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## **The Divergent Convergence of Multiculturalism Policy in the Nordic Countries (1964-2006). Immigration Size, Policy Diffusion and Path Dependency**

### **Abstract**

Nordic countries are among the main destinations for immigrants in the world because of their traditionally generous policies. They are also some of the most integrated and similar countries. Yet, in the 1970s when they became confronted with the “multicultural question”, they made different choices. This article shows that the presence or absence of a sizeable immigration was the main causal factor. It explains why Sweden adopted multiculturalism while Finland and Iceland did not. However, this factor was sufficient and not necessary. The formulation of multicultural policy provisions (MCPs) in Norway despite a small and late labour immigration was the result of diffusion from Sweden. In Denmark, the absence of sizeable immigration combined with the presence of a nationally-oriented policy legacy to further deny such outcome. There was an upward albeit slow convergence towards multiculturalism. Groupings of multiculturalist and assimilationist countries stuck together until the civic turn in the mid-2000s.

### **Key Words**

Multiculturalism, Nordic countries, policy change, divergence, convergence, migration

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## INTRODUCTION

Nordic countries are, to paraphrase Hague, “most-similar designs” (2001, p. 74). They are neighbours and share a common history. Their populations are in majority Lutheran and speak closely related languages except for Finland. They also share the same economic system based on exports and technological innovation (Hall and Soskice 2001). Their social welfare regime is embodied by universal access to welfare provisions (Esping-Andersen 1990). Scholars have theorised a “Scandinavian model of government” based on consensual politics (Arter 2006).

In the mid-1970s, Sweden first adopted multiculturalism for immigrant groups. While this change occurred in the same period of time as in Canada and Australia, it was a homegrown process (Hansen 2002, Tawat 2017, Wickström 2015), the outcome of an ideological battle that saw the triumph of proponents of a pluralist concept of cultural equality over advocates of cultural homogenization (Tawat 2012, 2017). Specifically, between 1964 when the multicultural question was tossed into the public debate by David Schwartz, an activist-cum-public intellectual and 1968 when a recess occurred as the government launched an enquiry on immigrant integration, various intellectual factions battled each other over the merits and demerits of multiculturalism (Román 1994, Tawat 2017, pp. 6-7).

Despite the positive disposition of the main trade union organization, Landsorganisationen (LO) (Lund 1994, Johansson 2008), lobbying from emissaries of the Finnish government who anticipated the return of Finns, the largest immigrant group (Runblom 1994), bureaucratic pressures (Sarstrand 2007, Hammar 1985), the government of Tage Erlander remained immune to these demands. It is not until the advent of Olof Palme as Minister in charge of Culture in 1967 and later on his ascent as Prime Minister that a multicultural policy emerged (Tawat 2017).

MCPs were notably present in the first Cultural Policy, Prop. 1974: 28 and its preliminary report SOU 1972: 66. In this report, it was stated that the cultural situation of immigrants was dire. They were in danger of losing their cultural traditions because they lacked the means of preserving their own cultural traditions. They were segregated from the society because of their lack of Swedish language skills and knowledge of cultural codes (SOU 1972: 66, p. 293).

The Bill required the “systematic” monitoring of the cultural situation of immigrants, financial support to cultural associations that, in light of their close links and wealth of experience with immigrants, were considered the most effective mechanism of implementation (Prop. 1974: 28, pp. 299-300). In the meantime, state institutions were advised to give to these associations as much autonomy as possible in the management of

their affairs (Ibid., p. 300). The same policy principles were included in the 1974 Constitution (Kungörelse 1974:152) and the 1975 Bill Prop. 1975: 26, Guidelines for an Immigrant and National Minority Policy and its preliminary report SOU 1974: 69 where respectively the recognition of cultural diversity and the freedom of choice of immigrants to preserve their cultures were inscribed. These multiculturalism policies continued until 2006 when they purportedly became depoliticized (Åberg 2013), while a retreat (Joppke 2004, p. 243, Kymlicka 2012, p. 3, Borevi 2008) and a civic integrationist turn were occurring (Borevi, Jensen, and Mouritsen 2017, Banting and Kymlicka 2012).

Like their Swedish counterparts, Norwegian policymakers formulated multicultural provisions. However, Danish, Finnish and Icelandic governments did not although they were all aware of developments in Sweden least through the Nordic Cultural Commission (NKK). The latter, one of the first postwar institutions of regional cooperation, was created in 1952; even before the launch of the Nordic common labour market in 1954 (Kharkina 2013, p. 50, Andrén 2000, p. 47, Duelund 2003). According to Haggren, “cooperation on cultural affairs was reorganized in the 1960s [with] two main lines: the establishment of Nordic institutions and the integration of Nordic cooperation into the activities of national bodies” (2009). The central question thus is why Norway converged with Sweden while Denmark, Finland and Iceland diverged at choice-point? Why did Finland later converge with Sweden and Norway while Denmark and Iceland continued to diverge until the mid-2000s?

## ARGUMENTS AND LITERATURE REVIEW

We argue that the most prominent factor of policy convergence or divergence among the five countries at choice-point in the 1970s was immigration size. Even variation in size among countries with little immigration, say “low” and “very low”, had a differential impact on policy choice. Specifically, Finland and Iceland did not formulate multicultural policy provisions in the 1970s because of the severe absence of immigrant populations. With this factor missing, problematization and consequently agenda-setting was not possible as in Sweden even though Finnish policymakers held a positive disposition towards multiculturalism. Policy convergence between Finland and Sweden after the former had become a country of net immigration in the 1990s unlike Iceland is further evidence of this.

However immigration size was a sufficient but not necessary factor. Despite similar conditions - a low-level immigration and a late onset of labour immigration than in Sweden - Norway and Denmark made different choices. The former adopted MCPs as a result of policy diffusion from Sweden. The latter eschewed them also because of the

presence of a nationally-oriented cultural policy legacy. Unlike in Finland, even as its immigrant population became sizeable, Danish policymakers refused to formulate a multiculturalism policy.

To the best of our knowledge, no study hitherto has investigated the causal processes associated with the advent of multiculturalism policy in the Nordic countries including the less-studied Iceland. This study would be the first of its kind. Duelund et al. (2003) and Kharkina (2013) analyzed the five countries' cultural policies in search respectively of a common Nordic model and the tenets of Nordic cultural cooperation since the Second World War. However, their studies did not tackle policymaking processes and immigrant issues.

Conversely, other studies have explored immigrant integration policy but in fewer countries. Hedetoft, Petersson and Sturefelt (2006) and Tawat (2006, 2012) compared Denmark and Sweden, underlining factors such as ideas and historical institutionalism. Wikström (2015) investigated the advent of multiculturalism in Sweden with reference to Australia and Canada, highlighting the role of white Ethnics. Saukkonen (2013) studied multiculturalism in cultural policy in Finland, Sweden and the Netherlands and dwelled on implementation matters. Brochmann and Hagelund (2012) and Kivisto and Wahlbeck (2013) canvassed various aspects of policy development in connection to the welfare state respectively in Sweden, Denmark and Norway and in the Nordic countries except Iceland. Assuredly, these studies make useful contributions within their respective scopes. However, systematic studies of the five countries' immigrant cultural policies including Iceland are needed and can yield original and complementary insights. While Iceland and to certain extent Finland are often discounted in case selection arguably for their silence or late policymaking, silence matters in evidentiary tasks (Jacobs 2005) and causal asymmetry is a natural feature of causal complexity (Wagemann and Schneider 2012, p. 78).

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

### Policy Diffusion

Broadly defined, policy is the course of action or *inaction* that politicians in power, or vying for power, want to take (Hague et al. 1998, pp. 255-256). Policymaking refers to policy formulation at government high-level (national). That is, agenda-setting or the way an issue finds itself on policymakers' table, policy formulation or the conception of alternative solutions, and decisionmaking or the choice between policy alternatives. The

study deals in particular with policy output and not outcomes. Policy diffusion and policy legacy are two of the most established frameworks of analysis of the policymaking process (Sabatier et al. 2014).

According to Dobbin, Simmons and Garrett's widely accepted definition, policy diffusion, occurs "when government policy decisions in a given [jurisdiction] are systematically conditioned by prior policy choices made in other [jurisdictions]" (2006, 787). Börzel and Risse (2012) distinguish diffusion through direct influence and indirect influence. The former encompasses coercion through force or legal imposition, manipulation through positive and negative incentives, socialization through normative pressure and persuasion through reason-giving. A related concept, soft coercion, emphasizes the influence that a stronger jurisdiction exerts on a weaker one between whom there is a relationship of dependency (Dobbin, Simmons and Garrett 2006, p. 791).

The latter includes lesson drawing (functional emulation from policy implementation or learning when new information become available), mimicry (normative emulation) and competition (economic competitiveness). Given the blurred territory between coercion especially its soft version and emulation, Dobbin, Simmons and Garrett (Ibid) recommend testing, controlling for coercion, competition, and learning, to see if ideas, for example, of leading epistemic communities or advocacy groups have had effects. Holzinger and Knill (2005) write that shared norms also structure convergence between countries.

Pointedly, a further methodological step is the study of diffusion over time or convergence (Gilardi 2016). In their study of the transposition and implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) by EU member-states, Holzinger, Knill and Sommerer (2011, see also Holzinger and Knill 2005, pp. 776-778) uncovered three dimensions of convergence. The first, *homogeneity or the degree of convergence* deals with similarity in policy contents. It is postulated that increased homogeneity reduces variation among cases. The second, *mobility or direction* refers to the strength of the movement with which policies are formulated: a shift upward or downward. For example, in his study of US and European governments' responses to hate speech, Bleich (2011) examined at what "speed" policies in each case were formulated and implemented. He found that, in general, it has been a "slow creep" rather than a "slippery slope."

The third dimension, *position or the scope of convergence*, deals with the position of each actor with respect to mobility. The aim is to determine how many countries or group of countries converged. Who was the forerunner or laggard? Holzinger and Knill write that "the scope of convergence increases with the number of countries and policies that are actually affected by a certain convergence mechanism, with the reference point being the total number of countries and policies under study." However, they caution that there is

“no straightforward relationship between degree and scope of convergence... For example, a subgroup of countries might converge towards a point far away from the other countries” (2005, p. 778).

### Policy Legacy

Policy legacy entails a pre-existing policy and/or historical event that shapes the policy at critical juncture or a time of upheavals and potential radical change. Path dependency, its main concept presupposes that once a path is chosen, a policy is likely to remain on this path as the consequence of various constraint mechanisms (Hall and Taylor 1996, Mahoney 2000). In a review of the literature on the topic, Bennett and Elman (2006) identified four dimensions: causal possibility, contingency, closure and constraint. Causal possibility corresponds to equifinality or the existence of alternative causal factors at the phase of policy initiation. Contingency “implies that the causal story is affected by a random or unaccounted factor”(Ibid., p. 252). This random event can be a crisis or a government change. These moments of creation are usually referred to as critical junctures. Closure denotes the gradual loss of alternative paths over time. One policy orientation will gradually gain ground over competing options. Constraint, the main process of reproduction, refers to the prohibitive effects of a shift to an alternative policy (Ibid).

Bennett and Elman (2006, p. 259) state four main constraint mechanisms. The first emphasizes the concept of *increasing returns*. Scholars working within this strand hypothesize a “linear” policy evolution based on the positive feedback received by policymakers or the lock-in effects mentioned above. The second is fostered by *negative feedback*. Policy failure may prompt decisionmakers to change some of their practices and behaviours in order to achieve their initial goal. The third perspective states that constraints can arise from *reactive sequences*. The implementation of a policy may occasion the social mobilization of its opponents and a series of events which eventually lead to the achievement of the initial goal. The fourth perspective sees path dependence as occurring through *cyclical* “ping pong” policy processes.

### Immigration Size

Unlike the rich literature available on policy diffusion and policy legacy, research at the intersection of immigration control policy including immigration size and immigrant integration policy namely cultural is thin. The bulk of the current scholarship investigates the relationship between immigration size - often in conjunction with its nature - and

restrictive policies (Layton-Henry 1992, Hansen 2000, Fitzgerald and Cook-Martín 2014). However, Kymlicka (2003) has described “a three-legged stool” whereby the problems of citizenship arise from cultural diversity, which in turn stems from immigration. Studies based on this precept seek to understand how racial attitudes change with increased immigration. Specifically how these affect policymaking through the rise of far-right parties (Rydgren 2010, Hellström 2016) or these parties’ influence public attitudes towards immigration (Bohman and Hjelm 2016).

Relying on surveys and other statistical tools, they convey three sorts of argument. First, the “labour-market effects” or the fear of displacement on the labour market of native workers on the lower end of the job market and the downward pressure on their wages (Borjas 2005). Second, the “welfare effect” or the alleged pressure on housing, hospitals, school services and abuse of welfare provisions or “welfare tourism” (Nannestad 2007, Banting and Kymlicka 2006). Third, the “racial or xenophobic effect” which comes from opposition to ethnocultural diversity (Mudde 2013). Its central concept, ethnic identity relates to how people see themselves at the personal, group and national levels.

Much of the literature at national level, has crystallized around the concept of national boundary starting with Fredrik Barth 1969 seminal study of ethnic groups in the Swat Valley of Pakistan. Barth claimed in his Relational Theory that what matters is not the “cultural stuff” but the boundary itself. Social processes involve “exclusion and incorporation whereby discrete categories are maintained despite changing participation and membership in the course of individual life histories” (ibid., p. 6). More recently, Abdelal et al. (2006, pp. 17-32) showed that national boundaries can change both in content and the level of agreement on this content.

## METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORKS

### Comparative Historical Analysis (CHA)

The research design is qualitative and comparative in nature. We use a “modified” most similar/different outcome (MSDO) design (Przeworski and Teune 1970). In contrast to the

most different/similar outcome (MDSO) design, MSDO requires that cases be as similar as possible but with different outcomes. We call it modified because two of the outcomes are different although all the cases as described in the introduction, share similar backgrounds. Comparative historical analysis “attempts to identify the intervening causal process - the causal chain and causal mechanism - between an independent variable (variables) and dependent variable or outcome of the independent variable” in small N (George and Bennett 2005, p. 206). As such, it is ideally suited for the study of convergence/divergence (Goldstone 2003). CHA relies on two main techniques: process tracing and congruence testing.

George and Bennett distinguish four variants of process-tracing. The first, ‘detailed narrative’ is an in-depth but atheoretical account of the causal mechanisms of an event. The second, ‘the use of hypotheses and generalizations’, like detailed narrative, is atheoretical and may seek generalizations or an established pattern. However, it is sustained by one or many hypotheses. The third, ‘analytic explanation’, our variant of choice, is couched in explicit theoretical terms. The explanation may be deliberately selective, focusing on what are thought to be particularly important parts of an adequate or parsimonious explanation; or the partial character of the explanation may reflect the investigator’s inability to specify or theoretically ground all steps in a hypothesized process or to find data to document every step. (2005, pp. 210-211).

Congruence testing provides the basis for claims regarding “common patterns” based on relations of sufficiency.<sup>1</sup> That is, the search of factor(s) whose presence is always associated with a positive outcome although this outcome can occur through a different path (Goldstone 2003, p. 50). In her study of revolutions, Theda Skocpol showed for example that “the roles of state crisis, elite revolt, and popular mobilization formed nearly the same, or ‘congruent,’ patterns in the French, Russian, and Chinese revolutions” (1979 cited by Goldstone 2003, p. 50). Congruence testing also includes the use of counterfactuals and the method of elimination. It admits conjunctural causation or the combination of variables, and as mentioned previously equifinality or the possibility of alternative causal paths and causal asymmetry. The latter “implies that both the occurrence (presence) and the non-occurrence (absence) of social phenomena require separate analysis and that the presence and absence of conditions might play crucially different roles in bringing about the outcome” (Schneider and Wagemann 2012, p. 89).

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<sup>1</sup> Relations of necessity are rare in the study of causal complexity although not impossible. Necessity entails that the variable of interest is always present when the outcome is positive. The latter is not allowed with a different causal variable.

## Operationalization and Data Collection

**Multiculturalism policy**, the dependable variable, is compounded of two of the eight indicators of the well-established Multiculturalism Policy Index (2011):

- i) Constitutional, legislative or parliamentary affirmation of multiculturalism at any level of government.
- ii) The funding of ethnic group organizations or activities in the form of core- or project-based support stated.

They are the sole indicators among the eight that were present in the positive case (Sweden) at critical juncture in the 1970s and in policy continuity. As such, they are held constant, allowing for a systematic study.<sup>2</sup> We study policymaking at national level is paramount to other policy arenas (regional and local) and where policy formulation occurred.

**Immigration size**, our sufficient or most “parsimonious” intervening variable, includes three indicators: (1) high, (2) low and (3) very low. High refers to a country of net immigration which has experienced immigration over many years like Sweden. Low refers to a country of mostly emigration but with a burgeoning immigration. Very low relates to a country of emigration with virtually no experience of immigration. If immigration size and its variation (low, very low or high), was as we posit the main factor of divergence or convergence, as comparative historical analysis premises, there should be a congruent pattern around this variable. Still yet, as we also claim that immigration size was only a sufficient variable, other hypothesized variables namely policy diffusion and policy legacy should be present.

**Policy Diffusion**, the second hypothesized variable is linked to the Norwegian case. It is based on six indicators drawn from Borzel and Risse (2012)’s typology: *coercion, manipulation, socialization through normative pressure, persuasion through reasoning, lesson drawing (functional emulation from policy implementation or learning when new information become available) and mimicry (normative emulation)*. The cathartic question is, after testing through the method of elimination and counterfactual analysis as advocated by Dobbin, Simmons and Garrett (2006), did policy diffuse from Sweden to Norway through mimicry or norms emulation?

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<sup>2</sup> The remaining indicators are associated with developments in the 1990s and sometimes after 2006 such as exemptions from dress codes, accommodations on religious grounds, acceptance of dual citizenship and affirmative action for disadvantaged immigrant groups. Funding of bilingual education and mother-tongue instruction were present in both positive and negative cases (Sweden and Denmark) and therefore redundant.

**Policy legacy**, the third hypothesized variable is composed of seven indicators informed by the literature on path dependency and relates to the Danish case. The first three indicators, constraint, closure and contingency are relevant for the study of policy change at critical juncture. But in fact only the constraint mechanism, *policy legacy*, has causal power and requires analysis. The four other indicators are mechanisms of reproduction over time. There are *increasing returns*, *negative feedback*, *reactive sequences* and *cyclical “ping pong” processes*. The relevant questions are: did policy legacy constrain the formulation of MCPs in Denmark? If yes, what were its mechanisms of reproduction over time?

**Convergence/divergence** is concerned with the movement of diffusion across time. As note before, it is premised on three indicators: homogeneity, mobility and position. Relevant questions are a) how much similar or homogeneous were the countries’ policy contents across time? b) Was mobility or the direction of diffusion a “slow creep”, a “slippery slope”, “upward” or “downward”? c) What was the position of each country with respect to this mobility? That is, who was the forerunner, the laggard and when? We measure homogeneity and mobility through the concept of  $\sigma$ -convergence. According to Knill and Holzinger, an increase in the degree of convergence corresponds to a decrease of standard deviation from time  $t_1$  to  $t_2$  (2005 pp. 776-777).

**Data** were gathered from the Multicultural Policy Index evidence book. It compiles information on all the Nordic countries’ (except Iceland) citizenship, cultural and official integration policies. However, these data are not comprehensive and limited to the period 1990-2010. We sourced other evidentiary materials through archival research of the countries’ official immigrant integration policies, state cultural policies since the 1960s as well secondary literature (articles, books and newspapers). The article is divided into four sections. The first three sections deal with policy adoption at critical juncture in the 1970s. Each tackles one or two cases. The last section engages in the study of convergence over time.

## I. NORWAY: A LOW IMMIGRATION BUT POLICY DIFFUSION FROM SWEDEN

Norway’s first state cultural policy (*Ny kulturpolitikk*) St.Meld. nr. 52 (1973/1974) was published on 29 March 1974 and included multicultural policy provisions. However, unlike in Sweden, it lacked a sizeable community of immigrants which would have given them claim-making rights, a factor absent in other negative cases. Multiculturalism did not

become a controversial issue. There was neither advocacy coalitions nor a policy entrepreneur such as David Schwarz in Sweden. Between 1957 when the “Fremmedloven” (Alien Law) was passed and 1974, immigrants were given unfettered access to Norway for the purpose of seeking employment. However, there was net emigration in the 1950s, about zero net immigration in the 1960s, and slightly net immigration at the beginning of the 1970s. In 1971, the possession of a job offer and accommodation were introduced as preconditions to labour immigration.

In St. Meld 39 (1973-1974), it was stated that labour immigration in the country was in general lower than in other West European countries. But to the question “Should Norway seek to Increase Immigration?”, the Bill answered negatively citing as reasons the pressure on the housing market underlined by the Danielsen Commission and the claim by the Ministry of Industry that labour shortages could be solved in a different way than through labour immigration. In 1974, as MCPs were formulated, a temporary halt was decided from 1 July 1974 to 30 June 1975. At the end of the interim period, a total ban on labour immigration was imposed (Cappelen et al. 2011, p. 4) along Sweden and Denmark’s decisions to stop labour immigration respectively in 1972 and 1973 as these countries’ economies slowed down (Johansson 2006) and the 1973 Oil Crisis broke out. As a consequence, Norwegian policymakers could only have borrowed the policy from abroad, specifically from Sweden. As with other Nordic countries, they were aware of the existence of multiculturalism as a policy alternative in Sweden and the debate that had raged there. Following Börzel and Risse’s theoretical perspective (2012), this outcome<sup>3</sup> was the result of indirect influence specifically mimicry (norm emulation) as opposed to competition. Firstly, their policy texts attest of a high degree of similarity or homogeneity. St.Meld. nr. 52 (1973/1974) bore a similar title, *Ny Kultur Politikk* (New Cultural Policy) as the Swedish cultural policy report, SOU 1972: 66 *Ny Kultur Politik* (New Cultural Policy). Its provisions were laid out in almost identical terms. On pages 6 and 7, in a special section called “Spesielle Grupper”, immigrants and guestworkers were mentioned together with

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<sup>3</sup> The term “outcome” refers to a dependable variable or policy output. “Policy outcome” is coterminous with policy implementation.

groups such as the Sami and Finns in the regions of Finnmark and Troms as needing special support from the state. On page 29, in the section “andra grupper” it was stated that:

The Ministry thinks that it is important that the state takes special responsibility for other cultural minorities (immigrants and guestworkers) besides the actions carried out by the counties and municipalities. It is underlined that these groups must have the same rights and aspirations as others to the same outcome and experiences... Immigrants must themselves choose whether in the long term, they want to be assimilated as to become Norwegians or if they want to keep their cultures... the drafters point out in particular the valuable contribution to our culture that immigrants can make with theirs.

The same provisions were included in the government Bill St. Meld. nr. 39 (1973-1974) *Om innvandringspolitikken* (about immigration policy) published on 14 March 1974, two weeks before the State Cultural Policy Bill St. Meld. nr. 52. St. Meld. nr. 39 (1973-1974) built upon the Policy Report NOU 1973: 17 of the same name published on 22 December 1972 by the Danielsen Commission launched on 16 October 1970. It was stated on page 8 that:

Concerning immigrants' relationship to the Norwegian society, the main question is whether they must be assimilated (absorbed in the national community and be integrated) or one must take into account the fact that they will leave the country shortly. The Government's position is that decision must not be imposed in one or another direction. The right thing to do is for immigrants to have, to the extent that is possible, the means to choose what kind of relationship they want to have with the society. They must be given the freedom of choice to do so.

Second, testing against other factors as Dobbin, Simmons and Garrett (2006) predicates, it appears that diffusion could not be the result of lesson drawing (functional emulation). The Swedish final policy was published in March 1974, in the same month and year as the

Norwegian policy. Similarly, it could not have been the product of direct influence specifically imposition. While as mentioned in the introduction, all the five Nordic countries were required to consult each other on cultural policy in the context of the Nordic Cultural Commission (Prop 1971: 54), its resolutions were non-binding and even so, there was none on multiculturalism. There was no logical ground for manipulation given the absence of electoral incentives. Multiculturalism in particular and immigrants' issues in general although current were not matters of concern for the general public as today insofar as politicians would spend precious political capital (Westin 1987, Borevi 2013, p. 54).

Lastly, we found no trace of socialization through normative pressure, or persuasion through reason-giving by Swedish policymakers in the protocol of St.Meld. nr. 52. Rather, there were mutual appreciation between Swedish and Norwegian policymakers. Swedish policymakers were appreciative of the progress made in policy formulation in Norway (SOU 1972: 66, p. 107). Their Norwegian counterparts gushed over the scope and quality of the work accomplished in Sweden, consecrating a whole page to its description (St.Meld. nr. 54, p. 15). While low, Norway's immigration was not too low, with the country being on the cusp of labour immigration for policymakers not to contemplate a multiculturalism policy.

## II. DENMARK: A LOW IMMIGRATION AND THE PRESENCE OF A POLICY LEGACY

Unlike its Norwegian equivalent, Betaenkning 517 of 1969, the policy report produced by Danish policymakers did not contain multicultural policy provisions. However, like in Sweden, the country underwent changes in its political environment with the ministerial appointment in 1968 of Kristen Helveg Petersen, a Radical Liberal politician who like Olof Palme was eager to carry out cultural policy reform. Petersen launched the policy reform project in April 1968, barely two months after his appointment. As he wrote in the preface of the Report, "Time has been short. Work started in April 1968 and the main objective has been to put in a platform as soon as possible which can give way to a broad debate" (Betænkning nr. 517, p. 4). The Report 517 was completed the following year, ahead of the Swedish and Norwegian projects. However, the Swedish drafters of SOU 1972: 66 and the Norwegian drafters of St. Meld. nr. 52 deemed it of poor quality, claiming that it had mapped out problems within several cultural sectors but failed to propose overarching policy goals (St. Meld. nr. 52, p. 15, SOU 1972: 66, p. 107).

Danish policymakers were also aware of the existence of multiculturalism as a choice option and policy debates in Sweden. However, the issue was not problematized. Like

Norway, Denmark lacked a numerically significant immigrant population for claim-making by a political entrepreneur or else. When Schwarz opened the debate on multiculturalism in October 1964, Danish opinion leaders were still debating the possibility of importing foreign workers. Nearly four months earlier, on 29 June 1964, Hilmar Baunsgaard, then the Minister in charge of Trade, had published an explorative article titled “Foreign Labour?” in the newspaper *Aktuelt*. In this article, he advocated the use of labour immigration to fill labour shortages that had started to appear and threatened to slow the country’s economic growth; citing Switzerland, Germany and Sweden as successful examples. It is not until 1967 that non-Nordic guest workers started to arrive in Denmark mainly from Turkey, former Yugoslavia and Pakistan. Most did not even come as recruits but officially on tourist visas and once inside the country sought employment. According to the 1972 census, 29% of workers originated from Turkey, 22% from Yugoslavia, 10% from Pakistan and 19% from the rest of Europe. At the stop of labour immigration on 29 November 1973, the share of immigrants including labour migrants in the national population was less than 1% (Andersen 1979, p. 33, Lov nr. 203 af 27 maj 1970).

However, even as its immigrant community became numerous and fully-fledged official integration policies were formulated from the late 1990s onwards, these remained assimilationist except a short-lived multicultural experiment marked by controversy initiated by Jytte Hilden during her ministerial term (1993-1996) (Tawat 2014, pp. 207-208). This indicates the presence of a mechanism of path dependency (historical institutionalism) at critical juncture in the 1970s. This factor combined with the absence of a sizeable immigrant population to form a conjunctural causation (Schneider and Wagemann 2012, p. 78).

Indeed, as Peter Duelund (2003), one of the foremost experts in Danish cultural policy argued, the ideas supporting Danish cultural policy at that time were rooted in an “inward-looking” policy legacy, the 1953 Historic Compromise on Culture contained in the report *Mennesket i Centrum. Bidrag til en Aktiv Kulturpolitik* (Focus on the Individual Citizen. Contribution to an Active Cultural Policy). In 1932, Julius Bomholt, a politician and scholar, author of a book entitled *Arbejderkultur* (Workers’ Culture) was commissioned to draft a cultural policy by the new Social Democratic government. He conceived a policy based on workers’ culture inspired from the International Labour Movement that entailed “mutual solidarity, pride in the job, a special jargon, worker’s song and the trade unions” as opposed to the alleged individualism and exploitation of the bourgeois class. However, this policy was met with opposition, on the one hand by Cultural Radicals who promoted a different view centered on individual choices, and on the other hand, Radical Liberals

who considering Grundtvig's ideology of "one people, folk and language" and his people-centered church wanted the preservation of a national culture. Social Democrats including Bomholt himself reneged on the international workers' culture as part of a series of concessions to other parties in exchange for their adhesion to their welfare state project, "Danmark för Folket" (Denmark for the People).

A causal link has been claimed not only between Grundtvigianism and Danish cultural policy but also between Grundtvigianism and the markedly assimilationist policy that developed in the 1990s. In the book "*Grundtvig: Nyckeln till det danska?*" (Grundtvig: the key to understanding Denmark?), Danish historians Ole Vind and Urban Claesson assert that Grundtvig's ideology formalized the sentiment of Danes after the country's defeat in 1864 to Prussia and the loss of Schleswig Holstein and explains contemporary policy developments. Hanne Frøsig (1999, p. 18) has compared this loss to the Battle of Kosovo Polje for Serbia: a national trauma that became one of the mechanisms of its national identity.

Pointedly, prior to the defeat, Denmark was a multicultural empire where German-speaking inhabitants of South-Schleswig and the inhabitants of current Norway were considered as the sons and daughters of the soil, "*landets egne børn*". After the war in 1866, the citizenship law was changed so that only those who spoke the Danish language and upheld cultural practices including wearing Danish clothes could be naturalized (Holm 2006, p. 73).

In sum, to refer to Bennett and Elman's typology (2006, p. 259), the constraint mechanism in this process of path dependence was increasing returns at critical juncture in the 1970s. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Danish policymakers did not perceive any problem with immigrants' cultures like in Sweden because the existing community was Lilliputian to begin with. They would not be charmed by Swedish policy too because as Saukkonen writes about the Dutch adoption of multiculturalism "it was a logical choice against the [historical] background" (2013, p. 186) which in this case was monoculture.

Furthermore, like in Sweden, there is evidence of this legacy before, during and after policy formulation. In the Cultural Policy Section of the Radical Liberal Party's programme published in 1969, the same year as the Policy Report, the Party purports to foster socioeconomic equality in order to attain cultural equality. It seeks to give support to the inhabitants of South Schleswig in then West Germany so that they can continue to enjoy Danish cultural and religious life. It aims to increase cultural cooperation between Denmark and underdeveloped countries. It even seeks to provide to foreign spouses of Danish women the same civil and social rights afforded to the foreign spouses of Danish

men. Yet as in Report 517, it does not mention immigrants' cultures (Kongelige bibliotek 2009).

### III. FINLAND AND ICELAND: VERY LOW IMMIGRATION

In contrast to Sweden, Norway and Denmark, no state cultural policy or immigrant integration policy were formulated in Iceland and Finland in the 1970s. Like Denmark, the two countries were not oblivious to policy developments in Sweden and even Norway because of their shared institutions of regional cooperation. In 1971 for example, the Finnish government signed a decree enforcing cultural policy cooperation, the Nordic Cultural Treaty (909/1971). However, without a significant presence of immigrants in the first place, the issue could not have been problematized as in Sweden. The size of the immigrant population in Finland was Lilliputian compared to Sweden where more than 400,000 immigrants had arrived between the end of World War 2 and 1974, there was even speculation among public intellectuals about the emergence of an immigrant party (Tawat 2017, p. 6).

Even compared to Denmark and Norway, the immigrant population in Finland was patently lower. In all probability, policy diffusion did not occur as in Norway arguably because of this scarcity and Finland's stature as the quintessential country of emigration to Sweden. There is scholarly consensus that Finnish policymakers held multiculturalist ideas because they contemplated the return of Finnish emigrants from Sweden after signs of labour shortages had started to appear at home. Runblom argues that as the Finnish economy grew, 'It became important [for the Finnish government] to prepare Finns in Sweden for a return to Finland ... Finland's demands on Sweden were important to the launching of the Swedish home language reform. As a result ... immigrants were granted certain cultural rights (1994, p. 630, see also Wickström 2015). Indeed, it is not until the 1990s when Finland experienced net immigration that it officially adopted multicultural cultural provisions (Saukkonen 2013). Even so, according to Statistics Finland, "As late as in the early 1990s, only one per cent of all people living in Finland were foreign nationals" (2017).

Like Finland, Iceland was a country of net emigration in the 1970s. It has remained so for most of its modern life. In 1980, foreigners formed 1,4 % of the population. In 1998, they made up 3% of the workforce (Einarsdóttir, Heijstra and Rafnsdóttir 2018). Its largest immigrant group is Poles. Other numerically-significant immigrant groups are Lithuanians and Filipinos. While one cannot ascertain the existence of an additional causal factor as in Denmark, a look at its policy towards the national culture shows strong exclusivist and assimilationist overtones. Hilmarsson-Dunn and Kristinsson assert that "Purist language

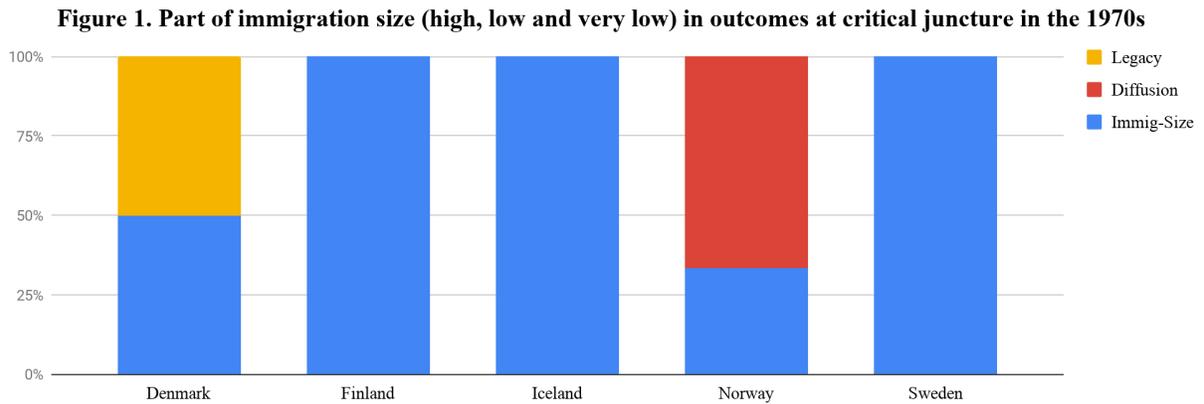
policies in Iceland have preserved and modernized Icelandic up until the present time” and “globalization and global English has led to the perception that the language is less secure than in the past and has prompted efforts by policy makers towards greater protection of Icelandic” (2011, p. 207). Jónsdóttir and Ragnarsdóttir (2010, p. 158) write concerning multicultural education in Iceland that:

Though equality is emphasized [curriculum guides for preschools and compulsory schools] are firmly based in Icelandic national culture and adapted to Icelandic society... They contain numerous references to nationalist ideology and do not allow for, or presume, contributions from other cultures and religions in compulsory or preschool education or curriculum development.

As Table 1 below illustrates, immigration size was the most significant variable. We gave a score of 1 for the presence of a variable or combination of variables that directly exerted effects on the outcome and 0 for its absence. For the presence of a variable without such causal power or that contradicts the outcome, we awarded a score of 0.5. Immigration size has a score of 4,5 out 5 against 1 out 5 respectively for policy diffusion and policy legacy. As Skocpol (1979) has predicted and Figure 1 illustrates, it formed a congruent pattern across the five cases, either alone as in the cases of Sweden, Iceland and Finland or in combination with other variables as the Danish and Norwegian cases exemplify. Without Sweden, Figure 1 illustrates the part that the absence of sizeable immigration (low or very low immigration) played in the non-adoption of multiculturalism in the 1970s. However, the absence of sizeable immigration was a sufficient but not necessary condition because policy diffusion exerted a more powerful effect on the outcome in the case of Norway.

Table 1. Causal factors and scores at critical juncture in the 1970s

	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Sweden	Total score
Immig-size	1	1	1	0.5	1	4.5
Diffusion	0	0	0	1	0	1
Legacy	1	0	0	0	0	1



#### IV. A DIVERGENT CONVERGENCE OVER TIME

Regarding the *degree of convergence* of these policies over time or homogeneity, there was, as theorized by Knill and Holzinger (2005), a high degree of homogeneity between Swedish and Norwegian MCPs until the mid-2000s based on shared norms, the initial mechanism of diffusion. In the 1990s, as the 1970s policies were evaluated, critical reports were issued about the integration of immigrants. On 12 September 1996, the Swedish government produced a Bill, Prop. 1996/1997: 3 “Kulturpolitik” (Cultural Policy) redefining multiculturalism as “Mångfald” (diversity). “In such a context”, it said, “an appropriate cultural policy is crucial for the advent of a genuine multicultural society where people with different backgrounds would be able to live peacefully together and enrich each other.” Two core ideas were embodied in this concept: ethnocultural diversity as (1) an enrichment for national culture, and (2) as an effective means of combating racism and xenophobia.

The Norwegian equivalent St. meld. no. 17 (1996-1997) About Immigration and the Multicultural Norway (*Om innvandring og det flerkulturelle Norge*) published on 27 February 1997 reiterated the same message. The very first paragraph of the Bill on page 7 claimed with emphasis in *italic* that:

The government recognizes that the Norwegian society has been and will increasingly be multicultural. Cultural pluralism is enriching and

astrength for the Community”. In every sector, openness and dialogue, interaction and innovation must be encouraged. Racism and discrimination are in contradiction with our fundamental values and must be countered actively.

Finland formulated its first multicultural provisions in the 1990s, a period of time which as mentioned before coincides with increased immigration. These provisions were similar in nature to those contained in the Swedish and Norwegian texts of the same period of time. In Section 17 of its 1995 constitution, provisions were made for other groups than indigenous groups such as Sami, Roma and Finnish-Swedes to “maintain and develop their own language and culture” (Multicultural Policy Index 2011). In Section 2(1) of the 1999 *Act on the Integration of Immigrants and the Reception of Asylum Seekers*, integration was defined as “the personal development of immigrants, aimed at participation in work life and the functioning of society while *preserving their language and culture*’ (emphasis added)” (Ibid). Few years later, in the national government's 2003 program, it was asserted that “multiculturalism and the needs of different language groups” will be mainstreamed in government policy (Ibid).

Concerning funding of immigrants’ associations, the 2001 Action Plan to Combat Ethnic Discrimination and Racism, stated the government’s material support for immigrant and ethnic minority organizations. The Ministry in charge of Education and Culture was tasked to set up a “support system for immigrant and ethnic minority organisations, culture and publication activities and the coverage of this system.” (Ibid).

By contrast, there was convergence between Iceland and Denmark in the realm of assimilationist policies. In Denmark, there were hardly any references to immigrants’ cultures in the 1998 Integration Act passed in the 1990s. The Act mandated the acquisition of local norms and values referring to Danish cultural beliefs and practices. A special Act on Danish Language Teaching was enacted alongside abolishing home language teaching for non-Western immigrants’ children only and requesting them to learn Danish.

Although under her tenure as Minister in charge of Culture, Jytte Hilden launched a cultural policy project (1993-1996) in which she set a “multicultural Denmark” as

objective, this was met by a negative feedback, one of the constraint mechanisms discussed before (Bennett and Elman 2006, p. 259). Danish’s assimilationist posture became even more explicit when the far-right Danish People’s Party became a powermaker and influenced the political agenda and mainstream parties. In 2006, a nationally-oriented Cultural Canon was published under the aegis of the Ministry of Culture (Tawat 2014). Iceland continued to eschew any official affirmation of multiculturalism policy and funding of immigrants’ associations. In 2000, the Parliament *Althingi*, approved the launching of a Multicultural Centre, the first such initiative under the pressure of “an interest group on cultural diversity in the Westfjords, later named Roots (Rætur)” in collaboration with local councils, the Icelandic Red Cross and the Directorate of Labour in the Westfjords (Fjölmenningarsetur. Multicultural and Information Centre 2018). The centre function was just to ease:

communications between Icelanders and foreign citizens, to work with municipalities to enhance services for foreign citizens, to try and prevent problems in communications between individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds and to facilitate the integration of foreigners into Icelandic society” (Althingi 125th assembly 1999/2000, no. 220).

The measure of  $\sigma$ -convergence corroborates the findings above. We awarded a score of 1 for presence of the dependent variable, multicultural policy and 0 for its absence and calculated total scores for each case as Table 2 illustrates.

**Table 2: Multiculturalism Policies (Official Affirmation and Funding for Immigrant Minorities) in the Nordic Countries (1974-2006). Adapted from the Multiculturalism Policy Index 2011.**

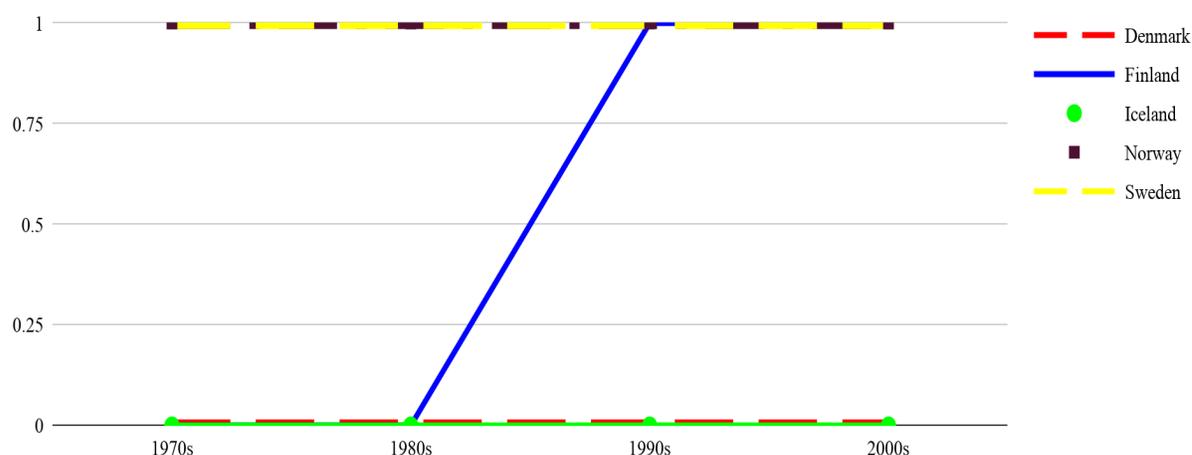
Countries	Years			
	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s
Denmark	0	0	0	0
Finland	0	0	1	1
Iceland	0	0	0	0
Norway	1	1	1	1
Sweden	1	1	1	1

Following Knill and Holzinger (2005, 776-777), we calculated standard deviations for the population, as per the formula below, at inception in the 1970s and at endpoint in 2006 to explicate whether an increase or decrease occurred in the degree of convergence.

$$\sigma = \sqrt{\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N (x_i - \mu)^2}$$

Results show that neither a decrease nor an increase of standard deviation occurred over time. The standard deviation for the years 1970s is 0,49 (rounded) and that of the years 2000s, 0,49 (rounded). This conveys the argument that there was a gap in the countries' policy contents that did not close. Indeed, as Figure 2 shows, policies stood at opposite poles (0 and 1) with no score in between. e.g. 0.5. One can conclude from this that there was no policy "mixing" or "dillution". Even as Finland crossed the floor to join Sweden and Norway in the 1990s, pushing the direction of convergence upward albeit slowly, it adopted the same range of policies, no less. The *scope of convergence* over the timespan equally supports this thesis. As Figure 2 illustrates, there were two core groups of countries, distinct and parallel to each other which did not intersect throughout the time period. An assimilationist group involving Denmark and Iceland and a multiculturalist group including Sweden and Norway. The former were forerunners for ever and the latter reluctant players.

**Figure 2. Convergence and divergence of multiculturalism Policies in the Nordic Countries (1974-2006)**



## CONCLUSION

The most important predictor of the adoption or rejection of MCPs in a Nordic country at critical juncture in the 1970s was immigration size. This factor was present more or less in all the cases. A “high” or sizeable immigration led to the adoption of MCPs as in Sweden. Conversely, its absence resulted in negative outcomes in Denmark, Finland and Iceland. This finding holds particular relevance for agenda-setting, the first stage of the policymaking process. It was a prerequisite for the problematization of the issue that would lead to the adoption of a multiculturalism policy as in Sweden. Even difference in immigration size among countries with virtually no labour immigration (very low) such as Finland and Iceland, and those with a low but burgeoning labour immigration as Norway and Denmark had a differential effect on the policy output. This explains the inability of Finnish policymakers to formulate MCPs while lobbying for their adoption by the Swedish government. Not coincidentally, they introduced MCPs when Finland became a country of net immigration in the 1990s. Following this, one can also theorize a causal relationship between immigration control policy and immigrant integration policy through agenda-setting.

However, immigration size was a sufficient but not necessary factor. In some cases, other factors mattered more or combined with the absence of sizeable immigration to produce the outcomes. In Denmark, the presence of a nationally-oriented policy legacy, the 1953 grundvitgian-inspired cross-party agreement on culture, combined with a low percentage of immigrants to prevent the adoption of multiculturalism. Likewise, Norwegian decisionmakers adopted a multiculturalism policy despite a low immigrant population,

and even as they turned their back on labour immigration. This was the result of diffusion through norms emulation from Sweden. The degree of convergence between the five countries stayed the same over time, showing that there was no effort to blend insights from multiculturalism and assimilation. This is reflected in the existence of two core groups of multiculturalists (Sweden and Norway) and assimilationists (Denmark and Iceland) that stood at opposite poles throughout the period of study. Sweden and Norway remained the flagships of multiculturalism and Denmark and Iceland strongholds of assimilation. Despite adhering to multiculturalism in the 1990s and thus pushing the direction of this convergence a little bit upward, Finland espoused the same types of policies as Sweden and Norway.

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