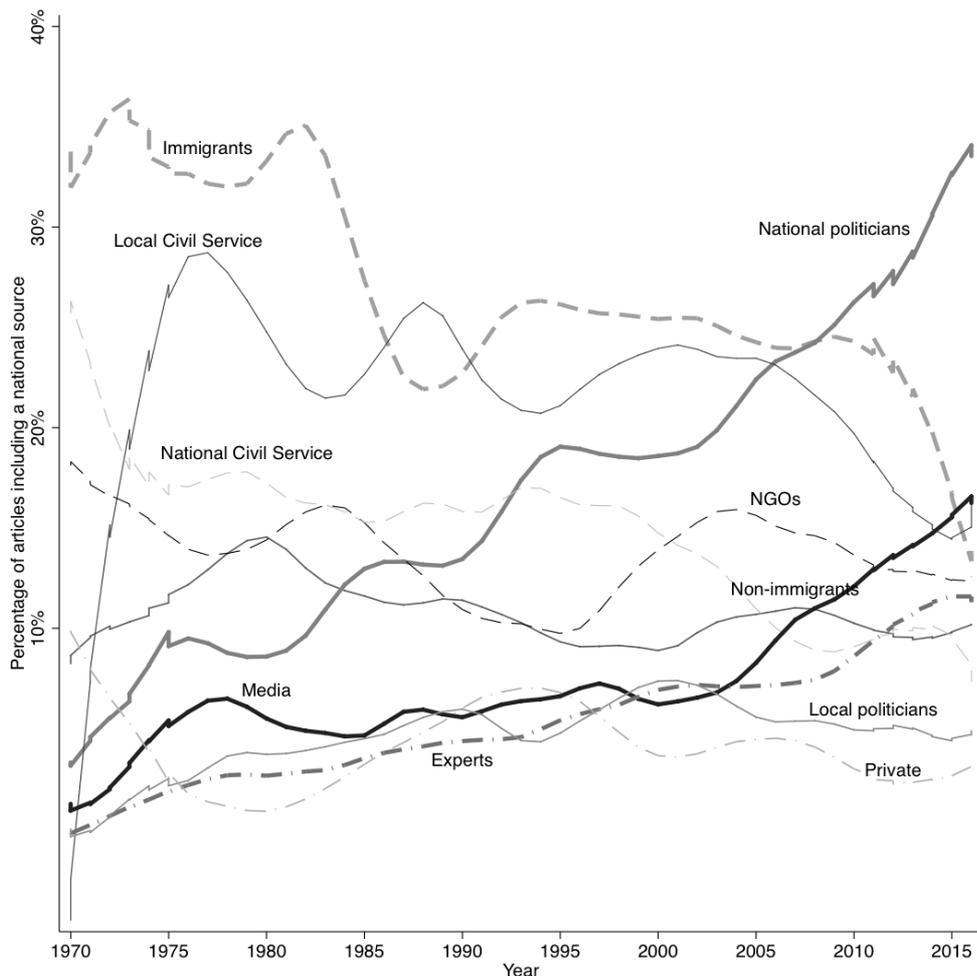
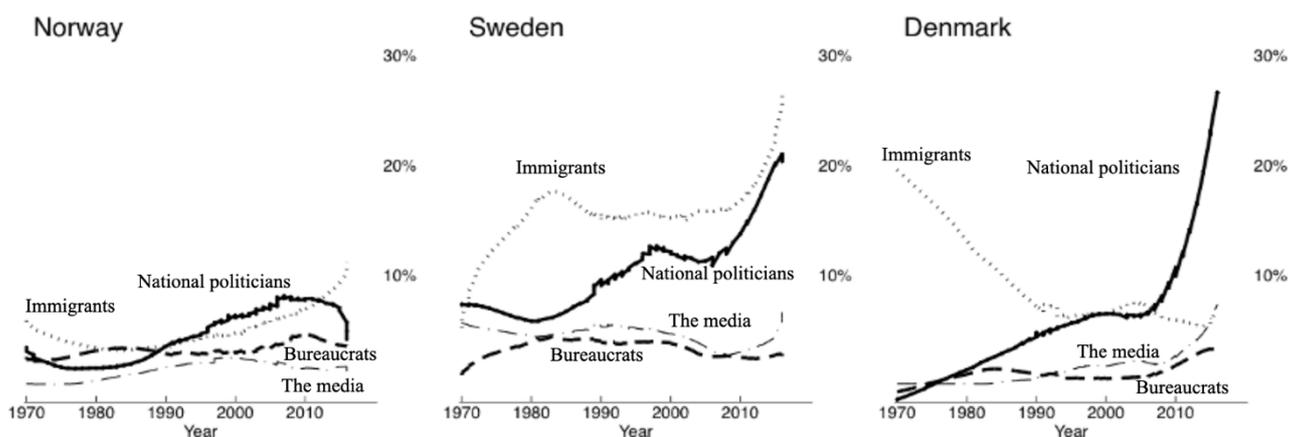


Figure 10. Sources in articles: National politicians, National Civil Servants, Media and Immigrants, by country. Percentages of those mentioning a national source.



## Heroes, victims and threats

Framing, as suggested by Entman (1993), involves emphasizing some aspects of reality in a text and thereby promoting a particular way of thinking about it. Regarding the framing of immigrants in the press, a common distinction is between emphasizing them as victims, heroes, and threats (Benson 2013). While the Scandinavian countries are similar in many respects in their coverage of immigrants,

## The immigration debate in the Scandinavian press

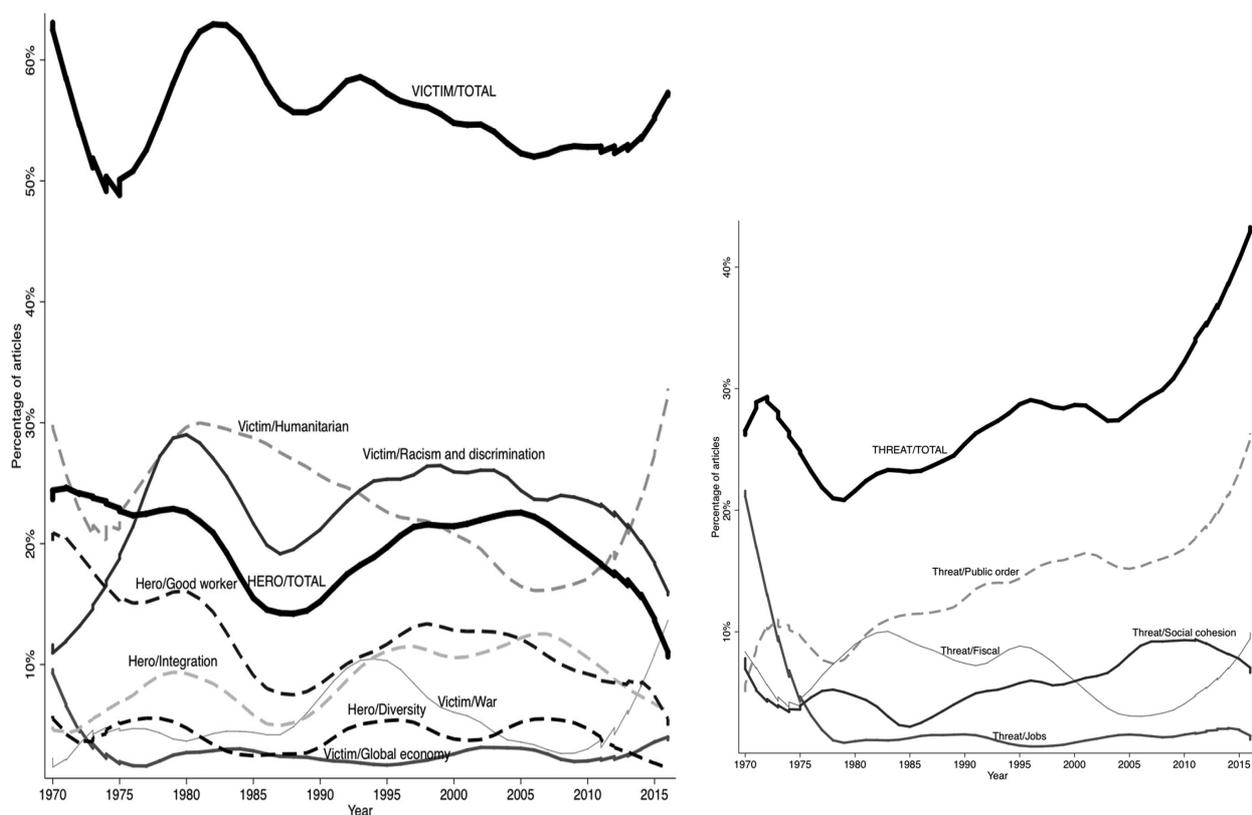
the framing of immigrants in the press varies both over time and with the country. The debate of the immigrant issue in the press generally leans towards sympathetic framings (Figure 11). Swedish newspapers are more likely to frame the issue in this way, Norwegian newspapers somewhat less (Figure 12). Danish newspapers have a much stronger focus on the problematic sides of immigration, especially after 2000.

Fig 12 Hero, victim and threat frames, by country and total (N = 3264).



## The immigration debate in the Scandinavian press

Figure 11 Main frame and subframes in the Scandinavian press, weighted by country.



Framing the immigrants as *victims* has been more common in Sweden in the entire period and remain the dominant frame. Denmark, in contrast, has seen a marked increase in threat-related frames, while victim frames have declined just as markedly. Norway appears more similar to Sweden, with relatively few articles emphasizing the threat frame and has the lowest presence of the victim frame. Victim frames are the most common type of framing in all three countries, but most so in Sweden. This in particular goes for the racism/discrimination subframe, present in a third of all items, but only in a fifth and tenth, respectively, of the Danish and Norwegian articles. Victim frames become more common over time in Sweden, but less common in Denmark, and with no clear trend in Norway. When it comes to the *threat* frames, Denmark is once again an exception. While it is found in one of five Norwegian and Swedish articles, half of all Danish items contain some variant of them. Threat frames also become more frequent in the period. The public order subframe (e.g., immigrants committing crimes) is more common in Denmark, and has increased sharply since the 1990s. The fiscal (e.g., immigrants as a financial burden on the welfare state) and social cohesion (e.g., immigrants undermining national unity) subframes have also become more frequent with time and more common here. *Hero* frames are relatively infrequent in all three countries, with no clear trend.

While the three countries are relatively similar in their press coverage of immigration in the seventies, the analysis suggest they have become more different over time, most visibly in the Danish press' increasing emphasis on the problems of cultural integration and immigrants as a burden on the welfare state, and the decreasing focus on their suffering and troubles as victims of war, discrimination, and racism. The latter two issues have been more prominent in the Norwegian and (especially) Swedish press debate from the nineties and onwards.

## A shifting discursive space



## The immigration debate in the Scandinavian press

threat-oriented frames, where articles to the left more often involve the emphasis of immigrants as good workers, well-integrated and bringing positive diversity, their positive role for cultural life, and often feature the voices of the immigrants themselves. This is opposed to a discourse on the right where immigrants are more often discussed as a problem, often with a focus on religion and immigrants' cultural customs, social cohesion and public order, and the fiscal soundness of the welfare state, more often using politicians as sources. Also, the immigration debate itself is a more common theme in the latter type of discourse.

The differences between the articles appear as a combination of two major differentiating principles, the first one being *time*, which opposes older articles (lower left) from the newer (upper right), which suggests it is meaningful to think of Scandinavian press discourse on immigration as having a shared historical direction. Second, *nation*, where the Danish articles (lower-lower right) are opposed to the Swedish and Norwegian articles (upper-upper left). This supports a familiar tale of the more positive, multicultural Swedish debate and more negative, integration-focused Danish debate, with the Norwegian immigration debate as an intermediate and closer to the Swedish case (Brochmann & Hagelund, 2012). The mapping suggests some quite clear historical shifts in the debate on immigration in the corpus of Scandinavian newspaper texts. First, it supports the idea of a general shift (e.g., Yilmaz, 2016), from a more worker-focused narrative in the 70s and 80s to *a more cultural discourse* during the 90s and 00s, and also *a more reflective discourse*, where the immigration debate itself is more often the theme. Finally, the coverage *increasingly concerns immigrants as a problem for the societies*. At the same time, the analysis again suggests that this shift has been much more dramatic in the Danish press, and starts very early there.

To get a better idea of what kind of stories about the immigration issue that are opposed in this discursive space, we have organized them into six clusters based on statistical similarities (Table 3). The first is 1) *Racism, discrimination, and neglect* (32 %), which is not only the largest but also the most complex group. First, it mixes stories about concrete racism – both organized (e. g., Nazis) and non-organized – towards immigrants with debates about the nature of racism and discrimination, which not only include arguments about people and policies being racist but also by people denying such accusations and arguing against "naive" attitudes and policies. A large number of these stories concern the attitudes of immigrant critics and radical right parties. Second, it includes stories about immigrants (usually refugees) who are neglected and suffering where the government or "we" should – or at least could – help (e.g., a reportage on an Iranian woman who was refused asylum in Norway in 1985, ill and unhappy in Istanbul). Some stories imply institutional and cultural racism (Barker, 1981), for instance, in arguments of systematic marginalization of immigrant youths in schools, and others document suffering without any precise framing or perpetrators. A second major grouping consists of three clusters which emphasize different ways in which immigrants either are outright threats or at least bring trouble as 'others' – to the state, to the public, to each other: In 2) *Troublesome culture, troublesome religion* (11 %), such themes are usually framed as a threat to social cohesion and immigrants' integration but in some cases also in a more neutral light. Related concerns are found in 3) *The limits of the welfare state* (8 %), usually negatively framed and concerned with lack of integration into working life and its consequences for a financially strained welfare state. The final types of such critical stories, 4) *Crime and terror* (18 %), mix stories of major and minor crimes, ranging from acts of terrorism and murders to lesser demeanors. In 5) *Humanitarian victims* (18 %), the focus is instead on refugees fleeing war and persecution, varying from simple reports on the numbers to more general debates on the principles for their admittance, and more case-specific stories of suffering refugees and their families in various stages of transmission and troubles. In the last group, 6) *Heroes* (12 %), immigrants are shown bringing cultural diversity, being well-integrated, good workers, and so forth. Immigrants are overrepresented as quoted sources in these two latter types of stories, and ordinary citizens underrepresented. The cluster analysis suggests that while the coverage of the immigration issue in the press, as many have noted before, is mostly about problems and conflicts (Eberl et al., 2018), the stories emphasizing immigrants as threats are outnumbered by those emphasizing their plights and troubles.

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Table 3: Six clusters of immigration stories, with dominant frames, subclusters, and exemplary headlines (Hovden, 2020).

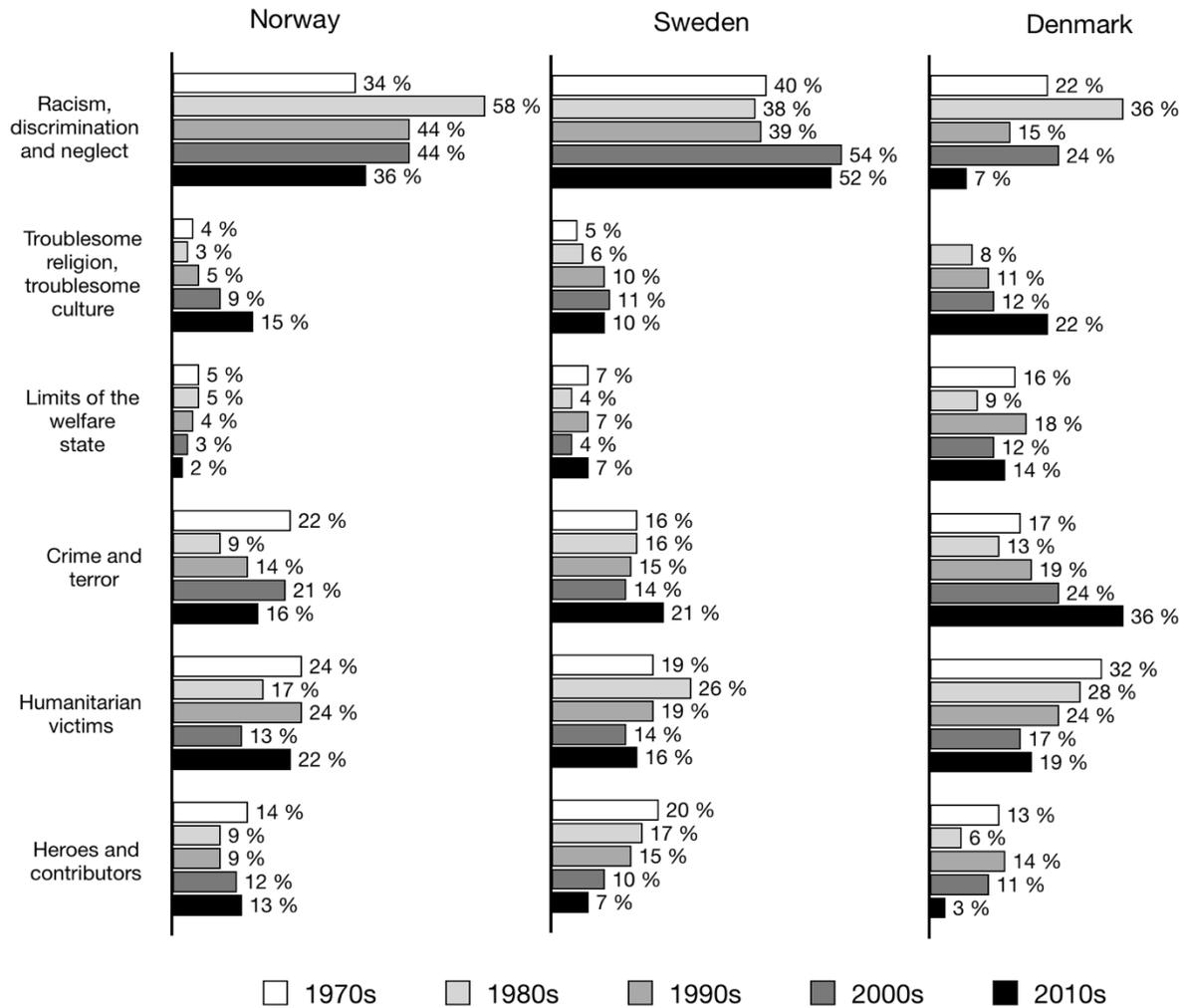
Main clusters	Dominant frames	Subclusters	Exemplary headlines
<b>Racism, discrimination, and neglect (32%)</b>	(Mixed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expert views</li> <li>• Who is a racist?</li> <li>• Suffering immigrants</li> <li>• Politicians and parties</li> <li>• Vox populi</li> </ul>	"Refugee almost starved to death" (AP 1981) "Mahvesh is breaking down" (VG 1985) "Racism or humor?" (AP 2012) "Political Party Racist?" (VG 2015) "The only ones with a heart?" (VG 2015)
<b>Troublesome culture, troublesome religion (11%)</b>	Threat (public order, social cohesion)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culture and religion as a threat to social cohesion</li> <li>• Metadebate</li> </ul>	"Perpetrators are often immigrants" (DN 1989) "Happy boys – veiled girls" (VG 2010) "Too few see the warning signs" (AP 2014) "Institutional care should not be religiously segregated" (AB 2008)
<b>The limits of the welfare state (8%)</b>	Threat (jobs, fiscal)		"150000 work immigrants in Denmark in the coming decade" (EB 1970) "Obligatory visa effectively reduce immigration" (JP 1992) "Ghetto-Denmark" (EB 2000) "Asylum seekers lodgings cost 122 million every month" (VG 2004) "Failed integration" (VG 2012)
<b>Crime and terror (18%)</b>	Threat (public order)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terrorists and murderers</li> <li>• Crimes against women</li> </ul>	"Expel him!" (EB 1992) "Jailed after 15 violent crimes" (AB 1987) "Angry refugee forced SAS-airplane to land" (JP 1987) "Pakistani Murderer appeal to the court" (AP 1978) "Sex crime. Society has failed the women" (DN 2016)
<b>Humanitarian victims (18%)</b>	Victim (humanitarian and war)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Humanitarian victims</li> <li>• Political asylum seekers</li> </ul>	"Vietnam-refugees are not wanted" (PO 1975) "Let my family come!" (AP 1980) "Their fate will be decided today" (PO 1985) "The long wait" (AP 1985) "Protest storm against expelling order" (VG 1988)
<b>Heroes (12%)</b>	Hero (diversity, good worker)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everyday heroes</li> <li>• Cultural heroes</li> </ul>	"He escaped life on the streets" (VG May 1997) "The Hot Cuban in Umeå" (DN Dec 1999) "Peaceful Ghetto life at Tolga" (AP Sep 2006) "Karzan Kader lives the dream" (DN Nov 2012)

Notes: Dominant frames have a statistically significant placement in the cluster. Subclusters are selected from nine- and twelve-cluster solutions. Headlines are taken from the top 20 paragonic articles (placing closest to the center of the cluster). For statistical details, see Hovden (2020).

If we look at the distribution of the six types of stories by country and year (Figure 14), we find many of the same marked national differences as discussed earlier. The Danish newspapers have markedly less focus on racism and discrimination and stories in which immigrants are heroes and contributors and a larger share of problem-oriented stories about immigrants' culture and religion or as a criminal threat, in particular in the later decades, some very probably related to the years of debates and the religiously motivated attacks following the publication of caricatures of Mohammed in Jyllandsposten in 2005. Also prominent is the Danish newspapers' consistent focus on welfare state integration, which suggests again the importance of this issue in Danish political debates over the whole period (Brochmann and Hagelund, 2012). The Swedish and Norwegian press appear much more similar, although the Swedish press appears to write more about racism and related issues in the later decades. There are also important nuances inside the clusters. For instance, immigrants' crimes against women are a much more common theme in the Swedish press than in other countries.<sup>x</sup>

# The immigration debate in the Scandinavian press

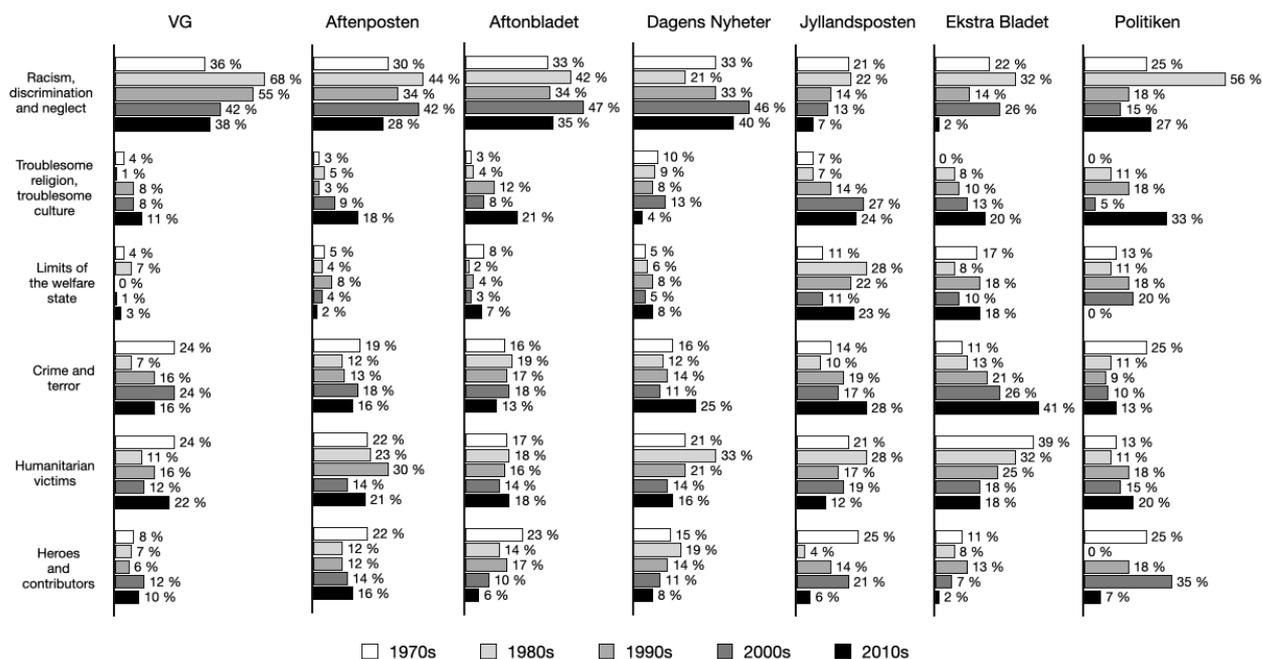
Figure 14. Distribution of six types of immigration stories over time, by country and decade.



Note: Margins, following logistic regression with year and publication as predictors separately for each country.

## The immigration debate in the Scandinavian press

Figure 15. Distribution of six types of immigration stories over time, by newspaper and decade.



Looking at the individual newspapers in this picture (Figure 15), the national context appears generally more important than newspaper format and traditional political leanings for what kind of immigrant issues, sources and frames appear in the press. This can for example be seen in a generally stronger focus on religion and cultural themes in the Danish newspapers. And while the three tabloids (VG, Aftonbladet, Ekstra Bladet) more often than the broadsheets use ordinary people and immigrants as sources (Hovden & Mjelde, 2019b), only minor differences in their themes and framings can be attributed to their format. At the same time, there are important differences between the newspapers which show the importance of a pluralized press for a broad public debate on the issue, most clearly in how the socialist-leaning Politiken is clearly less threat-oriented than the other two, more conservative Danish newspapers<sup>xi</sup>.

## Immigration news, debate and the Vox populi

We noted earlier that the newspaper coverage of the immigration issue has been rising in the whole period, in particular from the mid-eighties and forward. Importantly, this increase in volume is accompanied by a *shifting emphasis from news to debate genres* (Figure 16). While only one in ten articles related to the immigration debate in the 70s and 80s were in the debate genre, this proportion increases gradually to one in three articles in the 2010s. This is compelling evidence that the immigration issue has become an increasingly salient public issue in the Scandinavian public spheres, especially from the nineties and onward. The national differences support arguments that the immigration issue became a heated public issue much earlier in Denmark and Sweden than in Norway, and that this debate has been more intense and polarised in Denmark (cf. Green-Pedersen and Krogstrup, 2008; Brochmann and Hagelund, 2012). The dominance of columns (editorials, regular columns, op-eds) over letters in Sweden is also striking, demonstrating that direct opinions of elite voices have here been given much more room than regular citizens in the public deliberation in the mainstream press.

Here, the role of the letters to the editor in the immigration debate is worth dwelling on. As a forum for public discussion of community concerns by ordinary citizens with high visibility for the general public, the letters sections of newspapers have been argued to be a staple of the public sphere (Habermas, 1962). While the deliberative role of these “transcripts of the town square” (Nader and

### The immigration debate in the Scandinavian press

Gold, 1988: 52-53) is debatable due to questions about their representativeness and the amount of real debate taking place (Wahl-Jorgensen, 1999), studies suggest that both citizens and politicians see them as generally reliable indicators of public opinion (Herbst, 1998). While they cannot be a completely accurate representation of the *vox publica*, then, they might still function as if they are, and an important way citizens' concerns can enter the public deliberation on the immigration issue. In the Scandinavian immigration debate, the volume and content of letters support general findings in literature that their volume tends to follow ongoing debate in the press (Gregory and Hutchins, 2004; Nielsen, 2010), but also shows that this varies considerably in otherwise similar countries on the same issue.

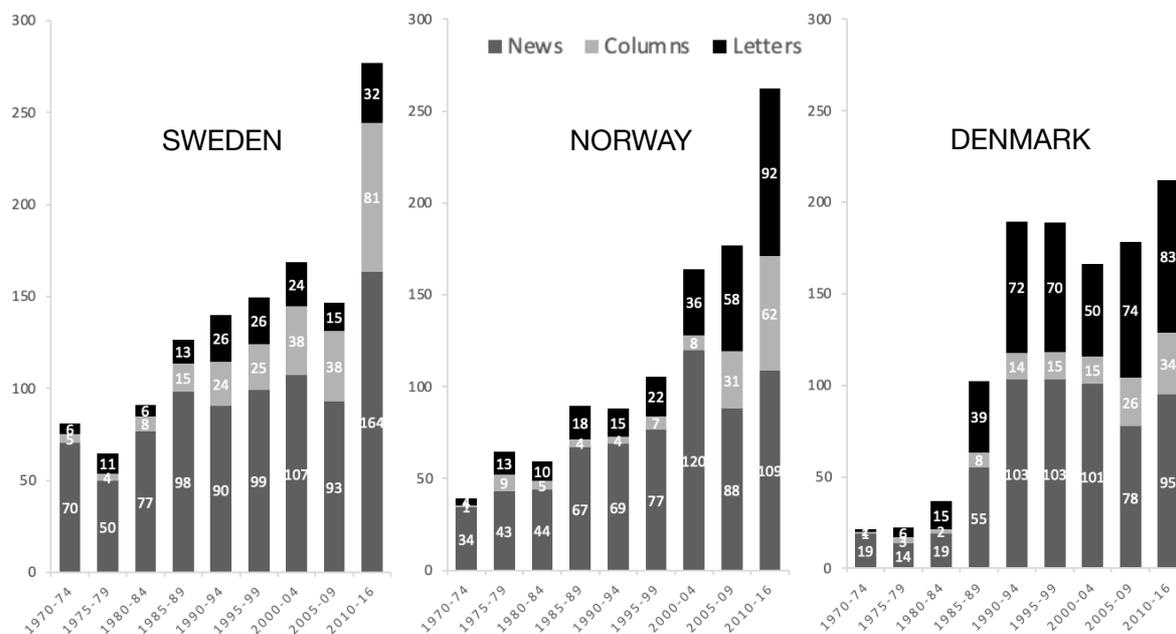


Figure 17. Regular news items, columns (editorials, regular columns and op-eds) and letters to the editor on the immigration issue in six Scandinavian newspapers 1970-2016. Average per newspaper and year, by five-year period (Hovden & Mjælde, 2019b).

Both letters and columns have a more marked historical development than the news articles, where the latter appear to revolve more around the same subjects and frames, which appear to speak to the routine nature of news gathering (Tuchman 1973) versus the more dynamic and shifting nature of public debate. But letters also differ from both news and columns (Table 4). Threat frames are more likely to be found in letters than in columns and news articles, while the opposite is true for victim and hero frames. Sweden is an interesting exception, with generally less difference in framing between the three genre categories.

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Table 4. Differences in framing and subjects in letters, columns and news articles, by country.

	SWEDEN			NORWAY			DENMARK		
	Letter	Column	News	Letters	Column	News	Letters	Column	News
	N=	201	304	1074	342	169	823	522	152
<b>FRAMES</b>									
Victim	<b>69%</b>	80%	69%	<b>31%</b>	*50%	38%	<b>32%</b>	*52%	*52%
Hero	<b>15%</b>	17%	22%	<b>9%</b>	17%	16%	<b>11%</b>	17%	*21%
Threat	<b>23%</b>	22%	21%	<b>28%</b>	*11%	*19%	<b>66%</b>	*49%	*49%
<b>SUBJECTS</b>									
Arrival/return	<b>39%</b>	37%	40%	<b>36%</b>	41%	39%	<b>46%</b>	47%	47%
Integration	<b>32%</b>	37%	27%	<b>23%</b>	36%	*13%	<b>36%</b>	*52%	42%
Racism	<b>41%</b>	53%	*28%	<b>22%</b>	24%	14%	<b>22%</b>	19%	*11%
Crime	<b>24%</b>	22%	*36%	<b>12%</b>	19%	*32%	<b>19%</b>	24%	*30%
Working life	<b>23%</b>	20%	21%	<b>11%</b>	16%	*18%	<b>16%</b>	18%	*22%
Civil rights	<b>17%</b>	18%	16%	<b>8%</b>	11%	8%	<b>13%</b>	25%	21%
Economy	<b>19%</b>	19%	*8%	<b>7%</b>	7%	4%	<b>19%</b>	18%	*11%
Political issue	<b>18%</b>	*31%	12%	<b>14%</b>	15%	11%	<b>20%</b>	27%	17%
Multicult	<b>14%</b>	23%	12%	<b>11%</b>	*27%	*7%	<b>11%</b>	15%	9%
Social welfare	<b>11%</b>	12%	9%	<b>9%</b>	6%	10%	<b>35%</b>	38%	30%
Religion	<b>8%</b>	13%	9%	<b>15%</b>	24%	*7%	<b>28%</b>	*21%	*13%
Cultural customs	<b>9%</b>	8%	12%	<b>10%</b>	14%	12%	<b>16%</b>	19%	16%
Attitudes	<b>18%</b>	20%	*9%	<b>5%</b>	6%	2%	<b>12%</b>	11%	7%

Margins following logistic regression with control for sesquidecade (interaction between country and genre). Statistically significant differences between letters and the other genre categories are marked (\*).

When it comes to subjects, themes like racism, religion and multiculturalism are more common in the debate genres than regular news. Letters, however, are typically less concerned with such themes than columns are, suggesting a divide between popular and elite interest in this part of the immigration discourse. Interestingly, this divide is much smaller in Denmark, perhaps reflecting that such cultural themes earlier became central in Danish mainstream political debate. This divide also varies nationally : in Sweden, columnists are more often concerned than the vox populi with racism, Norwegian columnists more often with multiculturalism and Danish columnists are, unlike their Scandinavian neighbours, less, not more, often concerned with religion than the authors of the letters are. In Norway and Denmark the vox populi are also notably less concerned with integration than the columnists, which might speak to a more persistent popular view of immigrants as permanent "others", and if so, echoes findings of lower educated groups in these countries as much more negative to immigration than higher-educated groups- Columnists are also generally more concerned with politicians' and parties' handling of the immigration issue than both letters and regular news, emphasizing their elite-oriented perspectives on the issue.

## Conclusion

The analysis of the Scandinavian immigration discourse from 1970 to 2016 in the newspapers reveals that the arrival of new groups of immigrants led to a widespread and broad debate in the Scandinavian press about who should be admitted or returned, on what grounds, their rights in the new country, whether or not they should be integrated (in the workforce, in education, in their neighborhoods, culturally, etc.), and if so how, the positive and negative effects of their arrival, and so forth. This debate has never been purely national but always appears as part of a shared Scandinavian and North-European debate, where discussion of issues related to immigration at home has been preceded and informed by discussion of such issues elsewhere. At the same time, the debate in the Scandinavian press appears to be more humanitarian and less threat-focused than in other European

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countries, underlining again the distinctness of the Scandinavian case, and echoing their immigration policies and public opinion on the issue.

Historically, some crucial findings shared by the three countries are the increasing salience of the issue in the whole period, seen in the significantly increased volume of coverage and a shift of coverage from news to debate genres, politicization through the increase of national political voices, and coverage of government and party politics, a decreasing focus on immigrants' rights and increasing focus on the cultural and welfare integration of immigrants from the nineties. How the national presses has handled this issue differs. In Danish newspapers there is an earlier and stronger shift towards discussing problematic sides of the immigration issue, both financial and cultural. Swedish newspapers are clearly less concerned with such matters, and much stronger emphasize the theme of racism and immigrants as humanitarian victims. The Swedish newspapers also appear to have given larger prominence to the journalists, experts and elites voices in the debate, with markedly fewer letters on the immigration issue published, while the reverse is true in Denmark. It is uncertain, however, to what degree this reflects a) more fundamental differences in their public spheres (Swedish public culture has for example been suggested to be generally more elite- and expert-oriented than the other Scandinavian countries, (c.f. Gripsrud, 2019), b) that the Swedish press and elites, more than in other countries, have put a *cordon sanitaire* for negative views on the issue (a critique which has been voiced in the Swedish debate, giving birth to the concept of an "opinon corridor"), or simply that c) there are lesser divides in public opinion and between the political parties on the issue here (see Hovden & Mjelde, forthcoming). Whatever the reason, it underlines the fact that the immigration debate has had a distinctly different character in Denmark and Sweden, with Norway somewhere in the middle, but in most respects closer to the Swedish case.

The rising volume of the immigration debate in newspapers seems to be clearly influenced by the larger immigration patterns following the large displacement of people by wars, unrest, and precariousness, especially when this has coincided with the arrival of new ethnic, social, and religious groups. It also seems to be linked to the issue as an increasingly routinized object for political regulation and debate (c.f. Brochmann and Hagelund 2012), making it a recurring discursive event where the immigrants' arrival appears to set in motion the same institutions and agents, the same debates and topoi, again and again, while shifting groups and themes come into focus and fades. At the same time, the immigration issue in the Scandinavian press has increasingly become an issue for debate, a debate which at the same time appears more politicized, increasingly dominated by national politicians rather than the civil service, and also, a debate where experts and the media commentariat have become more important references. Some of these findings corroborate arguments of stronger links between politics and media in Scandinavia, especially from the nineties and forward (Strömbäck, Ørsten, and Aalberg 2008; Hjarvard 2013).

In regard to other causes of these trends and national differences, the press coverage of immigration appear an excellent example of a social phenomena characterised by what Louis Althusser (2005) called *overdetermination*, affected by a plethora of influences where not one single cause can be pointed to as decisive, ranging from major national differences in public institutions and cultures, in the type and volume of immigration, the role of national events, more general characteristics of the news-gathering process, differences between newspaper and genre traditions, and so on. And in regard to public debate, the difference between cause and effect is muddled. Most of the major events in Scandinavian immigration history, for example, did clearly not happen independently of the media. They were, like most public events, a spontaneous or provoked mobilization of the media around something they agreed, for some time, to consider as such (Champagne 1999). The story of immigration debate in Scandinavia, from the many political stunts to the terrorist attacks, is clearly rife with made-for-media provocations, and caused by public debate as much as causing it. The public policies and institutions, including the regulations of how many and who are to be admitted, are also just as much an explanas as an explanandum, shaping and being shaped by public debate, which again is shaped by social struggles and the capacities and interests the engaged agents bring to this complex issue.

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<sup>i</sup> One example is that soft news, like cultural journalism, seems to emphasise more positive aspects of immigration (e.g., Riegiert & Hovden, 2019; Ter Wal, 2002).

<sup>ii</sup> The analysis of the articles is based on a multiple correspondence analysis of 46 dummy variables for characteristics in the articles: Negative frames (5), positive frames (1), agents mentioned (17), agents quoted (10), measures to help refugees (7) and measures to protect European citizens (6). For more details, see Hovden & Zaborowski 2019.

<sup>iii</sup> While Aftonbladet and Ekstra Bladet arguably can be said to come from a social-democratic tradition, the Norwegian tabloid, VG, was founded after the war by the Resistance movement, without any political affiliation. In regard to the broadsheets, Aftenposten and Jyllandsposten both have roots in the conservative press, while Dagens Nyheter is arguably a newspaper in the liberal tradition. The Swedish newspapers in the sample thus appears to lean slightly more towards the political left of the spectrum than in the other countries, which is the reason why left-oriented Politiken was included as a possible contradictory case in Denmark.

<sup>iv</sup> Television news was originally planned as part of the data collection, but was dropped for lack of resources. This is a clear limitation of the study, both because of tv news' important role in the national news agenda and because we must expect them to have a slightly other profile in their immigration coverage than the press. Studies in other countries do for example find that television coverage to be more negative than print news (e.g., Ruhmann, 2002). Given the specificities of the Scandinavian case - including the strong position of public service television in Scandinavia, it is uncertain if that would also be the case here.

<sup>v</sup> Note that all figures showing trends in the chapter are Loess curves. Lowess (or locally weighted) smoothing is a non-parametric method for fitting a line to the data which emphasises the trends in the data more than their exact value in a given year, greatly improving the readability of the series at the cost of removing short-time fluctuations. The trend lines can in some instances exceed the range of the data. The smoothing constant ( $\alpha$ ) varies, having been chosen to provide the best compromise between readability and the trends apparent in the data. In figures showing general Scandinavian trends, these have been weighted to avoid differences due to different volume of articles in the three countries.

<sup>vi</sup> The increase is much larger than can be attributed to changes in newspaper formats and layout. In Norway, while the total number of articles (on all subjects, not just immigration) in VG and Aftenposten increased 37% from 1983 to 2015, the number of articles on immigration debate in these newspapers increased with 367%. In Sweden, while the number of total articles similarly increased with 37% between 1995 to 2015, the number of immigration articles rose with 167%. Comparable statistics have not been found for the Danish newspapers. Source: Retriever/Atekst.

<sup>vii</sup> Note that letters to the editor is exempt from the discussions of trends and national differences if not stated otherwise. This is a consequence of the large increase in the number of such letters in the period in combination with the many particularities of this genre, including both its form (e.g. often being very short, which means that the items will have fewer subjects and sources), who writes them (more often "ordinary people" as opposed to bona fide journalists, experts and elites), their looser connection to the daily news agenda, etc. For such reasons, their inclusion in the statistics would heavily distort the longer historical trends of the general editorial coverage. We'll discuss the role of letters later in the chapter.

<sup>viii</sup> Letters to the editors were not included as active categories in this construction, but was added later as supplementary categories.

<sup>ix</sup> Fifteen variables (K=30) for *subjects* (Welfare programs / Education / Work / Integration Policy / Family and social customs / Religion / National Security / Crime / National and Social Economy / Arrival and return of legal immigrants / Illegal Immigration and Human Trafficking / Multiculturalism / Culture, arts and entertainment / Immigration debate / Civil and Political Rights), seven variables (K=14) for *quoted sources* (Ordinary Immigrants / Ordinary Non-immigrants / Politicians / Civil Servants / Experts / Non-governmental Organizations / Journalists, Commentators) and twelve variables (K=24) on *framing of immigrants* (Victim: Humanitarian / War / Racism and discrimination / Other, Hero: Diversity / Integration / Good worker / Other, Threat: Public Order / Fiscal / Social cohesion / Other). For more details on the statistical construction, see Hovden (2020).

<sup>x</sup> In the 2010s, 14 % of all stories in the Swedish press appeared in the subcluster "Crimes against women" – in contrast to 4 % in Norway and 6 % in Denmark.

<sup>xi</sup> For more details, see (Hovden et al., 2018).