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# **General versus program-specific welfare chauvinism**

**The case of attitudes to Eastern European workers' access to benefits and services in Denmark**

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## **Abstract:**

The article investigates how welfare chauvinism differs across various social benefits and services. The case is Danes' attitudes towards granting social rights to Eastern European workers. For some programs a clear majority favours giving social rights immediately on arrival, e.g. rights to health care, whereas permanent exclusion is favoured for other programs, e.g. child allowances given to children in country of origin. These findings support the thesis of program-specific welfare chauvinism and point to a political space for pragmatic adjustments of current EU rules. The article also finds similarity across programs. The Danish welfare chauvinist attitudes are in general fuelled by lack of shared identity with migrants and sociotropic concerns about the economic burden of migration. The article finds little evidence of narrow self-interest effects; with a notable exception of disability pensioners having stronger welfare chauvinist attitudes than other groups.

## Introduction

Welfare chauvinism is often believed to be the new winning formula for new-right-wing parties in Europe. The formula was pioneered in Denmark, where political entrepreneurs in 1995 broke with the former populist anti-tax party, Fremskridtspartiet, and created a new anti-migration, anti-EU and pro-welfare party called Dansk Folkeparti (Danish People's party). According to Schumacher & Kersbergen (2014) "*welfare chauvinism was pioneered by the Danish People's Party (DF) and this party's electoral success and influence on government policy has motivated diffusion of welfare chauvinism to the Dutch Freedom Party (PVV) and to a lesser extent to the Sweden Democrats (SD), The Finns (PS) and the French National Front (FN)*". Working on party manifesto data, Eger & Valdez (2014) show how this "welfare for our kind" has become a pivotal element among the new-right-parties in Europe. The rise of welfare chauvinism could set Europe on a different path than the US. In the US context playing the race-card typically lowered overall support progressive policies (Alesina et al., 1999; e.g. Alesina and Glaeser, 2004; e.g. Quadagno, 1994). In the European context with a popular welfare state is already in place (in contrast to the US case) and with multiparty party system making it possible to combine anti-migrant-, anti-EU- and pro-welfare-attitudes (in contrast to the two party system of the US) ethnic diversity is more likely to lead to welfare chauvinism. The new-right parties have successfully exploited these European opportunity structures and are likely to continue down this path. There are a number of examples of national legislation, which limits the social rights of migrants while maintaining rights for natives (see details for Danish case below). National parliaments are free to do so in the case of non-EU-migrants, while the EU-treaties (and their interpretation by the EU court) do protect some of the rights of EU-migrants. The latter has made the new right-wing parties able to fuse their EU-skepticism and their anti-immigration position, which has

become a serious challenge for the free movement of labour within EU; in the UK-case it even came to jeopardize the whole EU-membership.

The aim of the article is to describe to what extent the welfare chauvinism that underpins voting for new-right-wing parties is uniformly applied to all kinds of benefits and services. This question has not been studied before, primarily due to data limitations. It is, however, of crucial importance for real world policy making. If a majority rejects giving any social right to migrants, it will be close to impossible to prevent large differences in living conditions and to uphold free movement of workers within Europe. If it is only a specific kind of entitlements that fuel welfare chauvinism, one can imagine a number of efficient smaller adjustments, e.g. following the lines of the EU-offer to UK (19<sup>th</sup> of February) prior to membership referendum 23<sup>th</sup> of June 2016. In the theoretical discussion, the article distinguishes between attitudes based on self-interest rationales, solidarity rationales (recipient focused) and sociotropic rationales (state focused). In all three frameworks one can both make the case for one-dimensionality and multi-dimensionality in public attitudes towards migrants' entitlement to social rights.

## **Theory**

Most previous studies have treated welfare chauvinism as something that is applied uniformly across various social benefits and services. This both holds true for the previous empirical studies (Gerhards and Lengfeld, 2013; Mewes and Mau, 2012; Mewes and Mau, 2013; Reeskens and van Oorschot, 2012; Van der Waal et al., 2010; Van Der Waal et al., 2013) as well as for most of the previous theoretical debate (Johnston et al., 2010; Kymlicka and Banting, 2006; e.g. Miller, 1993). One could

label it “general welfare chauvinism”. The political rhetoric of the new-right parties is also geared to pose the question about welfare entitlements of migrants in this one-dimensional way. However, there are good theoretical reasons to believe that the public attitudes towards migrants’ welfare entitlements could be rather multidimensional. One could label it “program-specific welfare chauvinism”. The study of attitudes towards social entitlements of migrants is placed at a cross-road between the many studies of attitudes to migration/migrants and the many studies of attitudes to welfare schemes/redistribution. Thus, both strands of literature can be used to theorize whether the welfare chauvinist public attitudes are applied broadly across all kinds of benefits and services or vary across programs. The most coherent way to theoretically combine the two strands of literature is to look at how the traditions imagine the rationales behind the public attitudes.

*General versus program specific welfare-chauvinism in a self-interest perspective*

Reluctance to grant migrants social rights could be rooted in self-interest; following a long tradition both in studies of general attitudes to migration and general attitudes to welfare schemes. The main argument is that welfare chauvinist attitudes derive from competition (imagined or real) for resources (jobs, benefits, and services) between natives and migrants. In this setup welfare chauvinist attitudes are believed to be strongest among those who stand to lose the most if migrants are granted social rights. This is often operationalized as the lower strata of society; those in precarious jobs, unskilled workers or those living on welfare benefits. These groups are believed to face the strongest competition from migrants on the labor market (that could be attracted by generous rights) and those with strongest self-interest in not sharing limited resources (in the case migrants fall short of work). This could lead

lower strata of society to a uniform across-program rejection of granting social right to migrants, which is often what is theorized in previous studies (a pioneering article in this field was Scheve and Slaughter, 2001). In contrast, the upper strata are believed to have less to lose as face less competition on the labor market and are less dependent on welfare benefits and more to win by having cheap labor in the country.

One could, however, also imagine a more sophisticated calculation of self-interest. One of the standard arguments is that recipients of given benefits and services would be especially reluctant to include migrants in “their” scheme (e.g. Hedegaard and Larsen, 2014), which have not be studied in relation to welfare chauvinism. Other effects could also be imagined. On the one hand, granting social rights to migrants could increase immigration (or at least be imagined to do so), which would increase the competition lower strata face at the labour market. However, on the other hand, granting social rights to migrants is also a shield against low-wage competition because decent levels of services and benefits install a fairly high reservation wage (especially so in the Danish case). Unemployment benefits and social assistance would be the two schemes that provide the best shields for low-wage competition through reservation wage effects. Thus, from a self-interest perspective one should expect lower strata to at least be ambivalent about access to these two classic schemes. The self-interest of upper strata is neither straightforward as benefits and services often have an element of tax financing (especially in the Danish case). From a self-interest perspective upper strata might be better off by not granting benefits and services (as it lowers tax burden, or at least the imagined tax burden) and secures cheap labor (as it keeps low reservation wages). This could make the upper strata especially reluctant to grant unemployment benefits and social assistance to migrants as they (can be imagined to) attract the unproductive workers and hinder the low-wage service production typically consumed by the upper strata.

*General versus program specific welfare-chauvinism in a recipient focused solidarity perspective*

The second main explanation for welfare chauvinism has been the lack of shared identity with migrants. The basic argument for an across-program rejection of the rights of migrants is that support for social policies is rooted in a feeling of mutual shared identity among the members of a given nation (e.g. Miller, 1993). This is an understandable argument as the nation state formed the boundaries of the democracy, the political mobilization and the class compromises that fostered the modern welfare state. It is easy to imagine that citizens form a hardline between those outside and inside the boundaries of the nation state. In a simple sense everyone are welfare chauvinists; no one seems to imagine that e.g. the Danish people's pension should be paid to a Malaysian woman who has never been in Denmark. Thus, migrants constitute a grey zone between those who are included and excluded from the nation. A previous study found that immigrants are seen as the least deserving, in comparison with other (imagined) national groups (e.g. van Oorschot, 2006). In this framework, variations in welfare chauvinism could reflect fundamental attitudes about what it takes to become part of the nation. The distinction between ethnic and civic nation perceptions has been prominent (Janmaat, 2006; e.g. Kohn, 1944) and previous research has often assumed those with ethnic nation perceptions to be uniformly against any kind of inclusion of migrants.

If welfare chauvinism is rooted in lack of solidarity with recipients, one could, however, also expect some cross-program variation. One of the standard arguments has been that the public make moral judgments about whether the target groups of the different schemes deserve to be help or not. One of the important criteria (besides shared identity)- is whether the members of target group of a given scheme are seen as been in control or out of control of their situation (Larsen, 2006; Petersen,

2009; Van Oorschot, 2005). Sickness and old-age is typically seen as something uncontrollable, which foster public support, while unemployment is typically seen as something more controllable, which erode public support (though it depends a little on the unemployment level and the structure of the labor market). Another common argument is that the programmatic structures of the various schemes shape the deservingness judgments. The standard argument is that more universal schemes, covering larger groups of citizens, generate public support due to the target group consisting of “normal people”, whereas as more residual schemes, covering only the weakest citizens, erode public support due to the target group consisting of “the deviant” (Larsen, 2006; Larsen and Dejgaard, 2013; Rothstein, 1998). How the insurance design influence in feeling of solidarity/shared identity with recipients of these benefits and services is less theorized and studied. In previous studies these arguments have been used to explain the relative low level of welfare chauvinism found in the Nordic countries, at least when measured by a single item (Crepaz and Damron, 2009; Van Der Waal et al., 2013). Following this logic of the “image of the target group”, one often expects most hostility towards granting access to target benefits.

#### *General versus program specific welfare-chauvinism in a soiotropic perspective*

To these two main explanations one could add a third explanation, which I will label sociotropic reasoning. The argument is that welfare chauvinism could (also) be rooted in concerns about the function of overall society. Within election research voting rooted in the overall (perceived) need of the national economy over one’s own pocket book is labelled sociotropic voting (e.g. Kinder and Kiewiet, 1981). This perspective is also found in studies of general attitudes to migration (see Hainmueller and Hopkins, 2014 for an excellent metastudy) but can also be found within the welfare state literature. In



the latter tradition, welfare schemes are seen as functional arrangements that take care of the risks that need to be covered, as another insurance company, and the tasks that need to be done, as another service provider (e.g. Barr, 2001). Thus, welfare chauvinism might not (only) be rooted in calculation of self-interest or absence of (recipient focused) solidarity feelings but could also be rooted in perceptions about migration being dysfunctional for the welfare state. In such a framework, the (perceived) costs and benefits for overall society of granting social rights to migrants is likely to hold a prominent place. An overall negative assessment of the societal impact of migration on the welfare state could lead to an overall across program rejection of granting social rights to migrants. The other way around, seeing migrants as contributing to the survival of the welfare state would lead to less general welfare chauvinism. Hjorth (2015) e.g. shows that Swedes are more reluctant to give to Bulgarians (often imagined as those with low human capital) than to Dutch (often imagined as those with high human capital).

If welfare chauvinism is rooted in sociotropic concerns, one could, however, also imagine cross-program variations. Granting access to some schemes could be seen as more functional and less dysfunctional than granting access to other schemes. One of the standard arguments in the literature has been that universal organized programs are (or at least perceived to be) more functional and less dysfunctional due to low levels of bureaucracy, low risk of welfare fraud and moderate influence on work incentives (in contrast to targeted schemes). This would again make an argument for less reluctance to give access to universal schemes. It has, however, also been argued that universal schemes could increase welfare chauvinism. The problem is that immigrants have direct access to these benefits and services; in contrast to means-tested benefits and services only giving to migrants in need and insurance based benefits and services only giving to migrants that have paid the insurance. This kind of easy access could function as magnet for migrants with low human capital (e.g. the Bulgarians

in Hjort's study). Following this argument Bay and Pedersen show that (imagined) inclusion of migrants leads to much lower levels of support when Norwegians in survey experiments are asked about a basic income scheme, the ultimate universal scheme (2006). This could make the public less inclined to grant access to universal schemes. The article will nuance this classic debate about universalism by distinguishing between benefits and services. The logic is that in contrast to benefits, services cannot through remittances be channeled to the country of origin; as in the sensitive case of child-allowances paid to children living in the country of origin (see below). Services are consumed in the host country and can easily be seen as functional ways to make society work.

### *The difficult distinctions*

Empirically it is difficult to keep the three theoretical frameworks apart. The strong link between socio-economic position and welfare chauvinism found in previous studies (e.g. Mewes and Mau, 2012; Reeskens and van Oorschot, 2012; Van Oorschot and Uunk, 2007) could both be a matter of self-interest, ethnic nation perceptions or sociotropic concerns. One could even argue that what characterizes a winning political formula is exactly the ability to speak to self-interest, feelings of solidarity and rational thinking about what is functional for the overall society at the same time. Therefore the first thesis (*H1*) is simply that public attitudes towards granting migrant social rights are fairly uniform across programs. As for the prediction of multi-dimensionality in public attitudes, it is also difficult empirically to distinguish between the potential causes of cross-program variations. It is a classic problem that it is difficult to distinguish the effects connected to the risks that a given program covers (e.g. sickness versus unemployment), the effects connect to institutional structure of a given program (universal schemes versus targeted schemes) and the self-interest (especially if measured as potential insurance e.g. against sickness and old-age). Therefore the second thesis is simply thesis that

public attitudes towards granting social rights to migrants vary significantly across programs (*H2*). It is a task for future research to disentangle the details of the causes of program-specific welfare chauvinism.

### **The Danish case**

In terms of politics and public policies, Denmark is often used as a clear-cut example of general welfare chauvinism. The Danish new right wing party, Dansk Folkeparti, has grown from an electoral basis of 7.4 percent in the 1998-election to 21.1 percent in the 2015-election; making it the largest Danish right-wing party. The Danish People Party even obtained 27 percent of the votes for the EU parliament election in 2014. The party has never been in office but has functioned as the parliamentary basis of the right-wing government in office from 2001 to 2011 and again from 2015 and onwards. This coalition has especially changed the social assistance scheme. The changes were presented as having the double purpose of creating better economic job-incentives for non-Western migrants and limiting the inflow of migrants from non-Western countries. The most dramatic change, firstly, was the establishment of a new social scheme for migrants (2002), who within the last 8 years have not been seven year in the country (carrying the strange name “Start help”). The benefit was 35 to 50 percent lower than ordinary social assistance, depending on household composition (the largest reductions were for people with children). Secondly, the government introduced cuts in the ordinary social assistance scheme for families where both partners were on social assistance (2002). The majority of these families had a non-Western background. The 2002-reform reduced the normal social assistance for this group by some 1000 DKK per month (135 €) after six months. The government also introduced a ceiling (in order to reduce the use of additional support), which for some families meant a reduction of

up to 2580 DKK (about 350 €) per month. Furthermore if a wife was considered to be a housewife unavailable for the labour market (typically imagined as a migrant), social assistance was withdrawn and replaced by a housewife supplement. Finally, these measures were in 2005 supplemented with a 300-hours-rule that demanded 300 hours of ordinary work (within the last two years) if two spouses (with work ability) were to receive social assistance. These measures were in place until 2011 when a Social Democratic government came into office and abolished these rules, which it in the electoral campaign successfully labelled “poverty benefits”. Once back in office in 2015, the right-wing government re-introduced the lower levels for newly arrived migrants (2015), the ceiling for spouses on ordinary social assistance (2016) and a modified version of the 300-hours-rule (2016).

In principle the EU-treaties guarantee the free movement of EU-workers and their access to benefits and services. In practice, however, the social rights of EU-citizens are established in a complex interaction between the EU-court, the EU commission and the member states. In the Danish case, a few rules were changes when the country entered EU in 1972; most importantly a demand of 40 years of residence (or employment) in Denmark for obtaining the full universal people pension. Besides these first adjustments EU migrants’ access to benefits and services was rarely on the political agenda. This changed with the EU east-enlargements. The Danish government commissioned a report, “Danske sociale ydelser i lyset af udvidelsen med EU” (Danish social benefits in the light of the EU enlargement, published in April 2003), which made an overview of all the potential rights Eastern European worker could obtain in Denmark. As most of the other EU-members, Denmark used the possibility to apply a five year transition rule. For the ten new EU-members, workers could only enter Denmark if they had a signed contract for full-time work on Danish labour market conditions

(established in the collective agreement between employers and unions). In the case, they lost the contracted job they were not allowed to stay in Denmark.

These transition rules were slowly phased out and by 2009 Eastern-EU citizens got the same rights as other EU-citizens to work in Denmark. This started a new heated debate (autumn 2010), which made the government commission yet another report, “Rapport om optjeningsprincipper i forhold til danske velfærdsydelser” (Report about entitlement principles in relation to Danish welfare benefits, published in March 2011). It vigorously describes EU-migrants access to social benefits and services and possibilities to restrict them within the boundaries of the EU-treaties. As in the UK, the most heated issue was about child allowances given to children of temporary Eastern European workers living in the country of origin. The response of the government was to introduce a rule (2010) that required two years of residence (or employment) in Denmark (within the last ten years) before full child-allowances were granted to these children. The government also reduced child-allowances of parents with more than two children (based on the miscalculation that migrants have larger families). In April 2013, the EU-commission stated that the Danish two-year-rule was illegal. Therefore the rule was abolished in June 2013, which started yet another political debate on the issue; the right-wing parties, now in opposition, demanding that the Social-democratic led government should test the position of the EU-commission in the EU-court. The Social democrats also abolished the third-child-rule but replaced ceiling to exclude high-income earners. Eastern European workers’ easier access to unemployment benefits became another political issue. Danish workers are, besides insurance payment, required 52 weeks of work within the last three years before unemployment benefits can be obtained. According to the EU-commission, EU-workers entitled to unemployment benefits in the country of origin (regardless of softer entitlement criteria) should be granted full unemployment benefits in Denmark (under the

condition of insurance payment in Denmark). In order to reduce such “problems” Denmark installed a practice that demanded three months of work and insurance payment in Denmark before unemployment benefits could be obtained. The EU-commission has also deemed this rule illegal but it has not yet been changed.

Judged by these policy changes the Danish case, and the public attitudes that underpin it, could seem like a best case for general welfare chauvinism. Especially so, as national economic studies clearly indicate that Denmark gain economically from EU-migration (e.g. Hansen et al., 2015). In the 2015 election campaign the winning right-wing government committed itself to take a tougher stand towards the EU-commission and work for changes in the EU-legislation. Therefore the EU-offer to UK about in-work benefits was celebrated as a political success that potentially could solve a number of sensitive Danish issue. Denmark had declared that it will use the new possibility to index child-allowances (to living cost in the country of origin) and elements in the EU-offer to the UK.

## **Data and method**

The study of welfare chauvinism is in its early stages and has so far relied on a few general survey items. Most studies have used the one item available in the European Social Survey (ESS), *“Thinking of people coming to live in [country] from other countries, when do you think they should obtain the same rights to social benefits and services as citizens already living here?”* (Mewes and Mau, 2012; Mewes and Mau, 2013; Reeskens and van Oorschot, 2012; Van Der Waal et al., 2013), which implicit carries the assumption that the welfare chauvinism cut across all types of migrants and across all types of benefits and services. Measured by this ESS-item Danes do not stand out as particular chauvinistic.

As in other European countries, the most common answer is that migrants should obtain the same right “once they have become citizens” (36 percent) or “after worked and paid taxes at least a year” (32 percent). But there is also a fairly large share that answers that rights should be granted “immediately on arrival” (14 percent) or “after a year, whether or not have worked” (16 percent). The size of these latter two non-chauvinist positions is only surpassed by Sweden and Israel (among the 29 countries in the ESS data). This could reflect a broad public opposition within Denmark to the policies implemented by the right-wing governments in office but it could also reflect large cross-program variations that cannot be studied by means of the ESS-item. Therefore national data was collected, which enabled us to break chauvinist attitudes down by programs. We asked about the social rights of workers coming from Eastern Europe in order to link to the questions in the contemporary national debate; in contrast to the ESS question about “people from other countries”. The following introduction text was used *“In relation to migration of East European workforce it has been discussed, when and to what extent they should have the same rights as Danish citizens. When do you think workers from Eastern Europe should have the same rights as citizens that already live here?”*. We used the same response categories as in the ESS; i.e. 1) immediately on arrival, 2) after living in Denmark for a year, whether or not they have worked, 3) only after they have worked and paid taxes for at least a year, 4) once they have become a Danish citizen and 5) they should never get the same rights.

Four service schemes were included in the data; 1) right to treatment at hospitals, 2) right to child-care institutions, 3) right to primary and secondary schooling for children living in the country and 4) right to university schooling for children living in the country. All of the four services are organized along universal principles, i.e. rights are giving to all with residence (independent on economic income), the services are paid by general taxes (except an additional user fee in child-care

facilities) and the services are fairly uniform and adequate throughout the country. In terms of social expenditures these four programs constitute a large part of the Danish welfare state (elderly care facilities are not included as most Eastern European workers come in working age). Four benefits scheme were also included; 1) right to child-allowance to children living in Denmark, 2) right to child-allowances to children living in the country of origin, 3) right to unemployment benefits and 4) right to social assistance. The child-allowance is a universal benefit (though a ceiling was implemented in 2012), unemployment benefits is an insurance benefits (voluntary insurance, though tax subsidized) and social assistance is a classic means-tested benefit.

The survey data was collected among 18-74 years old in the period from 28<sup>th</sup> of November 2014 to 2<sup>nd</sup> of January 2015. We used YUUGOV standing representation web panel with a total of 2287 interviews. Judged by socio-economic composition the sample is close to representative but in the analysis to come the data is weighted by sex, age (four groups), geography (five regions) and education (eight groups); primarily it corrects for too few without any education (above primary and secondary level) in the sample. If H1 (general welfare chauvinism) is right, one should expect little variation across programs, if H2 (program-specific welfare chauvinism) is right, large variation across programs should be found. This proposition is tested by means of simple descriptive analyses in the next section.

If H1 is right one should also expect similar correlations with explanatory variables across programs. If H2 is right, one could expect the opposite. As explanatory variables were used: 1) socio-economic position measured by type of occupation and type of received benefit (in order to capture self-interest effects); 2) agreement or disagreement with a statement about migration being a threat to Danish culture (in order to capture ethnic nationhood perceptions, wording “*Migration pose a serious threat to our national culture/identity*”; five point likert scale); 3) perception of migrants being net-



winner or net-losers on the Danish welfare state (in order to capture a sociotropic concern; wording “*Migration and refugees have come to Denmark for many various reasons. Some work and pay taxes but at the same time they also use healthcare and welfare benefits/services. Do you think migrations and refugees in general receive more than they contribute with*”; 0 – 10 point scale) and 4) agreement or disagreement in the statement that EU citizens’ right to receive Danish welfare benefits and services is a serious threat to the Danish welfare state (in order to capture another sociotropic concern; wording “*The rights of EU-citizens to receive Danish welfare benefits/services pose a serious threat to the Danish welfare state*”; five point likert scale). In order to ease interpretation of estimates and comparison across models simple OLS-regression is applied. The dependent variable is welfare chauvinism measured on a scale from 1 (“access immediately on arrival”) to 5 (“never”); i.e. higher values indicates higher welfare chauvinism, see Table 1. Ordinal logistic models give very similar results (see Table A2 in online appendix); the few differences that were found between the OLS- and the Ordinal-logistic-models are stated in the text.

### **Welfare chauvinism across benefits and services**

The distributions on the dependent variables are shown in Table 1 (schemes are ranged after degree of welfare chauvinism measured by mean). The simple bivariate results indicate a large variation across schemes. There is a majority, 56 percent, which is willing to give Eastern European workers access to treatments at hospitals immediately on arrival. There is also a majority, 53 percent, which is willing to give immediate access to primary and secondary schooling for the children of Eastern European workers. If one adds the share answering “after living in Denmark for a year, whether or not they have

worked” there is also a majority (42 percent plus 9 percent) in favour of given access to the child-care institutions. Thus, there seem to be widespread support for giving access to the Nordic universal service schemes; a much larger support than what could be inferred from the Danish answers to the general ESS-item. In terms of services, the exception is access to university education. Here the public is somewhat divided and more in line with the ESS-data; 30 percent answer immediately on arrival, nine percent answer after a year, 30 percent answer only after worked and paid taxes a year, 27 percent answer once they have become Danish citizens and finally five percent answer never.

Table 1: Public attitudes to when workers from East Europe should have the same rights to various welfare schemes as Danish citizens (n=2287).

|   | Immedia-<br>tely on<br>arrival | After<br>living in<br>Denmark<br>for a year,<br>whether or<br>not they<br>have<br>worked | Only after<br>they have<br>worked<br>and paid<br>taxes for<br>at least a<br>year | Once they<br>have<br>become a<br>Danish<br>citizen | They<br>should<br>never get<br>the same<br>rights | Total | Mean<br>(1-5) |
|---|--------------------------------|--|--|--|---|-------|---------------|
| Treatment at<br>hospitals   | 56                             | 7  | 22   | 12   | 3   | 100   | 2.0           |
| Primary and<br>secondary schooling<br>for children living in<br>the country | 53                             | 7  | 20   | 16   | 4   | 100   | 2.1           |
| Child-care<br>institutions  | 42                             | 9  | 29   | 17   | 4   | 100   | 2.3           |
| University schooling<br>for children living in<br>the country               | 30                             | 9  | 30   | 27   | 5   | 100   | 2.7           |
| Child-allowance to<br>children living in the<br>country:                    | 15                             | 9  | 38   | 31   | 7   | 100   | 3.1           |
| Social assistance:  | 9                              | 9  | 43   | 30   | 8   | 100   | 3.2           |
| Unemployment<br>benefits  | 14                             | 8  | 51   | 22   | 5   | 100   | 3.9           |
| Child-allowances to<br>children living in the<br>country of origin          | 3                              | 3  | 17   | 23   | 53  | 100   | 4.2           |

The Danes are more reluctant to give access to the four different kinds of benefits, which also have been the subject to intense national policy debates. Only 15 percent think that Eastern European workers' children living in Denmark immediately should be given the same rights to child-allowance as Danish citizens. The public is also reluctant to give immediate access to social assistance and unemployment benefits; only nine and 14 percent support access immediately on arrival. The most common answer for child allowances (to children living in Denmark), social assistance and unemployment benefits is that the same right should only be given after Eastern European workers have worked and paid taxes for at least a year or once they have become Danish citizens, i.e. clearly a conditional access, which is also the typical response in the ESS. Finally, there is clear evidence that giving child-allowances to children living in the country of origin is highly contested; a majority, 53 percent, indicates that Eastern European workers should never be given such rights. Thus, on this issue the public holds much stronger welfare chauvinist attitudes than what was found in the ESS-data.

The 491 respondents who would vote for Danish people's party (if there was a general election tomorrow) are less inclined to give migrants access to all eight welfare rights (see online appendix Table A1). However, even within this mobilized group there is cross-program variation. 38 percent and 35 percent of the DF-voters would grant Eastern European workers immediate access to treatment at hospitals and access to primary and secondary schooling. These DF-voters are also clearly against sending child-allowances to children living in country of origin. However, on the other seven items only small minorities of DF-voters indicated that access should never be granted (range from seven to 16 percent). Thus, it is not a matter of never granting EU-migrants social rights. Even for this mobilized group it is a matter of under what conditions social rights should be granted.

These bivariate distributions support the argument that welfare chauvinism varies across programs. However, this does not mean that being welfare chauvinist in one area is unrelated to being welfare chauvinist in another; it could be (large) variations across a more general attitude. Unsurprisingly, this is what standard factor analyses suggest. Factor analyses (principal component, rotated) indicate a strong first dimension (eigenvalue 4.72) and a weaker second dimension (eigenvalue 1.09). The second dimension contains attitude to the question about child-allowances to children living in country of origin, which is special sensitive issue. Thus, based on factor analyses one could conclude that the Danish attitude structure is one- or two-dimensional. A more interesting question, however, is whether correlations with explanatory variables are the same across programs as it might help explain some of the large across program variation.

### **Variations in correlations with explanatory variables**

Two consistent across-program correlations are found in the models. The first is a strong and significant correlation between perceiving migration as a threat to Danish culture and welfare chauvinism; for all eight items positive correlation is found (ranking from 0.097 to 0.23; see Table 2). In the case of access to hospital treatment it is e.g. estimated that a person who “strongly agree” (5) in migration being a threat to Danish culture score 0.76 point higher (4 times 0.19) than a person who “strongly disagree” (1) in the statement. This supports the proposition that absence of shared identity establishes welfare chauvinism across programs. The other consistent across program finding is a strong and significant correlation between judgments of migrants’ contribution to the Danish welfare state and welfare chauvinism; on all eight items those thinking migrants put more in than they take out

hold less welfare chauvinist attitudes. It is e.g. estimated that a person who indicates that migrants put much more in than they take out (answering 10 on the scale) scores 0.64 lower on the scale for access to hospitals than does a person who indicates that migrants take much more out than they put in (answering 0 on the scale); 10 times  $-0.064$ . This supports the proposition that sociotropic concerns about the economic burden of migration can establish welfare chauvinism across programs. The other measure of sociotropic concern, the perception of EU-laws being a threat to the Danish welfare state, is less uniformly correlated with welfare chauvinism. The link between EU-threat and welfare chauvinism is strongest for attitudes to child allowances given to children in the country of origin (0.22) as one would expect from the controversy between the Danish governments and the EU-commission. There is a weaker, but still significant, correlation between this concern and reluctance to give access to social assistance (0.16), child-allowances in host-country (0.15), unemployment benefit (0.12) and universities (0.13). The concern of EU-laws being a threat to the Danish welfare states is weaker correlated with attitudes to given access to hospitals, child-care and schools; though still significant in OLS-regression for child-care and for all three areas in ordinal logistic models (see online appendix Table A2).

Table 2: OLS-regression. Beta-coefficients (bold significant at minimum 0.05-level; n=2287)

|                                | Hospitals    | Child-care   | Schools       | University   | Unemployment benefits: | Child-allowance (host) | Social assistance: | Child-allowance (origin) |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Constant                       | 1.784        | 1.414        | 1.754         | 1.444        | 2.232                  | 2.185                  | 2.597              | 3.171                    |
| Gender                         | <b>.147</b>  | <b>.235</b>  | <b>0.204</b>  | <b>.178</b>  | .038                   | 0.03                   | 0.002              | <b>-.115</b>             |
| Age                            | <b>-.015</b> | <b>-.007</b> | <b>-0.014</b> | -.004        | -.002                  | <b>-0.005</b>          | <b>-0.007</b>      | <b>.006</b>              |
| Blue collar unskilled          | .199         | .166         | 0.197         | .035         | <b>.183</b>            | 0.109                  | 0.02               | -.014                    |
| Blue collar skilled            | .125         | .096         | 0.103         | .047         | .071                   | 0.112                  | -0.049             | -.007                    |
| White-collar low               | <b>.188</b>  | .088         | 0.064         | .154         | .060                   | 0.055                  | 0.067              | .055                     |
| Whiter-collar high             | Ref.         | Ref.         | Ref.          | Ref.         | Ref.                   | Ref.                   | Ref.               | Ref.                     |
| self employed                  | .054         | .072         | -0.005        | .041         | -.047                  | -0.052                 | 0.069              | -.180                    |
| Unemployed (insured)           | .016         | -.012        | -0.005        | .084         | -.050                  | -0.233                 | -0.154             | -.081                    |
| Unemployed (social assistance) | -.041        | .282         | 0.112         | .020         | .174                   | 0.036                  | -0.21              | .241                     |
| Disability benefits            | .020         | <b>.282</b>  | <b>0.276</b>  | <b>.265</b>  | <b>.180</b>            | <b>0.281</b>           | 0.053              | -.086                    |
| Pensioner (and early retired)  | .075         | .170         | 0.162         | -.005        | -.035                  | -0.009                 | 0.026              | <b>-.161</b>             |
| Students                       | -.072        | .064         | -0.126        | -.088        | .057                   | 0.015                  | 0.022              | .020                     |
| Others                         | .075         | .088         | 0.132         | <b>.272</b>  | .157                   | 0.159                  | 0.119              | -.018                    |
| Cultural threat (1-5)          | <b>.190</b>  | <b>.229</b>  | <b>0.191</b>  | <b>.232</b>  | <b>.139</b>            | <b>0.208</b>           | <b>0.155</b>       | <b>.097</b>              |
| Contribution (0-10)            | <b>-.064</b> | <b>-.074</b> | <b>-0.063</b> | <b>-.070</b> | <b>-.069</b>           | <b>-0.091</b>          | <b>-0.075</b>      | <b>-.062</b>             |
| EU-welfare threat (1-5)        | .034         | <b>.059</b>  | 0.04          | <b>.133</b>  | <b>.119</b>            | <b>0.151</b>           | <b>0.16</b>        | <b>.224</b>              |

The correlations with socio-economic positions are scattered. Taken perception of cultural threat and sociotropic concerns into account, there are few independent effects from socio-economic position on welfare chauvinism. The unskilled and skilled blue-collar workers do seem to hold more welfare chauvinist attitudes than do the well-educated high white collar workers (in general the group with the least welfare chauvinist attitudes, therefore used as reference group). However, the difference only turns significant in the case of access to unemployment benefits. Thus, the argument that blue-collar workers from a self-interest perspective could perceive unemployment benefits as a shield against wage competition, which could lower welfare chauvinism, received not support. In fact this was the only benefit where blue-collar workers were significant more welfare chauvinist than were higher white collar workers.

Those living on public benefits are neither much more welfare chauvinist than are high white collar workers. Those living on unemployment benefits, social assistance and student allowances are actually a little bit less welfare chauvinist but the differences are not significant. Pensioners are significantly less welfare chauvinist in terms of child-allowances to children in county of origin than are high white collar workers (-0.16). Thus, it is difficult to find indication of strong self-interest effects; one cannot even find a correlation between the type of benefits received and welfare chauvinism in that area; students are e.g. not more reluctant to give access to universities than are other groups. However, there is one exception to this absence of narrow self-interest effects. Those living on disability benefits, often long term sick people fully dependent on the welfare state, are more inclined to hold welfare chauvinist attitudes. This effect is significant for attitudes to access to child-care (0.28), schools (0.28), universities (0.27), unemployment benefits (0.18) and child-allowances in host country (0.28); after taken difference in cultural and sociotropic perceptions into account. In ordinal logistic



regression the difference between disability pensioners and lower white collar workers does not turn significant for schools and university. Nevertheless, there is clear indications of higher welfare chauvinism among disability pensioners.

## **Conclusion and discussion**

The article contributes with knowledge about how welfare chauvinist attitudes differ across welfare schemes. This is rare knowledge as most previous studies have relied on a single item from the ESS. The Danish case demonstrates that despite long term exposure to the anti-EU-, anti-migration and pro-welfare-formula, the public has not adopted an across-program general reluctance to give social rights to EU-migrants. The main finding is a large variation across programs, which supports thesis H1. A majority of Danes was in favour of giving Eastern European workers immediate access to Nordic universal welfare services such as hospital treatment, child-care and primary and secondary schooling. In these areas the Danish public is less welfare chauvinist than what one would infer from the answers given to the general ESS-question. This is not a trivial finding as service expenditures constitute a very large part of the Danish welfare state and access to such services improves migrants' living conditions significantly. In terms of services, the exception was access to free university education, where the public was more divided.

The majority of Danes favoured more conditional access to unemployment benefits, social assistance and child-allowances given to children living in Denmark. The two most used answers were “only after they have worked and paid taxes for at least a year” and “once they become Danish citizens”. This is more in line with what one could infer from the ESS-data and reflects a situation,

where the Danish public (as most other publics throughout Europe) is in opposition to the current EU-legislation. Making access to unemployment benefits conditional on a year of work in Denmark, the most common answer, could reflect that the public adheres to the idea of insurance paid in Denmark (in opposition to the current EU-legislation and the position of the EU-commission). Applying the same condition for access to social assistance could reflect that Danes are in favour of imposing some of the same rules on EU-migrants as Danish governments have imposed on non-EU-migrants. However, applying the same condition of one year of work, favoured by 38 percent, or the citizenship criterion, favoured by 31 percent, on child-allowance given to migrants' children living in Denmark seems at odds with all previous policies. Since the introduction in 1987 child-allowance has been a flat-rate grant given to all residents with children below 18 years old (though with minor modification made in 2010 and 2012). Favouring conditionality on this program indicates the limit to the theoretical argument that universal benefits generate their own support (as previously also argued by Bay and Pedersen, 2006) (see also Andersen, 2015, for general attitudes to conditionality for child-allowances).

Finally, the article shows that child-allowances given to children in the country of origin is highly contested; too a much larger extent than what one would infer from the Danes' answers to the general ESS-items. This could reflect the controversy between the Danish government and the EU-commission on this issue but it could also reflect a perception of a more fundamental violation of the residence criterion on which universalism in the Nordic countries and the UK rest. The future possibility to index these allowances to living conditions in the country of origin is unlikely to be enough to hamper these attitudes.

The large variation across programs does not mean that welfare chauvinist attitudes cannot be studied as a general phenomenon as it has been done in the previous studies. The Danish welfare

chauvinist attitudes did go together across programs and the study did find a similarity in correlations with background variables. This lends some support to H2. Perceptions of cultural threat and perceptions of migrants being an economic burden were correlated with welfare chauvinism in all areas. The new-right-wing parties' mobilization of welfare chauvinism based on xenophobic attitudes – or at least ethnic nationhood perceptions – is well-known. The mobilization of welfare chauvinism based on sociotropic concerns about the survival of the welfare state is also well-known but less empirical explored. The article demonstrates that these sociotropic concerns seem to be of high importance for understanding the welfare chauvinist attitudes; at least in the Danish case (though cultural threats might in general be more important for new-right-wing voting in Europe, Lucassen and Lubbers, 2012). This definitely does deliver opportunities for new-right-wing parties as they can mobilise outside the xenophobic segments. This is what has happened in Denmark as there is no indication that Danes in general have turned more xenophobic or more national conservative (Larsen, 2016). However, welfare chauvinism rooted in sociotropic concerns also delivers opportunities for pragmatic policy debates with point of departure in the actual pros and cons of intra-EU-migration. Finally, the article found little evidence that narrow personal self-interest has driven Danes to neglect the social rights of migrants though it has been one of the standard arguments in previous research; at least theoretically. Some of the standard explanations of such findings have been the presence of other motives behind attitudes or the inability of surveys to reveal self-interest-effects. One could, however, also point to the fact that self-interest is actually fairly difficult to calculate on this matter; both for lower and upper strata. The exception is disability pensioners who know that they often will be dependent on the Danish welfare state for most of their life.

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## Online appendix

Table A1: Public attitudes to when workers from East Europe should have the same rights as Danish citizens. Voters of Danish people's party (n=491)

|  | Immedia<br>tely on<br>arrival | After<br>living in<br>Denmark<br>for a<br>year,<br>whether<br>or not<br>they<br>have<br>worked | Only after<br>they have<br>worked<br>and paid<br>taxes for<br>at least a<br>year | Once<br>they<br>have<br>become a<br>Danish<br>citizen | They<br>should<br>never get<br>the same<br>rights | Total | Mean<br>(1-5) |
|--|-------------------------------|--|--|---|---|-------|---------------|
| Treatment at hospitals   | 38                            | 7  | 30   | 19  | 7   | 100   | 2.5           |
| Primary and secondary schooling for children living in the country | 35                            | 7  | 24   | 27  | 7   | 100   | 2.7           |
| Child-care institutions  | 20                            | 9  | 35   | 28  | 8   | 100   | 2.9           |
| University schooling for children living in the country            | 13                            | 5  | 33   | 40  | 9   | 100   | 3.3           |
| Unemployment benefits  | 5                             | 4  | 49   | 32  | 11  | 100   | 3.4           |
| Child-allowance to children living in the country                  | 4                             | 4  | 33   | 45  | 14  | 100   | 3.6           |
| Social assistance:   | 2                             | 4  | 36   | 41  | 16  | 100   | 3.7           |
| Child-allowances to children living in the country of origin       | 0                             | 1  | 8  | 24  | 68  | 100   | 4.6           |

Table A2: Ordinal logistic regression. Odds-ratios (bold significant at minimum 0.05-level; n = 2287)

|                                | Hospitals    | Child-care   | Schools      | University   | Unemployment benefits | Child-allowance (host) | Social assistance | Child-allowance (origin) |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Gender                         | <b>-.233</b> | <b>-.359</b> | <b>-.352</b> | <b>-.265</b> | -.019                 | -.043                  | -.003             | <b>0.25</b>              |
| Age                            | <b>-.025</b> | <b>-.012</b> | <b>-.024</b> | -.006        | -.007                 | <b>-.011</b>           | <b>-.014</b>      | <b>.013</b>              |
| Blue collar unskilled          | .014         | .141         | .222         | -.148        | .231                  | .055                   | -.100             | -.148                    |
| Blue collar skilled            | -.104        | .027         | .057         | -.144        | .006                  | .135                   | -.201             | -.231                    |
| White-collar low               | Ref.         | Ref.         | Ref.         | Ref.         | Ref.                  | Ref.                   | Ref.              | Ref.                     |
| Whiter-collar high             | -.291        | -.121        | -.078        | -.234        | -.104                 | -.100                  | -.143             | -.107                    |
| self employed                  | -.214        | .014         | -.158        | -.201        | -.259                 | -.245                  | -.052             | <b>-.618</b>             |
| Unemployed (insured)           | -.277        | -.081        | .045         | -.027        | -.134                 | -.414                  | -.274             | -.421                    |
| Unemployed (social assistance) | -.587        | .203         | -.065        | -.198        | .344                  | .018                   | -.506             | .329                     |
| Disability benefits            | <b>-.420</b> | <b>.344</b>  | .321         | .216         | .203                  | <b>.495</b>            | -.069             | -.368                    |
| Pensioner (and early retired)  | -.250        | .146         | .179         | -.257        | -.211                 | -.082                  | -.082             | <b>-.543</b>             |
| Students                       | <b>-.425</b> | .012         | -.292        | -.327        | -.038                 | -.089                  | -.064             | -.172                    |
| Others                         | -.026        | .087         | .146         | .207         | .060                  | .068                   | .006              | -.266                    |
| Cultural threat (1-5)          | <b>.341</b>  | <b>.371</b>  | <b>.324</b>  | <b>.354</b>  | <b>.270</b>           | <b>.376</b>            | <b>.300</b>       | <b>.207</b>              |
| Contribution (0-10)            | <b>-.110</b> | <b>-.125</b> | <b>-.104</b> | <b>-.118</b> | <b>-.154</b>          | <b>-.171</b>           | <b>-.158</b>      | <b>-.114</b>             |
| EU-welfare threat (1-5)        | <b>.129</b>  | <b>.140</b>  | <b>.106</b>  | <b>.232</b>  | <b>.245</b>           | <b>.298</b>            | <b>.331</b>       | <b>.450</b>              |