Palacký University Olomouc

Analysis of factors influencing asylum seekers' choice of Denmark

Faktory ovlivňující žadatele o azyl v jejich volbě Dánska

by

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Declaration of Authorship

I do solemnly declare that I have written the presented bachelor's thesis *Analysis of factors influencing asylum seekers' choice of Denmark* independently and that it is entirely my own work except where otherwise indicated. All sources that have been used are stated in the references section.

In Olomouc (date): …… Signature: ……

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The focus of the thesis is to analyse factors influencing asylum seekers' choice to apply for asylum in Denmark. In the introductory part, basic terms regarding this issue are defined and present situation in the World is investigated. In the following part, theoretical relationship between push/pull factors and the number of application lodged in a country is explored. In the final part of the thesis, factors influencing asylum seekers' choice of Denmark are statistically analysed and then interpreted.

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Abstract

The main focus of this thesis is to analyse factors that influence asylum seekers' choice of lodging their application in Denmark. The introductory part of the thesis is theoretical, discussing the current situation regarding asylum seekers and refugees in the world, Europe, and Denmark is described. In following chapters, push and pull factors that influence decision-making of an asylum seeker are explored, and later on the theoretical relationship between push/pull factors and the number of asylum applications lodged in a country is investigated. In the final practical part, the relationship between number of applications and selected factors is statistically analysed, and the results are interpreted. By processing the analysis, it was found that social network, violence, distance between a country of origin and Denmark, population size, vulnerability to climatic changes, economic instability and income per capita are significant determinants of the number of asylum applications lodged in Denmark between 2005 and 2015. Contrarily, Denmark's disbursements of official development assistance (ODA) were not found significant.

Key words: refugees, asylum applicants, Denmark, push/pull factors, regression

Abstrakt

Cílem této práce je analyzovat faktory, které ovlivňují volbu žadatele o azyl podat si žádost v Dánsku. Úvodní část práce je teoretická a je v ní popsána současná situace uprchlíků a žadatelů o azyl ve světě, v Evropě a v Dánsku. V navazujících kapitolách jsou zkoumány push a pull faktory ovlivňující rozhodování žadatele o azyl. Dále je zde zkoumán teoretický vztah mezi push/pull faktory a počtem žádostí o azyl podaných v Dánsku. Závěrečná část je praktická. Zahrnuje statistickou analýzu vztahu počtu žádostí a vybraných faktorů. Výsledky jsou následně interpretovány. Analýzou bylo zjištěno, že sociální sítě, násilí, vzdálenost mezi zemí původu a Dánskem, velikost populace, zranitelnost země vůči klimatickým změnám, ekonomická stabilita a hrubý domácí produkt významně ovlivnily počet žádostí o azyl podaných v Dánsku mezi lety 2005 a 2015. Objem oficiální rozvojové pomoci (ODA) Dánska naopak nebyl shledán jako významný faktor.

Klíčová slova: uprchlíci, žadatelé o azyl, Dánsko, push/pull faktory, regrese

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List of abbreviations

CPI	Consumer Price Index
GDP	gross domestic product
IDPs	internally displaced persons
LDCs	the least developed countries
ND-GAIN	Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OLS	ordinary least squares
PPP	purchasing power parity
UK	the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
UMIs	unaccompanied minors
UN	United Nations Organization
USA	the United States of America

Introduction

Freedom of movement is present in and guaranteed by the constitutions of many countries. It has been also embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights since 1948. Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that *"(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state. (2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country."* (United Nations, 1948) A few years before this document was written, thousands of people were moving between Europe and the Middle East. They were Europeans fleeing their homes because of war and seeking asylum in countries on border of Mediterranean Sea. Camps were built in Syria, Palestine and Egypt in order to accommodate them. Today this stream of people is running in the opposite direction for the same reason as those who came into their country a few decades ago. Somalia has been caught by a conflict since 1991 and drought and famines are worsening the situation. In Eritrea, Eritrean national service with conditions called "slavery-like" by the UN commission of inquiry and restrictions in various dimensions of life have driven people out of this country. (OHCHR, 2015: 13) Civil war in Syria was initiated as a fight of its citizens for greater freedom inspired by the Arab spring and democratic changes in other countries but was repressed by government forces led by Syrian president Bashar al-Assad. At the moment, there are many warring parties supported by different groups and states and there is no end to this conflict in sight.

The list of war-affected and no-rule-of-law areas could continue with Afghanistan, Iraq, Sudan, Democratic republic of Congo, etc. to the Central America where organized violence and war between gangs and mafias have caused displacement of hundreds of thousands of people. However, violence is not the only thing that forces people to leave their homelands. Environmental and natural disasters (drought, flooding, desertification, hurricane etc.) can serve as a good reason to leave as well (as can be seen in case of Somalia). Human made disasters such as the explosion of the Ukrainian nuclear power plant Chernobyl are not insignificant either. Nationals of Southeast Asian states working in oil-rich countries of the Arab Peninsula are examples of economic migrants. Race, religion, political opinions, sexual orientation, membership in a social group, origin and other aspects can be all sources of discrimination resulting in forced migration.

As inflows of migrants and refugees do not cease and current refugee crisis has become the most discussed topic in media and public places, it needs to be subjected to proper

examination and sufficient measures should be derived. This thesis focuses on analysis of factors that play role in decision making of asylum seekers when they are lodging their application in Denmark. Many researches have been conducted in order to understand behaviour of an asylum applicant in the United Kingdom of Great Britain, Norway, Germany, etc. This paper will examine push and pull factors and later on, statistically analyse the relationship between number of asylum applications lodged in Demark and selected push/pull factors. Analysis will use dataset containing Denmark and 190 countries of origin of asylum applicants for nine-year period of time 2005–2014.

Methodology and goals

This thesis was built upon research among sources dealing with the same issue, and processed using the method of compilation. At the beginning, there was a research made about the subject of concern, followed by exploration of data availability. After the data was collected and sorted out, the dataset was built and analysis took place. At the end results of the analysis were interpreted. Most of the information this thesis is derived from comes from online sources. The reason is that these sources are more up to date and usually provides further links to relevant information.

The goal of this thesis is to analyse push and pull factors that influence decision making of asylum seekers submitting their applications in Denmark. A lot of European countries need to deal with high numbers of asylum seekers. Several studies, surveys and analyses have been carried out trying to answer the question why asylum seekers prefer some countries to others. This paper examines factors that play a role in the case of choosing Denmark and tries to answer following research questions:

RQ1: Where do the most applications in Denmark come from and how do the top refugee nations change through the period 2005–2015?

RQ2: Are the factors of presence of violence/war, level of gross domestic product and social network are statistically significant?

RQ3: Does the volume of ODA sent by Denmark to country of origin influence number of applications of country's nationals lodged in Denmark?

The thesis is arranged into chapters. At the beginning of the first chapter, basic terms such as *asylum seeker*, *refugee* and *migrant* are defined. It is important to explain the difference in order to clarify and distinguish the terms and avoid confusion. The first chapter proceeds with a description of the current refugee situation in the world and in Europe.

The following chapter is dedicated to asylum seekers in Denmark, the distribution of nationalities asking for asylum, how successful they are in being granted asylum, family reunification and insight into other aspects regarding asylum in Denmark is given including recent restrictions and cuts in asylum seekers benefits approved in August 2016.

The third chapter is divided into two sections. In the first section, four different groups of factors (characteristics of an origin country, characteristics of a destination country, links between an origin country and a destination and facilitators and obstacles to flight)

influencing the decision-making of asylum seekers described and their theoretical effect on the number of asylum applications lodged in a destination country is assessed. In the second part of this chapter previous quantitative and qualitative studies focused on factors determining asylum flows are reviewed and their findings are summarized.

The empirical analysis is depicted in the last, i.e. fourth chapter. First of all, it provides information about the dataset and the tobit model, an estimation technique that has been used. Subsequently, the dependent and independent variables entering the analysis are described. There are results of the analysis presented later on, interpreted and compared to results of other quantitative and qualitative researches that have been made. Summary at the end of the chapter is concluding empirical findings gained by processing the analysis.

Terminology

At the beginning it is important to mention definitions of several terms connected with problematics of asylum seekers.

Asylum seeker is a person who fled his own homeland because of persecution and threats to life and searches for sanctuary in other countries. (S)he submitted his application at country's authority and awaits the decision. (IOM, 2011)

Refugee is a person who fears persecution based on his race, nationality, religion, political affiliation or membership in a certain social group. (S)he left his home country and does not want to come back. (S)he submitted his asylum application in another country and has been recognized as a refugee. Refugees are protected by Convention from 1951. (UNHCR, 1992)

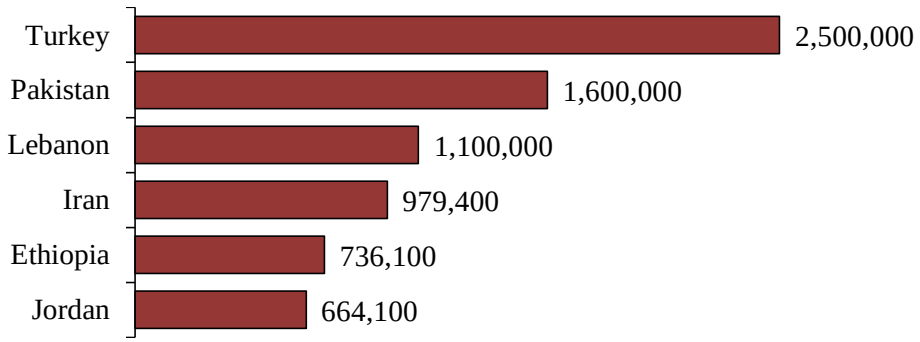
Migrant is a person who left his place of residence in order to move to another place in the same country or in another country irrespective of how long he stays there, what reasons he had for his deed and whether it was voluntarily or legally. (IOM, 2011)

1. Current global trends regarding asylum seekers and refugees

1.1 Asylum seekers and refugee flows in the World

Conflicts in several parts of the world and inequality in level of development causs a huge mass of people moving out of their countries and in search for better life in other states. Current European refugee/migration crisis is discussed in all media. Despite the fact that Europe is actually facing an immense amount of people entering its borders, European countries are not the ones receiving the greatest load of asylum seekers. Chart 1 shows that in 2015, Turkey has been hosting 2.5 million refugees (the most of all countries) and Pakistan 1.6 million refugees. In the same year, Lebanon has been providing shelter for 1.1 million refugees. One single country about a thousand times smaller area than Europe, has accommodated almost the same amount of asylum seekers as the whole of Europe in 2015 (check Table 1 to see for how many percent refugees account in the countries with highest number of refugees. (UNHCR, 2016a)

Chart 1: Top refugee hosting countries at the end of 2015 (cumulative number of refugees)



Source: UNHCR (2016a)

Table 1: Countries with highest number of refugees at the end of 2015 (share of refugees on country's population, percent)

1	**Lebanon**	18.80
2	**Jordan**	8.74
3	**Turkey**	3.18
4	**Iran**	1.24
5	**Pakistan**	0.85
6	**Ethiopia**	0.74

Source: Author's calculation based on The World Bank (2016a) and UNHCR (2016b)

Northern America cannot avoid big refugee inflows either. The United States of America registered 172,700 asylum applications in 2015 which means a growth of more than 40 percent compared to 2014. More than half of the applicants originate in four countries: Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala. (UNHCR, 2016a)

Forced migration brought forth vast refugee camps and settlements worldwide. Some of them were built up unintentionally, some of them as a temporary solution but through years have grown up into self-governing units with their own institutions, economy and local administration. As reported in Table 2, the first four out of ten biggest refugee camps in 2015 are situated in Kenya. These are Kakuma, Hagadera, Dagahaleya and Ifo and in 2015, they provided shelter for more than 460,000 people in total, mainly from Somalia and South Sudan. Whilst Kakuma is the biggest one, the rest of the refugee camps in Kenya create one great refugee camp complex called Dadaab. Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan was ranked number five with population of about 77,871 people in 2015, mainly of Syrian nationality. (UNHCR, 2016b)

Table 2: Ten biggest world refugee camps in 2015

Rank	Name	Country	Number of refugees	Main nationalities
1	Kakuma	Kenya	184,550	South Sudan, Somalia
2	Hagadera	Kenya	105,998	Somalia
3	Dagahaley	Kenya	87,223	Somalia
4	Ifo	Kenya	84,089	Somalia
5	Zaatari	Jordan	77,781	Syria
6	Yida	South Sudan	70,331	Sudan
7	Katumba	Tanzania	66,416	Burundi
8	Pugnido	Ethiopia	63,262	South Sudan, Somalia
9	Panian	Pakistan	62,264	Afghanistan
10	Mishamo	Tanzania	62,264	Burundi

Source: UNHCR (2016b)

Major source countries of refugees for 2015 (follow the Table 3) are the Syrian Arab Republic (4.9 million), Afghanistan (2.7 million) and Somalia (1.1 million). Worldwide there are 21.3 million refugees and 3.2 million people who seek asylum. (UNHCR, 2016a) Chart 2

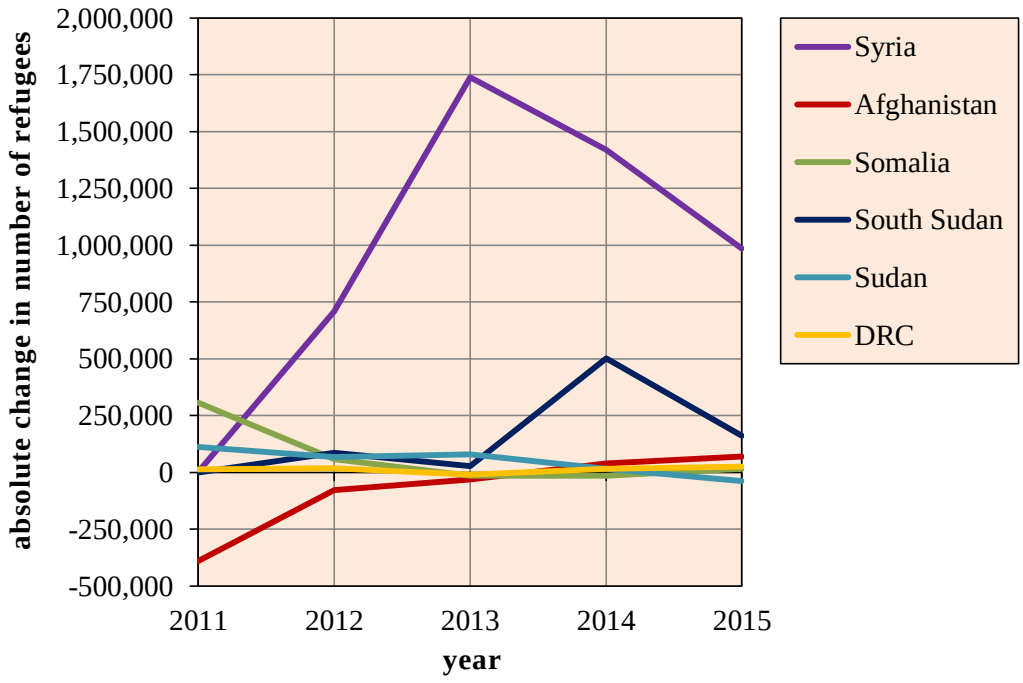
demonstrates the top refugee source countries in 2015 and how the number of refugees that have lodged their application for international protection changed through 2011–2015. For example, in 2012, Afghanistan produced 78,284 less refugees then in 2011, and South Sudan in 2014 produced 501,744 more refugees then in 2013 (The World Bank, 2017).

Table 3: Top refugee producing countries in 2015

1	**Syria**	4,872,585
2	**Afghanistan**	2,666,254
3	**Somalia**	1,123,052
4	**South Sudan**	778,697
5	**Sudan**	628,770
6	**DRC**	541,499

Source: The World Bank (2017)

Chart 2: Produced number of refugees by country of origin (absolute change, 2011–2015)



Source: The World Bank (2017)

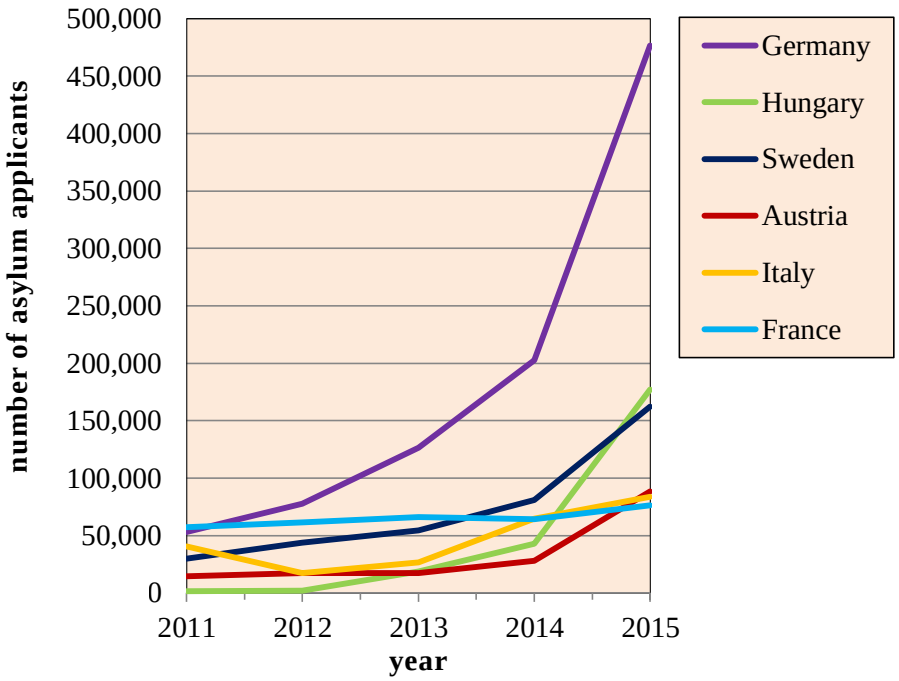
1.2 Seeking asylum in Europe

There are two main routes that are used by asylum seekers in order to get to Europe – the Mediterranean route and Balkan route. The Balkan route leads from Turkey to Greece across the Aegean Sea, from there they continue through Macedonia and Serbia to Hungary or Croatia. By crossing borders into Croatia and Hungary they have already entered the European Union and try to make their way further towards Western Europe and Scandinavian countries. Migrants using the Mediterranean route start their journey in Northern Africa, get to the Italian peninsula by crossing the Mediterranean Sea and further head for countries of Western and Northern Europe. In total around 800,000 people have reached Europe in 2015 by using the Balkan route and 150,000 people by using the Mediterranean route. In addition, there is also 34,000 migrants who decided to cross the European borders not across sea but by land from Turkey to Bulgaria and Greece. (Clayton, Holland, 2015)

In 2015 more than 1.2 million first time asylum applicants[1] lodged their application in countries of the European Union (Eurostat Press Office, 2016). According to Eurostat (2016a), the highest numbers of asylum applications was registered in Germany, Hungary, Sweden, Austria, Italy and France (as drawn in Chart 3). A factor that plays a role in the case of Hungary is that it is a transit country. Applicants did not intend to stay there. They probably wished to continue further into Western and Northern Europe, but according to Dublin regulation, applicant's claim for asylum should be processed in the country where (s)he entered the European Union and where his/her fingerprints had been taken (European Union, 2013). Thus, if an asylum seeker applied for asylum e.g. in France and authorities found out that applicant's fingerprints had been registered in Hungary, French authorities have the right to return the applicant to Hungary.

[1] A person who has applied for asylum in a destination and has never submitted an asylum application there before, regardless of whether (s)he has applied for protection in another country of EU. (Eurostat, 2015)

Chart 3: Number of asylum applicants in top six refugee receiving countries in Europe (2011–2015)



Source: Eurostat (2016a)

Table 4: Number of asylum applicants in top six refugee receiving countries in Europe (2011–2015)

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total (2011–2015)	Share on population (%)
Germany	53,235	77,485	126,705	202,645	476,510	936,580	0.012
Hungary	1,690	2,155	18,895	42,775	177,135	242,650	0.025
Sweden	29,650	43,855	54,270	81,180	162,450	371,405	0.038
Austria	14,420	17,415	17,500	28,035	88,160	165,530	0.019
Italy	40,315	17,335	26,620	64,625	83,540	232,435	0.004
France	57,330	61,440	66,265	64,310	76,165	325,510	0.005

Source: Eurostat (2016a), The World Bank (2016c)

Note: The figures for population are from 2015.

2. Asylum seekers and refugees in Denmark

2.1 Facts and numbers

One of the Scandinavian destination countries is Denmark. Since 2010, the number of first time asylum applicants in Denmark has grown more than four times, from 5,065 in 2010 to 20,935 applicants in 2015 (Eurostat, 2017). However, some of the applications were not processed in Denmark and had been sent to other European countries due to the above mentioned Dublin regulation i.e. in 2015 there were 12,225 applicants whose case had been considered in Denmark (compared to 20,935 applications that were lodged that year). Thus, there is difference between the number of applications that had been lodged in Denmark that year and the number of applications that had been processed. Moreover, some applications may not receive decision the same year they are submitted. These cases are included in the statistics for the year they received decision. According to Eurostat, out of the 12,225 applications that were considered, 9,920 received positive decision, in total resulting in a recognition rate of 81.1 percent for 2015. (Eurostat, 2016b)

The distribution of nationalities in Denmark has been changing only slightly (as illustrated by Table 4) with several countries dominating top three positions over past ten years: Afghanistan, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Russia, Serbia, Somalia and Syria (Chart 4). The highest number of refugees in 2005 came to Denmark from Serbia, Iraq and Afghanistan. One year later, Afghanistan kept its third position but Serbia was outrun by Iraq. Since 2007 Serbia dropped from the top three positions and Afghanistan overtook the table and dominated until 2011. During 2007 and 2008 Russia and Iraq shared the second and third place. Meanwhile, Syrian asylum seekers were growing in numbers and in 2009 they replaced Iraqis and accounted for the second largest asylum applicants' nation in Denmark. During 2012, the most applications were submitted by Somalian, Syrian and Afghan citizens. The top leader origin country since 2013 has been Syria standing for 8,608 applications in 2015. The second and third position countries changed a lot between 2013 and 2015 starting with Somalia and Russia in 2013. A year later the number of Eritreans quickly increased and a category of stateless[2] people reached the third place, with Afghanistan and Iraq regaining their place in the top three source countries again in 2015. (Statistics Denmark, 2016a)

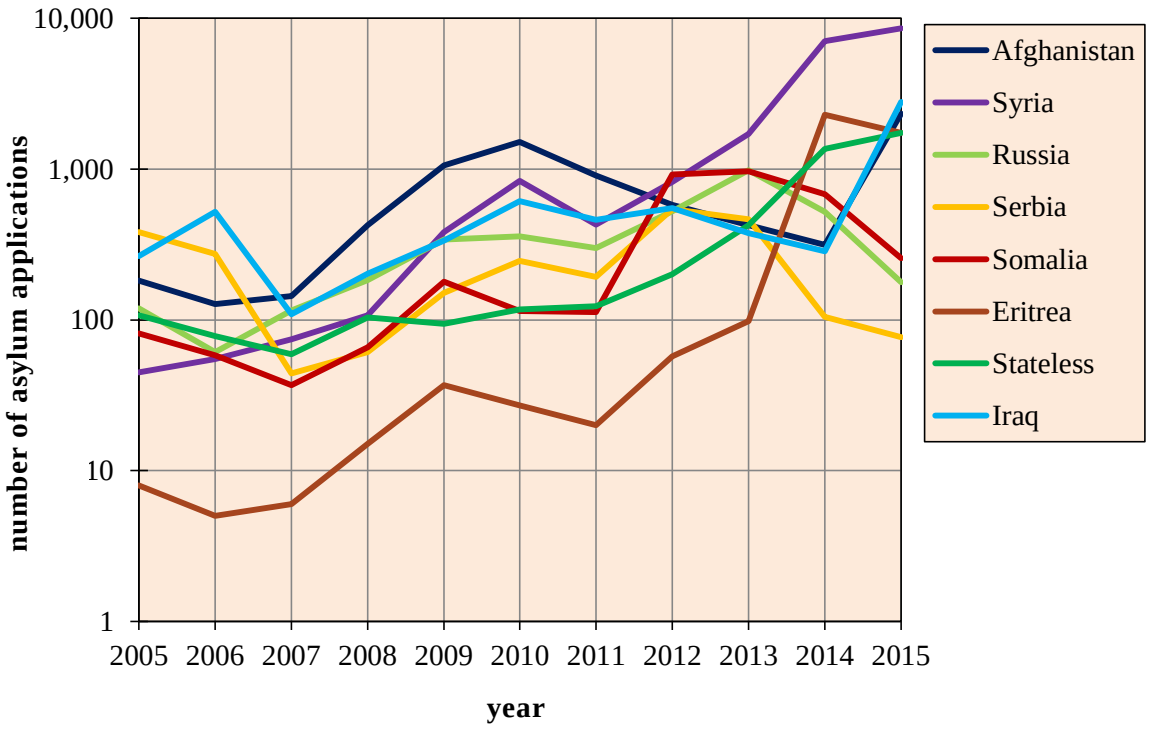
[2] A person without any nationality. People can be either born stateless or become stateless. (UNHCR, 2017)

Table 5: Top 5 asylum applicants' nationalities in Denmark (2011–2015)

	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
1	Afghanistan	906	Somalia	919	Syria	1,710	Syria	7,087	Syria	8,608
2	Iraq	462	Syria	822	Russia	982	Eritrea	2,285	Iraq	2,787
3	Syria	429	Afghanistan	577	Somalia	965	Stateless	1,362	Afghanistan	2,330
4	Russia	300	Iraq	549	Serbia	466	Somalia	683	Eritrea	1,740
5	Serbia	192	Serbia	544	Afghanistan	426	Russia	522	Stateless	1,734

Source: Statistics Denmark (2016a)

Chart 4: Top 5 asylum seekers' nationalities in Denmark (2005–2015)



Source: Statistics Denmark (2016a)

Note: Serbia's figures for 2005 and 2006 are substituted by figures for Serbia and Montenegro.

Recognition rates for all nationalities are different. Currently, the most successful are Syrians and Eritreans reaching 98 percent, followed by Iranians with 73 percent and Somalians 44 percent. Children and teenagers under 18 years old who travel alone and seek asylum, account for a significant part of asylum seekers (they are called "unaccompanied minors", UMIs). (Bendixen, 2016b) According to Danish Ministry of Immigration and Integration (2016a), there were 2,144 unaccompanied children and teenagers who came to

Denmark in 2015. UMIs, unlike asylum seekers over 18 years, cannot be sent to another country to get their application processed. Most of them are teenage boys and their residence permits expire when they turn 18. The nationality distribution of UMIs corresponds to that of adult asylum seekers. In 2015, the most children and teenagers came from Afghanistan (844), Syria (584) and Eritrea (168). (Ministry of Immigration and Integration. 2016a)

2.2 Asylum system

In the beginning of January 2017, there were 53 refugee centers in Denmark. Sandholm Asylcenter situated close to the capital is the biggest one. It is also the arrival center for those asylum seekers that just came, and the departure center for those whose application has been rejected and need to leave country. The number of refugee centers is not constant and are subject to changes according to how many new applicants there are. Refugees cannot decide which center they want to stay in. It is Danish Immigration Service that decides where a person is accommodated. Unfortunately, it often happens that a person is being moved from one center to another several times. Applicants have to stay in a refugee center during the time their application is being processed. (Newtodenmark.dk, 2017)

In 2013, there was a new agreement that came into force. After living half a year in Denmark, a person was allowed to submit an application for permission to move out of a center even though (s)he had not received any decision on his/her asylum application. This rule was changed in 2016. A person can still move out of an asylum center after a half-year stay in the country, but only if (s)he has a family or friends that have enough space to accommodate him/her and if they live outside of an area that already stopped receiving refugees. (Bendixen, 2016c)

Asylum seekers in Danish refugee centers do not have to pay for accommodation there (only if they have a job). It is paid for by the Danish Immigration Service along with health care, education and transport. Nonetheless, only the transportation to school, to appointments with authorities and to internships is covered. Asylum seekers also receive a cash allowance every two weeks as they cannot work. The amount of money varies according to several factors (number of children, center an asylum seeker lives in, phase of his/her case and extent to which an asylum seeker cooperates with authorities). (Bendixen, 2016d) Health care and necessary medication is for free as well. However, it is limited to urgent cases and asylum seekers need to apply for support to the Danish Immigration Service to get more complicated

surgical treatment financially covered. Asylum seekers are offered free Danish language classes in local language schools. Usually the class takes place for four hours three times a week. There are three different classes for beginners where refugees start. A class that an asylum seeker is sent to depends on the level of his/her education. Each refugee who passes Danish Language course 2 receives 1,500 DKr per month in addition to his/her integration allowance. (Bendixen, 2016e)

A person who has been granted asylum in Denmark and whose family members are staying in a country of origin can apply for reunification with his/her family. (S)he first gets access to it after a three-year stay in the country. It is limited only to nuclear family, i.e. to spouses and minor children (does not include adult children). Birth and marriage certificates must be enclosed in the application. If these documents are not available for some reason, DNA tests take place and spouses need to prove that they have been living together. DNA tests must be made at a Danish embassy. Unfortunately, Danish embassies are not currently present in every country. If that happens, families and children have to travel to another country with Danish embassy to undergo the tests. It poses a risk to their safety and integrity, and they cannot be sure that their case will receive positive decision. (Bendixen, 2016f)

2.3 Recent restrictions affecting asylum seekers and refugees

As cuts in asylum seekers' benefits were implemented in 2015 by the Danish government, unemployment benefits for refugees (cash allowances) were replaced by integration allowance which dropped from 10,849 DKr to 5,945 DKr per month (before tax) for one single adult person with no children. This now applies for all asylum seekers who have been residing in Denmark less than 7 years in the past 8 years. (The Local, 2015a) The government cut the benefits in order to discourage asylum seekers from coming to and asking for asylum in Denmark. The United Nations stated that it is a violation of The Refugee Convention from 1951 which says that *'The Contracting States shall accord to refugees lawfully staying in their territory the same treatment with respect to public relief and assistance as is accorded to their nationals'* (UNHCR, 2011). Denmark's representatives defend their decision by arguing that this is not a way to discriminate asylum seekers, but to lower the number of people applying for asylum in Denmark. And it should allow the Danish society to deal with those that were already granted asylum and try to integrate them. (The Local, 2015b)

Denmark does not participate in the quota refugee system brought to attention by the European Union. According to the system almost all countries of the EU need to accept a certain number of migrants from Italy and Greece in order to share the burden. In the case of Denmark, 500 quota refugees per year have been taken care of since 1989. (Newtodenmark.dk, 2016) In 2016, Denmark suspended reception of quota refugees and postponed it until this year, using the same argument about the need to cope with the asylum seekers that they have already accepted (Bendixen, 2016g).

Danish government also passed restrictions regarding refugees' and migrants' stay in the country. The authorities are now for example allowed to turn asylum seekers away at the border if their number rises sharply. Another point of the catalogue of restrictions says that asylum seekers' assets can be seized in order to pay for their stay in Denmark. But only if they are worth more than 10,000 DKr and they do not have sentimental value for them (Ministry of Immigration and Integration, 2016b). Requirements for receiving a permanent residence permit were made more difficult, as well as the family reunification. The waiting time for family reunification was raised from one to three years. It means that an asylum seeker that has been granted asylum needs to live in Denmark for three years before his/her family is allowed to come to Denmark. This restriction was described by Danish Institute of Human Rights as a violation of The European Convention of Human Rights even before the law was approved. Despite this warning, it has not changed government's decision. As mentioned above, asylum seekers receive a cash allowance (also called an integration allowance). After a legal stay in Denmark for 7 in past 8 years, the integration allowance of an asylum seeker is changed into the same normal social benefits, the same as Danish citizens receive. With changes of 2016, a new requirement of holding a fulltime unsupported job for two and half years in total was added. (Bendixen, 2016g)

3. Determinants of asylum seeker flows

Decision-making of an asylum seeker is a complicated comparison of pros and cons, costs and benefits. There are factors on the side of a country of origin and on the side of destination country that influence the decision. Push factors are characteristics of countries of origin that are unfavourable and make people leave the country, for example presence of an armed conflict on country's territory, human rights violations, genocide, natural disasters, etc. Pull factors refer to features of destination countries. They appeal to asylum seekers and play an important role in the decision where to apply for asylum. Some examples include number of positive decisions on asylum applications, presence of family or friends, income per capita, future opportunities, etc.

Nonetheless the division on push and pull is not the only way the different factors can be categorized. Neumayer (2005) followed Moore, Shellman (2004) and split them into two groups based on whether they raise or lower costs of staying in a country of origin and costs of migration to another country. An individual tries to minimize costs and when the costs of staying outweigh costs of migration, (s)he decides to flee. Clark (1989) presents more complex classification of factors influencing the decision to seek asylum distinguishing push factors, intervening factors and triggering events (for more see Clark, 1989).

Classification of factors in this thesis are inspired by Havinga, Böcker (1999: 44) who distinguish three groups: links between the country of origin and the country of destination; characteristics of the country of destination; and events during flight. In order to cover the characteristics of countries of origin as well, one more group representing features of countries of origin is added. In the next section, four groups of factors are going to be mentioned and their theoretical influence on the number of asylum applications will be described. The four groups are:

- characteristics of the country of origin
- characteristics of the destination country
- links between the country of origin and country of destination
- facilitators and obstacles to flight

3.1 Characteristics of countries of origin

Violence and lack of security

Various forms of violence, conflicts and wars are sources of great refugee flows. If there is no functioning government or institution to penalize involved parties or if the state itself is the offender, inhabitants are not provided any kind of protection. Political repression, human rights abuses, and discrimination against ethnic minorities turn, in many cases, into direct decimation of a country's population. Organized violence against citizens produce a lot of refugees, but as Davenport et al. (2003) states, later on when restrictions on the right to leave a country are applied, the number decreases. Violence in general was found as a reliable predictor of refugee flights (Schmeidl (1997), Davenport, Moore, Poe (2003) Moore, Shellman (2004) and Crawley (2010)). Presence of violence in a country of origin increases the number of people leaving their home and thus, number of asylum applications in countries of asylum rises.

Low income

Low income itself is seen as a reason for migration, but not for asylum seeking. However, in a combination with conflict or war poverty, it can represent great difficulties and accelerate refugee flights. Neumayer (2005) found out that there is a negative association between GDP per capita in a country of origin and number of asylum applications. Therefore, the expectation is that there will be more asylum applications originating in countries with lower income per capita.

Environment and natural disasters

Not only threats to personal integrity from humans but also natural threats and environmental changes cause forced displacement. Myers, Kent (1995) estimate that there were 25 million environmental refugees in 1995. Piguet (2008) based on Lonergan (1998) distinguishes five groups of environmental push factors: natural disasters; development projects that involve changes in the environment; progressive evolution of the environment (land degradation, deforestation, etc.); industrial accidents; and environmental consequences due to conflict. The assumption is that there is higher number of asylum applications from countries that are affected by a natural disaster or an environmental change.

3.2 Characteristics of destination countries

High standard of living

Empirical evidence shows that asylum seekers do prefer rich countries when making decision where to lodge their application (for example Keogh (2013), Neumayer (2004)). If they have enough time to make necessary arrangements and make up their mind about the country where they are going to apply for protection, more affluent countries are those that are prioritized. However, level of income might lose its importance when other factors are considered (Toshkov, 2014). When people do not have time or money to plan their journey and need to leave in a hurry, they might end up fleeing and asking for asylum in a neighbouring country regardless of the country's level of economic development. In general, it is expected that there will be higher number of asylum applications in countries with high income per capita.

Image of the country

Image of a destination country that asylum seekers perceive, has been proved to be a significant factor during the process of decision-making. Western countries are regarded as democratic, safe and respecting human rights. Family members, friends and travel agents (smugglers) are the usual source of the information about the destination country. Robinson, Segrott (2002) have focused their research on Great Britain and Brekke, Aarset (2009) on Norway as destination countries. They have found out that freedoms and respect to human rights are highly valued by those who have faced political repression in their homeland. Overall, asylum seekers that authors interviewed mentioned safety and peaceful life among the first reasons why they have decided to lodge their applications in those two countries. Hence, there is higher number of asylum applications in countries that are perceived as democratic, peaceful and protecting human rights.

Social network

Presence of family and friends makes one destination country more attractive than the others. For some asylum seekers, this is the factor that tips the scale. Crawley (2010) has conducted a qualitative research in order to understand why asylum seekers come to the United Kingdom. It turned out that almost half of the respondents had family members or friends that had already been living there. Countries with well-established

immigrant[3] communities are more probable to experience higher inflows of refugees than other countries. Family reunification is interwoven with this factor. After the decision of leaving a country of origin is made, the possibility of being reunited with family member/s already living abroad strongly contributes to the decision of where a person applies for asylum (Robinson, Segrott, 2002). Asylum seekers apply for asylum in countries where their family, friends or nationals sought asylum in the past (Neumayer, 2004). Nevertheless, reasons differ from individual to individual and the presence of compatriots can serve as a deterring factor as well (Crawley, 2010).

Recognition rate

Recognition rate is '*the share of positive decisions in the total number of asylum decisions for each stage of the asylum procedure (i.e. first instance and final on appeal)'* (Eurostat, 2014). Asylum seekers apply in countries where they know that they have higher chance to be successful. Recent studies by Keogh (2013) and Toshkov (2014) have found a positive effect of the recognition rate on number of lodged asylum applications suggesting that the higher the recognition rate from a particular country, the more new asylum applications originating in that country are submitted. Conversely, Toshkov (2014) analysed mutual relationship between recognition rates and number of asylum applicants, and found out that when the number of asylum applications rises, the recognition rates decrease.

Asylum policy

Government's position on immigration, entry and visa restrictions, restrictions on work, restrictions on obtaining a permanent residence permit and many others influence the choice of a destination country for asylum seekers. Rotte, Vogler (1999) found out that after implementing restrictions on working for asylum seekers in Germany in 1987 and subsequently in 1993, the number of asylum applications has dropped. The opposite effect happened with the abolition of restrictions in 1987 and 1991, which were followed by an increase in the number of asylum applicants. Asylum seekers prefer to lodge their application in a country where the government supports immigration and thus, where there are less restrictions regarding asylum seekers' life. (Toshkov, 2014)

[3] *'(..) a person born abroad whose parents are both (or one of them if there is no available information on the other parent) foreign citizens or were both born abroad. If there is no available information on either of the parents and the person was born abroad, the person is also defined as an immigrant.'* (Statistics Denmark, 2017)

Future opportunities

People seeking asylum consider future opportunities that the destination country offers. Opportunities for further studies, prospects of finding a job, conditions that the state provides for raising children and the way government provides its citizens with social and economic welfare services are important when somebody is making a decision about his/her future. A destination country is more sought-after by asylum seekers if previously mentioned conditions are favourable. Brekke, Aarset (2009) came up with a finding that future opportunities are the second most important factor that asylum seekers decide upon during the process of decision making. The better the government of a destination country takes care of its citizens, the more asylum seekers apply for protection in the country.

3.3 Links between a country of origin and a country of destination

Colonial links

Taking into account the country's past colonial ties can also explain asylum seekers' choices. Robinson, Segrott (2002) and Crawley (2010) found out that the role of colonial ties is important. For example, asylum seekers coming from former British colonies have knowledge about their destination country mostly due to the colonial relations in the past. They are aware of British history, because the subject was taught in schools during the British rule. Regarding culture, asylum seekers were able to mention famous political figures, musicians or bands. Some British cities are known as well due to the popularity of their football clubs. Television revealed to be an important source of information about British culture as there is usually worldwide access to British sport channels. The knowledge and experience asylum seekers had about/with Great Britain served as a pull factor. Moreover, some respondents in Robinson, Segrott (2002) had feeling that their former motherland is obligated to take care about them. Colonial links between countries are of great importance, because it is assumed that former colonial empire countries receive higher number of asylum applications compared to those destination countries that do not have former colonies.

Common language

If a country of origin shares the same language with a country of destination, obstacles in asylum seekers' integration into a new society are much lower and the destination becomes more attractive. Hence, a common language between a country of origin and a country of

destination leads to higher number of asylum applications being lodged into that destination country. Neumayer (2004) came to the same conclusion in his analysis. But a common language cannot explain all refugee flows. Havinga, Böcker (1999) conducted interviews in three countries (UK, Belgium and Netherlands). Even though a common language was found important in the case of asylum seekers coming to UK, it was not found as a significant factor in Belgium and Netherlands.

Aid and trade

Aid and trade relations enhance the diffusion of information. It suggests that if there are any bilateral flows in terms of development or humanitarian aid and trade between a country of origin and a country of destination, the destination is being proclaimed in media and therefore, potential asylum seekers are familiar with the country. Speaking about humanitarian and development aid, these destinations can be seen as supportive and sympathetic and appear as "friendly" in asylum seekers' eyes. Bilateral flows between an origin country and a destination country generate greater flow of information between the two countries leading to higher number of asylum applications submitted in a destination from a country of origin. Yet, it is not easy to distinguish the effect of the flows. The argument could be that higher flows of trade and development aid should lead to better situation and living conditions in a country of origin and so lowering the number of people leaving the origin country.

3.4 Facilitators and obstacles to flight

Distance

Distance represents an obstacle in refugee flights. Stable and safe countries are not situated close to conflict areas and asylum seekers need to travel great distances to reach a safe sanctuary. Those without sufficient financial resources for paying the journey usually end up in neighbouring countries or moving only within state borders (internally displaced persons, IDPs). Families that do not have enough money for the whole family's flight usually send only one member and then apply for family reunification once the family member is granted asylum. It often happens that the whole distance between a country of origin and a destination country is not travelled all at once, but several stops are taken along the way. Many different transport vehicles are used ranging from boats, cars, trucks, trains, airplanes, etc. Some asylum seekers might go on foot. The way a journey looks like very much depends

on whether an asylum seeker plans and makes the journey happen on his/her own or whether (s)he uses help from a smuggler (a travel agent that plans the journey, facilitates the transport and makes living on it). Distance between a country of origin and a destination country is expected to negatively affect the number of applications lodged in a destination country (Neumayer, 2005). Increasing distance between the two countries lowers the number of asylum applications submitted in a country of destination.

Travel agents (or smugglers)

Many choices of particular destinations are not made by asylum seekers themselves but by travel agents. In some cases asylum seekers do not know their destination until they get there. If asylum seekers have enough money they might be able to choose from a range of countries. The range of countries that travel agents offer depends on the same factors that play role in asylum seekers' decision-making, for example a destination's asylum policy, strictness of checks and controls, smugglers' networks, etc. Havinga, Böcker (1999).

Travel agents not only plan and arrange the journey but also provide necessary travel documents such as tickets, visas, passports, etc. Some respondents in Crawley (2010) experienced an agent travelling with them to a destination, bringing them to a specific place where they could get help from others and then left. Sometimes services of more than one smuggler are needed if the route crosses through several countries.

In order to pay for the service of a smuggler and the journey, people wishing to flee often need to borrow money from their family, friends or community. The price of such a service varies. Some destinations are inexpensive, some are expensive. Usually a direct flight costs more than a journey with several stops (Robinson, Segrott, 2002). On the other hand, the more stops there are on a way, the higher the risk of being detected. Unfortunately, the role of agents is difficult to analyse by quantitative methods. However, their role is captured in several qualitative studies. To learn more about the role of smugglers, see Brekke, Aarset (2009), Crawley (2010), Havinga, Böcker (1999), Robinson, Segrott (2002).

Visa, checks and controls

Strict control of borders and checks of people entering a destination affect number of asylum applicants. This suggests that there will be more asylum applications in countries that do not have strict restrictions on entry and those that are accessible by land. As many asylum seekers without valid travel documents choose to travel illegally by land, there is a lower chance that they are getting their documents checked before they reach the desired destination

country. Not all countries are within an easy reach by land (e.g. USA, Canada) and therefore, asylum seekers with no travel documents need to choose the more accessible destinations over the ones they desire.

3.5 Review of empirical research

In this section, already existing empirical literature regarding asylum migration is reviewed. Firstly, quantitative studies and analysis are presented followed by qualitative studies. They are arranged from the oldest to the newest within each division. There is one exception, even though Brekke, Aarset (2009) are not the newest, their paper is put last due to relation of the other two qualitative studies to the same destination country. Studies' focus varies as some of them deal with push factors, the others with pull factors and some of them combine both. The main findings of each paper are presented and results are compared with other studies.

Schmeidl (1997: 291) analyses push factors causing refugee flows. Her sample comprises 109 countries from Southeast Asia, Middle East, Africa and Latin America and covers 1971–1990 time period. Schmeidl (1997: 297) used ordinary least squares (OLS) to analyze her dataset and found out that violence is the main reason why people flee their home countries. Genocide and politicide showed up to be the best predictors for refugee movements. Further, she entered variables such as civil war with foreign military intervention, civil war without foreign military intervention and interstate war. All of them turned out to be significant. Ethnic rebellion was not found significant unless six outliers (all experiencing civil war in the period under review) were excluded (Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sudan, El Salvador). Schmeidl (1997: 302) indicates that *'(..) this findings suggest that ethnic rebellion significantly predicts smaller displacements but cannot account for large-scale mass exodus of refugees.'*

Population pressures measured by population density and poverty proxied by energy consumption were not significant. However, poverty became significant when put into interaction with genocide/politicide. It implies that origin country's level of development matters as low level of development can exacerbate the situation and make people realize that staying in the country would cost them more than fleeing abroad and seeking asylum. Surprising finding was that civil rights violations were found insignificant. This opposes Hatton (2008) who concluded that human rights violations are of great significance.

Schmeidl (1997) also tried to affect geographical factors and therefore, entered three variables: number of borders, land access (share of land borders on borders constituted by water) and geographic obstacles (islands, mountains, jungles, etc.). None of those variables were proven significant. The explanation may be that the origin country's geographical features are not that important compared to asylum policies, border controls and migration routes.

Rotte, Vogler (1999) were investigating determinants of migration flows to Germany. Besides migration flows they used asylum migration rates as a dependent variable covering a period of 1984–1995. The dataset contains almost all Least Developed Countries (LDCs) from Asia and Africa (Rotte, Vogler, 1999: 12). To get the dependent variable asylum migration rates, the number of asylum seekers is divided by the population of countries of origin. Using fixed effects model and asylum migration rates as a dependent variable, they found positive effect of political violence on asylum migration compared to civil rights violations that have no effect: this corresponds to the findings that Schmeidl (1997) came to. The effect of wage differential is positive, the greater the difference, the higher the asylum flows. This finding contradicts Schmeidl (1997) and Davenport, Moore, Poe (2003), because it did not find any significant effect of income on a dependent variable. GDP growth in origin country was found to negatively affect asylum flows as well as distance.

Rotte, Vogler (1999) also accounted for institutional measures. Their effects are weak but the direction is as expected. Restrictive laws from 1987 and 1993 lowered the asylum migration rate but a law from 1991 that abolished a work ban, influenced the rate positively. Positive effect of urban population suggests that people in cities have better access to information and regarding their skills they might have a greater chance to find a job abroad. Population growth measured by a growth of the labour force, aid from Germany and trade with Germany are insignificant. However, Rotte, Vogler (1999) found out that if the analysis is conducted separately for states situated in Africa and in Asia, trade becomes significant having a positive effect on asylum seekers from Asia while negatively affecting asylum seekers from Africa.

Compared to Schmeidl (1997) who focused on push factors, and to Rotte, Vogler (1999) who focused on asylum migration only to Germany, Neumayer (2004) tries to explain why asylum seekers prefer some countries in Western Europe to the others. In order to be able to compare countries in how much asylum seekers they receive, he used a share of asylum seekers on destination population size divided by a share of asylum seekers in Western

Europe using Western Europe's population as a dependent variable. Dataset includes 17 destination countries, 125 countries of origin over the period 1982–1999 (Neumayer, 2004: 35). The OLS method is used to estimate the results.

GDP per capita, recognition rate, social network, colonial ties and common language were found significant with a positive effect on asylum share, suggesting that asylum seekers prefer wealthier countries with an established community of asylum seekers' compatriots and countries where there is a higher probability of asylum being granted. They do also prefer countries that speak a language that asylum seekers are familiar with. Colonial ties turned out to be significant as well. Those destination countries that used to rule other nations during the era of colonisation are more likely to experience higher number of asylum seekers.

Among the variables affecting asylum share negatively, are the growth of the gross domestic product, hostile attitudes towards foreigners, distance and party of Schengen Convention. It implies that countries with anti-immigration policies and attitudes receive less asylum seekers. Asylum seekers favour countries that are geographically closer. If a destination country took a part in Schengen Agreement (which established new rules regarding asylum within the EU) in the specified time period, the share of asylum seekers decreased. And lastly, a negative effect of growth is a surprise that Neumayer (2004) himself could not find a proper explanation for. Still, he suggests that it might be partly explained by the fact that asylum seekers apply in rich European countries that experience lower GDP growth than countries with lower income per capita. Unemployment in destination, left-wing political parties and welfare provisions were not found significant.

In accordance with Neumayer (2004), Hatton (2008) found out that social networks are an important determinant of asylum seekers' choice of a destination country. His sample accounted for 19 destination countries and 40 countries of origin during 1997–2007 (Hatton, 2008: 23). Violence and political oppression in a destination country are significant which corresponds to Schmeidl (1997) and Rotte, Vogler (1999). However, their results differ when it comes to human rights. While Hatton (2008) found out that violation of human rights increases the number of asylum seekers, Schmeidl (1997) and Rotte, Vogler (1999) have not found evidence of any such effect. Similarly, Hatton's finding about significantly negative effect of destinations' unemployment on number of asylum applicants disagree with Neumayer (2004) who found unemployment insignificant.

Hatton (2008) also entered recognition rates into the analysis but no significant effect was found. Therefore, he replaced recognition rates with three institutional measures: access

to destinations' territory, toughness of the recognition process and welfare provisions. The outcomes he obtained are similar to those of Neumayer (2004) and Rotte, Vogler (1999) and indicate that countries with tough asylum application processing and restrictions on entry receive a lower number of asylum applicants. Welfare benefits have no significant effect on asylum seekers' decision-making.

Keogh (2013: 371) focuses only on three pull factors: GDP per capita, recognition rate and refugee stock over 1985—2011 period in 15 European destinations. His finding agrees with previous studies: GDP per capita and recognition rate were found to be important determinants of refugee migration. Yet surprisingly, he did not find support for refugee stock as a proxy variable for social networks. It comes into conflict with previous studies that have found networks as a substantial determinant of asylum migration. The three variables may explain part of the puzzle of asylum seekers' choice however, it is important to realize that each destination is specific with different factors being relevant. In one of the following qualitative studies, namely Brekke, Aarset (2009), an example of destination specific factors is provided.

Qualitative studies offer closer insight into the thinking and decision-making process of asylum seekers. Robinson, Segrott (2002: 8) conducted a research among asylum seekers in the United Kingdom using the method of in depth interviews. There were 65 asylum seekers interviewed during 2000–2001 in order to answer questions why and how they chose to claim asylum in the UK (Robinson, Segrott, 2002: 6, 10). The authors found out that a lot depends on the financial resources that asylum seekers have at their disposal. It is a factor influencing whether to use a service of a travel agent or not. If they do not have enough money to afford the service, they may flee to the closest safe country. Richer asylum seekers pay a smuggler to get help with organising the flight. Sadly, a smuggler offers them only a limited range of countries so they do not have much choice either.

Research findings imply that war-free democratic countries respecting human rights with high level of human and economic development are the desired destinations. From those destinations, asylum seekers prefer the countries where family or friends already reside. Due to colonial past and English being a world language, knowledge of English and British culture was another important factor. Finally, images that asylum seekers had about the UK before arrival (gained from movies, books, sport TV channels and so on) played a role as well. Yet, interviews also confirmed that asylum seekers might go through decision-making several

times as the first destination may represent only temporary solution to find a safe haven. And once they get there, another decision about the final destination country must be taken.

Few years after Robinson and Segrott (2002), Crawley (2010) carried out a qualitative research asking the same question about asylum seekers' choice of the UK. It was based on existing relevant literature and on interviews and focus groups with refugees and asylum seekers (Crawley, 2010: 4). From all research participants, only one third of them had exercised their own will when coming to the UK. Travel agents decided for others and some of the respondents ended up therein while travelling to another destination. The important role of travel agents in a distribution of asylum seekers in destination countries has been found in this study as well. Unfortunately, their activities and influence are hard to be captured. Conclusions made by Crawley (2010) correspond with Robinson, Segrott (2002). He also found the significance of historical and language ties, family, social network and images that asylum seekers had about Great Britain. Nevertheless, Crawley (2010) also mentions that respondents did not know much about the asylum system, welfare benefits and employment opportunities in the UK. All these findings are similar to those that Neumayer (2004) came to in his regression analysis except for one. Neumayer (2004) claims that attitudes towards foreigners and asylum system in destination country matter. But Crawley (2010) found out that asylum seekers and refugees had little information about asylum policy in the UK. That is no surprise as two thirds of them did not intent to end up there. Moreover, some asylum seekers did not even know what the word "asylum" meant, let alone to know that they can apply for it.

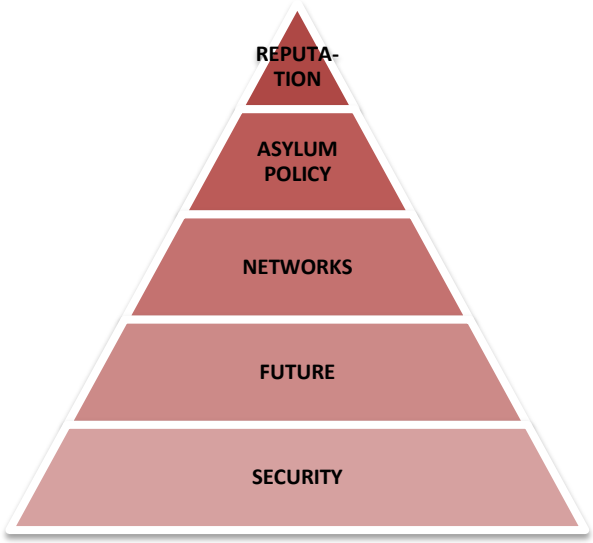
In order to see how the main pull factors vary from one destination to another, Brekke, Aarset (2009) carried out a research about asylum seekers in Norway and why they went there. Their analysis is based on interviews with asylum seekers, informants from asylum "environment", analysis of asylum seekers' case files and of documents from Norwegian Directorate of Immigration. The authors found out that except for the democracy, security and modern rich country providing lot of opportunities (which are factors embracing all Western European countries), the pull factors were slightly different compared to those found by Crawley (2010).

As Norwegian colonial history possessions include islands in polar region with no permanent population (except for Svalbard), colonial ties cannot serve as an explanatory factor of high flows of asylum seekers. Hence, after presence of family and social network, another important factor is asylum policy and attitudes towards applicants followed by

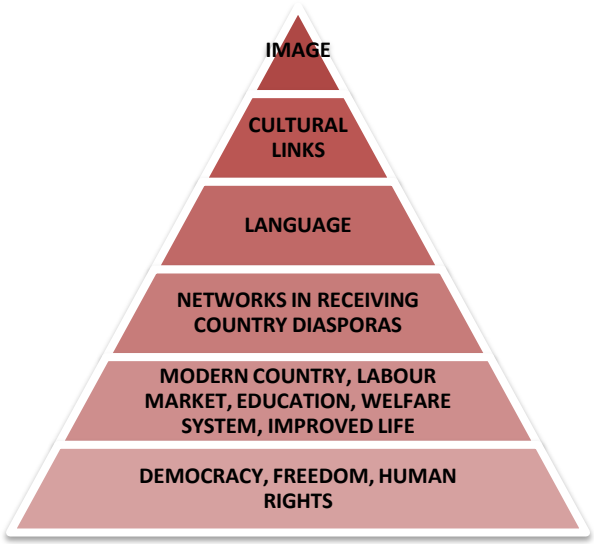
country's reputation as Norway is well-known for its generosity. Strong influence of travel agents on determination of a destination country found in this study corresponds with Robinson, Segrott (2002) and Crawley (2010). Brekke, Aarset (2009: 31, 85) presented two hierarchies of pull factors in their report. The first one (Figure 1a) accounts for asylum seekers in Norway and is based on their own study. The second one (Figure 1b) is a pyramid hierarchy based on findings reported in Robinson, Segrott (2002) about asylum seekers in the UK.

Figure 1: Hierarchy of pull factors:

a) for Norway



b) for the UK



Source: Brekke, Aarset (2009), modified by the author

3.6 Summary

This chapter provided an insight into the complexity of decision that asylum seekers have to make. Four groups of factors that influence the decision making were introduced: push factors of an origin country, pull factors of a destination country, relations between the countries and events during flight; and their potential effect on number of asylum applications lodged in a destination country was described. In the second part of the chapter, empirical studies related to the issue and their findings were presented including both quantitative and qualitative analysis. To summarize their findings, various forms of violence and human right abuses were found as the most important push factor that can be aggravated by a bad economic situation. There is strong empirical evidence that a level of economic and human development of a destination and existing networks therein are substantial determinants of asylum seekers flows. Historical and cultural ties appear to be of greater importance than bilateral relations such as trade and aid. Distance serves either as facilitator or obstacle. In general, growing distance leads to lower number of asylum applications. Travel agents determine the distribution of asylum seekers in destination countries to a considerable extent. Policy measures accompanying asylum have mixed effect. Restrictions and anti-immigration feelings lower the number of asylum applications but on the other hand, high recognition rates and generous welfare provisions lead to increased number of asylum applicants.

4. Empirical analysis

4.1 Dataset and estimation technique

The time period covered by the dataset is 2005–2015. Though, not all variables contain data for a year 2015 due to lack of data availability in the time of the collection. There are 190 countries included in the dataset (see Table 6). The countries were derived from the central authority on Danish statistics (Statistics Denmark) which was used to get the data for the dependent variable, i.e. number of asylum applicants in Denmark. The criterion for a country to be included into the dataset was a membership in the UN. Countries that were not members of the UN at that time were dropped from the dataset.

Table 6: List of countries included in the analysis

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Colombia, Comoros, Congo (Democratic Republic), Congo (Republic), Costa Rica, Cotê d'Ivoire/Ivory Coast, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, East Timor, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, The, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala Guinea Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Chad, Chile, China, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Korea (North/DPRK), Korea (South/Korea), Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua,, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russia, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syria, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Thailand, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Uruguay, USA, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Vietnam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Estimation of results is based on panel data random-effects tobit model. The reason for choosing this model is that it is applicable on panel data and it takes account of zero values. There are many zero values on dependent variable and it is not desirable to lose these observations. Tobit is based on the assumption of homoscedasticity and normal distribution of the latent variable. Therefore, in order to lower the risk of heteroscedasticity appearing in the

model, it was necessary to adjust the dependent variable using natural logarithm. But before doing that, one unit was added to all observations of the response variables (natural logarithm would cause all zero values to turn into missing values and many observations would be lost) and logarithm was applied afterwards. This adjustment leads to a distortion. However, regarding the need to account for zero observations, the tobit model was given preference to models not adjusting for zero values and to some other models (such as for example the zero-inflated poisson or zero-inflated negative binominal model), too.

4.2 The dependent and independent variables

The **dependent variable 'ln asylum'** is defined as a number of asylum applications submitted in Denmark (see Table 7). Before using logarithm on this variable, one unit was added to all observations. The reason for this adjustment is an issue with applying natural logarithm on observations with a value of zero. If a log of a zero value is taken, the result is a missing value (since a log of zero is not defined) and such an observation would be lost and not included in the analysis. If one unit is added to all observations before applying natural logarithm, originally zero observations are zeros after the logarithmic transformation, i.e. they are saved and can be analysed. There is a distortion caused by this adjustment but as there are many zero values on dependent variable, a significant number of observations would be lost. Data for this variable are taken from the Danish central authority Statistics Denmark (Statistics Denmark, 2016a).

The first **independent variable** in the dataset is an income differential (**'ln income differential'**). It captures the difference between economic development of a destination (Denmark) and a country of origin. The GDP per capita PPP in constant prices of 2011 (international dollar) is used to approximate this variable. It is analysed as a logarithmically transformed ratio of GDP per capita of Denmark and GDP per capita of an origin country (natural logarithm). The data were taken from The World Bank DataBank (The World Bank, 2016b).

Population size is entered as a control variable (**'ln population'**). The same adjustments as for *ln income differential* were made in order to make a bilateral variable and compare the population size i.e. values were logged and then put into proportion (Denmark/ a country of origin). The figures for population come from The World Bank (The World Bank, 2016c).

Social network of asylum seekers in a destination is approximated by an immigrant population in Denmark (**'ln stock'**). It is a logarithmically transformed sum of immigrants and descendants[4]. The source used for the figures is Statistics Denmark (Statistics Denmark, 2016b).

To account for the distance between Denmark and origin country, the variable **'ln distance'** is presented. It is a logged distance between Denmark's capital Copenhagen and particular capitals of countries of origin. The unit of measurement is a kilometer. Data are taken from GeoDist Database, concretely from Mayer, Zignago (2011).

The stability and existence of violence in a country is approximated by Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism indicator (**'violence'**) brought forward by The Worldwide Governance Indicators project (The World Bank, 2016e). It is an estimate measuring the probability of occurrence of "*political instability and/or politically-motivated violence, including terrorism."* (The World Bank, 2016e) The variable is entered as a ratio (estimate for Denmark/estimate of an origin country). For the purpose of easier interpretation, there was 3.33 added to all estimates. Thus, the values range approximately from 0.00 (which means instability and violence) to 4.92 (stability, absence of violence).

Total net official development assistance disbursed by Denmark to countries of origin is a proxy variable used to demonstrate links and flows of information between the destination and countries of origin (**'ln oda'**). The figures are presented in millions of 2014 constant prices of US Dollar and come from the statistics of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (OECD, 2016).

Proxy variable **'vulnerability'** is used to approximate the 'environmental and natural disasters' factor. It measures the extent of sensitivity and exposure to climate change a country has, and also the country's capacity to deal with its negative effects. The ND-GAIN (Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative) Index data are used to estimate the results (ND-GAIN, 2016). The figures acquire values between 0 (low vulnerability) and 1 (high vulnerability). A ratio of Denmark's vulnerability and vulnerability of an origin country is used in the analysis.

[4] *'(..) a person born in Denmark whose parents (or one of them if there is no available information on the other parent) are either immigrants or descendants with foreign citizenship. If there is no available information on either of the parents and the person in question is a foreign citizen, the person is also defined as a descendant.'* (Statistics Denmark, 2017)

'Inflation' captures the economic stability of a country. Data are taken from The World Bank database where inflation is counted as CPI (Consumer Price Index) (The World Bank, 2016d). In the analysis, *inflation* is handled as a ratio of Denmark's inflation and origin's inflation.

All variables cover a period 2005–2015 except for *ln oda* and *vulnerability*. These two variables do not account for the year 2015 due to lack of available data.

Table 7: Variables and descriptive statistics

Variables	Definition	Observations	Mean (Standard deviation)	Minimum	Maximum
ln asylum	ln number of asylum applications in Denmark	2,082	1.090 (1.554)	0.000	9.061
ln income differential	ln (GDP per capita Denmark, PPP/GDP per capita origin), PPP (international $)	1,950	1.613 (1.225)	-1.137	4.421
ln population	ln (population of Denmark/ population of origin)	2,068	1,034.012 (596.6917)	1.000	2067.000
ln stock	ln immigrant population in Denmark	2,082	4.989 (2.651)	0.000	10.389
ln distance	ln distance between Copenhagen and origin's capital, km	2,077	8.433 (0.868)	6.185	9.812
violence	Political stability and absence of violence(terrorism) Denmark/Political stability and absence of violence(terrorism) origin, estimate	2,082	1.866 (10.016)	0.876	430.000
ln oda	ln Denmark's ODA disbursements, million ($)	1,893	0.454 (1.620)	-4.605	4.919
vulnerability	Denmark's vulnerability/origin's vulnerability, estimate	1,808	0.631 (0.182)	0.372	1.201
inflation	inflation in Denmark/inflation in origin, annual %	1,869	1.550 (49.019)	-88.820	2,112.825

Among the factors that are not captured by the variables due to lack of data, are visas and controls and recognition rate. Recognition rate may also serve as an indicator approximating the destination country's asylum and immigration policy. Higher recognition rates might indicate more benevolent attitude towards asylum seekers and immigrants in general. While lower rates could imply tougher applications processing and serve as a mean

of deterring asylum seekers from applying to a certain destination. Similar measures can also be applied to influence of visa requirements on asylum applications.

Importance of travel agents' activities can be clearly seen from previously mentioned qualitative research papers however, they are not covered in the dataset as there are no official statistics available on this topic.

Colonial and linguistic links are not included in the dataset regarding the fact that the Kingdom of Denmark has not owned any significant colonies that might be nowadays a source of asylum seekers. Danish language is now spoken only in Greenland and the Faroe Islands which belong within the realm of Denmark.

4.3 Results and discussion

The random-effect tobit model for panel data was run eight times with a different set of variables. Hence, there are six models whose results are presented and interpreted. The dependent variable in all six models is *ln asylum*. Table 8 provides an insight into the results. Models (4) – (8) are assessed only for a period 2005–2014 due to lack of existing data.

The first model (**model (1)**) contains three variables: *ln income differential*, *ln stock* and *violence*. All three variables are highly statistically significant (at 0.01 level) and their coefficients are positive. To confirm findings of Rotte, Vogler (1999), Neumayer (2004) and Keogh (2013), it can be stated that the greater the difference in income per capita between Denmark and an origin country (the poorer a country of origin is, ceteris paribus), the more asylum applications will be submitted from that particular origin country in the destination. The results also suggest that there is a relation between the size of an origin's community in Denmark and number of asylum applications. The bigger the community is, the higher the number of asylum applicants applying in Denmark from an origin country. Neumayer (2004) and Hatton (2008) and other authors of qualitative researches (for example Robinson, Segrott (2002), Brekke, Aarset (2009)) came to the same result. Regarding *violence* and in agreement with Schmeidl (1998), Rotte, Vogler (1999) and Hatton (2008), it was found that there are more asylum applicants from countries that experience severe forms of violence, war or high political instability (relatively to Denmark).

When *ln distance* is added to the regression (**model (2)**), *ln income differential* and *violence* appear to have stronger effect on the number of asylum applications while the effect

of social networks as a pull factor has slightly lowered. It indicates that geographical proximity affects not only the number of asylum applications but it also impacts the other variables and their effect on the dependent variable. Its effect on the number of asylum applications is strongly negative and of high statistical significance as found by Rotte, Vogler (1999) and Neumayer (2004) as well. Increasing distance between Denmark and a country of origin leads to fewer asylum applications being lodged there (ceteris paribus).

Third model (**model (3)**) includes the ratio of population size in addition to the other four variables already included. *Ln population* was found to be statistically significant at 0.05 level which corresponds to findings in Neumayer (2005). Its negative sign implies that more populated countries (relatively to Denmark) send more asylum seekers to Denmark than countries with a small population (ceteris paribus). After adding the control variable, all four variables remained highly statistically significant. The only change was in lower coefficients, i.e. smaller effects of *ln income differential*, *ln stock* and *ln distance* on *ln asylum*. Contrarily, the impact of *violence* on number of asylum applicants has grown.

To account for relations and contacts between Denmark and a country of origin, gross ODA disbursements (*ln oda*) to different origin countries by Denmark was entered (**model (4)**). This proxy variable for mutual relations showed only marginal positive effect of negligible significance. Thus, as Rotte, Vogler (1999) concluded, it is possible to say that the number of asylum applications lodged in Denmark is not influenced by the amount of financial resources Denmark spends on development assistance. All other variables remained statistically significant, only *ln population* dropped to 0.1 significance level.

In **model (5)**, the *vulnerability* variable was added. Inclusion of this variable substantially affected the significance of *ln income differential* which became statistically insignificant and its sign did not have the expected direction. Therefore, correlation matrix was run (see Table 9) and a strong dependence between *ln income differential* and *vulnerability* was revealed. This means that there may be a high degree of collinearity between these two variables that may lead to the above described effects. *Vulnerability* itself turned out to be an important predictor of asylum seekers flows running to Denmark. A high statistical significance and a negative sign imply that the less vulnerable a country is (relatively to Denmark), the less asylum seekers it produces. In other words, there are more applications submitted by citizens of countries which are more susceptible to climate change and less able to deal with the side-effects related to the change of global climate. Neumayer (2005) accounted for countries' vulnerability using the number of deaths caused by natural

disasters, but has not found any significant effect. The significance of any other variable from model (5) has been unchanged.

Economic stability measured by the *inflation* was entered in **model (6)**. *Ln income differential* keeps being insignificant with a positive sign. *Ln stock, violence, ln distance* and *vulnerability* remain strong predictors in this model with *ln population* significant at 0.1 level. *Inflation* is significant at 0.05 level and its sign is negative as predicted. It says that economically more stable countries (with lower inflation, relatively to Denmark) send to Denmark fewer asylum seekers than countries suffering from higher instability. Rotte, Vogler (1999) measured economic stability of origin countries not by inflation but by the GDP growth. They found this variable significant with negative effect on asylum flows to Germany.

To see how the regression output varies when *ln income differential* or *vulnerability* are left behind, **model (7)** and **model (8)** are presented. When *vulnerability* is dropped from the model (6), the difference in income per capita regains its high significance (model (7)) leaving all other variables unchanged. In model (8), *ln income differential* was not included. However, the output of the other variables has not changed much compared to model (6). *Ln stock, violence, ln distance* and *vulnerability* are significant at 0.01 level, *ln population* and *inflation* at 0.05 level and ODA is insignificant. The output that has changed compared to model (6) is the Wald test statistics. It increased from 204.37 in model (6) to 217.28 in model (8). According to this test, out of all models, it is model (8) that includes the best predictors of asylum seekers flows to Denmark.

Table 8: Regression estimates (random-effects tobit model)

Models	**(1)**	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**	**(6)**	**(7)**	**(8)**
Dependent variable	**ln asylum**	**ln asylum**	**ln asylum**	**ln asylum**	**ln asylum**	**ln asylum**	**ln asylum**	**ln asylum**
Variables								
ln income differential	0.411***	0.521***	0.466***	0.514***	0.194	0.121	0.477***	
	(0.097)	(0.100)	(0.103)	(0.106)	(0.134)	(0.143)	(0.113)	
ln stock	0.474***	0.421***	0.396***	0.405***	0.450***	0.450***	0.397***	0.465***
	(0.042)	(0.044)	(0.046)	(0.048)	(0.048)	(0.050)	(0.050)	(0.050)
violence	0.353***	0.358***	0.383***	0.385***	0.375***	0.386***	0.401***	0.378***
	(0.061)	(0.063)	(0.064)	(0.066)	(0.065)	(0.070)	(0.071)	(0.066)
ln distance		-0.555***	-0.543***	-0.589***	-0.782***	-0.785***	-0.573***	-0.816***
		(0.152)	(0.153)	(0.155)	(0.158)	(0.163)	(0.161)	(0.165)
ln population			-0.000**	-0.000*	-0.000*	-0.000*	-0.000*	-0.000**
			(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
ln oda				0.019	0.017	0.017	0.019	0.026
				(0.027)	(0.027)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.029)
vulnerability					-3.837***	-4.155***		-5.009***
					(1.038)	(1.082)		(0.813)
inflation						-0.018**	-0.018**	-0.018**
						(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)
Observations	1,950	1,945	1,934	1,772	1,742	1,675	1,675	1,703
Left-censored observations	1,018	1,014	1,014	938	908	891	891	901
Clusters	181	180	179	179	176	170	170	173
Tests								
Wald Chi-Square	170.72***	190.67***	194.99***	196.88	216.68***	204.37***	176.06***	217.28***

Note: coefficients with standard errors in parentheses, * significant at 0.1 level, ** significant at 0.05 level, *** significant at 0.01 level.

Table 9: Correlation matrix for variables included in the models

	ln income differential	ln population	ln stock	ln distance	violence	ln oda	vulnerability	inflation
ln income differential	**1.000**							
ln population	-0.125***	**1.000**						
ln stock	-0.257***	-0.438***	**1.000**					
ln distance	0.404***	0.102***	-0.446***	**1.000**				
violence	0.350***	-0.064***	0.070***	0.022	**1.000**			
ln oda	0.269***	-0.185***	0.166***	0.111***	0.077***	**1.000**		
vulnerability	-0.723***	-0.017	0.484***	-0.574***	-0.076***	-0.242***	**1.000**	
inflation	-0.030	0.01	0.022	-0.044*	-0.020	-0.007	0.043*	**1.000**

Note: * significant at 0.1 level, ** significant at 0.05 level, *** significant at 0.01 level.

4.4 Summary

To summarize the results presented in eight different models, it can be concluded that there are four explanatory variables that were highly statistically significant (at 0.01 level) through all eight models. These variables are: *ln stock*, *violence*, *ln distance* and *vulnerability*. They are the best predictors of number of asylum applications submitted in Denmark. *Inflation* is significant at 0.05 level in the three models where it was included. Significance of ln population was altering between 0.05 and 0.1 level with a negligible effect on the dependent variable. *Ln oda* was insignificant. Interpretation of *ln income differential* results is more complicated as the variable was significant in first four models, but then it lost its importance when *vulnerability* was added into the model.

To describe the actual meaning of the results, it can be summed up that there have been more asylum applications in Denmark between 2005 and 2015 (2014) from countries:

- with a larger community of its nationals residing in Denmark;
- that experience higher level of political instability (relatively to Denmark), i.e. facing wars, violence against its citizens, human rights abuses and instable political leadership
- that lie geographically closer to Denmark (which can be thought of as a proxy for migration costs);
- that have greater population (relatively to Denmark);
- that are more prone and more sensitive to changes of climate and are less capable of dealing with consequences of natural disasters connected to climate change (relatively to Denmark);
- that are facing higher economic instability, i.e. with higher inflation (relatively to Denmark);
- with a lower income per capita (relatively to Denmark)[5].

According to the regression results, Denmark's gross disbursements of ODA do not determine the number of asylum seekers applying for protection in Denmark. It is also necessary to stress, that all of the above mentioned results hold true only under the ceteris paribus condition.

[5] However, this last result applies to models (1), (2), (3), (4) and (7) when vulnerability was not considered. Once vulnerability is included in the regression, per capita income loses its significant due to high collinearity between these two variables. When these two variables are included separately, they are both highly significant with expected signs.

Conclusion

The goal of this thesis was to analyse factors which influence asylum seekers in their decision of applying for asylum in Denmark. It is structured into four chapters. The theoretical part of the text was designed using the compilation method and is followed by an empirical analysis of push and pull factors. There were three research questions that were to be answered in this paper. The questions are:

RQ1: Where do the most applications in Denmark come from and how do the top refugee nations change through the period 2005–2015?

RQ2: Are the factors of presence of violence/war, level of gross domestic product and social network are statistically significant?

RQ2: Does the volume of ODA sent by Denmark to country of origin influence number of applications of country's nationals lodged in Denmark?

The first chapter describes the situation regarding refugees and asylum seekers nowadays on two levels: situation in the world and in Europe. Thus, it is divided into two sections. The first section provides several facts about top hosting and top refugee source countries in the world using tables and charts to give an idea about the situation. Second section deals with asylum seeking in Europe and the two main routes, the Mediterranean and Balkan route, used by asylum seekers to get to the European Union, are described. Later on, countries where the most applications were submitted are presented together with the top refugee producing countries.

The attention in the second chapter is focused on asylum seekers and refugees in Denmark. It also answers the first research question. The most asylum applications in Denmark in 2015 were lodged by citizens of Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. Yet, there are only several countries occupying the top three positions. There is a chart inserted in order to help answer the second part of the question. The chapter proceeds with the explanation of who unaccompanied minors are and how many there are in Denmark. The last part gives basic facts about the Danish asylum system, asylum seekers' benefits, the possibility of family reunification and restrictions that have been passed by Danish government in order to discourage asylum seekers in applying for asylum in Denmark.

Determinants of asylum seekers flows and factors influencing the choice of a destination country are introduced in the third chapter. Factors are split into four groups which

are inspired by Havinga, Böcker (1999): characteristics of the country of origin (violence, low income, natural and environmental disasters), characteristics of the destination country (high, standard of living, image of the country, social network, recognition rate, asylum policy, future opportunities), links between the country of origin and country of destination (colonial links, common language, aid and trade), facilitators and obstacles to flight (distance, travel agents, visa, checks and controls). Factors are described and their theoretical influence on the number of asylum applicants in Denmark is indicated. Thereafter, there are quantitative and qualitative studies and papers reviewed and their main points are concluded in a summary.

Fourth chapter is dedicated to the empirical analysis that has been performed. There is detailed information about the dataset, the tobit model that has been applied and adjustments that had to be made to be able to use this model. Further, the dependent variable (*ln asylum*) and the explanatory variables (*ln income differential, ln population, ln stock, ln distance, violence, ln oda, vulnerability, inflation*) were presented and the sources of the data were acknowledged. There are several other variables mentioned as well that have not been included in the analysis, and also the reason for not accounting for them is reported. There were eight models that have been performed. The results were discussed later in this chapter and compared to other empirical analysis and papers. The fourth chapter also provides answers to the second and the third research question. It is concluded by a brief summary of findings.

This research may be limited in two ways. Firstly, there might be an important explanatory variable missing (recognition rate). However, with the non-availability of data, this factor could not have been covered. The second limitation is the assumption of homoscedasticity of the dependent variable *ln asylum* in tobit model. The variable was firstly adjusted by one and then logarithmically transformed to lower the risk of heteroscedasticity. However, due to high occurrence of zero observations, this adjustment might not have been sufficient.

Despite these limitations, the aim of this paper has been accomplished and the research questions have been addressed and answered.

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