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Globalization, Immigration and the Welfare State: A Cross-National Comparison

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Over the past decades, the forces of globalization have helped created a huge wave of immigration. The relationship between globalization and immigration has been intensely examined in the last decade with a focus not only on whether and how much globalization has caused international immigration but also how to promote and sustain a just global system for the growing number of immigrants. This study selects three developed countries with different welfare state philosophies and traditions—Australia, Sweden and the United States—and compares how they cope with the growing number of immigrants and their various needs. This paper reflects thinking about states’ ability to redistribute resources, about the ability to agree upon a unified theory of welfare rights in a diverse society, and the feasibility of opening nations’ welfare systems to all immigrants in the globalization context and from a rights-based social work perspective.

Keywords: Welfare State, Immigration, Australia, Sweden, the United States

Over the past decades, the forces of globalization have helped created a huge wave of immigration. The United
Nations estimates that 3% of the world’s population—about 191 million people—lived in a country other than the one in which they were born in 2005, with 33% having moved from a developing to a developed country, 33% moving between developing nations, and another 33% having moved from a developed country to another developed nation (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2006). In the last decade, the ratio of the Western world’s foreign-born population has been increasing. According to UN migration statistics from 228 countries and regions, the United States leads the world as a host country, with 38 million immigrants in 2005, constituting almost 13% of its population. But the share of the immigrant population is larger still in Australia at 19.6% in 2005, and Canada at 18.9%. In regional terms, however, Europe’s migrant population of 64 million in 2005 was almost 50% greater than the 45 million in North America (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2006). The relationship between globalization and immigration has been intensely examined in the last decade with a focus not only on whether and how much globalization has caused international immigration but also how to promote and sustain a just global system for the growing number of immigrants.

It is important to emphasize that a just global system must consider the interplay between immigration and the welfare state primarily because the welfare state has been conceptualized to structurally address issues like economic and social well-being, equality, human rights and justice. While scholars in the fields of law, political science, sociology, economics, and social work have identified several challenges that immigration poses to the welfare state, there is a general lack of discussion about a reconstruction of the welfare state to accommodate immigration in the context of globalization. In addition, while addressing relations between immigration and the welfare state, there is a sense of powerlessness and/or reservation about certain principles of the welfare state. Concerns have been raised about states’ ability to redistribute resources, about the ability to agree upon a unified theory of welfare rights in a diverse society, and the feasibility of opening nations’ welfare systems to all immigrants (e.g., Vasta, 2004; Clarke, 2005). Reflections on these issues pose particular
challenges to different types of the welfare state. This study selects three developed countries with different welfare state philosophies and traditions—Australia, Sweden and the United States—and compares how they cope with the growing number of immigrants and their various needs. This paper also explores the relationship between globalization, immigration and the welfare state from a rights-based social work perspective.

Literature Review

The Welfare State and Globalization

The term welfare state refers to a state or political entity whereby the state assumes primary responsibility for the welfare of its citizens. Welfare states, both politically and economically, address institutionalized relationships between welfare programs, a government and/or a nation, and are to enhance the quality of people's life, to support equality, justice and human rights, and to help develop and maintain the development of a country's economy. Variations exist across countries in terms of the meaning, desirability, distribution and scope of welfare—ranging from social democratic, liberal and corporatist welfarism (Esping-Andersen, 1990) to the expansive welfare politics of social movements (Piven & Cloward 1993). Nevertheless, the welfare state had been generally accepted as a nation-state doctrine during the post-war period, whereby the nation provided the territorial unity of welfare (Jessop, 2002; Clarke, 2005). In the last three decades welfare states have been subjected to diverse pressures of which globalization is the most powerful (Esping-Andersen, 1996; Yeates, 2001).

While modern globalization has led to increased trade, capital mobility and labor market flexibility, it has also drastically changed social conditions and cultural values in countries and communities. The incompatibility between the welfare state (a nation-state doctrine) and globalization (economic and social activities across national borders) has led to a claim that globalization heralds the "end of the welfare state". This claim has been largely discredited as evidence of the survival of welfare states has mounted (e.g., Esping-Andersen, 1996;
Kuhnle, 2000; Taylor-Gooby, 2001). This is primarily because, as Taylor-Gooby (2001) indicated, "[w]elfare is being recali-brated, recast, is in transition, adapting, restructuring, evolv-ing or being modified" (p. 2-3). Efforts to restructure welfare states include discussions about welfare policy and its gover-nance at the regional level, such as the European Union (EU), and in multi-level systems, such as local governments. Despite different approaches, the general trend in Western welfare states has been towards a reduction in welfare programs, and a shift to an ideology of individualism. As such, it is not done yet to access the extent to which welfare states are surviving globalization.

Globalization and Immigration

The academic literature has explored the relationship between globalization and immigration in detail. To the extent that scholars considered the possible links between globaliza-tion and international immigration in the past, the application of economic theorems has led to the inference that globaliza-tion and international immigration have been interdependent (e.g., Rodirk, 1997; Swank & Betz, 2003). That is, while global-ization has forced many countries to reform their immigration policies to become competitive in an integrated global market, to the extent that immigration is primarily driven by eco-nomic incentives, differences in real wages or more broadly, in returns to human capital, has generated incentives to migrate. On the other hand, to the extent that immigration is primar-ily driven by non-economic considerations such as a desire to reunite with family members, a need to escape wars or politi-cal persecution, and/or an aspiration to live in a country with better welfare benefits, there is no clear systematic relationship between globalization and immigration.

Observations indicate that the recent increased influx of culturally diverse immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers into West European nations accounts for a substantial compo-nent of these societies (OECD, 2006). As such, the real threat from globalization and immigration is that together—capital mobility, immigration of skilled workers, and incoming ref-ugees and asylum seekers (who usually take low-paid jobs) —are contributing to employment and income insecurities for
many native wage earners (Swank & Betz, 2003). In addition, immigrants in general are more likely to stay on welfare and to receive public benefits and most refugees and asylum seekers display a greater degree of “structural” welfare dependence than natives, and their dependency may last for years (Hanson & Lofstrom, 2003; Chung & Bemak, 1996). Therefore, it is no surprise that the mass public tends to weigh the costs of globalization and immigration more heavily than its benefits.

Immigration and the Welfare State

Debates about immigration have mainly focused on welfare and welfare eligibility, or social rights as defined by Marshall (1950). Immigrants' rights to welfare benefits differentiate migration that is considered as “wanted” (such as skilled labor migration) and “unwanted” (such as asylum seekers). By providing access to, or exclusion from welfare support, welfare states have sought to welcome some forms of migration while rejecting others (Geddes, 2003). Doing so reveals the territorial character of welfare states. While globalization has promoted economic and social integration, welfare states remain decidedly national and are “powerful institutional forces embodying ideas and practices associated with inclusion, exclusion, membership, belonging, entitlement and identity” (Geddes, 2003, p. 152). The intended discriminatory immigration-welfare policies however cannot counteract trends towards openness and inclusion of the “unwanted” immigrants due to humanitarian concerns and the imperative of refugee protection. Scholars have highlighted the contradictions in nations’ rationale to actively recruit skilled workers to sustain the labor market on one hand, and the concurrent concerns of unemployment, underemployment and welfare dependency on the other (e.g., Man, 2002; Nannestad, 2004). Moreover, with a growing number of immigrants and increased diversity among populations, it is becoming difficult for people to see a universal welfare solution that is based on an earlier collective value system. Without a certain degree of solidarity, it is easy for some members of dominate ethnic groups who feel threatened by the influx of immigrants to adopt an anti-welfare attitude that values self-sufficiency and blames immigrants for needing support (Brett, 1997; Byrne, 1999; Castles, 1997; Vaste, 2004). Debates about the
extent of the burden placed on national social welfare systems by immigrants have been ongoing for at least a century and the immigrants' welfare dependency (e.g., Razin & Sadka, 2004) has become the foundation for modern immigration law and welfare reforms. For example, as the number of migrants entering Britain rose throughout the 1990s, politicians legislated increasingly restrictive immigration policies; simultaneously, successive governments have sought to limit welfare entitlements for migrants (Dwyer & Brown, 2005). As Hjerm (2005) indicates, welfare states that were built and expanded on grounds of homogeneity, such as Scandinavian social democratic welfare states, have been struggling to address the changing circumstances in an increasingly racially and ethnically diverse society as a result of globalization and immigration. Welfare states of the 21st century have been unable to achieve their primary societal goals and secure equality for all people (Hjerm, 2005).

Nations with strong social welfare systems have been attempting to articulate concepts of how all differences can fit together, and socially responsible groups such as "modern" British people (Clarke & Newman, 2004) and Modern Finnish People (Castells & Himanen, 2002), have been articulated focusing on work and welfare, conditions and character of citizenship, and the multicultural community. These efforts nonetheless have tended toward reducing welfare benefits for immigrants, encouraging their participation in both the labor market and society, and enforcing the value of self-sufficiency and personal responsibility. Therefore, in the context of globalization and immigration, will modern developed nations continue their welfare states? And how will they do this? Will welfare programs address the needs of immigrants and survive the public's outcry over spending tax dollars on (useless) immigrants? This paper describes immigration policies, in particular policies concerning immigrant welfare eligibility, in Australia, Sweden and the United States. Then it discusses the use of welfare benefits among immigrants and refugees and their unmet needs, as well as societal concerns.

Three Countries in Prospect

I chose Australia, Sweden, and the United States for
comparison and analysis primarily due to their different types of welfare states. According to Esping-Anderson’s definition (1990), Sweden has been a flagship for social democratic welfare states; it applies universal and redistributive benefits, combines higher levels of welfare support with a social democratic principle of equality, and promotes universal solidarity in support of the welfare state. The United States has modeled a liberal welfare state for the past century, which emphasizes individual self-reliance and the primacy of the market; lower levels of state welfare support are accompanied by patterns of social stratification. The Australian welfare regime incorporates elements from both social democratic and liberal welfare states, such as the role of large, centralized unions in securing a relatively high minimum wage, which social democratic welfare states frequently adopt, and the means-tested income support system that liberal welfare states prefer (Beer & Forster, 2002).

The different welfare state philosophies and scope of welfare benefits can be illustrated best by the indicator of “public social expenditures as a percentage of GDP,” which is, according to the definition of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2006), a measure of the extent to which governments assume responsibility for supporting the standard of living of disadvantaged or vulnerable groups (see Figure 1). Public social expenditures include cash benefits, direct in-kind provision of goods and services, and tax breaks for social purposes. While in the last decade, the United States and Australia have maintained similar levels of public social expenditures (around 15% of their GDP), Sweden
earmarks at least 30% of its GDP for its comprehensive and universal public welfare system.

**Transparent or Opaque Immigration**

The three countries vary greatly in their history of immigration. While Australia and the United States have historically been considered "settlement countries," where immigrants have traditionally flocked, immigration to Australia has increased dramatically in last 50 years, more than immigration to the United States. When Australia embarked on its post-WWII program to encourage greater immigration to supplement its 1947 population, of which only 2.7% were foreign-born, today above 40% of Australians are either foreign born (23%) or have a foreign-born parent (19%) (Price, 1998). Unlike Australia and the United States, Sweden has been, until the past few decades, a very homogenous country that maintained its cultural uniformity by refraining from attracting "foreign elements" until the 1950s (Runblom, 1994). In the last decade, the percentage of the foreign-born population has increased from 9.6% to 12%, and from 8.3% to 12.2% in Sweden and the United States respectively, while Australia has maintained the same level over the past 10 years (roughly 22-23%) (see Figure 2). Currently, the United States leads the world as a host country for immigrants while Australia's population has the highest percentage of immigrants worldwide.

![Figure 2: Percentage of Foreign-born Population](image_url)
Immigration policies in the three countries share numerous similarities and differences. All three countries classify immigrants as labor-market-needed immigrants, family-reunification-based immigrants, and humanitarian-based refugees including asylum seekers (though the name of each category varies across countries). In Sweden, labor-market-needed immigrants had traditionally been reserved for Finnish, Danish and Norwegian workers. Not until 1965, when a huge flow of Yugoslavian temporary workers arrived unexpectedly, did Sweden start to regulate work-related immigration. However, due to Sweden’s central location, its strong ties with other Nordic and European countries, and the growing power of the EU, the dominant migration in Sweden has been refugees and asylum seekers from Southeastern Europe, followed by their family members (reunification), and EU citizens (Westin, 1996 & 2006; Hansen & Lofstrom, 2003). A significant number of foreign-born Swedes today are from the former Yugoslavia and Finland (Westin, 2006).

In the United States, the 1965 Immigration Act, aimed to facilitate family reunification and admit workers with special job skills, has produced two groups of immigrants. Since 1965, most immigration visas have been allocated to relatives of U.S. residents (Donato, 1992). The U.S. Immigration Act of 1990 further sets limits for certain categories of immigrants. In 2004, the limit for family-sponsored immigrants was 226,000 to 480,000, and 140,000 for employment-based immigrants (USCIS, 2006). The top two regions from which new U.S. immigrants come are Mexico and Asia. In contrast, in Australia, skill-based immigration comprised 68.1% of total immigration in 2005-06 (Australia Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, 2006), resulting from Australia’s immigration reform in 1995-96, which created a new category for skilled workers, superseding the previous family category. Consequently, since 1997 the number of skilled workers migrating to Australia has exceeded the family-member category, reflecting a continuing trend (Soon, 2001-02). Many migrants today enter Australia through an independent stream based on a point system that assesses immigrants’ potential for employment and self-sufficiency. Points are allocated for various criteria including professional skills, command of English, age
and other adaptation/self-sufficiency factors and applicants receive extra points if their occupation is in demand (e.g., medicine), and/or if an employment offer has been made (Reitz, 1998). The top countries and regions from which new immigrants come are United Kingdom, New Zealand and Asia. Comparatively, while Australia and the United States are more open than Sweden, Australia's immigration policy is more attractive for skilled workers.

Welfare Eligibility

Australia, Sweden and the United States vary greatly in the welfare benefits offered to immigrants. My comparison is largely based on income support programs, which is a means of resource redistribution and represents the societal goals to achieve social equality. Sweden historically restricted immigration and provided no aid to immigrants until the mid-1970s when it established an immigration policy that took equality as one of the country's top priorities and aimed to provide civil rights and equal opportunities to immigrants (Vollmer, 2002). Today, Sweden provides the most generous welfare package for immigrants who need monetary support. As soon as immigrants enter Sweden, they can access all the welfare benefits available to native Swedes. However, due to a 1980s economic recession, in the 1990s Sweden added restrictions to its welfare programs despite its ideal of welfare universality. For example, the welfare benefit is now based on an individual's work experience, such that low-wage, unskilled immigrants receive less support. Typically, to obtain unemployment benefits, the claimant must have been employed for a minimum time during a 12-month period immediately before becoming unemployed. In addition, the applicant must have contributed to an unemployment insurance fund for one year and must register with a public employment service. While this restriction is applied to both immigrants and natives, the implementation negatively impacts immigrants more than native Swedes.

It is noteworthy that both "settlement societies," Australia and the United States, tend to impose tighter restrictions on welfare eligibility for immigrants. Both countries require residency for immigrants to apply for income support benefits, and in the past decade, both nations have reformed their welfare
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programs for immigrants. Australia adopts a national welfare system while benefits are primarily paid by the central government. In general, Australian residency is required to qualify for income support benefits. Australia's immigration reforms of 1995-96 not only changed the focus of immigration away from family reunification to a skills-based needs test, but restricted newly arrived immigrants' access to welfare benefit. Most new arrivals must now wait for two years to apply for almost all social security benefits. Meanwhile, concluding that the welfare programs had not effectively promoted personal responsibility on the part of welfare recipients, the government in the 1990s further cut more specialized services for immigrants including language programs, income support, and ethno-specific health care services (Vasta, 2004).

In the United States, the federal, state and county governments share welfare responsibilities. The 1996 U.S. welfare and immigration policy reforms changed the eligibility for immigrants applying for federal benefits. Immigrants who entered the United States after August 22, 1996 cannot apply for federal income support benefits until they reside in the United States for five years. In addition, the reforms restrict most immigrants and refugees from receiving welfare benefits to five years total (Lim & Resko, 2002). In reality state and local governments have gradually provided various income support programs to immigrants, such as California's Cash Assistant Program for Immigrants that financially supports aged and disabled legal immigrants.

Assess Immigrants’ Needs

The success of immigrants depends mainly on the extent of their economic and social integration into society (Valtonen, 2001). While immigrants of "family reunification" and "refugee" status normally face more challenges and barriers than "skill-based" immigrants in integrating into the labor market, the use of welfare benefits, particularly during the early stage of immigration is critical. The use of welfare benefits and other government supports has been described as an important tool to assist immigrants acculturate and achieve economic self-sufficiency. Studies show that immigrants' use of welfare benefits decreased with the number of years spent in resettled
societies (Hirschl, Gurak & Tran, 1995; Chung & Bemak, 1996; Hansen & Lofstrom, 2003). Nonetheless, immigrants’ use of welfare benefits has been conceptualized as “welfare dependency” and this has been a hotly debated public issue in all three countries examined here. Available research and evaluations suggest that the governments of Australia, Sweden and the United States have had different perceptions on this issue and have legislated different policies to address immigrants’ needs.

In Sweden rather than viewing welfare dependency as a problem, much research has been devoted to examining social conditions of immigrants and the welfare programs that assist them; this perhaps reflects its strong universal redistributive welfare state. Despite Sweden’s comprehensive welfare system, its commitment to social and economic equality, and its extensive efforts to support multiculturalism and anti-discriminatory political principles, studies have found that immigrants in Sweden have fewer economic resources, lower salaries than native Swedes (i.e., from 1993–2000, immigrants earned 88% of the average native Swede’s income), do not have equal access to employment (in particular immigrants from non-Western Europe such as former Yugoslavia, Iran and Iraq), and consequently have a lower standard of living compared with native Swedes (Anderson, 1996; Martens, 1997; Hjerm, 2005). Research indicates that Sweden’s social welfare system and labor market have not worked reciprocally to minimize immigrants’ marginalization. Recent reforms in welfare policy that limits eligibility, and in particular, unemployment benefits, have posed tremendous challenges to immigrants: not only have they faced discrimination in the labor market, but most have not qualified for employment benefits (Bergmark & Palm, 2003; Bergmark & Backman, 2005). While Sweden has a strong reputation for caring for its populace, it seems to have neglected special needs of its newest members, its immigrants.

Stemming from the pressures of the growing number of “unwanted” immigrants and their use of welfare benefits, Australia reformed its immigration policies in the 1990s, favoring the English-speaking immigrants with valuable job skills and consequently incurred the net fiscal impact on the central
government’s budget in terms government outlays and receipts of migrations. These reforms effectively silenced the welfare dependency discussions (Betts, 2003; Khoo, 1994; Vasta, 2004) yet resulted in several positive outcomes including halving the unemployment among recently arrived immigrants, increasing the salaries of new arrivals by two-thirds, and reducing the number of immigrants on welfare programs to a historic low level (Hawthorne, 2005). Discussions on Australia’s immigration policy during the last 20 years have turned away from welfare dependency and have focused on assimilation, integration and multiculturalism, and how to incorporate these principles in welfare programs and service delivery (Kelaher & Manderson, 2000).

The United States’ immigration and welfare reforms in 1996 have achieved their stated goal of decreasing welfare dependency, but have also raised concerns about immigrants’ well-being. Studies examining the post-1996 U.S. welfare reform trends show that welfare use by immigrant households declined sharply—relative to the decline experienced by native households—immigrant families have had a disproportionately higher percentage of unemployment, lower earnings and public assistance benefits (Borjas, 2002; Fix & Passel, 1999; U.S. Census Bureau, 2001 & 2003). Based on studies that have shown the negative impact of immigration and welfare reform on low-income immigrants, refugees, immigrant women and children (Van Hook, 2003; Legomsky, 2002; Lofstrom & Bean, 2002; Fremstad, 2004), since the implementation of the laws in the late 1990s, the federal government has restored several important programs for immigrants such as nutrition programs (food stamp program) and income support programs for the elderly and disabled. But today, immigrant eligibility rules for family income support and health care programs have remained at the (low) levels of 1996. Concerns raised during discussions on the welfare reform reauthorization in 2006, have led to increased government investments from local levels in developing programs that improve the language ability of low-income, limited English-proficient immigrants.
Reflections

Immigration and Survival of a Universal Welfare State

While one might assume that countries with a long history of immigration such as the United States and Australia would be more willing to support immigrants and incorporate them into society, this is not the case, based on this study's comparisons of the three nations. Among the three countries studied, Sweden is the most generous country in terms of welfare benefits provided to all immigrants, both the “wanted” and the “unwanted”. It is argued that Sweden’s welfare system is based upon its immigration history and ethnic homogeneity. Given that Swedish social democratic welfare system is likely facing a greater threat to its stability than the United States or Australia as the forces of globalization have brought in diverse immigrant groups (predominantly refugees and relatives of immigrants), it is more likely that Sweden would change its commitment to equality and fundamental principles of welfare universality. However, as immigrant welfare dependency has been widely discussed in all three countries, it seems that it only poses a threat to social cohesion and welfare system stability in individualistic, non-collective cultures such as the United States and Australia. Several explanations can address this paradox. One, the number of the immigrant population in Sweden is relatively small, compared to Australia and the United States. As such, a universal welfare system is more manageable and immigrant welfare dependency could be more tolerable. Two, as a member of the European Union and within a unified and regulated labor market, the Swedish market seems more secured and an overflow of labor market-based immigration would not be expected in Sweden. In addition, the Swedish welfare system has been working to assimilate immigrants and reinforce its value system. As such, the survival or continuance of Sweden’s universal welfare state depends on how the welfare state can extend the same rights to immigrants as are enjoyed by citizens while creating a new solidarity across all groups of people.

Global Market and Welfare System Reforms

While recent immigration policies in Australia, Sweden
and the United States have been aimed to control the flow of immigrants, they nonetheless reflect each government’s desire to obtain valuable human capital—the “wanted” immigrants with desirable job skills—from the global labor market and to keep out unskilled workers who could strain their social welfare systems. However, the reforms in both Australia and the United States in the 1990s had less consideration of the increased mobility of people in the global market. Rather, their reforms focused on the populace’s growing resentment of the immigrants and their added stress on the welfare system to address immigration concerns, and vice versa. Policy makers assumed that by attracting more skilled immigrant workers, welfare dependency among immigrants would diminish. This was clearly the case in Australia. Policy makers also assumed that restricting immigrants’ access public welfare benefits would indirectly discourage new immigrants who lack language proficiency, formal education, and the ability to quickly become self-sufficient, from immigrating. This was a driver of the U.S. welfare reforms of the 1990s. While Australia and the United States adopted different strategies to address both spiraling welfare costs and the growing number of immigrants, the desired results—decreased welfare expenditures and a shift in the responsibility to immigrants themselves—were identical. While it could be argued that the different strategies stem from the nature of each country’s industries, need for human capital, and ease in border control, to name a few, a comparison of the 1990s immigration-welfare reforms distinguish America as a liberal welfare state, and suggest Australia has a practical orientation of its welfare system. Unfortunately, these reforms failed to note the role that each nation’s welfare system plays in the global labor market. In fact, welfare systems were developed to provide a safety net for citizens who work and live in a country and presumably pay taxes to support the system, not as welfare benefits for selected guests. A feasible welfare structure for immigrants and a form of securing their chances of participation in the labor market and integrating into society are critical in this era of globalization. This holds true for both the “wanted” and “unwanted” immigrants.
Equality and Redistribution in the Globalization Context

Overall, from the previous cross-national comparison, the relationship between globalization, immigration and welfare programs are not closely tied together as often is assumed. Increased globalization does not necessarily link to increased immigration; immigration flow is still highly controlled by categorizing people into the "wanted" and the "unwanted" and it is influenced by economic and political conditions in various countries. Immigration does challenge and has changed the boundary of welfare states and led to governments’ withdrawal from responsibility to immigrants to some extent, but the organizational structure of each welfare state remains the same. This reflects a transitional situation while welfare states are adjusting their positions in the era of globalization. This also represents the paradox of immigration with economic benefits on one hand, and welfare expenditures on the other. In addition, this reveals a tension about how we as nations and citizens set up boundaries between "us" and "them".

The U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) asserts that all human beings have the right to leave their country (Article 13), the right to a standard of living adequate for health and well-being including food, clothing, housing, medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, death of a spouse, and old age (Article 25). Following the UDHR principles, categorizing immigrants into "wanted" and the "unwanted" categories is a discriminatory policy; refusing access to public welfare benefits violates human rights; and a government’s failure to help its residents secure an adequate standard of living is morally questionable. However, immigration control for most nations is a long-term goal; most countries, both developed and developing, will not likely adopt a liberal immigration policy and fully open their labor markets, particularly given the specter of global terrorism. The very nature of politics and public policy, which responds to pressures from economic interests, makes it unlikely that the welfare of outsiders—immigrants—will be given much consideration.

Comparisons in this study suggest that different types of welfare states are rooted in history, culture, political ideology, and geographic and demographic factors. Indeed, social democratic welfare states like Sweden exemplify the UDHR
ideal. As for other types of welfare states, including liberal (the United States), conservative (German which is not included in this study), and third-way practical (Australia) welfare states, globalization and immigration could possibly coexist with individual states to intervene in the economy (i.e., resource redistribution) to ensure welfare goals such as equality and justice. To achieve welfare goals, international organizations and inter-government collaborations must play a critical role. Various international organizations and inter-governmental collaborations aim to promote structured global immigration, establish broadly recognized humane policies to move groups of people across borders, to support and assist immigrant health programs, and counter criminal activities across borders. Without market regulations from a multi-national organization such as the EU, social democratic welfare states such as Sweden will have to work hard to survive. Without collaborations between Mexico and the United States to control the border and regulate economic activities, American welfare policies will continue to discriminate against Mexican immigrants. As Western countries need immigrants to fill jobs that require special skills, to work at low-paid positions that natives are often unwilling to take, or simply to fill jobs that an aging society can no longer supply, policy makers, scholars, and social workers, etc. need to underscore and reinforce the value of immigrant, to their new society and to the global economy. A reconstructed welfare state needs to be built based on this consensus.

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