11. Attitudes to migrants' access to equal social rights

The previous chapters have shown that migrants' welfare state attitudes in many ways resemble those of natives. In this chapter, we describe how the 14 migrant groups respond to questions about respectively including or excluding migrants from access to social services and benefits. As we will show below, the question of migrants' social rights is often subject to a public debate that tends to polarize along political lines. How migrants view this is not quite as obvious.

One way of theorizing these attitudes is to think of the nation-state as a club that delivers several club-goods to its members. These club-goods are often characterized by being available to everyone that resides within the territory. In the words of Olson: "The basic and most elementary goods or services provided by the government, like defence and police protection, and the system of law and order generally, are such that they go to everyone or practically everyone in the nation" (Olson, 1971:14). The classic worry within economic and political theory is the free-rider problem. If you establish a club with low potential for excluding potential beneficiaries, who would then be willing to pay for establishing these goods? Thus, one of the main reasons for having a state is to establish these goods through forced taxation and sanctioning of free-riders, by using the state's monopoly on violence (law and order). Following the argument in Chapter 2, our prediction is that this basic institutional structure of a state is likely to establish logics of both consequentiality and appropriateness among natives and migrants.

The presence of state borders, however, does not mean that it is rational to close state borders. In the initial formulation of the club-good theory, Buchanan (1965) used the example of a swimming pool. With a limited number of members, the use of the swimming pool by one member does not lower the possibility of the use of another member. Using Ostrom's terms, the subtractability of use is low (Ostrom, 1990). Buchanan predicted that in such a situation it will be rational to increase the number of members as the cost per member thereby decreases. Therefore, the cost per member and the consumption possibilities per member need somehow to be balanced (in a rational choice framework the marginal utility of lowering the cost equals the marginal decline in utility caused by crowding). One could label the club-goods with

low subtractability “public club-goods”. The example already used is law and order. In these cases, the resource conflicts between migrants, the new members, and old club members are likely to be modest. Olson labelled this “inclusive groups” as “... usually the larger the number available to share the benefits and costs the better” (Olson, 1971:37). The conflicts can be predicted to be higher for goods where the consumption of one member reduces the consumption possibilities of other members more. One could label these club-goods with high subtractability of use, the “common club-goods”. Public schools and hospitals would be an example of “common club-goods”. The school seat or the hospital bed occupied by a migrant reduces the consumption possibilities of natives or other migrants (if tax payment of the migrant is zero). Olson labelled this “exclusive groups”.

Many of the welfare benefits and services found in the Nordic countries fall in the category of “common club-goods” (see Chapters 1 and 2), which should lead us to expect that natives will behave as an “exclusive group” when it comes to giving migrants access to social benefits and services. This preference for excluding migrants from welfare services and benefits has been labelled welfare chauvinism or welfare nationalism (Andersen & Bjørklund, 1990; Larsen, Frederiksen, & Nielsen, 2018). Previous research has shown that welfare nationalism is widespread among natives voting for new-right parties, natives with lower socio-economic status, and natives perceiving migrants to be a cultural or economic threat to the overall society (Eger & Breznau, 2017; Ford, 2016; Larsen, Frederiksen, & Nielsen, 2018; Mau & Burkhardt, 2009; Mewes & Mau, 2012; 2013; Reeskens & van Oorschot, 2012). The preference for including migrants in welfare benefits and services has received less attention, but could be labelled welfare universalism (Nielsen, Frederiksen, & Larsen, 2018) as one of the basic principles of universalism is that everybody permanently residing in a given state territory is entitled.

The issue of migrants' social rights has been a salient political issue in Denmark since the mid-1990s. In particular, the issue of access to social assistance has been salient and the rules have been changed several times (Andersen, 2007; Breidahl, 2012). See Table 5.1 in Chapter 5 for residence requirements for migrants' access to various benefits. Measured by the European Social Survey (ESS) in 2008, previous research has shown that native Danes by comparative standards hold attitudes that are fairly universal (Van Der Waal, De Koster, & van Oorschot, 2013); though one finds large variation across different schemes (Larsen, 2019). The latter study finds the Danish public to be much more reluctant to grant migrants equal access to benefits than to services. Less is known about what migrants think about giving migrants access to welfare benefits and services. Initially, it is easy to imagine that migrants should hold more universal, less welfare nationalist, attitudes than natives as they have a self-interest in being entitled to these club-goods of

the Danish state. The two existing studies based on the European Social Survey (ESS) do indeed find higher welfare universalism among migrants than among natives (Degen, Kuhn, & Van der Brug, 2019; Kolbe & Crepaz, 2016). The difference between natives and migrants in the ESS is statistically significant though not as sizeable as one could imagine from a simple self-interest perspective. The chapter contributes to the overall picture with results based on new data and a different design.

Our main interest is whether migrants' attitudes towards migrants' entitlement to benefit and services assimilate into those of the natives. As in the previous chapters, this will be studied by comparing attitudes between natives and migrants and across the 14 most-different groups. Unfortunately, there are no country of origin surveys for the topic in this chapter, so we cannot compare migrants living in Denmark with attitudes in the origin country. In terms of assimilation mechanisms, the main theoretical argument in the previous literature is that migrants might "enter and slam the door". This could be a matter of residing (interviewed) migrants having a self-interest in not sharing the club-goods with new incoming migrants, which could be (believed to be) attracted by access to social benefits and services (see discussion in Chapter 1). This interpretation is supported by the previous finding that migrants who have naturalized are more restrictive about migrants' access to social benefits and services than are non-naturalized migrants; the former group specifically points to citizenship as a preferred criterion for giving migrants the same social rights as natives (Degen, Kuhn, & Van der Brug, 2019; Kolbe & Crepaz, 2016). Obtained citizenship indicates that the migrant has fully entered the club, which secures his or her access to benefits and services. A more sociological interpretation is that in the process of acculturating in the destination country, migrants might begin to feel native and perceive (other) migrants as the other. Especially, the role of national identification has been discussed as a precondition of solidarity. There is a single study, using election survey data from Belgium, which finds the effect present among Marconian and Turkish; the larger the identification with Belgium, the larger support for redistribution (see Chapter 8). We will try to find these mechanisms for welfare nationalism/universalism by describing the effect of time in the destination country and our measure for national identification. This process might be moderated by a sense of ethnic solidarity that transcends narrow self-interest. Luttmer (2001) showed that such an effect of ethnic group interest was present in black Americans' attitudes on social assistance (AFDC) (Luttmer, 2001). Following this argument, Renema and Lubbers (2019) found a link between an ethnic group's reliance on social assistance and unemployment benefit in the Netherlands and attitudes towards spending on social assistance (but not unemployment benefit). However, they did not find group-belonging to mediate this effect, against their expectation. Thus, it has been difficult to find

a group-interest effect among European migrants equivalent to that of blacks in the US. The chapter contributes with analyses of the effect on attitudes towards excluding migrants for social entitlements. These attitudes might be stronger linked to group belonging than general attitudes towards spending of various benefits and schemes. In practice, we will study whether the (self-interest) effect connected to holding citizenship interacts with a measure of group belonging. We expect the effect of citizenship to be smaller, the stronger the feeling of group solidarity. Or in more popular words: Those who identify most with their ethnic group are expected to “leave the door a bit more open”.

WILLINGNESS TO INCLUDE MIGRANTS MEASURED IN THE MIFARE-DATA

The Mifare-data has a rather detailed measure of attitudes towards including and excluding migrants from social rights and benefits. The respondents were asked whether migrants respectively from their own country of origin, the European Union (EU), and migrants from outside the EU should have the same social rights as native Danes. The response categories were adopted from a European Social Survey (ESS)-item with small modifications. The wording was (4) after registering as a resident in Denmark, (3) after residing in Denmark for an extended period of time, whether or not they have worked, (2) only after they have worked and paid taxes and insurances for an extended period of time, (1) once they have become Danish (obtained nationality), and (0) they should never get the same rights. We treat the responses as a scale from 0 to 100, going from least to most inclusive. An average of 0 would mean that everybody in the group answers “they should never get the same right”. An average of 100 would mean that everybody in the group answers “after registering as a resident”. The survey asked about access to people’s pension, unemployment benefits, childcare, and social assistance. For the latter, the migrants were only asked about the entitlement of migrants for their own country of origin.

Levels of Welfare Nationalism in the Mifare-Data

Figure 11.1, left side, shows support for migrants’ access to the tax-financed flat-rate “Folkepension” (Danish people’s pension). As all our respondents are between 18 and 60 years old, none of the respondents receive this benefit at the moment. Thus, it is about a future club-good. The mean among native Danes is 42 for migrants from the EU and 37 for migrants from outside the EU, reflecting that natives are a bit more in favour of giving migrants from EU access to the Danish people’s pension. The support for giving migrants access to the Danish people’s pension is higher for all the ten migrant groups in the

Mifare-data than among natives, as expected. Especially, the migrants from Turkey are in favour of easy access, whereas there is little variation across the other nine groups. Against our expectation, the migrants distinguished little between access for migrants from their own country of origin, EU countries in general, and non-EU countries in general (see Figure 11.1, left). Thus, at least for the Danish people's pension, the migrants are in favour of easier access for all types of migrants than what is found among natives.

Figure 11.1, right side, shows support for migrants' access to Danish unemployment benefits. The natives are somewhat more supportive of migrants' access to unemployment benefits than they are about access to the Danish people's pension, which could be a matter of the insurance element in the former (Ruhs & Palme, 2018). The mean values for EU and non-EU migrants are respectively 49 and 45, which again demonstrates a little more willingness to include EU migrants. The differences between natives and migrants are less pronounced than for the pension. However, except for the migrants from the Philippines, the migrant groups are again more inclusive for all types of migrants than are native Danes. Finally, Figure 11.1, right, shows that the variations between the ten migrant groups are modest. The migrants from Turkey are still the group most in favour of including migrants but the support is not as distinct as in the case for the pension.

Figure 11.2, left, shows support for migrants' access to Danish childcare services. The natives are more willing to give access to childcare than to pension and unemployment benefits. The mean values for, respectively, EU and non-EU migrants are 75 and 72. However, except for attitudes towards the inclusion of non-EU migrants among migrants from Poland (72), all the migrant groups still indicate a higher willingness to include migrants in childcare than do natives. This is in line with Chapter 10, where we found migrants to largely emphasize the idea of state responsibility for childcare. Again, the differences across migrant groups and across attitudes to different types of migrants are moderate. The highest willingness to include migrants in childcare is found among migrants from Russia, Japan, the US, and again Turkey.

As already mentioned, the surveys have only asked for their own country of origin, when it comes to access to social assistance. The average among native Danes is 50 for EU migrants and 53 for non-EU migrants (see Figure 11.2, right side). Thus, on average, the natives are as willing to give access to social assistance as they are to give access to unemployment benefits and the people's pension. However, this average covers a political polarization where some are in favour of stronger and weaker conditions. Turning to the attitudes of the migrants, the result is again that all ten groups are more willing to give access to equal rights than are natives. Again, the migrants from Turkey are the group strongest in favour of equal access, while migrants from Poland and Romania are closer to the Danish level.

Note: Access for migrants from own country of origin, from the European Union and from outside the European Union. Migrants and natives living in Denmark (Mifare survey). Scale ranging from "They should never get the same right" (0) to "After registering as a resident" (100).
Source: Data collected from the Mifare survey (2018).

Figure 11.1 Attitudes towards migrants' access to "Folkepension" (Danish people's pension) (left) and unemployment benefit (right), (0–100 scale)

Note: Access for migrants from own country of origin, from the European Union and from outside the European Union. Migrants and natives living in Denmark (Mifare survey). Scale ranging from "They should never get the same right" (0) to "After registering as a resident" (100).
Source: Data collected from the Mifare survey (2018).

Figure 11.2 Attitudes towards migrants' access to Danish childcare services (left) and social assistance (right)

Patterns Behind the Willingness to Include Migrants

The descriptive statistics indicate that the interviewed migrants have not assimilated – fully at least – to the more restrictive position of native Danes. Still, there might be assimilation processes in place as we have no measurement of attitudes in the country of origin. In the following, we will focus on the migrants' willingness to give migrants from their own origin country equal access to benefits and services in Denmark. In Table 11.1 we present the full model but only show coefficients from the impact from the country of origin, citizenship, family status, years since first registration in Denmark, and national identification.

The models in Table 11.1 show significant variation across our (most-different) migrant groups. These models are controlled for socio-economic positions. For the background variables (not shown), we find the expected effect that receiving benefits goes together with a higher willingness to include one's own group, while higher income goes together with less willingness to include migrants. Also as expected, higher education tends to go together with more willingness to include migrants from one's own country of origin. We also find that the family status matters (included in Table 11.1). For access to pension, unemployment benefit, and social assistance we find that those living with Danish partners (mixed couples) are significantly more restrictive than migrants living alone in Denmark. For childcare, we do not find this effect. Here we find that just being a couple (whether mixed or from the same country of origin) increases the willingness to give migrants access. However, significant differences across groups remain even after taking these composition effects into account. On average (over the four different items), the migrants from Poland are the least willing to give social rights to other migrants from the same country of origin. Therefore, this group is used as a reference category. Migrants from Turkey (17.8), China (8.6), Great Britain (7.2), the Philippines (5.3), Spain (4.4), and the US (4.1) are significantly more inclined to give equal rights to the people's pension to migrants from their own country of origin. Thus, our third indicator for assimilation, absence of differences across the migrant groups, does not indicate full assimilation. The same holds for giving equal social rights to unemployment benefits, childcare, and social assistance. Most groups – also controlled for background variables – are more willing to give access than are migrants from Poland. The exception is migrants from Romania, which after control for background variables, are as unwilling to give migrants from their own country of origin access to social rights in Denmark. In the case of social assistance, the migrants from Romania are significantly less inclusive than are migrants from Poland. One could speculate that this is linked to the discriminated Roma minority in Romania, who are often portrayed as beggars and are perceived as a potential threat to

Table 11.1 Willingness to give own group's access to social benefits and service. Unstandardized coefficients (OLS) and significance level

	Access to pension ¹	Access to unemployment benefits ¹	Access to childcare ¹	Access to social assistance ¹
GBR	7.2**	8.0**	2.9 ^{ns}	9.9**
JPN	2.9 ^{ns}	2.3 ^{ns}	8.6**	2.4 ^{ns}
USA	4.1**	3.9**	9.7**	4.9**
TUR	17.8**	8.6**	11.8**	11.3**
POL	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
RUS	1.5 ^{ns}	3.9**	14.4**	1.0 ^{ns}
PHL	5.3**	4.4**	3.6 ^{ns}	4.6*
ESP	4.4**	4.6**	6.8**	7.6**
ROU	1.2 ^{ns}	0.8 ^{ns}	2.0 ^{ns}	-6.4**
CHN	8.6**	6.3**	5.0**	7.4**
Citizenship	-9.0**	-4.5**	-6.5**	-8.2**
Single	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
Same ethnic couple	1.4 ^{ns}	0.7 ^{ns}	4.7**	1.6 ^{ns}
Mixed couple	-1.8*	-1.9*	5.5**	-2.0*
Years in Denmark	0.0 ^{ns}	0.0 ^{ns}	0.1 ^{ns}	-0.0 ^{ns}
National identification (1–5 scale)	-1.1**	-0.8**	-0.5 ^{ns}	-2.1**
R ²	0.11	0.06	0.09	0.08
N	2470	2464	2472	2482

Note: Data collected from the Mifare survey (2018) ^{ns} Not significant. * Significant at 0.05. ** Significant at 0.01. ¹ Controlled for gender, age, wage-income, benefits, education (in three brackets) and employment situation (degree of employment), household composition.

social assistance schemes in other countries. However, there might be different reasons. As for the migrants from Turkey, the willingness to give access could be linked to the fact that this is the Mifare migrant group with a clear economic gain from the Danish welfare state (see Chapter 5). However, this interpretation relies on a group-interest argument (see below).

In line with previous research, we do find that having obtained citizenship correlates with having more restrictive attitudes. We find a significant effect for pension (-9.0), unemployment benefit (-4.5), childcare (-6.5), and social assistance (-8.5). Thus, obtaining citizenship potentially assimilates migrants to having restrictive attitudes, and we also find a negative relationship between

identifying with Denmark and willingness to give equal access to social rights. The effect is significant for equal rights to pension (-1.1), unemployment benefits (-0.8), and social assistance (-2.1), while insignificant for childcare. Thus, national Danish identification potentially also assimilates to more restrictive attitudes. Finally, we do not find an effect from the number of years since first registration in Denmark; however, it should be noted that both identification and citizenship go together with the length of stay.

Our final step was to analyse whether the more restrictive attitudes of those with citizenship were moderated by group identity. The latter is measured by a question about how close the interviewed migrant felt to other migrants from his or her country of origin living in Denmark. The response categories were “very close”, “close”, “moderate”, “weak”, and “not at all”; the same item as used by Renema and Lubbers (2019). As this item is strongly inversely correlated with destination-country identification, we excluded the latter from the models. In line with our expectation, we find that the effect of naturalization is moderated by group belonging. Thus, the stronger the group belonging,

Figure 11.3 Effect of naturalization on attitudes towards migrants' access to social assistance, moderated by the feeling of belonging with other migrants from the same country of origin living in Denmark

the smaller the effect from naturalization. The pattern is present for pension, unemployment benefits, and social assistance but not significant for childcare. The patterns are clearest for attitudes towards access to social assistance, which also was what Luttmer demonstrated in the US context. The predicted willingness to give access to social assistance is shown in Figure 11.3.

The predicted willingness to give migrants access to social assistance is around 67 on the 0–100 scale for those interviewed migrants who do not hold Danish citizenship – controlled for all other variables in the model (see Figure 11.3). For this group, it makes little difference whether one feels close or not to other migrants from the same country of origin living in Denmark. However, for those who do hold Danish citizenship, it makes a difference. Those who hold Danish citizenship and feel “not at all” close to other migrants from the country of origin are predicted to score 49 on the 0–100 scale, that is, they are much less willing to give access to social assistance. In contrast, those with citizenship who feel very close to other migrants from the country of origin are predicted to score 68 on the 0–100 scale, everything else being equal (see Figure 11.3). Thus, group identity does seem to moderate the assimilation towards more restrictive welfare nationalist attitudes caused by becoming a full member of the Danish club.

WILLINGNESS TO INCLUDE MIGRANTS IN THE COMCON-DATA

In the Comcon-data, the willingness to give migrants access to welfare benefits and services is measured on a Likert-scale item, where the respondent is asked to agree or disagree with the following statement: “*Refugees and migrants should have the same right to social assistance as Danes, even though they do not hold Danish citizenship*”. Figure 11.4 shows the share agreeing, where 39 per cent of the native Danes either completely agree (14 per cent) or partly agree (25 per cent). The term “social assistance” is a broad term but it has a reference to the means-tested benefits of last resort, which previous studies have found to be the most controversial for natives; especially so in Denmark (Larsen, 2019). The share agreeing is much higher among the five migrant groups; 69 per cent of the migrants from Turkey agree. The share is around 80 per cent for migrants from Pakistan and ex-Yugoslavia. Finally, the share is around 90 per cent for migrants from Iraq and Lebanon. In the Mifare-data, migrants from Turkey are among the most willing to give welfare entitlements to migrants. Thus, the migrants in the Comcon-data are clearly more willing than natives to give access to social assistance. The difference between native Danes and migrants is substantial when asked about access to social assistance. Thus, our second indication of assimilation, absence of difference between

natives and migrants, is not present. Neither is our third indication of assimilation, absence of difference between migrant groups.

Note: Migrants and natives in Denmark (Comcon survey). Per cent agree.

Source: Data collected from the Comcon survey (2015).

Figure 11.4 Attitudes towards whether refugees/migrants should have the same right to social assistance, even if not possessing Danish citizenship

The models in Figure 11.5 show substantial differences between the groups. The first binary model simply shows bivariate differences. The migrant group from Turkey is used as a reference as they are the least willing to give migrants equal access to social assistance among the Comcon groups. The other four groups are significantly more willing to give equal rights than are migrants from Turkey. The pattern is stable after control for basic background variables, that is, the “composition model”, which we take as an indication of an absence of assimilation to the more restrictive attitudes of the natives. Chapter 5 showed that among the Comcon migrants, the migrants from Turkey gained less from the Danish welfare state than the migrants from Iraq, Lebanon, and ex-Yugoslavia. However, socio-economic positions are taken into account at the individual level in these models. Thus, it is a self-interest effect framed at the group level as found by Luttmer (2001) for the attitudes of blacks towards social assistance (AFDC) in the US. The background variables (not shown) show that those with higher wages and those that receive benefits are more willing to give migrants access, while having higher education correlates with less willingness to give access. As in the Mifare-data, we find that migrants

living in mixed couples are less willing to give access to social assistance than are single migrants.

Note: Regression models comparing migrants from Iran (vertical line) to the other migrant groups. OLS-regression. Unstandardized coefficients with 95% confidence interval. N=370. “Composition” includes control for gender, age, wage-income, benefits, education (in three brackets), and employment situation (degree of employment), household composition. “Full model” includes national identification, years since first registration in Denmark, and naturalization.

Source: Data collected from the Comcon survey (2015).

Figure 11.5 Attitudes towards whether migrants should have the same right to social assistance (0–100 scale)

The mechanisms behind potential assimilation to the more restrictive attitudes of the native Danes are explored in the full model. We find the expected negative effect of holding citizenship (-0.7) but it is not statistically significant (in a model with only citizenship added, the effect is stronger, -0.26, but still not significant). We find the expected negative effect of national identification (-2.2) but again it does not turn significant. However, in a model with only identification it is significant. Thus, as in the Mifare-data, destination-country identification tends to go together with less willingness to give equal social rights to migrants, but it is a weak effect. Finally, Figure 11.5 shows that the number of years in Denmark also has the expected negative effect (-0.24 per year) though it is not statistically significant. Thus, altogether, we only find

weak and unstable effects but they go in the expected direction. An explanation of these limited signs of assimilation to the restrictive attitudes of the natives could be caused by group solidarity. Unfortunately, the Comcon survey does not include a measure of group identity as was the case in the Mifare-data.

PERSISTENT DIFFERENCES

The chapter has shown that there seem to be persistent differences between natives and migrants when it comes to attitudes towards giving migrants equal social rights. We do not have data about attitudes to equal rights to migrants in the country of origin. Thus, we do not know whether the attitudes of the migrants in Denmark are closer to those of native Danes than to those found in the country of origin, that is, our first indicator of assimilation. However, the cross-sectional data we have indicate clear differences between native Danes and the migrant groups. Thus, our second indicator does not point to assimilation. The differences are largest when it comes to cash benefits such as pension, unemployment benefits, and social assistance, and smaller when it comes to services such as childcare services, as expected. However, for all items we have analysed, the differences between natives and all migrant groups are sizeable and significant. These findings support the theoretical idea that welfare benefits and services are club-goods (or least perceived to be so), which the natives have an interest in not sharing with migrants. This interpretation is supported by the finding that indicators of acculturation go together with less willingness to include migrants. In line with previous research, we found that migrants with citizenship are more reluctant to give other migrants equal social rights. We found correlations between national identification with the destination country and less willingness to give migrants equal social rights. And we found that migrants in mixed couples, typically living together with a native, hold more restrictive attitudes than migrants living alone. These findings indicate the presence of mechanisms of assimilation, which might both be a matter of self-interest and/or identity.

Finally, we also find stable differences across the migrant groups, that is, our third indicator of assimilation. The differences between the migrant groups are difficult to explain as we have controlled for several background variables. These include gender, age, employment, wage, and received social benefits, which should control for most of the self-interest effects. Thus, within this field, there seems to be a country-origin effect, which we are not able to pinpoint. One plausible explanation is the presence of group-interest effects. It was indeed the most vulnerable groups who were most in favour of giving migrants access. In the Mifare-data, this was migrants from Turkey. In the Comcon-data this was migrants from Lebanon and Iraq. These group differences were also present after control for individual self-interest. In the Mifare-data, we were

able to directly analyse whether the more restrictive attitudes among those holding citizenship were moderated by identification with other migrants from the same country of origin living in Denmark. We found the expected effect. Thus, as Luttmer found in the American context, feelings of group belonging seem to matter, especially when it comes to social assistance. In our case, they matter for attitudes about who to include or exclude from the club-goods of the Danish welfare state.