



AALBORG UNIVERSITY
STUDENT REPORT

Balancing the heartless head and the headless heart

*An explorative thesis of the opportunities for and
obstacles to a sustainable immigration policy in Norway*

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Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to explore the term ‘sustainable immigration’: What does it entail and what are the opportunities for and obstacles to its implementation in the Norwegian welfare state? This research question is methodologically examined with document analysis and single case study. Context to the Norwegian case is provided through a historic and current overview of its welfare state and immigration policies towards voluntary and forced migrants. The outcome of the thesis is shaped by the Sustainable Migration Framework, a theoretical structure developed by economist Paul Collier and migration specialist Alexander Betts. In short, the thesis concludes that sustainable immigration entails fulfillment of basic ethical duties, democratic backing in the receiving state’s population, and respect for the long-term interests of the receiving state, the sending state and the migrant. For Norway, this might indicate a sustainable immigration policy characterized as low in numbers and high in rights, with the aim of retaining public support in the welfare state, permanent integration for most migrants and significant support to refugees but primarily in their neighboring areas. Further, the thesis concludes what constitutes as opportunities for and obstacles to implementation of a sustainable immigration policy in Norway. In line with the Sustainable Migration Framework, the following matters are deemed opportunities for implementation of sustainable immigration: i) Norwegian immigration policy’s theoretical compatibility with the duties of rescue, namely, to contribute to stability in fragile societies and protect refugees, ii) Norwegian immigration policy’s practical compatibility with the duty to contribute to stability in fragile societies, iii) Norwegian voting patterns’ preference of restrictive immigration policies, and iv) how Norway bases policy on long-term forecasts. Contrarily, the following matters are considered obstacles to implementation of sustainable immigration: i) Norwegian immigration policy’s promotion of brain drain and potentially mass migration, ii) the lack of compatibility between Norwegian immigration policy and the duty of assisting refugees in practice, iii) opinion polls and surveys’ conflicting results with voting patterns in regard to citizens’ preferences, iv) Norway’s insufficient information to would-be migrants and v) Norway’s disregard of origin states in policy-making.

Keywords: Sustainable immigration, policy-making, welfare, brain drain, mass migration

Abbreviations

EU = European Union

IOM = International Organization for Migration

NOK = Norwegian Krone

NORAD = Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation

NOUs = Norway's Official Reports

NRK = Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation

OECD = Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

SDGs = Sustainable Development Goals

SMF = Sustainable Migration Framework

SSB = Statistics Norway

UDI = Norwegian Directorate for Immigration

UN = United Nations

UNHCR = United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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1. Introduction

Throughout the last decade, attention has increasingly been drawn towards the issue of immigration in public and political spheres in Norway. In fact, the topic has continuously been ranked among the five top challenges for society since 2009 (Livgard, 2019:9). Significant engagement has been generated in response to various immigration dilemmas; Should Norway welcome children from the infamous Moria refugee camp? What should happen to the migrants saved by the Norwegian-owned Ocean Viking ship in the Mediterranean? Are the Norwegian government's forced repatriations to Afghanistan morally justified? The debate has become polarized between the fundamentally positive and the fundamentally skeptical parts of the population (Erdal et al., 2018:11). The political left is claiming migrants as victims while the political right is claiming them as threats. It appears as though the political views are reduced into labels: the political left as naïve and gullible, and the political right as racist and discriminatory. It is thus interesting to question if immigration will ever be regarded as an uncontroversial matter.

Along with the strengthened presence of immigration debate in Norwegian society, the term 'sustainable immigration' became increasingly popular. It provoked public discussions (Jaber, 2013; Ljung, 2019) as much as political commitment; Conflicting parties across the political spectrum claimed it and sketched their approach to sustainable immigration in Norway. The Progress Party was the first to urge a transformation to sustainable immigration, a shift which in their eyes included modifying the 1951 Refugee Convention (Sandvik & Solvang, 2013). A few years later, the Conservative Party announced its new course towards sustainable immigration and stressed that this meant to assist migrants in their neighboring areas (Solberg & Listhaug, 2016). In 2018, the Labor Party claimed sustainable immigration as part of its values, ensured by considerations of settlement, integration and the welfare system (Støre, 2018; Gjerde, 2018). Lastly, the Christian Democratic Party, recognized for its compassion towards migrants, especially the forcefully displaced, declared a platform stating the pursuit of sustainable immigration (Blaker, 2019). The reoccurring call for sustainable immigration in Norway has triggered the question *what does sustainable immigration entail and what are the opportunities for and obstacles to its implementation in the Norwegian welfare state?*

1.1 Terms and definitions

Ambiguous understandings, *war on words* (Mudde, 1996) and fake news all contribute to misconceptions regarding the meaning of terms. In order to avoid confusion, this section clarifies how this thesis utilizes potential controversial and misunderstood terms, some of which lack universal definitions. Take note that the thesis excludes internal migration and the terms are defined accordingly.

Migrant. Any person who changes his or her country of usual residence, irrespective of the causes, voluntary or involuntary, and the means, regular or irregular, used to migrate (IOM, 2019a:130; UN, 1998).

‘Migrant’ is considered a wide umbrella term. It is inclusive in nature; Migrant workers, international students, refugees, marriage migrants and others are bound together in a diverse group. In order to distinguish this massive category when necessary, this thesis will address migrants as either voluntary migrants or forced migrants. Refugees belong to the latter classification.

Voluntary migrant. Any person who voluntarily “moves away from his or her place of usual residence (...) temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons” (IOM, 2019a:59).

Forced migrant. Any person “who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their home or place of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters” (Ibid.:53).

Refugee. Any person “owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country (...)” (Refugee Convention, 1951: §A2).

Additionally, other key concepts must be defined in order to proceed. ‘Immigrant’ and ‘guest worker’ are defined with ease since their inclusions and exclusions are generally agreed upon. ‘Sustainable immigration’, however, is slightly more controversial. It is not commonly used in

academic contexts, and thus, rarely defined (Erdal et al., 2018:15). The term has a unique ability to appeal to all people, no matter one's political standpoint. It is understood as a word with exclusively positive connotations: no one argues against sustainability. The term is associated with forerunners such as 'sustainable development' from the 1980s, 'sustainable climate' from the 2000s and more recently, the UN's 'sustainable development goals' aimed at 2030 (Ibid.:5). No matter its trustworthy tone, sustainable immigration's vagueness contributes to doubts of what it encompasses. Carling and Erdal remark how the term serves as a politically charged rhetorical device: "it thrives on the liberal and progressive connotations of 'sustainable', but implicitly presents migration as an existential threat to society." (Carling & Erdal, 2018). In other words, 'sustainable immigration' is a popular term to use in the political arena because it appeals to those for and against immigration. For the pro-immigration campaigners, it implies a level of immigration equal to harmonic balance and global solidarity. For the anti-immigration campaigners, it indicates that the current level of immigration is not sustainable, that 'this cannot go on' and that immigration is continuing to 'threaten our society and contaminating our culture' (Ibid.). One can thus see the term as a dog-whistle: "it constitutes a message that appeals to a specific political group without attracting the negative attention of people with opposing views" (Ibid.). Additionally, what is regarded as sustainable immigration differs from society to society; The term is interpreted in one way in Nordic states and a different way in Gulf states. Despite the many outlooks on the term, it is defined by one single and short sentence which only amplifies its abstract nature.

Immigrant. "From the perspective of the country of arrival, a person who moves into a country other than that of his or her nationality or usual residence, so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence" (IOM, 2019a:101).

Guest worker. A person "considered to be a migrant worker recruited for a restricted time of residence and employment" (Ibid.:86).

Sustainable immigration. Immigration "capable of being maintained at a steady level" (Erdal et al., 2018:9).

1.2 Challenges and considerations

The thesis has been shaped by certain challenges and considerations. First, the covid-19 pandemic challenged the data collection process by limiting the access to libraries. It resulted

in a dominant presence of online sources. Second, the reader should be aware that the presented migration data is not necessarily as precise as desired. Such data is known to be intricate to analyze, for example due to insufficient resources and politicization of number management (Erdal et al., 2018:5). The standard of data collection varies and not all collectives analyze and categorize data similarly. The conclusions drawn are based on the selected data which might be flawed. Third, the scope of the this research has unfortunately cut short some of the grand and ambitious questions proposed by the framework - some of which were to such an extent that they deserved their own thesis. Lastly, the reader should be conscious of a few gross simplifications appearing in the thesis, such as Western/ non-Western, migrant sending/ migrant receiving, rich/ poor and low-, middle- or high-income country. These are traditional divides in academia and should only be understood as an indicator. Additionally, the thesis recognizes that some countries might be in between categories or belong to both dichotomies, for example by being both migrants sending and migrant receiving.

2. Methodology

In order to understand the path to the conclusion, it is necessary to look closer at the thesis' methodology. At its core, the thesis has an exploratory approach. Such an approach differs from descriptive or causal research by not aiming for conclusive answers, but rather seeking to gain greater understanding of the topic, for example through analyzing opportunities and obstacles (Singh, 2007:64). The target for this exploratory research is the term sustainable immigration. The sections below will reveal the preferred analytical tools for this thesis, namely document analysis and single case study. A brief literature review will conclude the methodology chapter.

2.1 Research design

This thesis will rely on document analysis and single case study. These two methods are compatible with one another and ideal for research conducted over short time spans. Document analysis is a qualitative approach which refers to the systematic examination of text, aimed at categorizing the content and transforming it into data (Grønmo, 2004). The method is intended to promote greater comprehension of a document. This is granted by thoroughly assessing the document in terms of the time of publishing, the author in question, the context for the writings, the specific use of words, along with the overall content (Bowen, 2009:27). The key is to critically evaluate each source before allowing it to be part of the dataset. Several elements must be taken into consideration before it is possible to deem a document significant: What is the purpose of the text? Who is the targeted audience? Why was in published? Is it a credible and

accurate source? Does the document contribute to a balanced representation? (Ibid.:33). After the data is selected, it is categorized accordingly, for example to sections regarding the welfare state or the duty of rescue. Document analysis has its pros and cons. It is relatively efficient in comparison with other research methods that rely on gathering data from scratch; It is less time-consuming to collect existing data than to produce data. Document analysis arguably allocates resources efficiently. Further, one can make the argument that document analysis prevents bias as the data is already created and, most likely, without the presence of the researcher. Words on paper cannot be manipulated. However, the researcher selects the documents and can therefore affect the outcome of the analysis. The researcher's credibility risks being weakened if only one-sided documents are utilized (Grønmo, 2004). Even though the words are printed, there is still an opportunity for the researcher to abuse the content of the document or twist words. Another notion is the large quantity of text available when conducting a document analysis. While this might seem beneficial, it also creates hardship for the selection process. It is an art to use search engines correctly. Additionally, documents regarding recent events or 'undiscovered' topics will not necessarily pop up in academic databases. There is no guarantee that the research question can be sufficiently answered with document analysis alone. Lastly, it is relevant to consider a researcher's access to data. Documents change over time; They are constantly updated, edited and deleted (Yin, 2004). Since the researcher does not have ownership of a certain document, it might be difficult to be granted access.

A single case study is an intensive examination of an individual unit, for example an incident, a political institution, or as in this thesis, a country (Wæhle & Dahlum, 2018). Its main strength is how it allows the researcher to go in depth with a topic with attention to detail (Ibid.). This method aims to shine a light on a whole topic by only assessing one case. Putting this in context, the thesis will analyze opportunities for and obstacles to sustainable immigration in Norway, but the findings might be valuable for other parties. Fundamental welfare states with relatively low population numbers but high gross domestic product per capita, such as the Nordics or New Zealand, might see a transferable value of such research. In other words, the result for Norway can be generalized and, thus, relevant for other countries too. However, generalization is challenging and not always helpful. One of the weaknesses with this method is indeed the risk of deriving false generalizations (Yin, 1994:36). Each country is unique and elements which might matter in Norway might not matter in other countries. After careful evaluation, document analysis and single case study are deemed preferable approaches to the thesis, despite their considerations.

2.2 Literature review

The selected literature shapes the outcome of the thesis. It is thus valuable to review the chosen literature to get an idea of its credibility and quality. Even though Betts and Collier's presence is dominant, the thesis' data is collected from an assortment of sources. The background section relies heavily on books, for example by recognized migration specialists Stephen Castles and Grete Brochmann. Central judicial documents like the 2008 Immigration Act and the 1951 Refugee Convention are included for a legal aspect. Norwegian documents are to a certain extent prioritized due to the risk of information being lost in translation. Official state documents such as press releases, white papers and Norway's Official Reports (NOUs) represent the foundation of understanding the state's approaches. Information regarding political parties are gathered directly from their communication platform. In terms of time, the oldest source dates back to the Middle Ages with Tordsson's Kings' sagas, while the newest ones characterize as articles by media outlets. Publications such as the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK), Aftenposten, Klassekampen and the Guardian are included. Data is also collected from inter-governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and national organizations such as the UN, Amnesty International and Norwegian Organization for Asylum Seekers. Lastly, statistics are provided by Eurostat, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) and Statistics Norway (SSB).

3. Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework has the ability to promote a term's value in policy-making. In this thesis, sustainable immigration is promoted by the Sustainable Migration Framework (SMF) which lays the groundwork for analysis. This theoretical framework, which has been labelled visionary and ambitious, is "addressing one of the most comprehensive and conflict-ridden matters of our time" (Brochmann, n.d:1). The minds behind the scheme are Alexander Betts and Paul Collier, two prominent social scientists within, respectively, migration and economics.

3.1 The Sustainable Migration Framework (SMF)

In response to the increased use of the term 'sustainable immigration' in political and public debates in Norway, the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security assigned two independent parties with the same task: to map out the understanding of the term. One party consisted of Betts and Collier, the other party of four research professors at the Peace Research Institute Oslo, namely Erdal, Carling, Horst and Talleraas. The two parties had different

approaches to the task; While the former suggested a framework aimed at guiding and informing governments and elected politicians worldwide (Betts & Collier, 2018a:11); The latter dove deeper into the term and considered its potential innovative value (Erdal et al., 2018:4). This thesis will primarily utilize Betts and Collier's SMF, supplemented with considerations made by Erdal et al.

What makes a sustainable immigration policy? The two parties disagree on the term's inclusions and exclusions. Erdal et al. suggest the following formulation: "a well-balanced distribution of costs and benefits for the individuals, societies and states affected, today and in the future." (Ibid.:9). They stress that the definition should be interpreted in a broad sense, beyond economic understandings. This is exemplified by mentioning specific costs and benefits outside the financial scope, namely the loss of life, trauma, and escape from persecution (Ibid.:9). In his book *Exodus*, Collier too concludes that immigration is more than economics. In fact, the "social effects [of immigration] are usually likely to trump economic effects, in part because the economic effects are usually modest." (Collier, 2013a:24). Despite this agreement, Betts and Collier denounces the definition of sustainable immigration policy above. They perceive it as not thorough enough, criticizing it for lacking normative and political engagement. Further, the definition does not indicate what a fair distribution of costs and benefits looks like (Betts & Collier, 2018a:6). This thesis seeks to explore the research question using a holistic approach, including economic, social, political and ethical aspects. The approach in question is the SMF.

The SMF puts forth three criteria for a sustainable immigration policy. They are as follows: a) Immigration based on basic ethical obligations b) Immigration based on democratic support of the receiving society, and c) Immigration which leads to 'no regret' outcomes (Ibid.:7). Together they make up the model in section 3.2.

3.1.1 Duty of rescue

Betts and Collier believe that ethics come into play when outlining a sustainable immigration policy. It is a challenging task to determine the ethical obligations of a state: What are its obligations and to whom? A range of scholars would be eager to answer this question. Moral philosopher Kant would point to his categorical imperative, "Act only according to that maxim whereby you can, at the same time, will that it should become a universal law." (Kant, 1994:30). Rawls, in his *Theory of Justice*, would argue for equal ethical treatment for all, including the duty of rescue the most unfortunate ones (Rawls, 1971). Philosophers of remedial duty would insist that a state is responsible for its infliction of deliberate and relational harm, demanding

compensation to the victims in question (Miller, 2007:82). For instance, they might claim Norway responsible for compensation to refugees fleeing Libya due to its direct involvement in the 2011 bombings. Additionally, they might see Norway as ethically obligated to compensate those forcefully displaced by climate change due to its role as an oil producer and distributor. Utilitarian Bentham and Mill would claim that the state could only act morally correct if it maximized “the greatest happiness for the greatest number” (Bentham & Mill, 2003:92). Betts and Collier regard a state’s obligations as primarily towards its own citizens (Betts & Collier, 2018a:12), inspired by the social contract (Hobbes, 1998; Rousseau, 1998). They underline that, in addition to maintaining its obligations of international law, the state has two duties of rescue to non-citizens. First, it is a state’s duty to ensure that “societies become stable, functional and capable of supporting human flourishing, escaping mass despair.” (Betts & Collier, 2018a:12). This only applies to states which are able to contribute, often described as middle and high-income countries. The duty is in practice to assist poor societies with humanitarian and development aid. Note how it is society that is entitled rescue out of poverty and not the individual. Second, it is a state’s duty to “assist and protect people who flee dysfunctional societies that are unable to ensure the most basic minimum standards of human dignity (...)” (Ibid.:8). This obligation aims for moral high ground and global solidarity.

3.1.2 Democratic mandate

When drafting an immigration policy aiming for sustainability, it is important that its content is acceptable for the majority of the public, if not, it will not endure. According to Betts and Collier, “a democratic mandate requires that a given set of policies can maintain the required political support from governments and their citizens over time” (Betts & Collier, 2018a:13). A democratic mandate is not a given; It is constantly affected by societal factors, such as the power of the media outlets. What has been regarded as acceptable immigration policy has changed over time, determined by the ones in power. Policy-making has historically been considered a job for the elite. They set the terms for immigration and decided, without regard to rest of the population, who were welcome to cross the borders (Castles et al., 2013:313). After democratic procedures were institutionalized in modern times, the power shifted towards the people. Today, politics transform by the interaction between people, norms and values. Democratic mandates towards homosexuality and smoking, for instance, have radically changed in the last decade.

Immigration is one of the issues which historically has fluctuated significantly in democratic support. States can refer to specific decades of both open borders and immigration

bans. Supply and demand for migrants are elements contributing to shaping democratic mandates. One of the challenges of drafting a sustainable immigration policy, is to maintain a democratic mandate in times of change. The current society is experiencing a shift in terms of an increasing aging population, a rise in automation, high-technological replacements and lack of care workers (Betts & Collier, 2018a:14). These aspects matter when a population is to take a stand on which political party's immigration policy they want to grant a democratic mandate.

3.1.3 'No regrets'

The third criterion for a sustainable immigration policy is referred to as 'no regrets'. The idea is to seek confidence in that the migrant, the sending state and receiving state will in retrospect believe that the mobility in question was in their long-term interest (Betts & Collier, 2018a:7). In other words, the key is to create mutually beneficial outcomes for all the parties involved. The migrant should not regret the mobility, the sending state should not regret the facilitation of movement and the receiving state should not regret the decision to grant entry. If this criterion is not upheld in policy making, a gap between expectations and the actual outcome can evolve.

It is not uncommon that citizens show regret of the state's immigration policies. This contributes to eroded public trust which, in turn, can lead to societies in tipping points and gross over-corrections by politicians (Ibid.:15). Sending states can, too, experience regret. When facilitating emigration, sending states might seek their own migrants to return with new knowledge for the benefit of the state. Additionally, they desire remittances which contribute to increased standard of living for its citizens. Similarly, migrants experience situations of regrets in the aftermath of emigration. This is due to lack of information gathering beforehand, spread of misinformation or simply a mismatch of expectations and actual outcomes. The gap is often created due to experiences during the mobility, or with matters of entry, residency, housing, education, labor or reunification after the journey. It is thus emphasized that sustainable immigration policies "must aspire to support informed migration decision-making and not tempt people into decisions they may later regret" (Ibid.:15).

The 'no regret' approach is developed to close the gap of expectation and reality by promoting informed travel for migrants and attempting to avoid politics of panic for the receiving states. Betts and Collier recommend states to develop policies which are "evidence-based and draw upon the best understanding approaches for predicting societal outcomes" (Ibid.:16). Further, they want to encourage politicians to make policies extending beyond the electoral cycle that include "the creation and dissemination of information, legal pathways and viable options for return" for migrants (Ibid.:16).

3.2 The SMF model

In line with the three criteria of sustainable immigration outlined above, Betts and Collier have developed the following model:

Ethical Criteria	Specific Conditions	Obligations Towards
1. Duties of Rescue	Development	Poor and fragile societies
	Protecting and empowering refugees	Individual refugees
2. Democratic Mandate	Compatible with citizen preferences	Citizens and values
3. No Regrets	Long-term interests of the receiving societies, sending societies, and migrants	Our future selves

Figure 1. Source: Betts & Collier, 2018a:16

In the interest of clarifying the SMF-model, row number one illustrates the first criterion of sustainable immigration, namely, to fulfill a state’s basic ethical obligations. This includes the two duties of rescue: i) provide development for poor societies and ii) protect and empower refugees. These are obligations a state has, respectively, towards fragile societies, and individual refugees. Row number two demonstrates the second criterion for sustainable immigration: a democratic mandate. Such a mandate is given by considering citizen’s preferences. This is an obligation towards the citizens themselves and the society’s values. Row number three displays the third criterion of ‘no regrets’. Situations of ‘no regrets’ are promoted by basing policy on the long-term interests of the receiving societies, sending societies and migrants. This is an obligation towards our future selves.

3.3 The SMF operationalized

Betts and Collier argue that their SMF “has the potential to reset the debate on criteria on which a new consensus can be forged.” (Betts & Collier, 2018a:6). They offer a point of departure for all politicians across the spectrum to engage in this so-called unifying framework. The goal is

to build a consensus on the immigration issue. But how is the framework operationalized? The first criterion, the duty of rescue, requires a comparison between an immigration policy and the basic ethical obligations. Furthermore, it seeks a comparison of the immigration policy in theory and practice; Does it provide refugees with their rights? Does it promote brain drain in sending states? Does it lead to mass migration? (Ibid.:17). The second criterion, a democratic mandate, is operationalized using citizens' preferences related to immigration. Fortunately, this has been researched for decades and data is accessible through voting patterns, opinion polls and surveys. The third criterion, 'no regrets', has a precautionary principle in mind. Its operationalization includes evaluation of whether the receiving state i) provides sufficient information to would-be migrants, ii) regards origin states when implementing policy, and iii) bases policy on long-term economic, demographic, and social forecasts (Ibid.:17). The three criteria are analyzed disproportionately in length simply because they differ in scope.

3.4 Criticism of the SMF

There are a few problematic elements with the SMF. Its first criterion, duty of rescue, requires a state to take ethical responsibility. Glancing at the actors in the international arena, one can quickly detect divergence among states to do so. A prime example is membership to humanitarian conventions and courts: states tend to avoid situations of scrutiny. This is the case of some states more than others, even Norway, a country which prides itself on its standard of human rights, has not ratified all nine of the UN Human Rights Conventions¹ (UN Treaties, 2020). States will not fulfill the duty of rescue unless it is in their self-interest to do so. Next, the second criterion, a democratic mandate, introduces the issue of maintaining support for a policy when governments are temporary. A policy implemented by one government might be discarded by the next. This is a significant challenge for states with a large gap between the political parties as their desired policy will most likely differ remarkably. Additionally, it is perceived challenging to maintain a democratic mandate for a certain policy over longer periods of time. Further, the criterion of 'no regrets' is problematic as one cannot predict the consequences of mobility for the migrant, the sending state or the receiving state. As Betts and Collier put it, "all areas of life are based on uncertainty and risk" (Betts & Collier, 2018a:16). If one could predict the future, 'no regrets' would not be a third criterion.

One last critical notion towards the framework is the matter of a reality check. While Betts and Collier claim that the model has the potential to unify politicians across party lines

¹ Norway is yet to ratify the 2003 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

and promote global agreement on the immigration issue, one is left questioning how the SMF would work in practice. If all states implemented sustainable immigration policies, it is likely that the total number estimated for sustainable voluntary migrants and forced migrants would not equal the real number. Putting it in context, it is doubtful that the sustainable immigration rates of the world's 195 nation states would add up to the current number of 272 million migrants (IOM, 2019b:19). A state is able to deny entry to a voluntary migrant, but for refugees who are forcefully displaced, the state is lawfully required to grant entry to people seeking asylum² – no matter of the estimated sustainable immigration rate (UN, 1948: §14). It is therefore valid to ask whether the SMF is useful at all, a question analyzed in section 5.1.

4. The case of Norway

The thesis will apply the Sustainable Migration Framework to the case of Norway. This country, located in the northern periphery of Europe, is known for punching above its weight in the international arena with its generous economic contributions to humanitarian projects, and peace and reconciliation efforts. The country has about 5,3 million inhabitants of which 14,7 % classify as immigrants (SSB, 2020). What makes Norway an interesting analytical case is its combination of an arguably restrictive immigration policy and inclusive welfare state. This section will provide the context to why the thesis will refer to Norwegian immigration policy as restrictive, in accordance with international law and with the aim of ensuring the survival of the welfare state.

4.1 Norwegian immigration policy: Voluntary migrants

Immigration policy concerns foreigners' possibilities to enter, reside and settle within a given country. Norway has historically been a country of emigration rather than immigration. In fact, it was not until 1961 that Norway received more migrants than it sent abroad (SSB, n.d). Its harsh climate, remoteness and difficult farming conditions have discouraged immigration for centuries, resulting in the relatively homogenous society that Norway has today.

An historical account of the development of Norwegian immigration policy reveals a story of a door open, ajar and closed. The country's very first Immigration Act stems from 1687, a time when Norway was part of a union with Denmark. The Act regulated immigration to the realm, manifesting how everyone was welcome except Jews, Tatars, Jesuits, Monks and general vagrants (King Christian V Law, 1687). Since Norway became a nation in 1814,

² Even though this is statutory in international law, states tend to find loopholes by making it impossible to seek asylum through border externalization, demanding visas on airline carriers, or simply force repatriation.

following the break-up of Denmark-Norway, the country has at some point singled out Catholics, Finns and Swedes too. Migrants who were perceived poor, loose, mobile and competed for resources along with the resident population, were unpopular and at risk of being marginalized and evicted. Interestingly, exceptions were made; Although all Jews in principle were banned from Norway until 1851, some Jews were invited to settle due to their wealth and capital contributions (Brochmann & Kjeldstadli, 2008:80, 83).

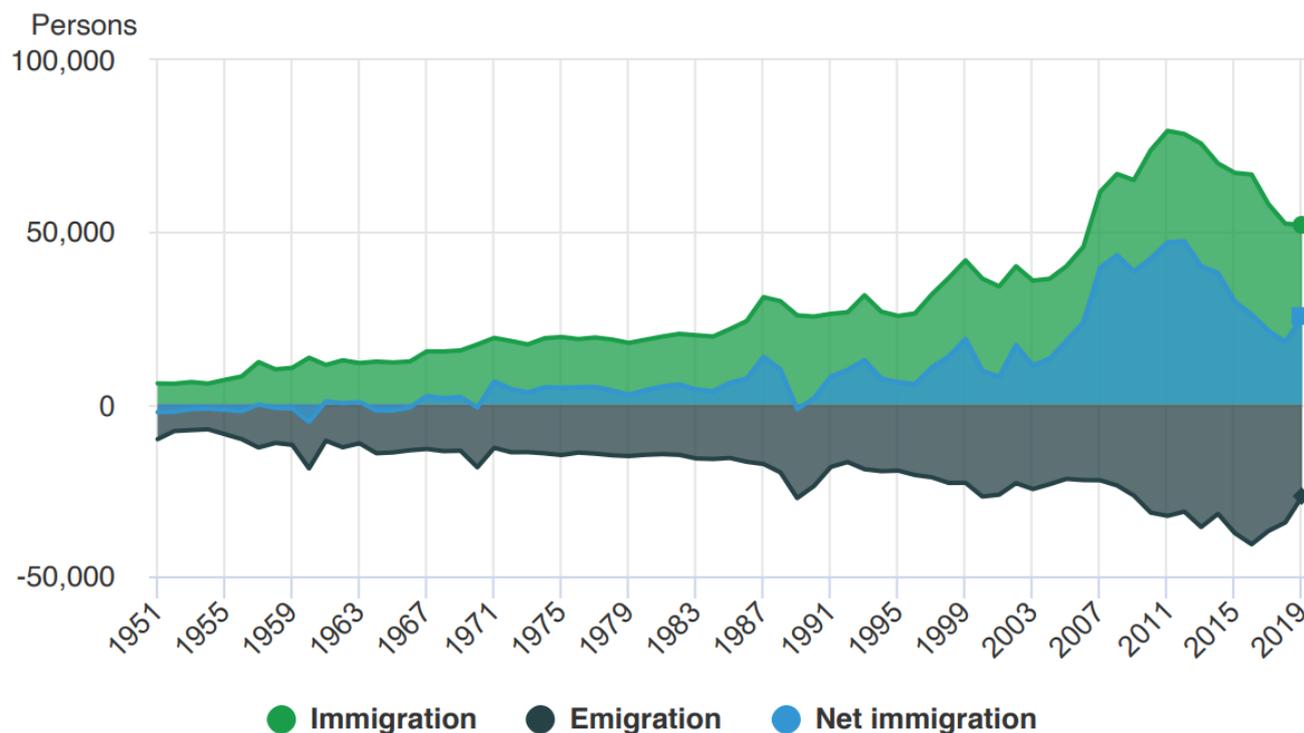
The abolishment of passports in 1860 promoted liberal immigration policies in Norway until the outbreak of the First World War. The war was to effectively end the *laissez-faire* period of immigration to Norway (Torpey, 2018:137). From this time forth, a control system was installed with the reintroduction of the passport and experimentations with externalization measures (Nissen, 2017). The passport was the legal basis to apply for visas that granted entry to Norway and the visas were only issued at Norwegian consulates and legations abroad. Passports and visas thus “became instruments to turn away people at the border, in fact to tell them not to approach the border at all” (Brochmann & Kjeldstadli, 2008:105). This new regime of control was further advanced by the establishment of special administrative entities, surveillance work, registers and postal requirements, as well as the increased power to the local police (Nissen, 2017). In the following decades, new immigration policies were passed; The Immigration Act of 1927 stated how all immigrants seeking to work in Norway had to be granted a working permit before entry (NOU, 2004:61); The Immigration Act of 1956 suspended the prohibition of Jesuits and Gypsies to the kingdom. The Act, however, did not change the reality for Gypsies as they were still regarded as part of the restricted ‘vagrants’ (Ibid.:62).

Immigration policies were liberalized following the Second World War. Norway sought laborers who could contribute to the booming economy but struggled to attract immigrants: the pull factors were comparatively greater in other countries in Western Europe (Kaya, 2002:20). Gradually, immigrants from developing countries migrated north, particularly Turks, Moroccans, Indians and Pakistanis (Østby, 2017). The welcoming atmosphere in Norway was put into words in a White Paper in 1968; The Parliament stated immigration as free and encouraged this as norm for the future (St.meld. no.45, 1968-69). The subsequent stop in immigration a few years later might therefore come as a surprise. The immigration ban was aimed at temporarily curtailing the flow of migrants, while drafting a new immigration policy reflecting the ongoing development of the welfare state (see section 4.3) (Østby, 2017). The rapidly changing Norwegian society had to be in line with migrants’ rights and restrictions internationally. It was especially important that the new policy prevented lasting

marginalization of vulnerable groups. At this time, Norway had experienced migrant laborers who came as guest workers yet stayed as permanent settlers. The government regarded this as an increasing issue and the term ‘foreign worker problem’ was coined (Amblie, 2016:13). Flaws in the labor and housing market promoted further conflict and it was therefore definite that Norway needed a break from its liberal immigration policies (Brochmann & Kjeldstadli, 2008:199). Nevertheless, there were holes in the fence: migrant laborers of demand, persons of family reunification and refugees were still admitted. During the first five years of the ban, about 23.000 dispensations were granted, 25 % of these were family reunifications primarily for spouses and children (Amblie, 2016:13). The initially temporary immigration stop was finally made permanent in 1981 after five periods of extension. The same year, entry and temporary residency was granted to students (Cappelen et al., 2011:13).

Norway became part of the European Economic Area in 1994 after twice voting ‘no’ on the question of membership to the European Union. The European Economic Area gave access to the internal market without obliging Norway to set a certain immigration policy, except for opening up its labor market for fellow member states. The passing of the Schengen Agreement in 2001, however, directly affected Norwegian policy on border control, and one may call it “a ‘back door membership’ [to the EU] (...) in the field of asylum, police cooperation and border control” (Brochmann & Kjeldstadli, 2008:254-255). The border with Russia now represented more than Norway’s territorial border, it was the border of the Schengen area as well. Before the turn of the century, the government declared Norway an increasing multicultural society (St.meld. no.17, 1996-1997). Norway’s integration with the European Economic Area and Schengen endorsed immigration, along with its refugee and family reunification schemes. In 1994, Norway received 26,911 immigrants, in 2001 the number had risen to 34,264, its all-time high was with 79,498 immigrants in 2011 and the most recent number from 2019 equaled 52,153 (see figure 2 below) (SSB, n.d). Today’s immigration legislation was enforced in 2010 and builds upon the immigration ban as well as previously passed laws. It is widely referred to as restrictive in character (Blaker, 2014); Fangen & Vaage, 2018) The 2010 Immigration Act states that except for Nordic citizens, all foreigners must apply for permanent residency in Norway. The main reasons for acceptance include employment, education, protection and family reunification (Immigration Act, 2008).

Immigration and emigration - Norway



Source: *Folkemengde og befolkningsendringar*, Statistics Norway

Figure 2. Source: SSB, n.d.

4.2 Norwegian immigration policy: Forced migrants

Immigration policy includes control and regulation of forced migrants as much as voluntary migrants. The Norse sagas stemming from the Viking Age are the first to record refugees in Norway, namely the Bjarms coming from today's Russia (Tordsson, 1914: §333). In the centuries to follow, Norway accepted refugees identified as Swedish and Danish nobles, Jews fleeing the tsarist regime, anti-communist groups in the Soviet Union and refugees fleeing Nazi-Germany (Brochmann & Kjeldstadli, 2008:123-124). One of the common denominators of this group is the relative geographical closeness to Norway; The refugees were to a large degree fleeing to the closest safe haven in their neighboring country. The group did not make up a substantial number, thus, the government did not regulate their arrival beyond the immigration policies already described in section 4.1. Note, however, the mutual repatriation agreements with Sweden in 1855 and Finland in 1860 concerning the return of forced migrants who were regarded as 'economic and social burdens' (Ibid.:104). After the Second World War, Norway accepted refugees with the labor market in mind. The refugees were actively selected according to gender, age and physic. Young, able-bodied men were of preference as they were considered the best fit for work life and of least cost to the public economy (Otnæs, 1950). Years later, the

selection logic changed from being purely economic to include humanitarian views. Challenged individuals like blind, tubercular and handicapped refugees were gradually admitted (Brochmann & Kjeldstadli, 2008:180). In the 1970s, the ‘jet refugees’ made their first appearance in Norway. These were refugees who had crossed several state boundaries, moved from one part of the world to another, primarily fleeing from the Chilean coup d’état and the Vietnam War. In the following decades, the refugee composition in Norway continued to be shaped by war and conflict in non-neighboring areas: In 1993, 12,876 (mainly Bosnians) applied for asylum, 10,160 asylum seekers (mainly Kosovars) applied in 1999 and in 2015, the all-time high number of 31,145 asylum seekers (mainly Syrians and Afghanis) sought refuge in Norway (UDI, n.d.a). Comparatively, contemporary numbers show 2,936 applicants for 2019 with an acceptance rate of 61% (UDI, 2020a). Which laws have affected these patterns of the forced migrants in Norway?

The international refugee regime can be traced back to the early 20th century with Fridtjof Nansen’s initiatives in the League of Nations. Since then, Norway has committed to treaties which affected national immigration policy. First and foremost, the 1951 Refugee Convention, and its following 1968 protocol, set a common standard for the refugee term as well as stated the rights of the internationally forcefully displaced. Further, the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Right and its two 1966 associated protocols claimed the fundamental rights for all human beings. Several other human rights conventions have been ratified as well, for example concerning the rights of children and women. While the international level developed policy primarily aimed at giving rights to the forced migrants, the regional level also focused restricting them. Norway, as part of Schengen, obliged to the Dublin Regulation in 2001 which specified that a claim for asylum must be processed in the first country of arrival for the applicant. This was regarded as a beneficial scheme for Norway due to the limited routes to its borders (Brekke & Staver, 2018:2175). Despite the lack of membership to the EU and its Common European Asylum System, Norway implemented similar regulations with the Union ultimately harmonizing policy and advocating against a ‘race to the bottom’ (Ibid.:2167). It became increasingly difficult for the forced migrants to apply for asylum in Europe and Norway due to visa requirements, carrier sanctions and the introduction of the concept ‘clearly unfounded cases’, which in practice meant turning away asylum seekers at the border without processing their claim (Brochmann & Kjeldstadli, 2008:257). Additionally, following the repercussions of the Arab Spring in 2011, Norway amended asylum seekers rights twice: tightening conditions for family reunification, restricting the opportunity to work and introducing integration criteria for permanent residency (Endringslov, 2016). The UN and

Amnesty International have criticized Norwegian immigration policy aimed at the forced migrants (UN Association Norway, 2016; Amnesty International 2017a:42).

4.3 The Norwegian welfare state

The modern welfare state was introduced in the 1880s when Otto von Bismarck extended social welfare programs to include ordinary citizens, not only the privileged (Kersbergen & Vis, 2013: 38). The concept was further developed through state interventions seen during the Great Depression and the World Wars. Today there are several types of welfare states, all with different approaches to health care, pensions, employment benefits and housing. The Nordic welfare states differ from other regions' welfare systems due to its emphasis on universalism, individualism, egalitarianism and gender equality. This welfare ideology is characterized as social democratic, with a strong state presence and high degree of decommodification (Greve, 2015:32). The model promotes maximum work force participation and comprehensive benefits (Esping-Andersen, 1990). It is regarded as one of, if not the most, robust modes of social protection in the world.

In the case of Norway, the social security policy of 1967 is perceived as the corner stone of the welfare state. This compulsory insurance and pension scheme collected all previous welfare policies into one law. It applies to all residents of Norway, including immigrants. Its aim is to ensure a certain standard of living for all by providing financial assistance in matters of unemployment, retirement, disability, motherhood and so forth. The welfare system is costly, in fact, 444 billion NOK were allocated to social security for 2020 (Regjeringen, 2019). Despite the system's dependency on tax, Norway does not range in the very top in taxation of its citizens. While Denmark and Sweden, respectively, operated with 44,86 % and 43,93 % in total tax revenue of the gross domestic product in 2018, Norway collected a tax rate of 39,03 % (OECD, 2019a). One of the reasons why Norway is able to provide welfare with a relatively low tax rate is its Government Pension Fund, commonly referred to as the Oil Fund. According to the Budgetary Rule, the government is allowed to allocate 3 % of the fund's value to the annual budget, which includes welfare costs (St.meld. no.29, 2016-2017). This was estimated to equal 243,6 billion NOK for the 2020 annual budget (St.meld. no.1, 2019-2020). Clearly, the petroleum industry plays a significant role in ensuring welfare in the Norwegian society.

While economists might argue of the importance of oil revenue in the makings of the Norwegian welfare state, sociologists might rather stress people's values. It is true that the system is based on more than financial arrangements, it is too based on levels of trust. This has been regarded as one of the keys to a successful welfare state. First, in order for the system to

function, Norwegian residents must have faith in the government managing the treasury. If Norway was a country known for corruption, it is likely that people would be more reluctant to pay taxes to the state. Since this is not the case, Norway can showcase a population of 68 % with confidence and trust in the government (OECD, 2019b:159). Comparatively, the OECD average was 45 %. Second, Norwegian residents must have trust in other peoples. If Norwegian residents believe others cheat the system, it is likely that they will too. The system will erode if there is a lack of faith in that other people contribute to the best of their ability. In the most recent Eurostat study, the average resident of Norway rated trust of other peoples to 7,3 in a scale from 0-10, where 0 equaled ‘You do not trust any other person’ and 10 ‘Most people can be trusted’ (Eurostat, 2013). The average rating of the EU was 5,8. Third and lastly, the resident must have trust in the welfare system’s reciprocity. At first, it might seem unfair that a high-income resident is to be taxed more than others, and subsequently, contribute to pay for welfare benefits to low-income residents. However, life is uncertain, it is impossible to know whether the high-income resident is able to work a lifetime uninterrupted by sickness, accidents and bankruptcies. The high-income resident is nonetheless free to enjoy all welfare services. This is in line with Rawls second principle of justice; “ (...) social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both (a) reasonably expected to be to everyone’s advantage” (Rawls, 1971:53). Welfare is thus distributed unevenly intended to decrease financial differences and be of benefit for the least advantaged. The welfare system operates as a national insurance company making sure everyone is taken care of, regardless of work performance or status (Vårdal, 2017).

The Norwegian welfare state prefers immigrants who produce welfare, not only consume welfare. This was in mind once the social security policy was passed, the ‘oil adventure’ developing and immigration came to halt in 1975. From here on and out, it was important that the rapidly evolving welfare state was built on “ethos of equality, humanism and international solidarity”, while at the same time maintaining the national household economy with *realpolitik* (Brochmann & Kjeldstadli, 2008:202). This became the dominant methodology, where the government was to accept inflows of immigrants who filled the gaps in the economy, while restricting immigrants considered ‘superfluous’ (Ibid.:199). It was a calculation of burden versus asset. The government strove for reducing unskilled labor and integrating the immigrants who had already settled. The Norwegian Confederation for Trade Unions agreed to the government’s strategy, as they were concerned of social dumping mechanisms which in turn would affect working conditions and salaries in Norway (Daae-Qvale & Meyer, 2013:149-150).

Parts of the public worried too, as the system did not differentiate between citizens and newcomers, they questioned the fairness of the division of burdens and rights in a society where some had contributed for a lifetime, other not. Additionally, it was debated whether immigrants who were unfamiliar with Norwegian values, especially the level of trust, would understand the social contract of reciprocity: “the whole system is - to a certain extent - based on the assumption that people will feel, if not shame, at least unease, when applying for aid, to avoid overtaxing the budgets. Immigrants (...) will not necessarily have the same kinds of 'accurate reluctance'” (Brochmann & Kjeldstadli, 2008:224). An Official Norwegian Report of 2017 stated that the long-term consequences of high immigration to Norway could result in lower trust. The committee warned that if the people who often receive social benefits also are people stemming from other countries, it will promote a discourse of distinctiveness which decreases levels of trust (NOU, 2017). This would accordingly change the will to contribute to the welfare state. The debates regarding the effect of immigration on levels of trust are, nevertheless, ongoing and no academic consensus has been reached. For instance, social scientist Bo Rothstein expressed his skepticism of the influence of foreigners on trust, by exemplifying regional areas with a relatively homogenous population which still lacked significant levels of trust (Rothstein, 2011). Social economist, Andreas Bergh, disregarded the correlation too, and claimed that it was the economic gaps between the rich and poor which made the greatest impact on attitudes of trust (Bergh & Bjørnskov, 2013).

Despite the debated effects of immigration, Norwegians have become more immigration friendly parallel with the increase of newcomers in the last decades (SSB, 2019a). According to Statistics Norway, in 2002 about 40 % of the population believed that most immigrants abused the welfare system. In 2018, this had decreased to 25 % (Ibid.). Today, 76 % of the population believe that most immigrants make an important contribution to Norwegian working life (SSB, 2019b). What about the ‘welfare tourism’ scare? Since the country joined the European Economic Area, ‘welfare tourism’ has been a concern among Norwegians. The term is defined as “immigration whose purpose is to achieve increased welfare through social security, rather than through work”³ (Ekhaugen et al., 2016: 6). In a report commissioned by the government, it is concluded that such immigration has appeared only to a limited extent in Norway (Ibid.:13). Considering the future challenges of maintaining the welfare state, the authorities are interested in investing in immigrants who characterize as net welfare producers. Norway is about to become a 30-30-30 society: People study until the age of 30, work for the

³ Translation from Norwegian to English.

next 30 years, following 30 years living of their pension (Vårdal, 2017). One can question how Norway is to take care of its elders using the welfare system, when the current demographics depict a limited work force. Some say the answer is immigrants: foreigners who are able to be absorbed into productive employment. After all, Norway has been bailed out by large-scale immigration before. No matter the means, the priority of the authorities is to ensure the survival of the welfare state by securing “economic sustainability intertwined with social cohesion and trust in political institutions” (Erdal et al., 2018:33). The role the welfare state plays in sustainable immigration is addressed in the next chapter.

5. Sustainable Immigration Analysis

In this chapter, the opportunities for and obstacles to implementation of a sustainable immigration policy in the Norwegian welfare state are analyzed using the Sustainable Migration Framework. The three criteria of the duty of rescue, a democratic mandate and ‘no regrets’ are assessed in a Norwegian context. In the areas Norway is performing in accordance with the SMF, it is regarded as an opportunity for implementation of a sustainable immigration policy. Conversely, in the areas Norway is not performing in accordance with the SMF, it is regarded as an obstacle for implementation of a sustainable immigration policy. The question of what sustainable immigration entails is present throughout the whole analysis section and with special emphasis on section 5.1 which asks if such a policy is preferable. At last, the sub-conclusions will be brought together to examine what this indicates in practice for a sustainable immigration policy in Norway.

5.1 Is a sustainable immigration policy preferable?

While attempting to analyze the opportunities for and obstacles to implementing a sustainable immigration policy in Norway, it is interesting to question the motif of doing so. Is a sustainable immigration policy even preferable? On the one hand, one can argue that it is a poor objective to aim for a sustainable immigration policy. Such a policy implies endurance, and absence of renegotiation processes and replacements. By maintaining immigration at a constant level, fluctuations in a society are disregarded (Carling & Erdal, 2018). There are fluctuations in demographic composition, the labor market, the political arena, the economy, etc., which tend to affect the supply and demand of immigrants. Additionally, public opinion towards newcomers are neglected by keeping immigration at a steady level. These are attitudes likely to change with the arrival of migrants, as “higher levels of immigration lead to greater societal change” (Ibid.). There is no yardstick predicting the fluctuations and attitudes in society of the

future. It is thus questionable whether it makes sense to set a certain immigration policy intended for a long period of time, when the need for immigrants is likely to change. However, in a sustainable immigration policy, the object of sustainability is not the immigration flow per se, but rather the policy related to it (Betts & Collier, 2018a:11). In other words, a sustainable immigration policy does not necessarily have to operate with a set quota. Instead, a policy can be made sustainable with set regulations, sanctions, taxes and subsidies managing immigration. This is the case for immigration policy governing voluntary migrants, not the forced migrants.

On the other hand, a sustainable immigration policy is preferable if the alternative is chaos. During the migrant influx of 2015, European states responded in various ways, some with implementing incoherent and arguably unsustainable immigration policies. For instance, there were shifts from open-door policies to policies of protectionist exclusion causing confusion and discontent (Ibid.:5). A change towards sustainable immigration may therefore be desirable: eliminating unpredictable, unstable and surprising practices in favor of balanced, conventional and calculated approaches. After all, immigration plays a significant role in shaping a society, why not think long-term and ensure a favorable demographic development? Erdal et al. claim that sustainable immigration has potential to become a useful analytical concept as long as it is defined clearly, with policy characterized as evidence-based and with a definite answer to the question ‘sustainable for whom?’ (Erdal et al., 2018:46). In regard to this thesis, the term has already been defined along the lines of maintaining stability and the SMF has promoted evidence-based policy (Betts & Collier, 2018a: 7, 47). What the SMF does not address, however, is whom the model is intended to be sustainable for: the migrant, the receiving state or the sending state? This is important as the perspective of these actors might be at odds with one another, especially when comparing short and long-term prospects. Implicitly, it is evident that the SMF seeks to guide the receiving state to a sustainable immigration policy. Even though the three core criteria involve the migrant, the receiving and the sending state, the primary focus is to ensure a policy agreed upon by the larger resident public for a certain amount of time. It is more likely to succeed if one has considered the receiving state’s ethical obligation, democratic mandate and ‘no regrets’ concerns. Whether the term has analytical value or not, it is nonetheless interesting to assess sustainable immigration as long as it is in the public and political discourse. It might sound like utopia, but if a state is able to set a sustainable immigration policy with considerations to fluctuations according to society, it is reason to believe that immigration will transform from a divisive, polarizing and controversial issue to become harmonic, composed and tranquil.

5.2 Norway and the duty of rescue

Norway is generally believed to be a country of high moral standards, perhaps due to its human rights record, prison rehabilitation programs and association with the Nobel Peace Prize. However, Norway can showcase a questionable ethical record in certain fields. For instance, the government has been criticized of investing the oil fund in companies committing war crimes (Amnesty International, 2018); Norwegian weapons and ammunitions have been sold to coalitions involved in the civil war in Yemen (Aarseth, 2018); Since 2015, the European Court of Human Rights has received 36 cases against Norway's practice of child protection services⁴ (NTB, 2020). What about Norway's basic obligations of rescue? Is this an opportunity for implementation of a sustainable immigration policy or an obstacle? In order to analyze this relationship, the SMF calls for a comparison between Norwegian policy and the duties of rescue, as well as a comparison of the policy in theory and in practice.

5.2.1 The duty of rescue in theory

Recalling section 3.1, Betts and Collier claim that states have their primary obligation towards their own citizens. This is an ideology Norway practices together with most states worldwide. The state's management of the welfare state, the oil fund and the annual budget are examples of how Norway puts its citizens first. Ethical considerations by Kant, Rawls, Bentham, philosophers of remedial duty and others are generally trumped by this principle. In terms of Norway's immigration policy, the priority of Norwegian citizens is obvious. Section 17 of the Immigration Act concerns rejections of foreign nationals. It ensures that newcomers will not be a burden for Norwegians, as foreigners suffering from serious mental disorders, or lack sufficient funds, or have recently committed a crime of a certain level, will be rejected at the border (Immigration Act, 2008: §17g-k). Explicitly, it states that a foreigner is subject to rejection "when it is necessary out of consideration for national security, public health, public order or international relations of Norway or another Schengen country" (Ibid.:§17l). This is an accurate depiction of how Norwegians come first in Norway, foreigners second. While foreigners are in danger of being expelled from the territory, Norwegian nationals are naturally not subjected to this (Ibid.:§69).

Now turning to the first duty of rescue: the duty to rescue fragile societies from mass despair. This is governed under the Norwegian Development Policy, a policy which since 2017 has been based on the UN's 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Norway is committed to these 17 goals and 169 targets and the government has expressed how

⁴ Nine of these cases have been processed and settled. Norway was convicted in seven of them.

they function as the point of departure for Norwegian developmental aid (St.meld. no.24, 2016-2017:9). The introduction of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs to Norwegian Developmental Policy caused Norway to concentrate its support on five areas: a) education, b) health, c) business development and job creation, d) climate, renewable energy and environment, and e) humanitarian aid. All of these priorities are related and mutually reinforcing (Ibid.). The four former areas stem from the following SDGs: 3. Good health and well-being, 4. Quality education, 7. Affordable and clean energy 8. Decent work and economic growth, 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns, and 13. Climate Action. The latter, humanitarian aid, originates from Norway's Humanitarian Strategy (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2018:6). The five priorities of the Norwegian Development Policy represent some of the core elements of assisting a fragile society out of poverty. They stand as fundamental building blocks for a stable and functioning society. The significant compatibility of the first duty of rescue and the Norwegian Development Policy come as no surprise as the SDGs were created by actors who paid "particular attention to the voices of the poorest and most vulnerable" (UN, 2015: §6).

Finally, Norwegian immigration policy is yet to be compared to the last duty of rescue: the duty to assist and protect refugees. By scrutinizing the Immigration Act, the extent of refugee protection in Norway is arguably far-reaching. While international treaties are often interpreted in a narrow sense globally, despite the notions of them being living documents that should be implemented in good faith, Norway expands refugees' rights beyond its international commitments. For example, the categories of persecution which gives grounds for asylum are enlarged and specified in Norwegian law to include physical violence, mental violence, sexual violence, punishment defined as disproportionate or discriminatory, and acts of gender and child specific nature (Immigration Act, 2008: §29a-f). Further, the Act clarifies that it is not only states that persecute: organizations, groups and non-state actors are perpetrators too. Paragraph 24 calls for collective protection in a mass flight situation and paragraph 73 ensures absolute protection against refoulment. Altogether, these rights depict comprehensive premises for refugee protection in Norway, an obligation in line with the second duty of rescue. Now that it is clear that both of the SMF's duties of rescue compare well with Norway's policies in theory, the question is, how does it compare in practice?

5.2.2 The duty of rescue in practice

The duty of lifting societies out of poverty is in practice conducted by the aid fund. Since Norway established such a fund in 1952, the country has devoted a few percentages of the

annual budget to assisting developing countries. Brazil, Tanzania, Mozambique and Afghanistan represent the greatest receivers of Norwegian aid, each receiving over 10,000 million NOK in total throughout the decades (NORAD, n.d). This might be surprising considering that only one of them are ranked among the 20 most fragile states⁵ (OECD, 2018). However, these countries reflect Norwegian aid programs covering half a century; Society changes and aid priorities accordingly. The top four Norwegian aid receivers of today are Syria, Afghanistan, Brazil and South Sudan (NORAD, n.d). This speaks of aid contributions aimed at war-torn, malfunctioning and unstable societies, with the exception of Brazil which received financial aid to reduce emissions from deforestation in the Amazon (Regjeringen, 2018). According to a Parliament White Paper, Norwegian aid is concentrated in countries defined as highly fragile, where the largest amount of people in need are located (St.meld. no. 24, 2016-2017:10). For 2020, Norway allocated 39,2 million NOK to the aid budget and, ultimately, to the duty of assisting fragile societies (Statsbudsjettet, n.d). At a global scale, the country is one out of five that donates 0,7 % or more of its Gross National Income, a target set by the UN (OECD, 2020).

It is evident that Norway generously allocates financial assistance to poor societies, but by doing so, is the country promoting mass migration? Does developmental aid reduce or increase migration? This is a relevant question for donor countries which often wish to deter migration, not promote it. Since the 1950s, it has been believed that immigration from low income countries would be reduced if given economic assistance (Lucas, 2014:152). Rich countries could replace immigration flows by directing aid and trade to poor societies. This was a widely accepted idea across the political spectrum, endorsed by the International Labor Organization and the European Commission among others (Ibid.:1-2). The correlation between aid and reduced migration was expressed in a Norwegian context too. During the European migration crisis, the biggest and most influential political parties spoke in favor of ‘helping in the nearby areas’ because ‘then more people can be helped’, and eventually the parties stressed how this strategy would ‘not make them come here’ (Eggen & Hegertun, 2017:36). This was not far off from Norway’s traditional aid policy where migration was perceived as the result of a country’s lack of development (Ibid.). The recognition of the ‘more aid equals less migration’ belief has, however, diminished with time. No empirical evidence has been found in support of declining emigration rates as a country accumulates wealth (Lucas, 2014:29). Rather, it is suggested that economic growth increases migration, at least until a country has reached an

⁵ This being Afghanistan.

annual gross domestic product of about 6,000 euro per capita (Eggen & Hegertun, 2017:33). This is because migrants are dependent on having sufficient resources in order to make the journey. It is a common misconception that all migrants are poor, but in fact, since “migration is costly, migrants are not among the poorest people in their home countries” (Collier, 2013b:22). When aid is donated to a developing country, it lifts society up to a new economic level which may encourage emigration, even mass emigration. About 40 % of people in countries defined as poor are estimated to emigrate if they had the chance (Ibid.). The debate on the effects of aid on migration was put to a close in Norway when a Parliament White Paper stated how it was unrealistic to assume developmental aid as an effective measure to affect migration (St.meld. no.24, 2016-2017:14). It clarified the goal of giving aid, namely, to reduce poverty, promote health and education, create jobs and provide the less fortunate with a better life. However, intentionally or unintentionally, Norway as a promoter of mass migration cannot be excluded. The restrictive immigration laws ensure that mass migration is not promoted to Norway, but it is not unlikely that Norwegian development aid facilitates migration from poor societies to less poor societies.

Norway’s role in stimulating mass migration is uncertain, but what about brain drain? This is a phenomenon described as a region’s “loss of skilled workers or students” (Cavallini et al., 2018:5). Brain drain is often found in movements from east to west, south to north and rural to urban. Norway ranked fourth to last on the human flight and drain brain index in 2019, indicating how it is a country of brain gain and not brain drain (Fund for Peace, 2019). Norway is a potential destination for foreign skilled workers due to its high wages and welfare benefits. But is it reasonable to claim that Norway promotes brain drain? All countries seek beneficial migrants if any, and emigration has a way of drawing upon the brightest, most ambitious and educated in a society (Collier, 2013a:195). However, by scrutinizing the Immigration Act, Norway’s active choice of prioritizing skilled workers is apparent; A work permit is only granted if the applicant is over 18 years of age, has a specific offer of employment with reasonable working conditions and pay, and the applicant is under the fixed quota by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the position cannot be filled by domestic, European Economic Area or European Fair Trade Association laborers (Immigration Act, 2008: §23). The paragraph favors skilled workers as they have a higher change of being offered a position before entering the country and is more likely to have certain expertise that domestic, European Economic Area or European Fair Trade Association workers do not obtain. Unskilled workers are in reality only subject to work permits through temporary seasonal labor or specified exchange programmes of culture and organizational labor (UDI, n.d.b). When Norway favors

skilled workers, it does promote brain drain. Pakistan, Iran, the Philippines, Serbia and India represented some of the top ten countries sending skilled workers to Norway in 2018 (UDI, n.d.c). These skilled workers were perhaps more needed in their home countries. Nonetheless, it is understandable that migrants are allured to high-income societies like Norway. Some of them might intend on staying to gain learning experience before returning home. This kind of circular migration is of preference for origin states, as it promotes knowledge exchange, capital growth by remittances and excludes long-time brain drain (Collier, 2013a:217).

In regard to the forced migrants, the SMF sees it necessary to analyze whether the refugees in Norway are provided the rights they are entitled to, according to the Immigration Act. This results in a compound picture. Norway seem to uphold its obligations towards the refugees – as long as they are on Norwegian soil. For while Norway can showcase grants of asylum based on homosexuality, persecution by non-state actors and fear of genital mutilation, honor killings and forced prostitution for women (Skjeggstad, 2012; Selmer, 2015), the country has made it increasingly difficult to reach its border to apply for asylum. The only border crossing to Norway is through Russia if a refugee wants to avoid the risk of being returned to its first Schengen country of arrival. When the 2015 migrant influx reached Europe, and eventually Norway⁶, the Parliament decided to alter the Immigration Act in such a way that all refugees could be returned to Russia without processing their claim of asylum in Norway (Flyktninghjelpen, n.d). In practice, Norway shut down the asylum institution on the Norwegian-Russian border and put a stop to the flow of asylum seekers on this route (Austenå, 2018). This decision, along with other immigration restrictions, received international attention and was criticized by more than 150 organizations, academic institutions and individuals, among them the UNHCR, Amnesty International, Peace Research Institute Oslo representatives and several state departments (Regjeringen, 2015). Instead of providing protection to refugees in Norway, the country sought to financially support them through UNHCR in their neighboring areas ⁷(Alfa, n.d). As an alternative to welcoming asylum seekers, Norway prioritized UN quota refugees. In the first decade of the new millennium, Norway accepted a 1000 of these, today this number has tripled. Interestingly, the country now receives more quota refugees than asylum seekers (UDI, 2020b). Despite Norway's relatively good merit in upholding refugees'

⁶ Interestingly, Russian legislation did not allow pedestrian crossings at this check point and Norwegian legislation penalized drivers transporting asylum seekers, hence, the migrants who travelled by the northern Norway route used bikes to cross the border.

⁷ Even though this is the dominant policy in Norway today, the government has been accused of making empty promises as little change has occurred in the budget to help refugees' neighbouring areas (Egeland, 2018; Nesse, 2018).

rights within its borders, controversies have taken place. For instance, when the Directorate for Immigration doubted asylum seekers claim regarding their age, medical examinations of teeth and hands were institutionalized. These tests were labelled ‘problematic’ and ‘unreliable’ yet affected the outcome of asylum applications (Malmo & Strøm, 2017). Furthermore, the Norwegian government was criticized for forcefully repatriate the so-called ‘October children’ to Afghanistan in 2017 (Amnesty International, 2017b; NTB, 2017). These persons arrived as single minors during the migrant influx of 2015, and by 2017 many of them had turned 18 years old and was hence legal to return. The Norwegian government considered parts of Afghanistan safe, and thus, did not regard repatriation to it as problematic to the non-refoulment principle (Tjernshaugen & Olsen, 2017). Even though the government saw no wrongdoing of its own, a French court stopped a return of an Afghani asylum seeker to Norway; It regarded Norway in breach of European minimum standards for cessations and returns, and ultimately, international human rights law (NTB, 2017). This was a similar case to the deportations of the refugees coming from Russia years earlier, where the UN High Commissioner for Refugees’ regional coordinator in Europe, Vincent Cochetel, stated that “We believe Norway is wrong to regard Russia as a safe country for people who need protection.” (Crouch, 2016). Due to these controversies and critics, the thesis must conclude that the Norwegian practice of providing protection to refugees is questionable.

To sum up, the first duty of rescue of assisting poor societies has been declared present both in theory and practice in Norway. This represents an opportunity for implementation of a sustainable immigration policy. However, it has also been established that Norway does promote brain drain, and perhaps even mass migration by its development aid, elements that serve as sustainable immigration obstacles. The second duty of rescue of protecting refugees has been considered accounted for in theory, yet rather doubtful in practice. This duty is hence split between being an opportunity and an obstacle.

5.3 Norway and a democratic mandate

Ranked third in democracy quality worldwide, Norway is a country known as a consensus-driven society that values public opinion (SGI, 2019). Norwegian citizens have granted members of parliament the mandate to govern on their behalf. Since the 20th century, there have been six instances where this democratic mandate has not been needed due to the practice of direct public participation instead; People voted in referendums regarding the union dissolution with Sweden, banning of liquor and membership to the EU (Berg, 2018). According to the SMF, a sustainable immigration policy is dependent on a democratic mandate. In order

to receive such a mandate on immigration, the citizens' preferences must be accounted for. Voting patterns, opinion polls and surveys are tools to analyze whether the public's preference to immigration policy is less or more restrictive, or perhaps equivalent to the current approach. Do the public's preferences represent an opportunity for or an obstacle to sustainable immigration in Norway?

5.3.1 Voting patterns

One approach to evaluate immigration stands through voting patterns, is to look at the development of the right-wing Progress Party. This is the Party who is known to have 'ownership' of the immigration issue and for many represent an equal sign to strict immigration policies (Stand, 2017). The Party was deemed somewhat anonymous before it changed its main campaign to an anti-immigration tone in the municipality election of 1987. The leader of the Progress Party, Carl I. Hagen, expressed his fear of 'hostile Muslims', and in order to convince others, read a letter allegedly from 'Mohammad Mustafa' who wanted to transform Norway into a Muslim state. The letter was later proven fake (Bore, 2003). This political stunt led the Party to double its turnout from the previous municipality council election, ultimately becoming the third most popular party in the country (SSB, 1987:16). A parallel can be drawn between the Party's rising popularity and the influx of migrants that year; For the last ten years, immigration to Norway had accounted for relatively stable numbers with an average of 17,600 immigrants per year, but in 1987, no more than 31,149 foreigners left their homes for Norway (SSB, n.d). This indicates a correlation between rising immigration, rising xenophobic expression by the Party, and in turn, rising voter turnout. The Progress Party's popularity had come to stay, because with the exception of 1993, the Party has constantly held the position as the second or third biggest political party in Norway (SSB, 2013; Valg, 2019). It was evident that the Party filled a void in Norwegian politics. It first came to power in 2013, after two record-high years of immigration, and effectively conducted its politics until January 2020⁸. Throughout its period in government, the Party managed to implement "the most restrictive asylum and immigration policies ever taken place in Norway, resulting in the lowest inflow of asylum seekers of 20 years"⁹ (FrP, n.d.a). This included substantial effort to transport foreigners out of the country, for example by forced returns due to termination of protection.

Despite its democratic mandate to execute strict policies, the Party has been subject to more political scandals than any other party in government; In the span of six years, no more

⁸ The Party voluntarily resigned from government when prime minister Erna Solberg decided to assist in the repatriation of a Norwegian IS-woman and her child from Syria.

⁹ Translated from Norwegian to English.

than six of its Ministers of Justice resigned. Their responsibility was withdrawn, among others issues, due to critic-worthy administration of children repatriations and disputed social media campaigning aimed at foreigners (Prestegård, 2020). Sylvi Listhuag was one of Party's profiles who attracted considerable media attention, for example by stating how 'foreigners are being carried into Norway on golden chairs', swimming in a survival suit by the Greek islands to 'understand the refugees better' and actively participating in a search for illegal immigrants together with the police and a television crew (Prestegård, 2018; Zaman, 2016). Controversies aside, the voting patterns exhibit the public's continued trust in Party and the government's immigration policies; In 2017, Norwegian citizens prolonged the governments mandate. The Party's immigration policy has been concluded as the main reason for the its electoral success (Gjerde et al., 2015).

Turning away from the Progress Party, what other approaches to immigration is offered to the Norwegian public? While there have been clear divisions in immigration policy in the political spectrum in the past, the lines have blurred in the recent decade as the migrant influx became reality. The Progress Party's biggest competitors have increasingly drafted more similar, more restrictive policies in their party programmes. For example, the Labor Party described their immigration politics as 'human, fair and consistent' during the election of 2009 (Ap, 2009:65). Today, 'consistent' has been exchanged by 'strict' (Ap, n.d), and goes well with the Progress Party's slogan of a 'strict and responsible immigration policy' (Frp, n.d.b). The two parties, supposedly belonging to different political axes, have been criticized of conducting the same immigration policy and competing in a race to the bottom (Feratovic, 2016; Johnsen, 2018). The Conservative Party, which has been among Norway's top three biggest parties in this millennium and is currently the biggest, have too been an advocate for a strict immigration policy and is backing the Progress Party's approach in government (Halse, 2016). The fact that the top three parties in Norway are all conducting a strict immigration policy is an expression of citizen's preferences. According to the voting patterns, the majority of Norwegians prefer a restrictive strategy to immigration.

5.3.2 Opinion polls and surveys

Voting patterns might represent a sufficient measure of a public's opinion, but it only depicts a nation's preference every four years and disregards the details of the political scenery. Opinion polls and surveys have the opportunity of providing a more nuanced picture by asking the right questions at the right times. Will such methods result in the same answers given by voting patterns?

Despite the previous note of Norwegians' increasingly positive attitude towards immigrants, 56 % of the population believe that the access to the country should stay the same as today for asylum seekers and migrants (SSB, 2019b). In other words, the majority of the public is happy with the current immigration policies. Since 2010, more people agree that access to Norway should stay the same, while there is an increase in people wanting it to become less difficult and decrease in people wanting it to become more difficult (see figure 3 below) (Ibid.). This may not come as a surprise as the immigration laws have been gradually restricted.

08783: Attitudes towards refugees' and asylum seekers' access to residence permits in Norway. Should it be easier, more difficult or remain as today, by contents and year.

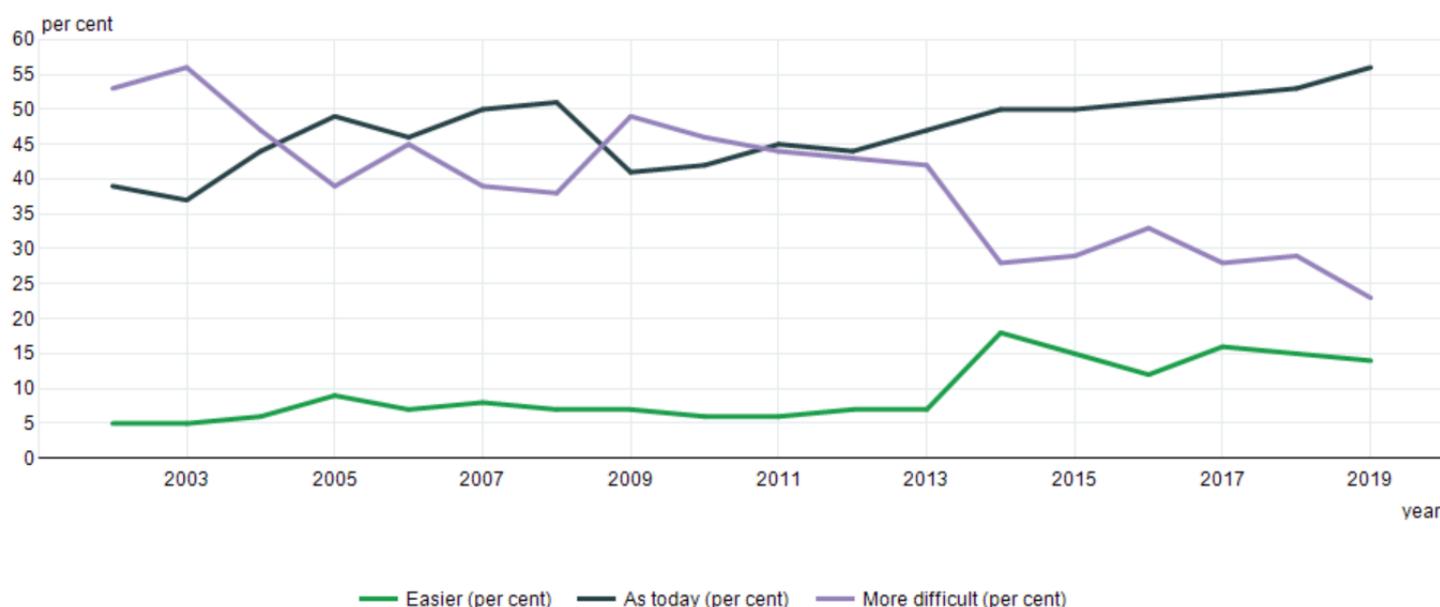


Figure 3. Source: SSB, 2019b

Even though the overall portrait shows public content with the enforced immigration laws, the public answers differently when asked questions about specific policies. For instance, in the 2017 repatriation case of the Afghani ‘October children’, 77 % of Norwegians supported reopening their application claims while staying in Norway. This included, respectively, 70% and 40 % of the voters of the governing Conservative Party and the Progress Party (Støbakk & Karlsen, 2017). Another example is the public’s attitude towards forced returns to Afghanistan in general. Norwegians were perhaps affected by the condemning international reports or the fact that Norway alone was responsible for 64 % of all returns to the country in 2016 (Gullestad & Skårderud, 2017). Opinion polls showed how only 22 % of the public was in favor of the Afghan repatriation policy, while 41 % wanted to stop all forced returns to the country (Ibid.). Furthermore, the Progress Party’s heavily debated proposition of institutionalizing asylum centers in the African continent had a 34 % backing in the Norwegian population, while 42 %

disagreed and rather preferred asylum seekers inside the border (Flaarønning, 2018). These examples illustrate that the picture is not black and white, even though the strict immigration policies as a package has been the majority's preference, some single cases stand out and not all of the policies are citizens' preferences.

To sum up, the voting patterns show that the preference of the public is immigration policies of a restrictive character. This equals an opportunity for conducting a sustainable immigration policy in Norway. The opinion polls and surveys illustrate the nuances as certain restrictive policies have received negative feedback from the majority of the population. This could be a sustainable immigration obstacle.

5.4 Norway and situations of 'no regrets'

It is in Norway's interest to promote situations of 'no regrets'. Unfortunate circumstances can be avoided if migrants are well-informed of the migration laying ahead, if the origin states are taken into consideration when drafting immigration policy and if the sending state bases its policies on long-term demographic, economic and social forecasts. Is Norway doing this adequately? Do these matters represent opportunities or obstacles for a sustainable immigration policy? The following sections analyze Norway's role in 'no regret' situations.

5.4.1 The migrant

Does Norway provide sufficient information to would-be migrants? Or does the country tempt migrants into journeys on false hope? Norway's main channel for communication to would-be migrants is through the internet. This is arguably the most efficient way to inform others about immigration to Norway. The Norwegian Directorate for Immigration is the first governmental website which pops up on a google search of 'Norway + immigration'. It offers general information about immigration to Norway along with residence permit applications (UDI, n.d.d). Besides Norwegian, the information is only available in English which indicates that the foreign applicant must either understand English or know someone who does. Additionally, government-sponsored websites such as 'New in Norway', 'Work in Norway' and 'Study in Norway' provide knowledge on specific situations of migration. Information to would-be migrants is also offered by Norwegian embassies or consulates. All information provided by the Norwegian authorities aims at being correct and neutral (Jacobsen, 2017); However, once the authorities started to experiment with new information platforms, this was challenged.

While the information from governmental websites has a formal and sterile character, alternative governmental approaches have been of a different nature. For example, it has been

revealed that millions of Norwegian kroners have been invested in governmental information campaigns aimed at discouraging migrants to come to Norway (Ramnefjell, 2017). During 2014 and 2015, the Ministry of Justice financed a 94-pages Somali cartoon that portrayed Norway as cold, brutal and racist (Brandvold, 2017). It told the story of fictional Hassan who was exposed to the black labor market, street living, denial of health care and abuse by ethnic slurs in Norway. The cartoon was printed in 48,000 copies and was supplementary to a television documentary, a radio drama and posters, all in Somali, conveying the same message (Castello, 2017). It is reasonable to question whether this type of information is regarded reliable and accurate, or simply a scare tactic with misinformation from the government. Nonetheless, it has been argued that the cartoon counterbalanced the utopia illusions of Norway and discouraged false expectations (Ramnefjell, 2017).

Since the Norwegian authorities started using social media as an information platform, would-be migrants have been reached on a greater level than with previous conventional approaches (Beyer, 2017:6). The Ministry of Justice's 2015 Facebook campaign "Stricter asylum regulations in Norway" reached 11 million people and its videos were viewed 21 million times (Brandvold, 2017). The page showcased videos with dramatic footages of journeys in rubber boats across the Mediterranean with voiceovers explaining that people seeking economic fortune in Norway would be forcefully repatriated. It also informed about potential return-agreements with Eritrea and Iraq, indicating how there was no reason for these nationals to even make the journey to Norway (Gjerde, 2015). The State Secretary, Jøran Kallmyr, expressed how the aim of the Facebook page was "to provide correct and sober information. This is not really 'Welcome to Norway'"¹⁰ (NTB, 2015). In order to avoid translation issues, the page was made available in a range of languages including different Eritrean and Afghani dialects. The campaign was met with different reactions. On the one hand, Amnesty International criticized it by claiming it scared away refugees with a right to seek asylum in Norway (Gjerde, 2015). On the other hand, The Norwegian Organization for Asylum Seekers supported the strategy and specified the importance of spreading awareness of Norwegian immigration policy (NTB, 2015). This was the first time Norwegian authorities communicated directly with would-be migrants through social media. According to The Institute of Social Research's report *Communicating borders: Informing migrants and potential asylum seekers through social media*, the campaign raised questions regarding government communication on social media, specifically regarding "transparency, communication format and rhetoric, norms of dialogue

¹⁰ Translation from Norwegian to English.

and target group identification” (Beyer, 2017:6). These were undiscussed matters by the government as the Facebook page was launched hastily in response to the migrant influx. Once the public reactions were getting out of hand with inappropriate comments at a governmental website, the Department had to shut down the comment section, and later the whole page (Jacobsen, 2017).

Despite the government’s effort to inform would-be migrants, there have been cases where migrants have returned to their country of origin due to a mismatch of expectation and outcome. Following the record-high year for asylum applications in 2015, the IOM assisted 1,500 people in leaving Norway voluntarily, allegedly due to unexpected realities (Reinholdtsen & Alayoubi, 2017). For instance, there were reports of Afghani asylum seekers coming from Russia who believed that ‘all applicants were granted asylum in Norway’. They were hence in for a surprise when they discovered that most Afghanis were rejected asylum and indeed at risk of being returned to Afghanistan (Strand, 2015). The asylum seekers in question decided to retract their application and rather stay in Russia. Another example is the family of forced migrants who were granted residence in Karasjok, Northern Norway. According to the family, they were promised a paradise, but were confused when they arrived in a small town where the sun never rose and with temperatures down to 40 minus degrees. The family preferred the refugee camp in Lebanon over the spacious house in Norway (Reinholdtsen & Alayoubi, 2017). Chief of Mission of IOM, Steve Hamilton, confirmed that this is not an unusual case, as migrants “expect to work, provide for their family and contribute to society. But there are few jobs, and their qualification are seldom approved” (Ibid.). It is thus important to also provide would-be migrants with information regarding the social conditions they will face if they make the journey. Information regarding the status of the housing market, the access to social benefits, measures to integrate and levels of discrimination in society is to a large degree absent from governmental channels. This kind of knowledge often stems from private actors sharing their experiences on social media, rumors and from family and friends (NTB, 2015). Interestingly, migrants have reported that information from family and friends is more trusted than information received through governmental sources (Beyer et.al, 2017:46). This might originate from the various levels of trust in many migrant sending countries or it might have linguistic roots; Since not all migrants understand English, and most governmental websites are only available in this language, migrants tend to depend on sources on their own language, often unofficial websites or conversations with other migrants, friends and family (UDI, 2019). Norwegian authorities cannot be completely satisfied with their effort to close the gap between expectations and outcome for migrants as long migrants seek information from other parties

and keep returning to their country of origin. However, it is evident that the government has a substantial focus on information sharing, no matter how controversial, and does aim to sufficiently inform would-be migrants with the best of its abilities.

5.4.2 The sending state

According to the SMF, a sustainable immigration policy should take into consideration the consequences for the state sending migrants. Does Norway regard origin states when implementing immigration policy? Section 5.2.2 has already concluded that Norway does promote brain drain through its cherry picking of skilled workers in low and middle-income regions. This is unfortunate for the countries in question because they are dependent on talented people for society to develop: “Narrowly conceived, skilled workers are vital for unskilled workers to become more productive; more broadly conceived, well-educated and forwardlooking people are vital to guide a society towards progress.” (Betts & Collier, 2018a: 28). The bright side of brain drain is the remittance economy. When skilled workers are hired in more developed countries, it often leads to a higher wage and the opportunity to send money home. Economically, a migrant is able to gain substantially in Norway and transfer a large amount of remittances to its country of origin. Today, every third non-Western immigrant sends remittances back home from Norway (Utrop, 2018). The relationship between brain drain and remittances and whether they balance each other out is precarious (Betts & Collier, 2018a:6). This might be the case for some countries, but it is not sustainable long-term. Society will not prosper if there are no skilled people who invest in it.

A way to counter for Norway’s brain drain-supported policies, is to restore pride and purpose in countries of origin. This is a complex project which demands more than economic attention, rather, a psychological transformation. Reports show that while many migrants claim to be on the move due to persecution, poverty, war and so forth, other migrants claim their mobility is due to lack of faith in their homeland (Vestøl, 2016:44). Low-income societies are often missing development in infrastructure, education and job creation, ultimately fostering a state of mind in despair for citizens. Most people regard migration as a last resort, yet, more people are settling with this option (IOM, 2019b:2). What is necessary is to empower origin states to such a degree that people see opportunities and prefer to stay. As a whole, “Europe’s ethical strategy should be to bring jobs by the million to Africa, rather than to tempt Africans by the thousands to Europe” (Betts & Collier, 2018a:31). By investing in education, entrepreneurs, private companies, job creation and youth in general, Norway can, in line with remedial duty theory, restore some of the damaged it has imposed by draining low and

middle-income countries for talent.

Norwegian immigration policy would to a greater extent take origin countries into consideration by shifting to a strategy of circular migration. Such a policy involves migration for skilled workers to high-income countries in a set time period. The migrant would gain experience abroad and make them valuable to their home country upon return. Put simply, “to be able to come, contribute, earn, learn, and return, can benefit everyone” (Betts & Collier, 2018b). Hosting countries would still receive the most talented migrants to help with skill shortages but would have to return them in a short time, only to be followed by new sets of migrants. The sending state would not suffer from long-term brain drain and would still receive remittances from those migrants abroad. The migrant would perhaps be the loser as it would only enjoy a relatively high income for a limited time. However, some might find value in contributing to strengthen his or her own country. According to calculations by Betts and Collier, if Norway was inspired by the Gulf states’ strategy of circular migration, “the flow of opportunities for poor migrants would have been four times greater than present projections” (Betts & Collier, 2018a:28). There is evidently much room for improvement for keeping origin states in mind when drafting immigration policy. However, there are reasons to why circular migration is of preference in the Gulf and not in Norway. First of all, circular migration does not promote integration to society. If a migrant knows its return date, there is little motivation to learn language, culture and people. It is reason to believe that if a person has no sense of belonging to its current home, chances are greater to resort to crime, or at least to lack trust to society. In Norway, trust is the foundation of the welfare state. Second, there is great administrative costs associated with facilitating circular migration to Norway. In such an organized society, migrants are dependent on identity cards and social security numbers in order to live comfortable lives. The administrative cost to facilitate more migrants but with shorter stays is considerable. Lastly, one can imagine that circular migration will result in an increase of migrants breaking the law by overstaying their visas. Life in Norway has a reputation of being good and it is not unlikely that some migrants favor this lifestyle in such a degree that he or she is willing to challenge the rules in order to stay (Brekke, 2015). The Norwegian skepticism to undertake this form of migration is therefore not baseless. Nevertheless, this section concludes that Norway does not take origin countries sufficiently into consideration when drafting immigration policy.

5.4.3 The receiving state

Is Norwegian immigration policy based on long-term demographic, economic and social forecasts? Situations of ‘no regrets’ are promoted by listening to such forecasts. In order to conclude this section, there are two premises; First, forecasts aim at predicting future challenges and second, Norwegian policy is restrictive by limiting migrants’ access to the country. Following, if forecasts predict challenging situations which can be considerably improved by the admittance of migrants, it must be concluded that the Norwegian government is not basing its immigration policies on forecasts. What challenges have forecasts predicted?

Demographic statistics predict that in the decades to come, Norway will witness an increasingly aging population and a decreasing birth rate (Leknes et al., 2018:126). Simultaneously, long-term economic forecasts are predicting that there will be a 20-90 billion NOK increase in social security costs in the decades towards 2060 (Stavrum, 2018). The disproportionate relationship between workers in the labor market and elderly demanding their pension can cause problems for the survival of the welfare state. There will not be enough people to take care of the massive group of elderly and not enough money to support them due to the decreased number of taxpayers. Some argue that this issue is reduced by admitting more migrants and that immigration is a prerequisite for the wellbeing of the welfare state (Hultgreen, 2013). More migrants will increase population growth, and if integrated properly, result in net contributions to the state. If this is the government’s mentality, it does not implement policy with demographic forecasts in mind. However, “The mere fact that a society is aging is not a reason to need extra workers.” (Collier, 2013a:124). According to Brochmann, immigration is not a solution to the sustainability issues of the welfare state, it is rather a measure to postpone the welfare dilemmas (Lorentsen, 2019). Collier has pointed to other alternatives, for example facilitation of more import than export resulting in release of workers to elderly care. Another interesting suggestion is the promotion of emigration for the elderly. In fact, it is not uncommon for Norwegians to retire in Southern Spain. Lastly, by removing the fixed age on retirement and utilizing a measure relative to the average life expectancy, people will contribute to the welfare state for a longer period of time (Collier, 2013a:123-124). The government agrees with Brochmann and Collier, and has emphasized the need to increase the fertility rate, not immigration, to address these challenges. In the Prime Minister’s New Year’s speech for 2019, Erna Solberg promised to make it easier to raise children in Norway, especially for young women, in order to ensure the continuity of the welfare state (Solberg, 2019). In Norway, there are currently only 1,56 births per woman, the lowest number in Norwegian history (Sønstebo, 2019).

What about economic challenges associated with the admittance of migrants? In regard to high-income societies, “the effect of immigration on the average incomes of the indigenous population is trivial. Economies are not damaged by immigration; nor do they need it” (Collier, 2013b:22). However, by specifically looking at Norway, claims have been made that it is more likely that the overall effect of immigration is significantly negative than positive (Betts & Collier, 2018a:27). For instance, a 2017 forecast predicted that in the years to come, male migrants from Africa, Asia, Latin America and non-EU Eastern European states will cost the Norwegian state 6 million NOK every year (NTB, 2017). In relation to the publication, the government stated that it would continue with restrictive policies with focus on repatriations, rapid integration and sustainable welfare schemes (Ibid.). A forecast calculating the effects of the restrictive policies has predicted that net immigration to Norway will decrease by 1000-4000 annually (Leknes et al., 2018:95). Still, the share of immigration is expected to grow in the Norwegian population, from 800,000 immigrants today to 1,3 million immigrants in 2060, a rise from about 14 % to 20 % (Ibid.: 10, 96). Based on the data analyzed in this section, the challenges predicted by forecasts have not stressed the need to admit more migrants, rather opposite, which indicates that the government does base its immigration policies on long-term forecasts.

To sum up, Norway does not inform would-be migrants sufficiently or regard origin states when drafting policy. This promotes situations of regrets and thus equals obstacles for making a sustainable immigration policy in Norway. It is, however, an opportunity for a sustainable immigration policy that Norway base its immigration policies on long-term forecasts.

5.5 Norway and a sustainable immigration policy

The result of what constitutes as opportunities for and obstacles to sustainable immigration in Norway appears chaotic and mixed, lacking clear lines of direction. Consequently, the thesis seeks to draw further conclusions, solely based on the findings so far, in order to make the outcome more concrete. Based on previous analysis, it is possible to indicate characteristics of a sustainable immigration policy in Norway?

First, a sustainable immigration policy in Norway is likely to be low in numbers, but high in rights. This is today’s immigration policy: Few voluntary and forced migrants are admitted annually, but those who arrive are granted rights to a comfortable life in Norway equal to the Norwegian population. Voting patterns, opinion polls and surveys have proven that this is citizen’s preference. An opposite immigration policy, high in numbers and low in rights,

would most likely not be given a democratic mandate; A high number of admitted immigrants would cause public concern as it goes against the recommendations made in the long-term forecasts analyzed in section 5.4.3; A reduction of rights for migrants would be unacceptable as it would potentially breach international law and lower working condition standards and wages, ultimately affecting market competition. To aim for a sustainable immigration policy in Norway, it would arguably have to carry restrictive, yet generous, characteristics.

Second, it is reason to believe that only a policy which retains public confidence in the welfare state could prosper as a sustainable immigration policy. Since the welfare system is thoroughly incorporated into Norwegian society, it is difficult to imagine that any immigration policy would be favored if it decreased public trust in the welfare state. Without popular support of the welfare state, it would deteriorate and change from the Norwegian welfare state known today. This might be of preference for some, and if this group becomes dominant, a sustainable immigration policy will not bother to maintain public trust in the welfare state. Nevertheless, for the sake of the strong welfare state today, it appears that a sustainable immigration policy must seek to uphold public confidence in the welfare state.

Third, findings in the analysis indicate that sustainable immigration in Norway is likely to involve permanent integration for most immigrants. Here the emphasis is on voluntary migrants, as forced migrants are expected to return to their country of origin in line with the cessation clause of the 1951 Refugee Convention. As discussed in section 5.4.2 regarding circular migration, Norway prefers to facilitate permanent rather than temporary integration in order to safeguard the welfare state. The welfare state is more likely to prosper with immigrants who share a sense of belonging to Norway and who feel a responsibility to contribute socially and economically – a quality developed over a longer period of time. This indicates that a characteristic of sustainable immigration in Norway is likely to be permanent integration for newcomers.

Fourth, sustainable immigration in Norway is expected to include significant support for refugees, but mainly close to home. In other words, it is not likely that it will be a priority to welcome refugees to Norway. This is in line with citizens' preferences and long-term forecasts, but it is a debate whether it is in accordance with a state ethical obligation to assist and protect refugees. Some will say that by supporting refugee camps in their neighboring areas and primarily accepting quota refugees from these camps, Norway disclaims its duty of rescue. Activists will claim it as immoral to leave less developed countries with the task of caring for the refugees. Advocates of the opposite side assume that it is possible to fulfill the duty of rescue from overseas, and by doing so, more people are assisted. By supporting the refugees

significantly, but close to home, it is believed that it is an economically smaller burden than to help the refugees upon arrival in Norway. Additionally, such a policy keeps the survival of the welfare state in mind.

6. Conclusion

This thesis has explored the term ‘sustainable immigration’ through Betts and Collier’s Sustainable Migration Framework. It has been exposed as a term beyond its initially brief definition: Immigration capable of being maintained at a steady level – criticized for its lacking reality check for when the global demand of refuge exceeds the supply. Its vague and exclusively positive tone has contributed to its controversial nature arguably making it a politically charged rhetorical device. Different interpretations of the value of sustainable immigration has showcased in the thesis; While some see it as a handicap due to its disregard to the fluctuations in society and public opinion, others recognize it as an alternative to chaos and note its potential analytical worth. What constitutes as a sustainable immigration policy differs between countries; In Norway it might be a policy low in numbers but high in rights, with regard to public confidence in the welfare state, permanent integration for most migrants and sufficient support to refugees, but close to home. Based on the Sustainable Migration Framework, sustainable immigration has been concluded to entail fulfillment of the basic ethical obligations known as the duties of rescue, democratic support in the receiving society and management in line with the long-term interests of the migrant, the sending state and the receiving state, ultimately promoting situations of ‘no regrets’. The concept was further explored by examining the opportunities for and obstacles to a sustainable immigration policy in the case of Norway. It showed great variety in opportunity and obstacle between and within the three SMF criteria:

The first criterion, duty of rescue, proved to be the criterion with most opportunity for implementation of a sustainable immigration policy. It concluded that both duties of rescue are compatible with Norwegian immigration policy, and that the duty of assisting fragile societies are present in theory and in practice. The obstacles, on the other hand, included Norway’s tendency to promote brain drain and perhaps even mass migration. Furthermore, the duty of protecting refugees was not found adequately present in practice and thus deemed an obstacle to implementation of a sustainable immigration policy in Norway.

The second criterion, democratic mandate, demonstrated citizens preference of immigration policy. The current restrictive policy, aimed at being in coherence with international law and ensure the survival of the welfare state, was established as the favorable

policy according to voting patterns. This marked an opportunity for drafting a sustainable immigration policy in Norway. However, according to opinion polls and surveys, the picture was more nuanced. The divergence between government policy and public preference in opinion polls and surveys became apparent, hence, creating an obstacle to a sustainable immigration policy.

The third and last criterion, 'no regrets', had too conflicting conclusions. On the one hand, Norway's insufficient measures to provide information to would-be migrants and its lack of regard of origin states in policy-making were deemed obstacles to sustainable immigration in Norway. On the other hand, long-term demographic, economic and social forecasts were argued as basis for immigration policy, ultimately making it an opportunity for achieving sustainability.

While the term can be debated further, one thing is for sure; Sustainable immigration is an approach to balancing the heartless head and the headless heart.

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