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Abstract

The "refugee gap" in the economic status of refugees relative to other migrants might be due to the experience of being a refugee, or to government policy, which often denies the right to work during lengthy application processes. In Denmark before the Second World War, however, refugees were not treated differently from other migrants, motivating our use of a database of the universe of Danish naturalizations between 1851 and 1960. We consider labor market performance and find that immigrants leaving conflicts fared no worse than other migrants, conditional on other characteristics, within this relatively homogenous sample of those who attained citizenship. Refugees must be provided with the same rights as other migrants if policy aims to ensure their economic success.

JEL Codes: F22, J61, N33, N34

Keywords: Asylum policy, Denmark, immigration, naturalizations, refugee gap

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1 Introduction

In the wake of the European refugee crisis of the late 2010s, it seems pertinent to take up the role of refugees in society and how they fare economically compared to other types of immigrants. Today, refugees are frequently placed in camps and might receive modest support but are often prevented from providing for themselves. Eventually, they might be returned to their country of origin, either because their application for asylum is rejected, or because it is considered to be safe enough for them to return. Alternatively, they are eventually given permission to stay, although this process can be extremely lengthy, and the path to citizenship even more so. This means that refugees will often be placed at a natural disadvantage compared to other immigrants, making it difficult to disentangle the effect of refugee status in itself, for example the potential trauma of having left persecution or war, and that of policy.[1] In history, asylum went from something which in Europe was the responsibility of the church or the monarch and became increasingly politicized. Attitudes and policies regarding immigrants and refugees changed over time, following the process of nation building, nationalism, and politics (see Bevelander and Spång, 2015). In Denmark until after the Second World War, however, refugees were not treated differently from other groups of migrants, motivating our use of over one hundred years of data of naturalizations in Denmark to consider how well those fleeing conflict fared relative to other migrants.

The recent history of Denmark demonstrates just how much asylum and immigration policy can be shaped by "events". For small relatively homogeneous countries, increasing focus has been placed on the integration of migrants, and on limiting the flow of new arrivals. Thus, the center-right government of Denmark between 2015 and 2019 built on years of increasing restrictions on immigration which transformed Denmark's reputation as one of the most welcoming to one with some of the greatest restrictions, attracting considerable international criticism. Shortly after coming to power and as the refugee crisis unfolded, the government followed many other European countries in reintroducing border controls and a tightening of the asylum law in 2015 which limited social provision to asylum seekers. Advertisements in Lebanese newspapers warned against applying for asylum in Denmark and "ghettos" were designated in cities which would face certain extra restrictions and penalties on communities of largely non-ethnic Danes. Perhaps most controversially, the so-called "Jewelry Law" of 2016 declared that asylum seekers might have to give up valuables at the border in exchange for service costs, and was heavily criticized in the international media, and was even compared to Nazism, despite even stricter such laws already being in place in other countries such as Norway and Germany.

Things changed quickly, however. In March 2019 the European Commission declared the refugee crisis to be at an end. A new Social Democratic government came to power in June of that year promising to uphold the policies of the previous government, but swiftly moved

[1] See also Hatton (2009, 2017, 2020) on asylum policy and its impact on the integration of refugees, and Bansak et al. (2018) and Edin et al. (2003, 2004).

to ease certain proposed restrictions including a plan to house "unwanted" migrants on the uninhabited island of Lindholm, which had previously been used for experiments on animals. The former Minister for Integration, Inger Støjberg, famous for celebrating the passing of her fiftieth regulation against immigration with a large cake, is at the time of writing being investigated for misuse of power when ordering the separation of young couples in asylum centers. Borders then closed around Europe with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020. Such rapid opinion and policy change no doubt plays a major part in determining the economic and social standing of migrants, and there is a substantial literature on the "immigrant wage gap", i.e. the gap in wages between immigrants and native born. Relatively little has, however, been written about the "refugee wage gap" (Connor, 2010; Bakker et al., 2017).

Borjas (1987, 1999) models the migration decision, demonstrating that it is more likely if the wage in the home country falls, the wage in the host country rises or if the cost of migration falls. For refugees, the migration decision is driven by push factors (war) and thus they are usually less selected than other migrants. Exactly how they compare to other migrants (in terms of skill level for example) depends on many factors and is difficult to pin down, although a detailed survey is provided by Brell et al. (2020). The reasons why refugees then might differ could be due to the fact that they are less prepared and/or have traumatic experiences (Richmond, 1988); because the asylum procedure is stressful and uncertain, and it might take long time before refugees know whether they can stay (Bakker et al., 2013; Phillimore, 2011); because of a "refugee entry effect", whereby refugees are more likely to start with lower wage levels because of lower language proficiency (having not prepared for migration) and experience difficulty getting their qualifications accepted in the host country (Reitz, 2007; Frenette and Morissette, 2005; Auer, 2018; Cheung and Phillimore, 2014; Dumont et al., 2016); and there might be a refugee entry effect due to possible mental stress from the home country experience and uncertainty during the process of seeking asylum (Bakker et al., 2017; Burnett and Peel, 2001; Giuntella et al., 2018). They might, however, also be positively selected by skill if, for example, a communist revolution confiscates the assets of relatively successful people, although they would of course be relatively poor at the time of migration (Borjas, 2014, pp. 14-15).

Bakker et al. (2017) exploit longitudinal data for the Netherlands and consider refugees who arrived between 1995 and 1999. Considering their labor market participation in 2000-2011, they find a negative entry effect, with significantly lower labor market participation rates of refugees in the first years after arrival compared to other migrants, although this gap narrows over the fifteen years considered. However, unlike the present work, they consider only labor force participation, and not the occupation the migrant achieves. Connor (2010) explains that many of the factors used to explain the refugee gap are the same as those used for explaining the immigrant wage gap. He argues, however, that this cannot explain a gap between refugees and other immigrants, and that it is therefore better to compare these groups. He mentions that other studies on refugees are often concerned with one particular group, and uses cross-sectional data from 2003 for immigrants receiving permanent residence,

which is nationally representative, similar to our study. He finds no gap in the likelihood of employment but a gap in occupational level/earnings, beyond that which can be explained by control variables (education, language proficiency, neighborhood).

Chin and Cortes (2015) analyse the same data as Connor (2010) but include other dimensions, for example health, finding that refugees fare worse than other migrants on basically all dimensions. However, over time refugees catch up or even surpass other immigrants, maybe because they know they cannot return to their home country or also because they are more likely to invest in human capital (Cortes, 2004). Similarly, Akresh (2008) finds that refugees (and migrants arriving through chain migration) initially experience greater downward mobility but more rapid upward mobility later on (although this latter for refugees only) because of greater certainty that they will stay and higher investment in human capital (see also (Cortes, 2004)). Dustmann et al. (2017), using a cross-section of immigrants in EU countries in 2008, finds a refugee gap in employment rates but this becomes insignificant after 15-19 years in the host country and disappears after 25 years.[2] In this cross-section it is not possible, however, to distinguish between cohort effects and effects stemming from time spent in the country.[3] Bratsberg et al. (2014) study the long-term labor market and social insurance outcomes for all major immigrant cohorts in Norway since 1970, finding that refugees assimilated during the initial period upon arrival, but labor market convergence halted after a decade and was accompanied by rising social insurance rates. Finally, Fasani et al. (2018) consider a wide range of outcomes for twenty European countries and find that refugees are more likely to be unemployed and have lower income and occupational quality, and that these gaps persist for more than a decade after arrival, with a significant role for asylum policy.

In contrast to these studies, we exploit the universe of Danish naturalizations between 1776 and 1960, although occupation was only recorded from 1851, giving us over a century of migration, and for a homogeneous group of migrants who both chose to remain in the country and were integrated to the extent that they were able to apply for citizenship. Moreover, for our historical period, we have the advantage that there were no barriers before 1926, and even after this, when migration restrictions in the form of requirements to preregister for residence and work permits were introduced, there was no "special treatment" for those we term "refugees". In fact, until after the Second World War, refugees had no special status in Denmark (or most countries) and were treated like any other migrants, and we thus define them as being those who left countries which were at war or involved in civil war. This is not a perfect proxy, but if nothing else might capture the impact of war in the sending country on the labor market outcomes of migrants. As Connor (2010) argues, comparing refugees to other immigrants gives a more representative idea of the refugee gap than if comparing to native born. With our data, the comparison is even cleaner, since they were subject to the same rules, and we find evidence that there was no refugee gap. Policymakers aiming to

[2]This might also be due to the increasing employment information passed on by ethnic communities as they become more integrated, see Beaman (2012).

[3]See also Becker and Ferrara (2019) for a survey on the evidence on the labor market integration of refugees.

ensure the economic success of refugees might learn from this, and remove the labor market restrictions on asylum seekers.

The remainder of this paper proceeds as follows. The following section describes the historical and legal background to the data we use for our analysis. Section 3 presents the data and gives an overview of the history of migration to Denmark. Section 4 presents the results and section 5 concludes.

2 The Historical and Legal Background

2.1 The Creation of a National Identity

The idea of citizenship or immigration policy does not mean much if there is no clear concept of nationhood, but the idea of a national identity is a relatively modern invention, despite what national histories would have us believe. Originally, the Danish word for "fatherland" (*fædreland*) was used in the same way as Latin *patria* about the town or village where you were born. The first sign of change came in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when the nobility and scholars began to claim to speak on behalf of the nation, linguists upheld the Danish language, and historians and poets told of Danish virtues. Clearly, a national identity requires other nations to feel different from, and here Denmark's neighbors were in the spotlight. Swedes were usually presented as enemies (which was not surprising since Denmark and Sweden were frequently at war), although the attitude towards Germans, which was to play a key role in shaping policy, was somewhat ambivalent. Close kinship was celebrated, but there was increasing resentment of competition from immigrants, and criticism of their desire to continue using their mother tongue (Ilsøe, 1991; Winge, 1991b; Østergaard, 2007, ch. 19).

The decisive break in attitudes was the establishment of a Danish *bürgerliche Öffentlichkeit*, which brought the first clash between cosmopolitan and national ideas. Around 1740 a group of young Danish commoners reacted against what they felt was their career opportunities being blocked by a landowning aristocratic elite with a strong foreign and mostly German language and culture. History and language thus became, in Denmark as elsewhere, important for defining what it meant to be a citizen, and by the 1760s fatherland reflected the country where you were born and its language. The abolition of censorship in 1770 and the dictatorship of the German J.F. Struensee 1770-1772 strengthened anti-German attitudes, and his successors found it necessary to accommodate the national ideas and feelings of the burgher class, with an increasing priority being to stabilize the absolutist government, and avoid splitting the multinational state, which included large German-speaking populations in the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein until they were lost to Prussia in 1864 (Feldbæk, 1991; Lampe and Sharp, 2018, p. 42-43).

2.2 The Law of Indigenous Rights of 1776

The answer from the absolute monarchy was the Law of Indigenous Rights of 1776,[4] something unique in ancient régime Europe. It was announced to great celebration on King Christian VII's birthday, 29 January 1776, with the enthusiastic welcome it received in Copenhagen and the provincial towns reflecting the growing reality of a Danish identity. The king promised that it would never be rescinded, which gave it a constitutional nature. The law for the first time in the world introduced the idea of being able to apply for naturalization, and restricted access to posts in public office to those born in Denmark, Norway and the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, unless their work had begun before 1776 and they had received a "Patent of Naturalization".[5] The reason given for the measure was among other things that "the children of the country should enjoy the bread of the country" (Korsgaard, 2012). The law was a forerunner to the increasing public debate about Germanness vs. Danishness in the 1800s, when there was also an increasing nationalist sentiment in Germany,[6] leading eventually to German unification in 1871.

2.3 The "German Feud"

Despite the law of 1776, it did not take long for antagonism between Germans and Danes to flare up again, and already from 1789-90 the so-called "German Feud" witnessed a clash over a Danish opera about the legendary hero Holger Danske due to the anti-German sentiments expressed. Some Danish participants in the ensuing debate argued that Germans should not have the right to serve in official posts, to which Germans argued they had the right as subjects of the king (Feldbæk, 1984; Feldbæk and Winge, 1991). The feud was forgotten for a time after the British bombed Copenhagen and seized the Danish navy during the Napoleonic War, but the debate waxed and waned. The loss of Norway in 1814 put Scandinavian speakers at more of a cultural and linguistic disadvantage compared to Germans, and the unity of the realm was increasingly threatened by clashes with a new sense of German national identity among Holsteiners. This led to a political struggle in the Duchies which ended with the wars of 1848-50 and 1864, when Schleswig and Holstein were finally lost to Prussia (Winge, 1991a). The northern part of Schleswig was returned to Denmark following a plebiscite after the First World War, but conflicts about the role of the German language in that region still resonate today.[7]

[4] https://danmarkshistorien.dk/leksikon-og-kilder/vis/materiale/forordning-om-indfoedsret-for-embedsmaend-15-januar-1776/

[5] Blüdnikow (2000) questions whether the law actually made the place of birth central for the concept of fatherland, since 1,552 people were naturalized 1776-1790, and only 328 were rejected. She argues that it was more concerned with raising awareness of duties to the fatherland.

[6] Reflecting in part a desire to put German on a par with French, providing a somewhat ironic contrast with the Danish desire to put their language on a par with German.

[7] *The Local*, "Danes reject German town names in Jutland", 17 March 2015.

2.4 The Development of an Immigration Policy

Before the middle of the nineteenth century foreigners could freely settle in Denmark, marry, purchase property, provide for themselves and enjoy municipal benefits. There were however restrictions on beggars, vagabonds, Romani, Jews and Catholics, and passports were required on entry until well into the nineteenth century, at which point they were abolished throughout most of Europe due to the difficulty of controlling them with the spread of the railroads. Beyond this, the law of 1776 stated which groups could be accepted on the same basis as native born. First, these included people with wealth and the desire to invest in property, industry, agriculture, etc. Second, were foreign teachers and scientists, called up by the universities, churches and missions, as well as foreign manufacturers, artists and masters who had been invited to perform particular tasks. Finally, certain military men were also accepted. The state could even be welcoming to foreigners without wealth or high levels of skill. Thus, for example, the physiocrats' ideas about agriculture laid the basis for a positive view of immigration under plans to cultivate the Jutland moor in the eighteenth century (Dübeck, 1987; Nielsen, 1987; Østergaard, 2007, ch.18).

A regulation of 10 December 1828 was the most important regarding immigration before 1875, and aimed to reduce an influx of travelling journeymen, based on concerns about them becoming a burden to the guilds in the market towns and to residents. It also included restrictions on criminals, and on poor Jews until 1850 (Dübeck, 1987). Following the democratic constitution of 1849, Denmark's first immigration law, the Law on the Supervision of Foreigners and Travelers (*Lov om Tilsyn med Fremmede og Rejsende*) of 15 May 1875, kept most of the provisions of the 1828 decree, but specifically addressed foreigners, and was introduced to make it easier for the police to keep track of migrants, and to expel them if necessary. There were several reasons for its enactment. Most importantly, a law of 1857 had relaxed guild restrictions and allowed trade and industry to move outside the market towns. Together with the abolition of passport requirements in many countries, including the German Empire, and new means of communication, this meant that it became much easier and more common for people to travel looking for work.

The main intention of the law was that foreigners could freely move to Denmark to work or start a business. It removed the requirement of applying for work in a market town and provided a new focus on workers rather than simply journeymen. All foreigners had to report to the police if they wished to apply for work, documentation had to be provided that they could provide for themselves for at least eight days, and the police had to determine whether they were likely to be successful in finding employment. If this was considered to be the case, they were issued a "book of residence" (*opholdsbog*), which was to be used for documenting travel and other changes in work situation. These books had to be shown to the police immediately on arrival at a new location, and employers had the responsibility of making sure that foreigners were in possession of one. This book of residence only ceased to be necessary when the foreigner had received "right of provision" (*forsørgelsesret*), which could

be attained in various ways. Notably, the law only regulated workers, not foreign investors and businessmen (Dübeck, 1987). It was only superseded by new legislation in 1952.

Another reason for the law was an increasing stream of poor Swedish workers. Since the law was more concerned with expelling foreigners rather than regulating entry, the large number of expulsions resulted in a diplomatic crisis with Sweden, which was only resolved through an agreement in 1888 after which Swedes could after 12 years of residence in Denmark be given the "right of provision". The main concern of the Danish authorities was that the immigrants would be a burden on the poor laws, which were revised in 1891 to make public provision dependent on Danish nationality. The law also made it illegal for "gypsies" and "travelers" to reside in Denmark. These provisions remained until after the Second World War, and are the reason that Romani who fled to Denmark in 1933 wanting passage to Norway were refused entry at the border, and thus many ended up in German concentration camps. Between 1875 and 1915 the Danish police expelled 14,187 foreigners, with a clear dominance of Swedish and German citizens.

During the First World War and Denmark's neutrality it was deemed desirable to limit large-scale immigration, and passport and visa requirements were reintroduced at the border. Before these measures expired, an addendum to the 1876 law was introduced on 21 March 1926 amid concerns about increasing unemployment. Importantly, this introduced rules for residence and work permits: thus, any foreigner who wanted to stay for over 3 months had to apply. These measures were intended to be temporary until the employment situation improved, and were thus to be taken up again every other year, although they are in fact still the most important limitation to foreigners wanting entry to Denmark, and are still based on a desire to protect Danish professional and business interests (Dübeck, 1987).

The rules were relaxed in the second half of the twentieth century for large groups of foreigners, due to increased Nordic cooperation and Denmark's membership of the then European Economic Community (later European Union) in 1973, and from 2000 Denmark removed border controls together with other signatories to the Schengen Agreement between mostly European Union countries. Immigration controls for those outside these countries became increasingly strict, however, with restrictions on chain migration, the right of asylum, and other measures as touched on in the introduction.

2.5 Asylum Legislation

Dübeck (1987) explains that asylum was for a long time based on historical practices and ecclesiastical and royal privilege, and it is only relatively recently that a right of asylum has been granted through international treaties. Asylum was the right of the state not of the individual, and the absolute monarch could grant asylum to whomsoever he wished. After the French Revolution, practice changed towards refusing criminals, but accepting more political refugees. However, an ordinance of 30 March 1827, which abolished the so-called "Banish-

ment Penalty" (*landsforvisningsstraffen*), kept the rule that foreigners could be expelled due to their situation, behavior or lack of passport, or if they could not support themselves or had converted to the Catholic faith. Extradition could be requested by other countries, but exemptions could be made to treaties if the foreigner had a particular relationship to Denmark or had acquired indigenous rights. Rejecting asylum might occur if it might otherwise be deemed to be a threat to the security of the state or the relationship to other powers. Importantly for our analysis below, Dübeck argues that there is no evidence that refugees allowed entry were treated differently to other immigrants, with the possible exception of those subject to expulsions and renditions (Dübeck, 1987).

In sum, although the concept of political refugee began to play a role in the 1830s, the important legal issue was not whether the state could give asylum but whether it had a duty to extradite. An unfortunate consequence of this was that Denmark thus had no specific legislation on asylum when large numbers of refugees fleeing the Nazi regime started to arrive in 1933, as touched on above. It was only after the Second World War that this changed with the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, to which Denmark was in fact the first signatory (Dübeck, 1987).[8]

3 The History of Migration to Denmark and our Data

Our data covers a period spanning immigrants arriving from the late eighteenth century until the Second World War, a time when refugees, as per the discussion above, were more-or-less subject to the same rules as other migrants. Our main source is a complete list of naturalizations (*indfødsrettildelinger*) in Denmark, digitized and maintained by the *Immigrant Museum* and hosted and provided by the *Danish Demographic Database*.[9] This includes information on 50,317 immigrants obtaining Danish citizenship during the period 1776 to 1960, i.e. starting when the concept of citizenship/naturalization was first introduced. The database covers the entire country, and from 1776-1849 is based on a list of "Patents of Naturalization", and from 1850-1940 from the bills put before the Danish parliament, following the first constitution of 1849 which states until today that "no foreigner can gain indigenous rights except by law". From 1851, the information provided includes the name, gender, age, occupation, region of residence in Denmark, and the home country of the immigrant, as well as the date of entry and the date of naturalization. Prior to 1898, women are only included in the database if they applied for citizenship independently. For married couples, wives and children automatically received citizenship with the application of the husband and are not included in the database. We account for this in the analysis by controlling for differing gender effects before and after 1898. Moreover, after 1914 there can in principle be

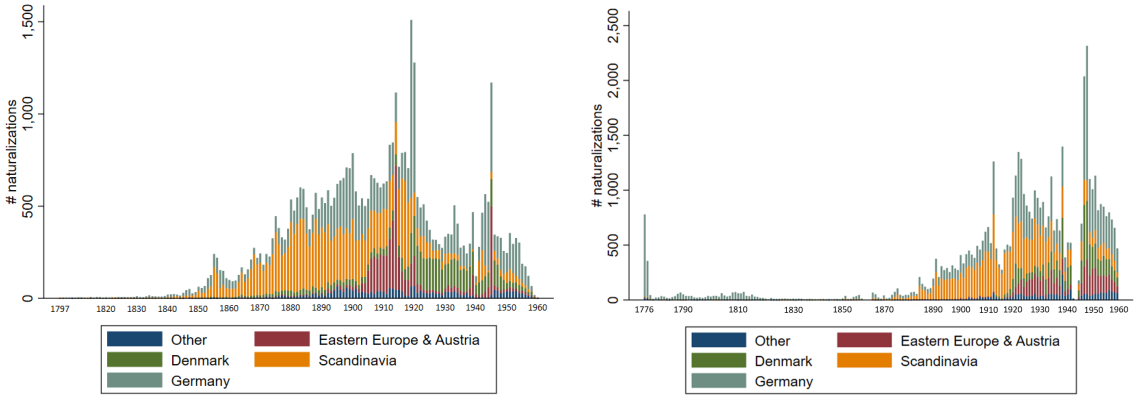
[8] Note that our data goes up to 1960. The convention was signed in 1951 and enforced in 1954. It ensured, however, only the rights of refugees from WWII. The rights of other possible refugees was not officially governed until 1967. We therefore do not introduce another break in 1951/54. Also, there are only 2 refugees in our data after this date and excluding 1954-1960 does not make a difference to our results.

[9] https://www.ddd.dda.dk/immibas/immibaslink.htm

some individuals who failed to achieve naturalization, since they did not meet a requirement to document that they had renounced their previous citizenship within a year. We assign HISCO codes and classes (see van Leeuwen et al., 2002) to the occupational information in the data to classify immigrants into skilled or unskilled. Here, we define anyone who has occupational information which is classified into Hisclasses 1 to 5, i.e. occupations with higher and secondary education, as skilled: see table A2 for a list of occupations in this category.

The data thus allows us to determine significant differences in various individual characteristics, which might aid the integration and thereby the economic success of the migrant, and thereby to look at possible selection of the two groups of migrants. We then use these factors to control for individual characteristics when estimating the refugee gap. We use first names to measure cultural similarity by constructing a measure of how common the first name of the immigrant is in Denmark as of 1850, following Biavaschi et al. (2017). We calculate the normalized frequency of the name in the total Danish population using name information on the total population in the 1850 Danish census (Danish National Archives, 1850). The name frequency measure counts the number of individuals with a particular given name in the census and normalizes this frequency by the maximum frequency across all names. The variable thus lies between 0 and 1, where a common name will receive a value closer to 1. We construct two further measures of cultural similarity/assimilation. The data often includes notes about the immigrants including relevant personal information for the application. Often, these notes state whether someone has a Danish mother or father, for example, or if they were married to a Dane. We code two dummy variables from this: whether the applicant had at least one Danish parent and whether the applicant was married to a Dane.

For this study, we are interested in capturing "refugee" status. We do this by combining the database with information on conflicts and wars compiled by *The Correlates of War Project* (Sarkees and Wayman, 2010). We define immigrants as coming from a conflict if his or her home country is listed as being in a war fought in the country at the time he or she entered Denmark. Appendix table A3 lists the number of migrants by country of birth and by refugee status. The data also includes the number of deaths suffered by each country in each war, which we use to calculate a measure of war intensity, defined as the number of deaths per 1,000 inhabitants. Population figures for the home countries are taken from the Maddison Project Database, version 2013 (Bolt and van Zanden, 2014). From the same source we also take the real GDP per capita for the home country and for Denmark to calculate relative incomes. We divide per capita GDP of the home country by per capita GDP in Denmark, such that a high value would indicate that the migrant comes from a relatively rich country (compared to Denmark), and thus might be expected to achieve a higher status. We use the per capita GDP figures within a 10-year range of arrival in Denmark. We also include controls for country of origin, which might capture education levels and cultural similarity, as well as dummies for county of residence to capture neighborhood effects. Refugees often live in areas where the share of migrants is high, which are often disadvantaged areas. Language proficiency is partially controlled for by the dummies for Danish parents or spouse.



(a) By year of immigration

(b) By year of naturalization

Figure 1: Number of naturalizations over time and by country of birth.

Table A1 in the appendix presents summary statistics for the variables used in the analysis separately for refugees and non-refugees.

Figure 1 shows the number of naturalizations over time by home country. Clearly, most migrants arrived from Scandinavia (Sweden, Norway, Finland, Iceland - though mostly Sweden) or Germany. There is a very significant number of naturalizations in the first years after 1769. These are mainly Germans, as per the discussion above, however they are lacking most other information (for example birth date, date of arrival and occupation), and are thus not included in our analysis. From 1900 a significant share was in fact born in Denmark but obtained citizenship first later in life, with around half of these born in the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, which were part of the Danish realm until 1864. Around the same time, we also see naturalizations from Eastern Europe (mainly Poland), and there are two obvious spikes around the time of the world wars.

Figure 1 also reflects well the story of immigration to Denmark, which however of course has a much longer history since the first hunter-gatherers arrived ca. 13,000 BCE. We cannot include here a complete discussion of the various groups which migrated to Denmark over the period studied, so we focus on the largest immigrant groups: Swedes, Poles, and Germans, although this is of course not because others were not of importance, such as Jews, and African slaves, and we refer for more information for example to the work of Østergaard (2007), as well as the other references below.

Besides the initial German migration touched on above, the most important group of migrants were Swedes (see Willerslev, 1983, 1987). Swedish immigration has a long history, but was originally mostly concentrated on Copenhagen, which was around two percent Swedish in 1789. The nature of this immigration changed around 1840, however, and became dominated by those looking for work from southern Sweden, and mostly consisted of poor young men from agricultural areas, and who went to the agricultural regions of Denmark. Thus, in 1870, 8,700 Swedish agricultural workers were living permanently in the countryside, and

in the summer, they were joined by roughly an equivalent number of seasonal workers (see Rasmussen, 1987). Then, from 1870, Copenhagen and its surroundings again increasingly became the focus of Swedish migrants, in part due to a large demand for labor as the city expanded rapidly into the new neighborhoods of Vesterbro, Østerbro and Nørrebro. There was also a large demand for women as servants, and industry needed both male and female workers, at various levels of skill. Over time the origin of the migrants also became more urban, with more women and educated men arriving from the towns. The simple explanation for this was that Denmark over this three-quarter century was able to offer Swedish workers better conditions than they could expect at home. Wages were higher, and there was more work to be had. The Swedish migrants are considered to have integrated rapidly, and often married Danes. This pattern continued until around the beginning of the First World War, by which time Swedish industry had expanded massively. Thus, after 1900 numbers decreased, with Denmark no-longer considered "the poor man's America" (Pedersen, 1987; Østergaard, 2007, ch. 22).

Another important group of migrants who joined the Swedish agricultural migrants from around 1893 were seasonal workers (mostly girls) from Poland. They worked especially in harvesting sugar beet where production was growing rapidly, and by the turn of the twentieth century numbered around 2,000 per year, and by 1914 over 14,000, although this number fell rapidly after the First World War. Not all these seasonal laborers went home, and between 1916-65 3,388 Poles became Danish citizens, most of them coming from Austrian Galicia (see also Østergaard, 2007, ch. 23).

Finally, it should again be noted that until the German occupation in 1940, between 800 and 1,600 refugees from Hitler came to Denmark, with many more in transit, perhaps around 20,000. Most were social democrats, communists and Jews. This was the "refugee problem" of the day, and Denmark successfully attempted to limit their number. As explained in the previous section, there was no specific legislation about asylum at that time, so under the immigration law of 1926 it was first required to apply for a residence permit, and to document that they could provide for themselves, although the authorities favored some groups over others. Until 1935 this benefited social democrats, since it was believed that they could better assimilate. Although the refugees were not usually eligible for government aid, plenty of private help was forthcoming, but the authorities worried about them participating in anti-Hitler activities, which were dangerous for relations to the large neighbor in the south. An important exception was refugees from Czechoslovakia, who were invited to Denmark by the government, and received support, and was in fact the only example of Denmark as a nation engaging in the refugee issue of the 1930s. Communists were considered a threat and were put under pressure to continue their journey to the Soviet Union. They were not allowed to settle outside Copenhagen and were required to meet more frequently with the police. The German Jews were the largest group of refugees and initially received no particular attention from the authorities. However, after the passing of the Nuremberg Laws of 1935 (the Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor, and the Reich Citizenship Law) it became clear that they could not return, and the government thus attempted to

limit the number who arrived, with only around 1,500 given residence permits. Those who were rejected often travelled on to especially South America and the United States, although others were sadly returned to Germany (Dübeck, 1987; Østergaard, 2007, ch. 24).

Germans who arrived during the war, or Danes who married them, were particularly harshly treated after liberation in 1945. The Law on Indigenous Rights of 1925 was current at the time, and was first replaced with a new law in 1951. This made it possible to achieve naturalization through: 1) individual application; 2) after the age of 19, as long as the person was born in Denmark and was still resident; and 3) through marriage to a Danish man. The second two gave automatic citizenship, whereas the first required a law to be passed. Citizenship of another country meant that citizenship was lost, although if it was based on place of birth, only once the individual left the country. Following the war, in 1946 there was a temporary amendment to this law (*tyskeloven* / the German Law), suspending the rights under the second two points, and making naturalization impossible to achieve for Germans (or stateless individuals whose parents had had German citizenship), backdated to 9 April 1940, for those who were brought to Denmark by the German occupiers either as refugees or who were present without residence permits. This meant that young Germans, who had naturalized after the age of 19, or German women who had married Danes, had their citizenship annulled. In the last months of the war more than 200,000 German civilians had fled to Denmark, the majority of them women, and they were considered undesirable. These measures were valid until 31 December 1948. The law also meant that Danish women who had married German citizens lost the citizenship they were born with, even if they had not left the country, and this rule was rescinded on 31 December 1947. It was however possible to apply for an exemption. When these measures expired, a transitionary period lasted until the new law came into effect on 1 January 1951. Danish women could again marry German citizens without losing their Danish nationality, and from 1 January 1949 young Germans born in Denmark could again claim citizenship after the age of 19. Everyone who had lost their citizenship or had been unable to claim it under the special law were encouraged to apply for naturalization. In practice, 2,715 people obtained Danish citizenship under the special law of 1946 (most of them German women married to Danish men), while only around 300 were refused (Feldbæk, 2013).

4 Results

4.1 The refugee gap

We start by estimating the refugee gap, i.e. whether refugees are less likely to be in a skilled occupation given their individual characteristics. We estimate the following regression on all observations (refugees and non-refugees) including an indicator for whether the migrant came from a conflict or not:

$$Skilled_i = \alpha + \beta_1 Conflict_i + \delta_2 WarIntensity_i + \beta X_i + c_i + \mu_i + \gamma_i + \epsilon_i \quad (1)$$

Our main coefficient of interest is β_1, showing whether migrants from conflict areas have a significantly lower or higher likelihood of being in a skilled occupation than migrants from non-conflict areas. $WarIntensity$ is zero if the migrant is from a non-conflict area and equal per capita deaths in battle suffered by the home country in the war during which the migrant arrived in Denmark. This variable might account for possible traumatic experiences in the home country expected to lower the likelihood of the migrant to be in a skilled occupation in Denmark (Richmond, 1988). X_i represents a vector of individual characteristics relevant for the economic success of the migrants. In particular, this includes the relative GDP per capita of the home country (relative to Denmark) at the time of migration, the normalized frequency of the migrant's first name (compared to the Danish census from 1850), an indicator variable for whether the migrant had Danish parents, an indicator for being married to a Dane, gender, gender interacted with an indicator variable for the period after 1897 (before this date married women automatically received citizenship upon their husband's naturalization), age, age squared, and the years spent in Denmark (i.e. number of years between entry and naturalization). b_i represents dummy variables for the birth country accounting for cultural similarity, μ_i for the municipality of residence accounting for neighborhood effects, and γ_i for the year of naturalization of migrant i accounting for cohort effects. Table 1 presents the results using logit estimation.

Table 1

	(1) all years	(2) all years	(3) pre-1926	(4) pre-1926	(5) post-1926	(6) post-1926
dependent variable: skilled						
Conflict	0.5712***	0.0515	0.5268***	-0.0242	0.0848	0.2084
	(0.0491)	(0.1243)	(0.0601)	(0.1490)	(0.0923)	(0.4646)
war_intensity		0.0007		0.0469		-0.0139
		(0.0134)		(0.0411)		(0.0199)
$(pcGDP_b/pcGDP_{DK})$		-0.4721***		-0.2894		-1.0468***
		(0.1447)		(0.2090)		(0.2697)
firstname_freq		0.0683		0.1322*		-0.2371
		(0.0685)		(0.0771)		(0.1446)
danish_parents		0.1650**		0.2293**		0.3334***
		(0.0687)		(0.0902)		(0.1112)
danish_married		-0.0668		0.0191		-0.2029**
		(0.0577)		(0.0811)		(0.0841)
female		0.4475***		0.4436***		0.8469***
		(0.0626)		(0.0635)		(0.0756)
post1897		-0.2276***		-0.0880		
		(0.0593)		(0.0653)		
female × post1897		0.3299***		0.3424***		
		(0.0736)		(0.0794)		
age		-0.0146**		-0.0350***		0.0391***
		(0.0062)		(0.0071)		(0.0129)
age_squared		0.0000		0.0002**		-0.0004***
		(0.0001)		(0.0001)		(0.0001)
residence		-0.0172***		-0.0072***		-0.0147***
		(0.0017)		(0.0024)		(0.0056)
Conflict × residence		-0.0044		-0.0002		0.0118
		(0.0060)		(0.0063)		(0.0314)
Constant	-1.0761***	1.2027	-1.3031***	1.4316	0.0503	-0.0160
	(0.0133)	(0.9504)	(0.0152)	(0.9774)	(0.0314)	(1.0149)
Birth country FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Municipality FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Year FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	31794	31751	27200	27163	4594	4571

Municipality FE include: Aabenraa-Sønderborg, Ålborg, Bornholm, Frederiksborg, Haderslev, Hjørring, Holbæk, Holsten, Copenhagen and Frederiksberg, Lolland-Falster, Maribo, Odense, Præstø, Randers, Ribe, Ringkøbing, Skanderborg, Slesvig, Sorø, Svendborg, Thisted, Tønder, Vejle, Viborg, Århus, Jutland, Zealand, Scandinavia, Germany, other, and unknown. Year FE represent year of naturalization. Robust standard errors in parentheses. *** $p < 0.01$ ** $p < 0.05$ * $p < 0.10$

We present results for the variable *Conflict* alone and when including the other individual

characteristics as control variables. We show this for all years and for the period split in 1926. The variable *Conflict* is significant and in fact positive when included without any other controls. However, as soon as we add control variables, especially year fixed effects, it turns insignificant – highlighting the importance of accounting for cohort effects. We thus do not find any evidence for a refugee gap. Migrants from conflict areas are not more or less likely to be in a skilled occupation at the time of naturalization than migrants from non-conflict areas, given their individual characteristics.

We note that although we cannot say anything about causality, we are able to control for many observable characteristics of the migrants, and our analysis provides insights which are very much in contrast to the literature using modern data. We find that migrants from conflict areas are not at a disadvantage per se, as other studies on modern data have found. We attribute this to the fact that, in our setting, the same rules applied to all migrants whereas in other studies, who find refugees at an inherent disadvantage, different rules apply to refugees and non-refugees. Today, the institutional treatment of refugees is very different from other migrants, ultimately placing refugees at a disadvantage in terms of labour market experience relative to the time spent in the host countries. The societal perception of migrants may also play a role, making it more difficult for refugees to enter skilled occupations today. These factors are not present when the same rules apply to refugees and non-refugees, and thus might explain why we do not find a refugee gap when controlling for individual characteristics during our period.

Alternative explanations for the gap found in modern data are the traumatic experience of refugees and their having less time to prepare for migration. As we do not find evidence for a refugee gap, these explanations would only be valid if they were different during our period, i.e. if wars were less traumatic historically and if also non-refugee migrants were less prepared. It is not unlikely that wars were less traumatic for the general population, as they were fought between soldiers on the battle field, sparing the general population from this experience. However, losing a son or a husband on the battle field or just having to endure the uncertainty while waiting for soldiers to return should not be neglected. As for preparation, surely today migrants have more opportunities to inform themselves about the host country and may even learn the language prior to migration. This is however, also not very common, and it should also be remembered that, during our period, the main share of migrants came from Germany and Sweden – both enjoying linguistic similarities to Danish. Thus, while these explanations cannot be ruled out, it seems likely that the main factor for why we see a refugee gap today but not historically, is because of different rules applying to refugees and non-refugees.

4.2 Selection of migrants

The previous section showed that there is no significant difference in the likelihood of being in a skilled occupation between refugees and non-refugees when controlling for individual

characteristics. This does not mean, however, that the two groups of migrants do not differ – just that their success on the labour market does not *per se* depend on which group they belong to. In this section, we therefore investigate possible selection of migrants. We estimate the following model separately for migrants from conflict areas and those not from conflict areas to determine the likelihood of the migrants to be in a skilled occupation and the role individual characteristics play, at the time of naturalization by refugee status:

$$Skilled_i = \alpha + \beta X_i + b_i + \mu_i + \gamma_i + \epsilon_i \tag{2}$$

Here, X_i includes the same factors as in the previous section identified to be relevant for the economic success of migrant i, where the effects of these variables are now estimated separately for migrants from conflict areas and those from non-conflict areas. The rest is as defined as above.

Table 2 shows logit estimations for equation 2, separately for migrants from non-conflict and from conflict areas. Columns (1) and (2) show these regressions for all years, whereas columns (3) to (6) split the period in 1926.

Table 2

	(1) No conflict all years	(2) Conflict all years	(3) No conflict pre-1926	(4) Conflict pre-1926	(5) No conflict post-1926	(6) Conflict post-1926
dependent variable: skilled						
$(pcGDP_b/pcGDP_{DK})$	-0.6605***	-0.5412	-0.2683	0.1576	-1.0119***	2.6781
	(0.1545)	(0.8062)	(0.2223)	(1.1997)	(0.2695)	(3.4616)
firstname_freq	0.0692	0.0695	0.1393*	0.0526	-0.2615*	0.3521
	(0.0712)	(0.2713)	(0.0802)	(0.3218)	(0.1509)	(0.7540)
danish_parents	0.1562**	0.3203	0.2315**	0.4261	0.3291***	0.2531
	(0.0712)	(0.2896)	(0.0940)	(0.3541)	(0.1140)	(0.5581)
danish_married	-0.0575	0.0753	0.0160	0.1482	-0.2081**	0.3332
	(0.0608)	(0.2012)	(0.0853)	(0.2978)	(0.0893)	(0.2857)
female	0.4391***	0.8748	0.4399***	0.7974	0.7690***	1.8074***
	(0.0630)	(1.0080)	(0.0641)	(1.0310)	(0.0795)	(0.3213)
post1897	-0.2133***	-3.2666***	-0.0891	-5.7103**		
	(0.0596)	(1.0686)	(0.0656)	(2.7875)		
female × post1897	0.3204***	0.2996	0.3473***	0.0053		
	(0.0750)	(1.0218)	(0.0809)	(1.0528)		
age	-0.0188***	0.0535**	-0.0428***	0.0828**	0.0461***	-0.0431
	(0.0065)	(0.0252)	(0.0073)	(0.0329)	(0.0136)	(0.0582)
age_squared	0.0000	-0.0004	0.0002***	-0.0007**	-0.0005***	0.0009
	(0.0001)	(0.0003)	(0.0001)	(0.0004)	(0.0002)	(0.0007)
residence	-0.0154***	-0.0772***	-0.0057**	-0.1271**	-0.0146***	-0.0013
	(0.0017)	(0.0132)	(0.0025)	(0.0561)	(0.0056)	(0.0615)
Constant	1.5884*	3.5746	1.5819	3.5149	0.6549	-0.5076
	(0.9588)	(2.3593)	(0.9831)	(3.6686)	(1.1450)	(2.2081)
Birth country FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Municipality FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	29846	1822	25795	1281	4040	507

Municipality FE include: Aabenraa-Sønderborg, Ålborg, Bornholm, Frederiksborg, Haderslev, Hjørring, Holbæk, Holsten, Copenhagen and Frederiksberg, Lolland-Falster, Maribo, Odense, Præstø, Randers, Ribe, Ringkøbing, Skanderborg, Slesvig, Sorø, Svendborg, Thisted, Tønder, Vejle, Viborg, Århus, Jutland, Zealand, Scandinavia, Germany, other, and unknown. Year FE represent year of naturalization. Robust standard errors in parentheses. *** $p < 0.01$ ** $p < 0.05$ * $p < 0.10$

Especially for migrants not from conflict areas several factors play a role. These migrants are significantly less likely to be in a skilled occupation when coming from relatively rich countries, although this effect stems from the post-1926 period only. This could indicate that the skilled residents choose to stay in countries with relatively high average income because of good opportunities at home and that it is the unskilled in this case who choose to migrate for better opportunities. This would indicate negative selection of non-refugee migrants after 1926. For women the opposite is true, as women who applied for citizenship

by themselves are on average more likely to be skilled in the non-refugee group. This is true before and after 1926, such that women with an occupation seem to be positively selected. After 1926, when also refugees had to apply for residence, this is also true for this group of migrants. Non-refugee migrants are significantly more likely to be skilled if they had Danish parents. For migrants from conflict areas, this factor is not significant.

At least before 1926, migrants from non conflict areas are less likely to be skilled with age whereas refugees are more likely to be skilled with age. This can be explained by different motivations to migrate. In general one would expect the likelihood of being skilled to increase with age, as is the case for the refugees. Other types of migrants, however, mainly migrate for economic reasons and a lack of opportunities in their home country. Migrants taking this decision later in life are even less likely to be skilled. For all groups it seems to be the case that those who naturalize faster are more likely to be skilled, as indicated by the negative coefficient on the variable *residence* - the time between entering the country and naturalization. This could have several reasons: skilled migrants might have an advantage in filing the application to naturalize because of higher human and/or social capital. It could also be the case that, being in a good job, they may be more willing to take the decision to stay in Denmark.

Thus, whereas we do not find evidence for a refugee gap, i.e. refugees being at a disadvantage *per se*, we do find that non-refugee migrants are more selected than refugee migrants. This is especially the case after 1926 when stricter rules apply to who can enter and stay in the country. This finding is in line with Borjas (1987, 1999) and is likely to stem from different motivations for migration. Whereas refugee migrants are driven by push factors and migration is not necessarily voluntary, other migrants are driven by a combination of push and pull factors with a conscious decision about the economic costs and gains.

5 Conclusion

In this paper we have analysed over 100 years of data on the universe of migrants receiving Danish citizenship between 1851 and 1960. Studies on modern data generally find refugees at a disadvantage both in terms of labour market participation rates and in terms of the skill level of the occupation. This disadvantage is termed the "refugee gap" and goes beyond what can be explained by individual characteristics of the migrants, and thereby also beyond what can be explained by different selection processes for refugees and non-refugees. We show that refugees and non-refugee migrants were also different from each other during our period of study. However, when controlling for these characteristics by measuring cultural similarity, age and cohort effects, we do not find evidence for a refugee gap. We show that this is likely to be due to the legal status/perception of the migrants. Today, based on the right to asylum, different rules apply to refugees. In this study we were able to show that the refugee gap disappears when the same rules apply to all migrants. This is true for both the

regime before 1926, with basically free migration and also after 1926 where migration was controlled, but refugees were treated no differently than other migrants. Preventing refugees from entering the labour market quickly, learning the language and finding a place to live places them at a disadvantage. Giving refugees the same rights as other migrants might well lead to a closure, or at least reduction, of the refugee gap we observe today.

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6 Appendix

Table A1: Summary statistics

	No conflict					Conflict				
All years	*N*	*Mean*	*Std. Dev.*	*Min.*	*Max.*	*N*	*Mean*	*Std. Dev.*	*Min.*	*Max.*
skilled	29,889	0.25	0.44	0	1	1,905	0.38	0.48	0	1
relative GDP per capita	29,889	0.84	0.22	0.07	2.54	1,905	0.81	0.18	0.05	1.96
war intensity	29,889	0	0	0	0	1,905	1.91	5.21	0	17.56
danish parents	29,889	0.04	0.20	0	1	1,905	0.04	0.21	0	1
danish married	29,889	0.07	0.25	0	1	1,905	0.10	0.30	0	1
age	29,889	44.82	14.27	8	93	1,905	40.08	14.69	14	86
female	29,889	0.21	0.41	0	1	1,905	0.17	0.38	0	1
residence years	29,889	23.66	12.37	0	87	1,905	18.22	10.60	0	77
firstname frequency	29,889	0.09	0.21	0	1	1,905	0.08	0.22	0	1
Before 1926										
skilled	25,829	0.21	0.41	0	1	1,371	0.32	0.46	0	1
relative GDP per capita	25,829	0.83	0.22	0.13	2.54	1,371	0.80	0.16	0.12	1.96
war intensity	25,829	0	0	0	0	1,371	0.32	1.55	0	17.32
danish parents	25,829	0.03	0.16	0	1	1,371	0.04	0.20	0	1
danish married	25,829	0.04	0.21	0	1	1,371	0.07	0.25	0	1
age	25,829	45.71	14.02	11	93	1,371	42.23	13.55	17	85
female	25,829	0.19	0.39	0	1	1,371	0.12	0.33	0	1
residence years	25,829	25.53	11.96	0	87	1,371	19.91	11.89	0	77
firstname frequency	25,829	0.09	0.20	0	1	1,371	0.10	0.23	0	1
After 1926										
skilled	4,060	0.51	0.50	0	1	534	0.53	0.50	0	1
relative GDP per capita	4,060	0.89	0.23	0.07	2.27	534	0.81	0.23	0.05	1.32
war intensity	4,060	0	0	0	0	534	6.00	8.22	0	17.56
danish parents	4,060	0.14	0.35	0	1	534	0.05	0.21	0	1
danish married	4,060	0.22	0.42	0	1	534	0.18	0.38	0	1
age	4,060	39.16	14.58	8	89	534	34.54	15.99	14	86
female	4,060	0.34	0.47	0	1	534	0.30	0.46	0	1
residence years	4,060	11.77	7.24	0	34	534	13.88	3.42	1	23
firstname frequency	4,060	0.09	0.23	0	1	534	0.04	0.17	0	1

Table A2: List of 30 most frequent occupational titles categorized as skilled

N	HISCO	Occupation
1,274	41025	Merchant
716	21110	Manufacturer, manager, director
684	39310	Office assistant, clerk
415	7110	Nurse
317	13200	Teacher
308	22610	Manager, chairman
298	30000	Assistant, civil service
228	39320	Correspondent, writer
223	14140	Nun, monk
222	39120	Seller, salesman
200	2000	Engineer
173	43230	Representative, agent
162	33110	Accountant
150	17140	Musician
97	22000	Supervisor, manager, inspector
93	51020	Hotel owner, innkeeper
91	6105	Doctor
82	16310	Photographer
81	32120	Secretary, clerk
80	31090	Controller, inspector
79	14120	Priest, deacon
78	41040	Lessor (farm, hotel, dairy)
68	17000	Artist
68	45130	Commercial officer, commercial traveller
66	33940	Authorized officer
61	51040	Lodging house keeper
60	33990	Debt collector, cashier
55	4230	Captain
53	21000	Bailiff

Table A3: Number of migrants by birth country

Birth country	No conflict	Conflict
Argentina	29	1
Australia	30	7
Austria	357	0
Belgium	26	11
Brazil	29	3
Canada	20	0
Chile	5	0
China	1	10
Congo	1	0
Czechoslovakia	53	1
Denmark	3,480	7
Egypt	4	0
Finland	215	194
France	106	11
Germany	9,821	1,580
Greece	7	0
Hungary	38	4
Iceland	3	0
India	13	1
Indonesia	3	3
Ireland	3	0
Italy	72	22
Japan	3	0
Malaysia	2	0
Mexico	0	1
Netherlands	192	0
New Zealand	11	0
Norway	1,484	1
Palestine	2	0
Panama	1	0
Paraguay	1	0
Poland	332	0
Portugal	5	1
Romania	13	17
Singapore	1	0
Spain	16	0
Sweden	13,107	0
Switzerland	82	0
Thailand	1	0
Turkey	4	1
United Kingdom	299	27
Uruguay	1	0
Venezuela	0	1
Yemen	0	1
Yugoslavia	16	1
Total	29,889	1,905

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