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UNIVERSAL WELFARE STATE AT STAKE?

The Changing Political Discourse Regarding Inclusive Welfare for Refugees in Sweden

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Abstract

Sweden has for a long time distinguished itself as a major player among few other generous and inclusive welfare states. The Swedish welfare system is characterised by the universal principles based on the idea that all legitimate inhabitants are eligible for welfare support in order to promote overall solidarity among citizens. This generous position changed rapidly in 2015 when there was a peak in asylum seekers. Temporary residence permits and identity checks along the border were implemented with a short notice. This thesis sets out to examine how official political discourse in Sweden pertaining to its inclusive welfare system in regard to refugees has changed significantly between 2015 and 2016. To achieve this aim, the study critically analyses political speeches by Stefan Löfven and Anna Kinberg Batra who are the party leaders of the two most influential mainstream parties in Sweden, namely the Social Democrats and Moderaterna. By conducting a documentary analysis using the analytical strategy of critical discourse analysis, political speeches can be studied. The theoretical framework builds upon the concepts of welfare chauvinism the theory as a frame for how mainstream parties relate to the issues such as having an inclusive immigration policy and granting the same welfare entitlements to immigrants. The concepts of the critical discourse analysis such as micro- and macro levels are also used in order to trace various layers in the changing discourses. The results of the study reveal that there have been fluctuations in the value words of the Swedish society in the official discourse regarding inclusive welfare for refugees. It becomes evident that the Social Democrats and Moderaterna to some extent adapt welfare chauvinistic claims, it is not that apparent in their speeches as it is in the implemented laws and regulations.

Key words: Sweden, welfare state, refugee, asylum-seeker, EU, solidarity, togetherness, deservingness, equality, critical discourse analysis, folkhemmet, the 'Swedish model', inclusion, exclusion, welfare chauvinism.

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Acronyms

AFSJ – Area of Freedom Security and Justice

CEAS – Common European Asylum System

CDA – Critical Discourse Analysis

EC- European Community

ECHR – European Convention on Human Rights

EU – European Union

PUT – Permanent Residence Permit

SAP- Swedish Social Democratic Party

SD- Swedish Democrats

TCN – Third Country Nationals

TUT – Temporary Residence Permit

UDHR – Universal Declaration of Human Rights

UN- United Nations

UNHCR – The United Nations Refugee Agency

Index

1. Introduction	1
1.1. Research Problem	3
1.1.2. Aim and Research Questions	4
1.1.3. Limitations	4
1.2. Outline of the Thesis.....	5
1.3. Asylum as a EU ‘Matter of Common Importance’	5
1.4. Dublin Convention as an Unsuccessful project?	6
2. Previous Studies	8
2.1. The Origins of the ‘Swedish model’	8
2.2. The Establishment of the Universal Welfare State.....	8
2.3. Development of Refugee Policies in Sweden since the 1960s	9
2.4. Is Heterogeneity Compatible with Solidarity of Welfare State?	11
2.5. Who deserves welfare? A Political Struggle Between the Mainstream and Right Wing/Populist Parties	12
3. Theoretical Framework	14
3.1. Welfare Chauvinism	14
3.2. Theorising Deservingness and the Welfare State in Relation to Refugees and Asylum Seekers	15
3.3. Critical Discourse Analysis	16
4. Methodology	18
4.1. Documentary Analysis	18
4.2. Analytic Strategy - Discourse Analysis	19
4.2.1. Micro, Meso and Macro	20
4.3. Empirical Material	20
4.3.1. Selection of documents	21
4.4. Quality of qualitative research.....	22
5. Results and Analysis	23
5.1. Micro-level	23
5.2. Macro-level.....	29
5.2.1. Solidarity	29
5.2.2. Deservingness.....	31
5.2.3. Reclaiming Folkhemmet	32
6. Discussion and Conclusion	35
6.1. Further Research.....	38
7. Bibliography.....	39

7.1. Electronical Resources	43
8. Appendix	45
8.1. Swedish Citations - Translations	45

1. Introduction

Sweden is a moderately populated nation compared to other European countries and into the 20th century the population was quite homogeneous with less than one percent foreign-born citizens (Eger, 2009). Swedes perceived themselves as being very alike and equal. Due to this perception, they were prepared to share the pain of upcoming problems. They were 'all in the same boat'. As Sweden's population got more diversified, it got harder to uphold the idea of sharing the pain equally among its residents. Consequently, one can argue that this might become problematic since it was the feeling of 'togetherness' that contributed to the development of the most generous welfare state in the world (ibid).

Sweden is considered to be one of the most egalitarian, humanitarian and democratic countries in the world (Borevi, 2012; Schierup & Ålund, 2011). All inhabitants are used to high standards of living, universal health care, free education, and generous unemployment benefits. Moreover, Sweden has had (and still has) a very good reputation internationally when it comes to welfare standards and inclusion of vulnerable groups. According to the Economist Intelligence Unit's index of democracy (2017), Sweden is ranked as one of the most democratic countries in the world, not just because of high participation in national elections but, rather because Swedish economic and social policies have reflected a desire to include marginalized populations (Eger, 2009).

However, with an increasing immigration to Sweden it becomes obvious that the fundamental principles of this longstanding inclusive welfare state have been put into question. The relationship between the welfare state and migration has always been tense, where increased migration tends to affect the conditions to pass on and develop the welfare model. The tension between the welfare state and migration is rooted in the so-called 'social contract' between the state and its inhabitants. In other words, in the same way that the state has responsibilities towards its citizens, citizens have obligations towards the state, such as paying taxes or complying with the legislation of the country (Marshall, 1963; Dølvik *et al.* 2014). Since 2015 and the increased influx of refugees to the EU, Sweden and other Nordic countries have faced several concerns and dilemmas linked to the issues of which are to be included into the welfare state. These concerns differ for each of the Nordic countries, depending on the challenges in relation to various categories of immigrants and the reasons for their migration as well as the luggage they bring with them. An example of this would be the issues of competence, trauma and health problems (Dølvik *et al.* 2014).

The relationship between migration and the welfare state can be understood as being dynamic. Firstly, the welfare states put forward important premises for migration policy, and at the same time, welfare policy has very important consequences for migrants' everyday lives. Secondly, the behaviours and actions of migrants influence the welfare state since migrants both produce and consume welfare goods. In all of the Nordic welfare states (Sweden is not an exception) migrants are perceived as representing cultural diversity and in some circumstances, they are perceived as a 'burden', since they in many cases require special needs (Brochmann &

Hagelund, 2012). In other words, migrants do to some extent challenge the work forms of the welfare state and the fundamental legitimacy of the community.

Historically, Sweden is not generally thought of as a country of immigration. Until the early 20th century Sweden was one of the major emigrant countries, and this situation changed rapidly following the Second World War (Dahlstedt & Neergaard, 2016). Currently, Sweden is characterized by ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity. The transformation from a homogeneous society towards a heterogeneous society has happened in a very short period of time. In present time, Sweden together with Germany has been one of the largest receivers of refugees compared to other EU countries.

Migration issues have nowadays become a phenomenon of national importance which has led to intense debates among Swedish politicians, as well as within the broader Swedish society. For instance, one of the current debates regards the accumulation of many newly arrived refugees to the peripheries of the Swedish larger cities. In other words, refugees are often placed in segregated and poor areas. This in turn has led to debates on the threats to national security (Dahlstedt & Neergaard, 2016). Debates on national security have yet again led to the targeting of suburban areas in search for potential terrorists. In the public debate, the city periphery is described as a 'culture of violence', representing a vital threat to Sweden's core values and a fear that the 'patriarchal culture' may spread to other urban areas as well (ibid). This quick transformation has prompted the Swedish government to, not only pass new legislation to protect minority groups from discrimination, but also to sharpen asylum regulations, and the laws relating to asylum seekers and their families (Nilsson & Nyström, 2016).

Unlike before, when most of the immigrants to Sweden were labour migrants, the majority of those who arrive today constitute political refugees. During 2015, Sweden received 162 877 asylum applications, in contrast to 2016 when it was a substantial decrease with "only" 28 939 applications. 2015 stands out significantly compared to 2013 and 2014 as well. In 2013, there were approximately 60 000 and in 2014 there were approximately 80 000 asylum applications¹ (Swedish migration agency, 2017).

There are several factors that have affected the substantial reduction of applications during 2016. For instance, there might have been fewer people fleeing (which is not credible since UNCHR's forecast from January 2016 shows the opposite) or, like in the case of Sweden, more restrictive laws were implemented, such as the introduction of the temporary residence permits, border controls and identity checks. Nowadays and until 2019 (this time period will probably be extended) it is not possible for newly arrived refugees to receive a permanent residence permit for newly arrived refugees and it is very hard to obtain refugee status (Regeringskansliet, 2015^b).

¹ See figure 1 in the appendix.

1.1. Research Problem

Given this background, it is important to pay a closer attention to the major changes in the Swedish welfare- and migration discourse as well as Swedish laws- and regulations since 2015 due to the growing inflow of refugees. This thesis argues that it is highly important to study changing discourse as a critical analysis of political debates and statements, as it provides us with rather powerful insights into the everyday manifestations and displays of social problems in interaction and depiction of social change (van Dijk, 1985). Asylum and refugee issues have recently been presented to the Swedish society as acute social problems (Regeringskansliet, 2015^b). Thus, the main point of this study is to examine how refugees and asylum seekers are constructed as social problems to be solved through official discourse. In doing so, this study argues that, discourses are not only mere expressions of social practice, they also exercise power in a society because they institutionalize and regulate ways of how people are talking, thinking and acting in relation to various social and political issues (van Dijk, 1985; Jäger & Maier, 2009:35; Cameron & Panovic, 2014).

Previous research on migration and welfare has largely focused on the political struggles between the mainstream- and right wing/populist parties (Eastmond, 2011; Schierup & Ålund, 2011; Hinnfors *et al.*, 2012; Norocel, 2016). In this thesis, it is the mainstream parties in Sweden at the time of increased immigration that are the focus. More specifically, the thesis analyses how the Social Democrats (SAP) and *Moderaterna* adapt/relate to welfare chauvinistic claims promulgated by the right wing/populist political opponents in the political speeches and policies regarding refugees. The concept of welfare chauvinism is applied as it reveals the mechanism of boundary-drawing, and the discourse under consideration embraces the tension between inclusion and exclusion in the welfare state (de Koster *et al.* 2012). It is therefore relevant to study whether welfare chauvinistic concepts have become more prominent in the official discourse since the increased influx of refugees during 2015. The study will also illustrate how the Swedish leading parties legitimize the minimum of the EU levels of refugee inclusion when Sweden's welfare state faces challenges.

There is a research gap connected to the welfare state and how Swedish parties relate to welfare chauvinism as previous research has been concerned with the influence of the Swedish Democrats (SD) by analysing their election manifesto. This study attempts to provide a new perspective, and deeper insight into the inclusive welfare state and refugees by analysing political speeches and election manifestos.

This study is also highly relevant in the broader European context because migration is a highly-debated issue among all the EU member states and it has become a 'matter of common interest'. Several changes regarding refugee reception and equal distribution among the EU member state have taken place recently. Within the European context, the Swedish asylum- and refugee policies have been fairly unrestrictive and they have been coupled with quite fast and straightforward possibilities for naturalization. Sweden was one of the first countries within the European Union to adopt a liberal multicultural integration policy in 1975. The policy formulated a strategy for a more multicultural society based on equality, freedom of choice and co-operation. This study will contribute to the field of European studies for the reason that Sweden decided to adapt to the EU minimum requirements on refugee policies in 2015. The shift towards the EU venue on asylum matters has allowed policy

makers to develop more restrictive provisions on asylum, which is now current in Sweden. The principle of solidarity has since the Lisbon Treaty been an important objective for the common EU policy on immigration. This study will provide us with a new understanding of solidarity and how solidarity has a tendency to change meaning depending on context.

1.1.2. Aim and Research Questions

The aim of this research is to get a deeper understanding of the rapid and profound transformation, taking place in the Swedish official political discourse regarding welfare rights and entitlements for refugees since 2015.

Subsequently, this study will proceed from a broader research question:

- ✓ How has the political discourse regarding welfare inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers changed since the autumn 2015 until 2016?

More specifically, the thesis will answer the following questions:

- What kind of discursive changes took place between solidarity and nationalistic claims within the official discourse on the Swedish welfare state?
- How does a shift towards limiting migration represent the discursive claims of the welfare chauvinism?

1.1.3. Limitations

This research will scrutinize political speeches that were held between the summer 2015 and the summer 2016, more specifically held by the Swedish Prime minister Stefan Löfven who is the party leader of the Social Democrats and by the leader of the liberal party (*Moderaterna*), Anna Kinberg Batra. These political speeches raise concerns for the Swedish welfare in relation the increased influx of refugees since 2015 and the challenges confronted by the Swedish society. The speeches highlight some central arguments in the current official discourse in relation to welfare inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers. The chosen time period 2015-08-16 to 2016-06-06 is relevant to this study since the immigration flow had become greater at this point in time and the Government then chose to declare and implement several restrictive measures. The chosen time period from which the material is selected is rather short, yet it allows for an insight into the quick transformation in the political domain that is taking place during this period. Following this objective, I found no additional value in analysing material long before the so-called 'refugee crisis'. I have chosen to focus on the specific speeches and temporary laws and base the analysis of them on the theoretical framework of welfare chauvinism

I have decided to focus on the largest and most influential Swedish Political parties during the chosen period of time, i.e. The Social Democrats and *Moderaterna*². I chose to focus on these parties since I would argue that they have the biggest impact on

² While writing this thesis in spring of 2017, the political supremacy of *Moderaterna* has dramatically changed and they have now much less support than during the period of the current study.

formulating and constituting the current policies regarding welfare and refugees during the particular time-period. I have actively decided not to include material from populist parties³, since my aim is to analyse how mainstream parties relate to welfare chauvinistic claims. For that reason, it is not interesting to investigate the discursive stance/changes of populist parties.

1.2. Outline of the Thesis

Following the introduction chapter, I provide a background to the research problem and the aim and research questions are presented. Later on, the previous studies dealing with the question of 'the Swedish model' and the universal welfare state will be presented. The following section introduces a subject of the political conflict, which in this thesis stands for the mainstreams parties' inclination to adapt the principle ideas of welfare chauvinism when it comes to refugees' access to welfare. This chapter is followed by the theoretical framework where welfare chauvinism is explained in detail and issues of the welfare state and deservingness are theorized in relation to refugees. The methodology chapter describes the overall research design and methodological tools used in this research. The methodology chapter presents the method and its dis/advantages as well as the empirical material that the thesis analyses. Furthermore, the results and the critical discourse analysis of my empirical material are presented in chapter five. The final chapter presents the main conclusions, final discussion and the suggestions for future research.

1.3. Asylum as a EU 'Matter of Common Importance'

The development of the EU's common asylum policy started outside the European Community's (EC) setting. This cooperation developed within the framework of the Ad Hoc Group on Migration which was established in 1986. This establishment was the starting point for the Dublin Convention, adopted in 1990. The Convention determines the state responsible for examining an application for asylum lodged in one of the Member States of the EC. The Convention also facilitates for Third Country Nationals (TCN) to stay and travel within the EU. During the 1990s and a few years later, when the Convention was implemented, the European States were experiencing a peak in asylum applications and one reason of this peak was the outbreak of the war in the former Yugoslavia (Eastmond, 2011). Later on, the Treaty of Maastricht formally brought this existing pattern of intergovernmental cooperation into the EU's institutional framework. From then on, asylum was seen as one of the nine "matters of common interest" in Justice and Home Affairs. Since this point in time it has possible to observe an increase in supranational governance in a policy area that traditionally was seen as intergovernmental with a high focus on national sovereignty. Moreover, 'matters of common interest' are to be dealt with in compliance with the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), and the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees – known as the Geneva Convention. (Kaunert & Léonard, 2012).

In the creation of a common EU asylum policy, the Member States remained the dominant actors. The effect of the EU measures, on the other hand, was mainly to be understood as a 'soft law' instrument, including recommendations and solutions. In

³The Swedish Democrats (SD) and the party leader Jimmy Åkesson.

the early stage of the development of a common asylum policy there was a major focus on 'burden sharing' and it aimed at promoting a balance of efforts amongst the Member States. Furthermore, *The Dublin II Regulation* was adopted in 2003 and established the criteria and mechanisms for shaping the Member States responsibilities. The main goal of this re-newed agreement was to ensure that asylum-seekers had access to an asylum procedure in one of the EU Member States. This regulation, furthermore, replaces and addresses some shortages of the Dublin Convention, for instance, it establishes a hierarchy of criteria, in which the main principle underpinning the system is that "the State responsible for processing an application is the State responsible for the asylum-seeker's presence in the EU, that is, the State through which an asylum-seeker has entered the EU" (Kaunert & Léonard, 2012:11).

The Treaty of Lisbon entered into force in December 2009 and it enabled the EU to adopt measures on a uniform status of asylum valid throughout the Union, a uniform status of subsidiary protection and a common system of temporary protection amongst others. After the Treaty of Lisbon, the EU adopted the Stockholm Programme which was in line with the tradition of adopting five-year working programmes for the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice (AFSJ). The Stockholm Programme is the third AFSJ programme for the period 2010-2014, and envisions the establishment of "a common area of protection and solidarity based on a common asylum procedure and a uniform status for those granted international protection" (Kaunert & Léonard, 2012:17).

The principle of solidarity has since the Lisbon Treaty been an important objective for the common EU policy on immigration. In other words, immigration policies are to be governed by the principle of solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility. In 2014, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the situation in the Mediterranean and the need for a holistic EU approach to migration. This instructed the EU Committee on Civil Liberties and Justice and Home Affairs to draft an initiative report. The report was adopted in April 2016 and included eight Working Documents which focused on different aspects of migration and asylum policy. Some of the issues pointed out in the report are that need to develop adequate legal economic migration channels, a strategy on cooperation with the third countries and an effective implementation of the Common European Asylum System (Kaunert & Léonard, 2012; European Parliament, 2016; European Parliament, 2017).

1.4. Dublin Convention as an Unsuccessful project?

Asylum-seekers and refugees have been an object of heated debates in the whole of Europe for a long time and it became particularly evident in the wake of the so-called Arab Spring. Talks about refugees and the 'refugee crisis' culminated in the French and Italian Governments re-introducing border controls in spring 2011. All around Europe, legislation regarding refugees has become restrictive with an aim to reduce the increasing flows of asylum seekers and protect the territories of the nation states. The EU, however, has played an important role in this policy area when it comes to the extent to which the Member States remain in control of their national asylum and migration policies. The EU has had a great influence over national policies since

the attempts to move beyond the minimum standards to adopt a common asylum standard. (Kaunert & Léonard, 2011).

The shift to the EU venue on asylum matters has allowed policy makers to develop more restrictive provisions on asylum, which we currently witness in Sweden and in many other EU countries. There has been an improvement of asylum policy-making in various EU Member States since these issues were taken on as the EU's common concern and asylum and immigration have gained importance as an area for closer cooperation among the EU member states. It is, however, International Law that sets the general standards for asylum processing within the EU, meaning that refugees within the EU must be able to have their claims assessed on the requirement of International Human Rights and Humanitarian Law. In other words, the EU has a mandate to protect refugees and human rights. The harmonization of asylum matters aims to avoid refugee flows between the Member States based solely on the differing levels of protection and obligations assumed under international human rights and refugee law (Ljungholm, 2014).

Yet, it can be argued that this ambitious theoretical framework was not put into practice successfully. The Dublin Convention is an example of an unsuccessful EU project with a poor outcome. Europe's Dublin system has been the subject of intense political debate and criticism since its inception. On the one hand, it has been acclaimed as the cornerstone of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). On the other hand, it has been reviled as a failure of solidarity and burden-sharing among EU member states (Fratzke, 2015). The truth is that the idea of the Dublin system was not designed to equalise or share the burden of asylum seekers. Instead, it was rather intended to create a mechanism that swiftly assigns responsibility for processing an individual's asylum application to a single Member State. The Dublin regulation has, however, been failing to achieve its primary goals, there has been low effective transfer rates and a high rate of secondary movement among asylum seekers, so-called 'asylum shopping' which was one of the intentions of the Regulation to elude. The transfer of asylum-processing responsibilities from northern Europe to southern Europe, has similarly received harsh criticism (ibid).

2. Previous Studies

The starting point for this research was *Deservingness in the Danish Context: Welfare Chauvinism in times of crisis* by Martin Bak Jørgensen and Trine Lund Thomsen (2016), conducted with an aim to study categories of deservingness in social policy. It also investigates welfare chauvinism in relation to social security benefits for refugees in Denmark. This study served as the main inspiration for my work and I apply theories and concepts used in the study, including theories on welfare regimes, multiculturalism, immigration policy and solidarity, to the context of Scandinavian states in general. Furthermore, I have used the results of the previous research on welfare inclusiveness of refugees, built on the concepts of discourse, *folkhemmet* and mainstream parties' adaption of populist parties' programme.

2.1. The Origins of the 'Swedish model'

During the late 1920s the Social Democrats launched a vision of 'the people's home' (*folkhemmet*), which had strong connections with the image of the Swedish society as a family. This thought was first launched by the political right sphere. However, during the same period more 'neutral' concepts such as democracy, citizenship and modernity gained their prominence. Throughout the 1920s the Social Democrats succeeded in their welfare state project and there was a growing sense among the Swedish population of a common national identity. The main reason for this success was the Social Democrats' ability to formulate a *communitarian* vision of a society.

The idea of *folkhemmet* contained biological as well as other excluding elements. There were several policies directed towards national minorities with assimilative traits, where 'turning a person into a Swede' was an explicit or implicit aim. It is difficult to deny that there existed expectations regarding what one should be like or how one should act as a Swedish citizen. Scholars such as Borevi (2012) and Schall (2016) have been arguing that the concept of *folkhemmet* involved a homogenising zeal directed against those who were thought to diverge from the norm. Moreover, the reason why Sweden developed such a strong universalistic welfare state was also attributed to Sweden's ethnic homogeneity.

During 1920s the idea of *folkhemmet* was highly successful, and later on became entirely linked with the ideals of social democracy, where the primary image of *folkhemmet* was an image of harmony and solidarity (Schall, 2016).

2.2. The Establishment of the Universal Welfare State

The welfare state that was established in Sweden after World War II can more or less be understood as an integration project with an aim to promote national cohesion and solidarity. On the other hand, as Nilsson and Nyström (2016) argue the Swedish model was achieved as an institutional framework with a purpose to promote modernization and a flexible adaption to the surrounding world, and its rapid changes. Regardless of what reason, Sweden has since distinguished itself as a major player among few other generous and inclusive welfare states.

As mentioned previously, the Swedish welfare model is characterised by universal principles, based on the idea that a welfare policy includes all inhabitants in order to

promote overall solidarity among citizens, rather than a policy that selectively focuses on certain categories of society. To uphold national solidarity and the idea of a universalistic welfare state, it is required that the majority of the population supports the idea of a fair distribution of goods. This in turn presupposes that a certain feeling of belonging and solidarity exists among the inhabitants. (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Borevi, 2012; Nilsson & Nyström, 2016).

In 1975, a multicultural policy was launched by the Swedish parliament. Until then there was a general understanding that Swedish welfare policies involved an ambition to make people adapt to a common national Swedish norm. Sweden was, compared to other European countries early in formulating a policy response towards immigration. This new immigration policy encouraged cultural diversity, but a new goal of freedom of choice was formulated as well, meaning that, immigrants' private sphere should be left alone. Moreover, multiculturalism refers to the attempts to integrate various categories of immigrants into the host society and immigrants were also given an opportunity to keep and develop their traditional culture and lifestyle.

Furthermore, this new immigration policy had to take into account that welfare policies in Sweden were formulated in accordance with a *universal welfare model*. In contrast to the *selective welfare model*, the former of the two means that the whole population is entitled to the state support. Within the selective model, only the poorest part of the population has access to welfare support. In other words, the universal welfare model is rooted in the idea that integration is promoted by making the welfare for all a common concern. One of the underlying issues of welfare as a common concern for the whole population is that it makes it easier to avoid stigmatisation of those who receive support and benefits (Runblom, 1994; Borevi, 2012).

Nilsson and Nyström (2016:173-4) highlight that one of the fundamental thoughts about the Swedish model was to push for structural change after the post-war period, and to promote movement of people from agricultural- to urban areas. There is, according to Nilsson and Nyström (2016), a myth that the welfare state and the movement of people are contradicting each other. The authors argue that the Swedish model and the welfare state are developed to respond to the challenges that are to some extent similar to those we face today. As a result of increased immigration, they underline, problems that already existed in the Swedish society and are to some extent independent of increased immigration, have been brought up to the surface.

2.3. Development of Refugee Policies in Sweden since the 1960s

When we look closer at how refugee policy developed in Sweden prior to 2015 it might be illuminating to discover that despite SAP's ideology of solidarity, *folkhemmet* draws on complex legacies and issues as fear of the 'other', and it is described as 'grey' (Andersson, 2009). In the article "The missing factor: why social democracy can lead to restrictive immigration policy" Hinnfors and his colleagues (2012) highlight the SAP and its continuous record of supporting restrictive immigration measures since the 1960s. It is important to mention that this article mostly emphasises the *entry regulations to Sweden*. Moreover, the article shows that SAP believes that *folkhemmet* has limited ability to make room for immigrants. These findings are counter-intuitive since the usual ideology of social democracy includes solidarity and inclusiveness of all

members of society. Given this clear ideological stand one would expect more generous policies regarding immigration, especially when addressing the needs of refugees and asylum seekers. It is interesting however that the SAP is the only mainstream party with a steady record of supporting strict entry policies, while several non-socialist parties have been in opposition to these policies during the years. In 1991 when SAP lost the parliamentary election and the non-socialist took office, they implemented a more open refugee admission policy, against a strong opposition from SAP (Hinnfors *et al.*, 2012).

Following Hinnfors *et al.* (2012) it is possible to argue that it is the ideology of SAP that allows them to formulate more restrictive immigration policies. As discussed earlier in this chapter, social democracy is rooted in ideological beliefs, such as solidarity and redistribution among the population. Since the creation of the SAP, they have aimed for a society built on mutual trust between the citizens, but most importantly, to remain a strong and universal welfare state. Despite that SAP has strong roots in *folkhemmet* there are no direct links existing between *folkhemmet* and restrictive policies, even if the ideological notions about 'Swedishness' might render strict immigration policies. Themes such as 'Swedishness', *folkhemmet* and the 'Swedish model' might however create uncertainty about 'the other' (ibid:588pp).

Regarding refugee and asylum policies, Sweden has internationally been portrayed as a 'bastion of open asylum policies' (Perlmutter, 1996:385). Prior to November 2015, Sweden's Aliens Act regulated three types of asylum statutes in Sweden; *refugee, persons deemed in need of subsidiary protection, and persons in need of other protection*. The 24th of November 2015 the Government announced that Sweden would align its asylum policy with that of the rest of the EU by limiting the number of grounds for asylum to include only refugees and persons in need of subsidiary protection. *A person deemed in need of subsidiary protection* is defined as "a foreigner [...] because there is a well-founded reason to believe that the foreigner would be at risk of being punished by death or be subjected to corporal punishment [...]". *A person in need of other protection* is defined as "a foreigner [...] need of protection due to external or internal military conflict, or because of other tensions in the country [...]" (Aliens Act, 2005:716, 2016:752).

The issue regarding refugee and asylum policies have however been highly dynamic over the past four decades. The SAP stands out as a key actor shaping increasingly restrictive refugee policy. Some examples on restrictive policies during the years are the implementation of temporary protection in the late 1980s but also the legislation making it possible for differential treatment of refugees based on the country of origin (Hinnfors *et al.*, 2012).

During the time when the SAP has been the leading party in Sweden there existed both 'High' and 'Low' levels of right wing populist parties, which proves that restrictive policies do not correlate with 'high' or 'low' levels of right wing populist parties, SAP's policies have been restrictive throughout. Thus, the driving force behind policies of SAP, most likely depend on the ideological stand on *folkhemmet* (ibid).

2.4. Is Heterogeneity Compatible with Solidarity of Welfare State?

Some scholars, most prominently Alesina and Glaeser (2004) argue contrary to Nilsson and Nyström (2016) that solidarity within a welfare state can be weakened as a result of increasing ethnic heterogeneity. Growing ethnic diversity, according to the authors, might force welfare states in Europe to reduce social spending, as a result, welfare states might need to adopt a system more similar to the USA model. Further, Alesina and Glaeser (2004) believe that increased diversity within societies become problematic since the willingness to show solidarity depends on whether social welfare provision is organized within a homogeneous community or whether it will extend beyond the boundaries of this homogenous community.

Several other scholars, regarding the relationship between heterogeneity and welfare state solidarity, for instance Hjerm and Schnabel (2012) in the article "How much heterogeneity can the welfare state endure? The influence of heterogeneity on attitudes to the welfare state", indicate that there is a general notion that heterogeneity often is seen as a threat to the existence of the welfare state since it challenges the consensus on the basic institutions and the redistributive instruments. Scandinavian states are historically homogenous and based on taxation which provides a basis for societal redistribution where "one must contribute according to one's ability and be able to enjoy according to one's need" (Brochmann & Hagelund, 2012:7). In other words, Scandinavian states are perceived to be strong welfare systems. On the other hand, there are countries such as Peru and Guatemala who have a history of heterogeneity but also a history of weak welfare systems. Other research reveals that there is a tendency that people are more inclined to concede rights and welfare benefits to their own group or to persons that are perceived as being the same. According to Coenders and Scheepers (2008), it is not generally migration *per se* that affects the public attitudes towards refugees and access to welfare, neither is it the actual level of ethnic competition. Negative attitudes can rather be attributed to the increasing numbers of refugees over time.

Sweden has traditionally been acclaimed as an inclusive society that defends human rights and multiculturalism by opening up its doors for those who seek asylum and a new life. In other words, the Swedish welfare regime appears somewhat exceptional, and from an international perspective, is seen as the model of a tolerant and egalitarian multicultural welfare society, a so-called 'exceptionalist' model for other states to follow. Today, this exceptionalism seems to fade away as since the middle of 2015, the former generous and inclusive refugee policies are contested by more restrictive policies on migration (Dahlstedt & Neergaard, 2016:2). Scholars such as Schierup and Ålund (1991) stress that Sweden as a multicultural society was at first thought as a solidarity project with an aim to create an image of Sweden as not only being an equal society in terms of class and gender, but also successful concerning the situation of migrants. Furthermore, in a later work, Schierup and Ålund (2011) argue that more restrictive policies on migration signal the end for the Swedish and the so-called 'exceptional' model. Dahlstedt and Neergaard (2016) maintain that the Swedish model has been transformed towards a new welfare regime, a regime that is less shaped by social democratic- and more by neoliberal features. Thus, according to the authors the shape of a new Swedish model is emerging with an emphasis on the duties

of citizens rather than on their rights. The Swedish model tends now to be more similar to other European countries where individual autonomy and freedom of choice are more prioritized than equality and redistribution of societal resources (Dahlstedt & Neergaard, 2016).

2.5. Who deserves welfare? A Political Struggle Between the Mainstream and Right Wing/Populist Parties

Since 2015 and the increased influx of refugees in Sweden, political parties such as the Swedish Democrats (SD) have started to question the generosity regarding refugees' inclusion into the welfare state.

Even though the SD continues to have quite marginal formal power within the Swedish government, the influence of SD can more or less be understood as holding the balance of power between the right-wing and the centre-left-wing blocs. Since their entrance to the parliament, the SD has been formally excluded from the political arena. It is however arguable whether both the right-wing parties and the Social Democrats have toyed with the rhetoric similar to that of the SD – especially in the context of the refugee situation in Europe and Sweden since 2015 (Dahlstedt & Neergaard, 2016).

One intention that the SD has, is to preserve and protect the *folkhemmet*, which according to SD, is built on 'the Swedish people's right to develop their culture on their own terms' and "Swedish welfare and the country's wellbeing come first" (Norocel, 2016:380). In other words, the SD assumes that Sweden needs to take care of 'the Swedes' before it strives to 'help people in need'. Strictly speaking, the SD urges to reintroduce the 'assimilation policy' of the *folkhem*'s golden era, where 'migrants shall adapt into the Swedish society and not the other way around' (ibid:380). According to the abovementioned, the idea of the *folkhemmet* in their understanding contains several important elements of welfare chauvinism ideology, which will be discussed in detail in the theory chapter (Norocel, 2016).

Furthermore, there has been an electoral rise of populist parties in almost all of the Western European countries. Consequently, several debates have focused on the issue of whether mainstream parties have adapted the rhetoric of the populist parties or not. In the article "Do mainstream parties adapt to the welfare chauvinism of populist parties" Schumacher and van Kersbergen (2016) have analysed to what extent welfare chauvinism has become part of the populist agenda in Denmark and the Netherlands. Welfare chauvinism stands in sharp contrast to the earlier neo-liberal position on the welfare state. Thus, populist parties can be described as chameleons changing colour to adapt to new political environments. For instance, populist parties in Denmark and Norway show an excellent example on parties acting like chameleons. In the beginning explicitly anti-welfare, but when the mainstream parties started to cut down on social policies they transformed into zealous defenders of the welfare state, and argued that immigrants make excessive use of the welfare state (Schumacher & van Kersbergen, 2016:300).

Thus, the solution for the populist parties was to adhere to the ideas of welfare chauvinism. In other words, their conviction is that the access to welfare should only be allowed for the 'deserving' natives. There are several reasons why populist parties embrace welfare chauvinism. Scholars such as Abts and Rummens (2007), Barr (2009) and Canovan (1999) stress that the heart of populism concerns the conflict between the

homogenous and unified common people and an enemy that consists of a divisive political, economic and cultural elite, in which a dangerous and threatening 'other' is added. The 'other' is consequently deemed unable to meet the 'Swedish ideal' such as gender equality and women's emancipation. For this reason, the 'other' is perceived as dangerous for the Swedish society. Thus, the content of populist parties' programmes often depends on who is identified as the elite, and to what extent a dangerous 'other' is specified (Schumacher & van Kersbergen, 2016:302; Norocel, 2016:375).

Recently, many of the Western European countries have experienced a reduction of welfare benefits and tightening of eligibility conditions of social welfare provisions, where the reduction has been for both natives and refugees. This generates high level of anxiety among voters, who in many cases depend on social services. In turn, there is a strong demand for political protection of social security, which provokes responses from the mainstream parties. The question is though how do they respond to the issues concerning welfare chauvinism or do they ignore the populist parties that take such a position?

Nowadays populist parties in Western Europe not only promote a monocultural society and a stop to European integration, but also the maintenance of a generous welfare state for the 'deserving' native population. Briefly, populist parties that are taking a welfare chauvinistic position most likely blame the elite for cutting the welfare rights of deserving 'natives' and the non-natives for their excessive claims on the welfare state. One clear example on this standpoint is Marine Le Pen (Le Monde, 2011), who stated⁴: "We must reserve our welfare and our social policy for our compatriots [...]". Her aim, according to Rydgren (2008:173) is to "promote feelings of xenophobic welfare chauvinism by depicting immigrants as lazy parasites living on state subsidies".

There are several ways that mainstreams parties within a welfare state can respond to populist parties taking a welfare chauvinistic position. Since welfare chauvinism is linked to welfare and multiculturalism, it is relevant to identify how mainstream parties change on these two issues when welfare chauvinism emerges. According to Schumacher and van Kersbergen (2016:302), mainstream parties can either *accommodate*, *attack* or *ignore* the standing of the populist party. If a mainstream party chooses to accommodate, it will take the same welfare chauvinistic position as populist parties. Attack, happens when the mainstream parties prioritize issues such as equality, universalism or speak positively about multiculturalism. Moreover, when mainstream parties choose to ignore the populist parties it is not possible to observe any changes in the mainstream party's position on welfare or multiculturalism.

⁴ Translation by Schumacher & Kersberg (2016).

3. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical chapter is divided into two sections: the first section will present the key ideas underlying the theory of Welfare Chauvinism. This theory will provide a tool for categorising arguments concerning inclusive or welfare chauvinistic preferences being expressed in political speeches. The second section introduces the concepts of structures of discourses and critical discourse analysis, which provide a tool for understanding different dimensions of discourse analysis and give the researcher instruments to analyse the relations between power and discourse.

3.1. Welfare Chauvinism

Access to welfare for refugees and asylum seekers is debated among all the political parties in Sweden and to understand the root causes of this debate it is necessary to understand the relationship nexus welfare-refugees. The potential conflict proceeds from the principles of the so-called 'social contract' between the welfare state and its citizens, which contains duties and rights. On the one hand, the welfare state has responsibilities towards its citizens. It must be able to provide welfare and citizens have the right to access support. Simultaneously, for citizens to be granted welfare entitlements, they must fulfil certain duties, such as pay taxes and contribute to the society (Marshall, 1963). Access to welfare can be designated as a subject to political recognition that is based on assumptions of deservingness of the recipient. There is, however an important aspect of the social contract, bringing a conditionality to non-citizens' social rights, in other words, refugees are not considered to be members of the community and thus are subjected to further requirements (Marshall, 1963:71-2,84; Sainsbury, 2012:11, 136).

Universal welfare states, such as Sweden are usually defined as inclusive by the generous recognition of refugees' social rights, especially in comparison with non-universal states that tend to facilitate the welfare-refugee relationship characterised by requirements and conditions. Although Sweden is conceived as an inclusive welfare state in terms of policy outcomes, earlier research such as Hinnfors *et al.* (2012), detects excluding forces in political debates that have led to restrictive policies regarding refugees and asylum seekers. Political parties' preferences towards refugees/asylum seekers and other immigrant groups can be designated as leaning to the ideas of welfare chauvinism. According to Andersen and Bjørklund (1990), welfare chauvinism is described as the natives' unwillingness to grant the same welfare entitlements to immigrants as to nationals a country. The concept refers to a protective stance that is based on the assumption that access to welfare should be enjoyed by the assumed 'us' at the expense of the assumed 'them', and not the other way around. Kitschelt (1997), however, argues that welfare chauvinism can be referred to an understanding of the welfare state as; "a system of social protection for those who belong to the ethnically defined community and who have contributed to it" (ibid:22). Historically, the term welfare chauvinism was used to explain the emergence of right-wing populist parties in the context of the transformation of the Western European party system. Generally, most of these parties are in support of the welfare state, though with an exclusionary understanding of who should benefit or not (Mewes & Mau, 2013). Furthermore, welfare chauvinism can be defined as 'nativist resentment' against the inclusion of

immigrants into the welfare system. Thus, it is not the welfare state *per se* that is at stake for welfare chauvinists. It is rather the issue of who should be included based on origin, ethnicity or nationality.

3.2. Theorising Deservingness and the Welfare State in Relation to Refugees and Asylum Seekers

A welfare state can be understood as a social arrangement with an aim to reduce social inequality and to manage collective risks. The current literature on welfare distribution points to various principles based on which citizens are entitled to various welfare services. One of the principles focuses on *merit*. According to this, citizens who contribute to the welfare system should be entitled to higher levels of provision. The second principle is *need*. Welfare provisions should only be allocated to those with the utmost need. Finally, the third principle is *equality*. Regardless of contribution and status, all citizens should be entitled to the same level of provision. Important variables to redistribution might also be dependent on citizenship and identity (Jørgensen & Thomsen, 2016:333; Mau & Burkhardt, 2009).

In their article, Jørgensen & Thomsen (2016) discuss the notion of welfare chauvinism as a dynamic concept with weak and strong forms. In its extreme version, welfare chauvinism prefers to exclude immigrants from any welfare provision, whereas it, in its weaker version, however, it relegates immigrants to lower benefit levels or high barriers to inclusion. The authors build their argument on the question: "How can welfare chauvinism be legitimised as something political actors regard as beneficial in a universal welfare state, and even become part of a political strategy?" (ibid:331). They examine welfare chauvinism through an analysis of policy framework, political party programmes and position papers. One of the conclusions the article brings forward is that the weak version of welfare chauvinism is legitimised through eligibility criteria such as contribution used to protect the welfare system for the whole population. However, the strong version of welfare chauvinism is based on nativist resentment against the inclusion of immigrants and welfare provisions should only be accessible to natives (Jørgensen & Thomsen).

'Who should get what, and why' (in other words, who deserves what?) has always been a highly-debated topic within the Danish welfare state. The conceptualisation of deservingness is inspired by Wim van Oorschot (2000). The author presents a number of criteria which create a hierarchy of deservingness. This is to say that some societal groups are perceived as more deserving of welfare entitlements than other groups. The actual need of social protection is less influential than criteria such as identity, control and reciprocity. The hierarchy indicates that refugees and asylum seekers are perceived as less deserving than native inhabitants. Since refugees do not belong to the principle of in-group preference, such as 'our people' or 'our family' they do not deserve as much as those who belong to 'us'. In developed societies, such as Sweden, the in-group preference together with the criteria might result in an unwillingness to support needy people from ethnic minorities or foreign residents in general. The interplay between different criteria can, however, suggest that deservingness varies among migrant groups. Labour migrants for instance might deserve more welfare entitlements since they contribute to the society more than refugees (ibid:35).

3.3. Critical Discourse Analysis

Van Dijk (2001) describes Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a type of analytical research that mostly studies the ways in which social power, abuse, dominance and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context. Briefly, it provides theories and methods for empirical study of the relations between discourse and social developments in different social domains (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002) Further, CDA focuses primarily on social problems and political issues but also on challenges within a society, such as power relations and dominance.

When conducting a CDA, it is important to be aware of the different dimensions of the discourse. The first dimension is the micro-level, where the use of language, verbal interaction and communication belong. Issues such as power, dominance and inequality, on the other hand, are tackled within the macro-level analysis. One of the aims with CDA is to bridge the gap between the abovementioned dimensions. The so-called 'meso-level' (when micro- and macro are connected) can be described as a 'one unified whole' which takes place in everyday interaction. When a political speech by a Swedish politician regarding refugees and challenges for the welfare state is held in the parliament it is a discourse at the micro-level of social interaction, in the specific situation of a debate. Simultaneously, it may endorse or be a constituent part of legislation at the macro-level. Thus, this can be understood as a bridge between micro- and macro-level, designated as a meso-level (van Dijk, 2001:354).

Moreover, it is highly relevant to have an understanding that discourse is an integral aspect of power-control, and more specifically, the social power of groups. Social power can be interpreted as the following: groups have power if they are able to control the acts and minds of other groups (Cameron & Pavovic, 2014; van Dijk, 2001:355). This, in turn, presupposes a form of *power base* of privileged access to social resources which may include money, status, knowledge, culture and information. It is important to note that *types of power* may be distinguished according to the various resources employed to exercise such power. For instance, rich people will have power because of their money. Yet, social power, when groups control other groups, might only occur in certain contexts. The power of dominant groups is in some cases integrated in the laws, rules and norms. This takes the form of what Gramsci (1971) called 'hegemony'. When such power is integrated into laws and regulations, it might be the reason why dominant groups find its power legitimate and natural. Although power is not always exercised in obviously offensive acts of dominant group members, it might be enacted the numerous taken-for-granted actions of everyday life (van Dijk, 1993:250; 2001:355).

When analysing the relation between discourse and power, it is firstly required to acknowledge that access to specific forms of discourse, such as politics, media or science, is a power resource in itself. In other words, groups who have the power to influence the most influential discourse by knowledge or opinions, will most likely have a higher chance of controlling the minds and actions of others. Members of powerful groups and institutions, like the prime minister and other elites have more or less exclusive access and control over the public discourse, since they have the power to implement and develop laws and policies. They are by definition more

powerful and one of the vital constituents of dominance, which is to say social power. Important to bear in mind is that all levels of context, text and talk can be controlled by powerful speakers and such power can be abused at the expense of other participants. Despite this, talk and text do not always and directly enact or embody the overall power relations between groups. Generally, it is the context that could interfere or transform such relationships (van Dijk, 1993; 2001:356-7).

For a researcher, who is conducting a critical discourse analysis, it is essential important to understand the nature of social power and dominance. This understanding will facilitate the researcher's formulation of ideas on how discourse contributes to the reproduction of dominance. Moreover, it is pertinent to gain an insight into how powerful speakers or groups/institutions enact their power in discourse, as well as to what extent they are able to persuade or influence their audience. Which are the discursive structures and strategies in such a process?

4. Methodology

The welfare chauvinistic discourse is, as we can see throughout this research, particularly focused on the tension between inclusion and exclusion in the welfare state. One of the most interesting paradoxes that characterises a welfare state is: “the combination of egalitarian views on the one hand and restrictive view pertaining to the deservingness of immigrants on the other hand” (de Koster *et al.*, 2012:6). The concept of welfare chauvinism as a political discourse extends across the whole political spectrum. It is linked to both the political institutions as well as practical policy instruments. In other words, the concept has significance in both political speeches and in the actual policy outcome.

This chapter will firstly present the method used in the thesis, a documentary analysis. Moreover, the empirical material and the selection of documents are discussed. Since welfare chauvinism permeates the whole political spectrum there is a wide range of the textual material. I have chosen documents among political speeches, election manifesto of the SAP and *Moderaterna*. I analyse these documents using discourse analysis because this strategy provides the researcher with both theoretical and methodological tools. This chapter presents the importance and the benefits of conducting a discourse analysis, but also mentions its limits. A critical discourse analysis also offer analytical tools that will guide the researcher throughout the analysis and are presented in the end of this chapter.

4.1. Documentary Analysis

Document analysis is a procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents, which are a specific form of empirical data referred to as “unobtrusive measures” (Lee, 2000). Documents come in different forms, for instance, personal documents such as diaries and letters, or official documents, as in my case speeches and manifestos. When conducting a document analysis, it is required to examine and interpret the data in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding and develop empirical knowledge about a certain issue. Documents provide the researcher with data on a specific context at on the same time provide background information as well as historical insight (Bowen, 2009).

Furthermore, information and insights derived from documents, which are political speeches and manifestos in this research, will contribute with valuable additions to the knowledge base about changing discourses. The most important and relevant in this study, is that the documents will provide me with a great tool of tracking change and developments. To answer my research questions, I will study the documents of my considerations and compare with regard to how they address and identify the issues of welfare and refugees in the course of time. When there is a convergence of information or meanings emerging from different documents, readers of the study usually have greater confidence in the trustworthiness of the findings (Bowen, 2009)

4.2. Analytic Strategy - Discourse Analysis

To answer my research questions, I conduct a critical discourse analysis of the document, as it is suitable for doing research on societal issues and especially when looking into questions of power and how this creates meanings in our world as we see it (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000).

“In order for there to be a *movement* (of power relations) from above to below there has to be a capillarity from below to above at the same time” (Foucault, 1980:201). Power is a central notion in most CDA, especially the *social power* of groups or institutions. Social power can be described as control, in other words groups have power if they can control the acts and minds of other groups. Powerful groups such as political parties can for instance have control over public discourse, as in this case the discourse regarding welfare and refugees. The ability of powerful groups lies in their power base, which means that they have access to social resources such as force, money, status, information and knowledge (van Dijk, 2001).

In the case of this research, both Löfven and Batra have a solid power base with access to money, information and knowledge, and for that reason, they are accorded as ‘experts’ and they make statements with authority that clearly embody truth claims. By their statements, they might influence peoples’ minds, for example their knowledge and opinions and in some cases, it will indirectly control some of their actions. In other words, authorities who have the ability to control the most influential discourse also have more chances to control the minds and actions of others (van Dijk, 2011). Not everyone has however equal access to discourses, when an ‘ordinary’ person with a lower power base make statements about societal issues, their comments are more often framed as opinions rather than truths, for that reason it is interesting to analyse the distribution and transformation of discourses in a certain context. There can be power imbalances between different discourses, to be able to analyse the order of discourses within a certain context it is relevant to identify the relationship between discourses. By identifying this relationship, it can explicate why people draw on some discourses rather than others in specific situations, it is however appropriate to focus on a single order of discourse, such as welfare and refugees but it is still highly relevant not to forget the relationship between different discourses (van Dijk, 2001; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002).

When conducting a discourse analysis, it is important to pay attention to *intertextuality* and not only focus on the content of letters. It is rather significant to look at the way writers/speechmaker formulate their accounts linguistically. It is more relevant to study *how* things are written/expressed instead of *what* is said. Furthermore, when conducting a discourse analysis, it is important as a researcher to not treat each text as a discrete item, but rather interpret texts in the light of other relevant text the researcher have encountered. What creates meaning, and shape the sense in a discourse analysis are the words that are chosen to state something, and the way in which they are spoken. (Cameron & Pavovic, 2014).

I have in detail studied a set of speeches by the Swedish politicians. Further, intertextual chains have been traced between 2015 and 2016, which means that the ‘same’ announcement are seen in a range of different versions. As a discourse analyst, I am rather concerned with the effects of discourse and what discourse can do, rather than the individuals who use it and whose speech I am analysing. The effects of

discourse are in other words more interesting than the thoughts and feelings expressed by the individual speakers. I have worked through the text line by line, and step by step. Since I as a researcher, have a certain perspective on language whilst I am reading the text it allows me to produce a particular kind of reading of the text, a reading which foregrounds the constructive and performative properties of language (Willig, 2013:341-3).

4.2.1. Micro, Meso and Macro

It is highly relevant to be aware of the different levels of discourse and how they are connected. To be able to understand the macro-level where issues such as power, dominance and inequality are tackled by for instance laws and regulations it is necessary to, firstly, understand the movement between micro-meso-levels and meso-macro-levels.

Micro-level can be designated as the overall theme that emerge from analysis of texts, in other words the use of language and verbal interaction, whilst meso-level is the context where the use of language and verbal interaction is happening i.e. under which circumstances the speech is held. As abovementioned, the macro level is large-scale orders of several texts across several years, such as policies (Talib & Fitzgerald, 2016). By scrutinizing the different levels and the movement between them, the analysis will be able to trace the evolution of the underpinning values through watchwords and metaphors related to them. The watchwords such as solidarity, togetherness and deservingness have been identified within previous studies as the most important watchwords within *folkhemmet*. Depending on context and discussion the words can get different meanings. Furthermore, the process of examining the different dimensions of the watchwords, will expose how such values are transported and propagated to the Swedish population through watchwords and metaphors, and their relation through three interconnected levels. As mentioned above, macro values are made desirable through support by the micro valuations within and through metaphorical relations. Significantly, watchwords and metaphors are used to bridge, connect, and smooth over contradictions but also provide an appearance of logical cohesion in the political speeches by Löfven and Batra. The movement between the micro- and the macro levels is however connected by the meso-level that constitutes the transitional link between the two levels. (Talib & Fitzgerald, 2016:356).

4.3. Empirical Material

The empirical material in this study consists of two different types: political speeches by the Swedish politicians, such as the Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Anna Kinberg Batra, a party leader for the liberal party (Moderaterna) and the election manifestos of the both parties for the period 2014-2018. Most of the speeches chosen for closer analysis were held in a public context, and both Löfven and Batra aimed to reach out to the Swedish population as a whole. One of the speeches was held at a service house for seniors (Rågsveds servicehus) whilst one speech was held at a municipality conference (Örebro kommunkonferens). The various contexts show that both Löfven and Batra want to reach out to as many people as possible by operating in different fields. Relevant however is that the chosen speeches consist of more than what is analysed in this research. I have actively limited the analyse to the sections that

focus primarily on welfare and refugees. When it comes to election manifestos, the texts of manifestos' chosen for the analysis in this study consist of more than just issues relating to refugees and asylum, thus, even in relation to them the focus will be put on the parts concerning refugees and welfare.

These two sources of material cover the time-period between years 2015-2016 for the speeches and years 2014-2018 for the manifestos. Combining these two sources of material together is relevant for my study as they help me to identify the discourses just before the so-called 'refugee crisis' had its peak in 2015 and, their changing patterns in relation to the issues of welfare and the inclusion of refugees/asylum seekers. Consequently, this body of texts constitute the primary material and the ground for the discourse analysis. To understand the outcome of the changing discourse regarding welfare and migration, I have also in detail studied the temporary laws and regulation regarding refugees that was implemented in 2015 and 2016 (Law 2016:752 - limited possibilities of being granted a residence permit in Sweden & Amendment to the right to assistance under the Reception of Asylum Seekers act).

4.3.1. Selection of documents

My selection of documents will consequently include;

- *Summer Speech* (Sommartal) 16th of August 2015, Stefan Löfven
- *Speech at the manifestation of asylum reception* (Tal på manifestation för asylmottagande) 6th of September 2015, Stefan Löfven
- *Address to the meeting* (Stämmotal) 17th of October 2015, Anna Kinberg Batra
- *Christmas Speech* (Jultal) 16th of December 2015, Anna Kinberg Batra
- *The battle of the Swedish Model* (Striden om den Svenska Modellen) 29th of February 2016, Stefan Löfven
- *The Strength of the Swedish Model* (Den Svenska Modellens styrka) 12th of March 2016, Stefan Löfven
- *A plan for a Stronger Sweden* (En plan för ett starkare Sverige) 21th of May 2016, Anna Kinberg Batra
- *Summer Speech* (Sommartal) 6th of June 2016, Anna Kinberg Batra
- *We Build Sweden* (Vi bygger Sverige) Election Manifesto, The Alliance 2014-2018.
- *Dear Future, Election Manifesto for a Better Sweden. For All.* (Kära Framtid, valmanifest för ett bättre Sverige. För alla.) Election Manifesto, Social Democrats 2014-2018.
- Limited possibilities of being granted a residence permit in Sweden, Law (2016:752).
- A solidarity-based refugee and migration policy and a secure world, 15th of March 2016, Government Offices of Sweden.

Throughout the study, the different speeches will be referred to using its Swedish name. There will however not be citations from all of the abovementioned speeches in the analysis, despite this, it is important to highlight that all speeches and documents have been analysed and studied in close relation to each other. The selected citations are however considered to be a reoccurring theme latent in all speeches.

4.4. Quality of qualitative research

In order for the study to be valid it is important that the research is made transparent, so that the reader can follow the process and consider whether the assumptions made and the results in the study are consistent and acceptable (Jørgensen & Philips, 2002). To produce a transparent result, I am showing discourses with citations and explaining the identified discourses one by one. It is impossible as a researcher to produce completely transparent knowledge since it is always influenced by context (ibid). To the extent it is possible, I need to distance myself from my understandings in order to see the knowledge that is taken for granted. By looking at historical understandings, and move away from the centre, it is possible to see how knowledge has developed and taken another form today (Jørgensen & Philips 2002: 189 pp.)

Since I am investigating a sensitive topic, meanwhile it is related to a vulnerable and exposed group, and it is also politically sensitive in many aspects. It is highly important to be reflective and always consider ethical issues. To obtain high quality in my research I have been aware of subjectivity and biases on the issues. I have also been aware that this research is conducted in a context where some interests and opinions are dominant and interfering with others (May, 1997). Therefore, I have tried to stay objective as far as it goes but I have also been selective when choosing my material. When I selected my empirical material, I put the problem in the centre, the chosen material is representative for how the Government represented the situation around my chosen time period and how decisions are coming to be justified. I gather my data by visiting the SAP's and *Moderaterna's* websites, since I had already decided my time-period I decided to include speeches which focus on welfare and refugees. I consider my empirical material to be reliable since it is official documents published on the parties' websites.

Researchers such as Tracy (2012), claim that a study should have a formal generalizability, in that the findings should be transferable in other contexts. Since this study is very specific and context-based and only refers to the changing political discourse in Sweden regarding inclusive welfare for refugees. Therefore, this specific study may not be transferable into other contexts. However, from this study we might be able to make predictions about *how* political parties change their stance regarding inclusive welfare for refugees' when it endangers the welfare system.

5. Results and Analysis

Below follow the results, consisting of discursive groupings that I have identified by interpreting citations from the election manifesto, speeches held by Löfven and Batra, and additional material using the concepts of solidarity, togetherness and deservingness. The separation of the discourses in different groupings is not completely distinct since some results are defined as consisting of more than one discourse.

The Social Democrats and *Moderaterna* are separately analysed as representations of the micro level discourse in order to get a deeper understanding of how the discourse changes over time in each of the political camps, and how they relate to welfare chauvinism. The macro level combines the speeches of the both parties and groups them under the common discursive threads, such as solidarity, deservingness and *Folkhemmet*.

The citations from the election manifestos, speeches and the additional material are my own English translations. The original phrases are in Swedish and can be found in the appendix.

5.1. Micro-level

Social Democratic Party 2014–2018

Solidarity

Anyone that needs protection shall have sanctuary in our country. Everyone should have the right to an individual and legally secure examination of their asylum claims. All Swedish municipalities should take joint responsibility for receiving refugees. Meanwhile, EU member states be persuaded to take a more joint and solidaristic responsibility (Socialdemokraterna – Valmanifest, 2014)

The SAP election manifesto deals very little with the refugee issue, in comparison to other issues being discussed, though when it is dealt with it is done so within an inclusive discourse. The statement above constitutes the most important declaration regarding Sweden's responsibilities regarding refugees. It is however important that everyone in need shall have the possibility to apply for asylum in Sweden. There is a major focus on welfare and that everyone independently on where they come from shall have the same opportunities in life. Moreover, it is stated that Sweden shall be the main player when it comes to the distribution of human rights. It is also argued that the EU needs to assume bigger responsibilities regarding peace and solidarity. It is further declared that the voice of Sweden shall be loud and clear when the dignity of humans is offended. The SAP election manifesto was conducted before the so-called refugee crisis had its peak and that probably is the main reason why there is so little focus on refugees in relation to the welfare state. In 2015, especially during the summer one can identify a change in discourse regarding the Swedish welfare state and the stance regarding inclusiveness and open borders.

The reception system is strained to its full capacity and the employees are on their knees. We therefore want to introduce a period to reduce the number of asylum seekers arriving to Sweden. The law should be temporarily adjusted to the minimum level in the EU so that more people will choose to seek asylum in other countries (Löfven, 2015-11-24)

At the press conference on the 24th of November 2015 the Prime Minister Stefan Löfven together with the Deputy Minister Åsa Romson announced a reintroduction of the internal border controls and identity checks in order to “create moratorium for the Swedish refugee reception” (Regeringskansliet, 2015^b). This action was unprecedented since the borders between the Nordic countries discontinued much earlier than the Schengen agreement was introduced. There were surprisingly small reactions to this action and this was probably due to that it was framed as temporary.

In other words, the Swedish laws and regulation meant to temporary be adapted to the EU minimum requirements according to international law. The actual decision might however be understood as something much more drastic. The implementation of ID controls and a limited access to entering the country can also be taken as a sign in favour of the national agenda and a departure from the principles of solidarity and inclusiveness. On the one hand, this would not come as a surprise if we recall, the SAP's previous record of supporting strict entry policies (Hinnfors *et al.*, 2011). On the other hand, the politics of the SAP support solidarity and inclusiveness, one would therefore expect this party to advocate greater generosity regarding migration and especially when addressing the needs of refugees who are considered to be a vulnerable group.

Nationalistic Discourse

We have had these rules for a long time [humane refugee policy] and it has worked well, but when the refugee crisis increases this much, then something entirely different happens. We need to relate to reality (Government Offices of Sweden, 2015).

Sweden has had the worst refugee crisis since World War II, and we have taken on more responsibility than any other country in the Western World. We are a small country that makes a huge effort and the Swedish people showing great solidarity at a difficult time. We cherish the international asylum law. [...] Therefore, the government now proposes a number of measures to create a moratorium for the Swedish refugee reception (Regeringskansliet, 2015^b).

Sweden has for a long time had a generous solidarity based refugee policy, according to Löfven, this stance now needs to be transformed. The decision to introduce ID-checks and controls at internal borders stems from a discursive change from an inclusive discourse towards a nationalistic discourse. Löfven argues that other countries need to take their responsibility and according to the increased influx of refugees to Sweden, it is no longer possible to maintain an open and solidarity based policy. Sweden is known for being an inclusive society that defends multiculturalism and open up its doors for those who is seeking asylum and a new life. Sweden has been a so-called ‘exceptionalist’ model for other states to follow (Schierup & Ålund, 2011). The decision taken by Löfven and his Government are divergent to what was previously known as the ‘exceptionalist’ model. Löfven together with the government are talking about ‘the worst refugee crisis’, at the same time as the Government decide

to make it almost impossible to receive refugee status in Sweden. Löfven states that: "It is time for the EU to move from chaos towards control" (Löfven – Den svenska modellens styrka, 2016-03-12). Sweden is a small country that has shown a great sense of *solidarity* and made huge efforts at a difficult time. Whilst Sweden is doing something that showing solidarity on a high level, other EU countries need to resume their solidarity, it is necessary that other EU countries start to take their responsibilities according to Löfven and his government (Regeringskansliet, 2015^b).

There must be order in the Swedish refugee reception. It should be characterized by responsibility, decency and straight roads into work (Löfven – Sommartal, 2015-08-16)

As Löfven states it is important that there is an order in the refugee reception. Sweden has taken large responsibility and the time has come to ensure a decent future reception. The welfare state and its provisions should be allocated to those in the highest need, and regardless of what status a person has, all citizens shall be entitled to the same level of welfare provisions. Sweden is represented as having great *solidarity* and one of the most important perspectives of solidarity is equal access to welfare, Löfven declares that "those granted asylum must both do their duty and work and get their right to welfare" (Löfven – Den svenska modellens styrka, 2016-03-12). The importance of having a well organised refugee reception goes hand in hand with the Swedish model according to Löfven. As a result of the TUT and the reintroduced ID-controls there will be many people who will not be able to get asylum in Sweden. Löfven focuses significantly on that the EU needs to take their responsibility and implement a more solidarity based asylum reception, since Sweden is not able to receive more refugees. This can be understood as showing solidarity for those who will not be able to seek asylum in Sweden, since the Swedish model cannot manage more.

We [see Social Democrats] reject the Swedish Democrat's extreme drive against immigrants. We [see Social Democrats] stand for a regulated immigration and a reception that makes welfare work for everyone. [...] Here we are equal. That is a natural part of the future of the Swedish model (Löfven – Den svenska modellens styrka, 2016-03-12).

It becomes evident that a solidarity based refugee policy is not equal to generous immigration and open borders when Löfven describes what the Swedish model stands for:

What we create should be a welfare that meets every human need for freedom of choice and individual adaptation (Löfven – Striden om den svenska modellen, 2016-02-29)

[...] Humane refugee policy – regulated immigration – which in a sustainable, long-term sustainable way, can make sure that we can do the best both for the society and for people fleeing [meaning]: opportunity to provide jobs, housing and education (Government Offices of Sweden, 2015).

A solidarity based refugee policy is represented as regulated immigration, not as open borders and inclusiveness. Solidarity is understood as regulated and sustainable, it is important that we can offer a life with dignity, in other words refugees shall have access to jobs, housing and education – the cornerstones for the welfare state. To be able to maintain high levels of solidarity and to be able to provide these services to the people who arrive in Sweden it is necessary to regulate the influx of people. Otherwise, Sweden will not be able to reach the goal of solidarity.

Thus, it can be argued that the goal with the changing discourse – the move from an open and inclusive refugee policy towards a more regulated policy is to ensure that the Swedish welfare state can provide welfare services to the whole population. During 2015 and in the aftermath of the so-called ‘refugee crisis’ the Swedish welfare state could not ensure that all newly arrived obtained welfare services. Löfven declare that this is a national duty that Sweden as a country shall solve the problems together, and every municipality need to take its responsibility. The 6th of September 2015 at *Tal på manifestation för asylmottagande* Löfven stated: “Solidarity is our greatest pride”, during this time the biggest challenge was to share the burden within Sweden. The more time that passed and the greater influx of refugees Sweden has responded to, there has also been a transfer of responsibility. The 12th of March 2016 Löfven stated that:

We need to ensure control of our external borders, implement the redistribution of refugees within the Union [...] where you apply for asylum within the EU, not a single country [...] we need to take a join responsibility for the asylum reception (Löfven - Den svenska modellens styrka, 2016-03-12).

According to the statement above, Sweden is represented as doing very much and taking great responsibility whilst the other EU countries are doing very little. It is then necessary that Sweden is taking control over its borders. This move can be understood as a proof that Sweden takes responsibility in contrast to the other European member states. The Government further states that Sweden act in accordance to the principle of solidarity and that Sweden takes responsibility for “the other” – the refugees. Löfven asserts that the Government conducts a refugee policy based on solidarity. Solidarity in other words mean that the Other shall have access to welfare provisions, this is not possible if Sweden continues to have open borders:

We chose a regulated immigration policy and an individualized establishment so those who are granted asylum can do their duty and demand their rights [...] to form the basis of free and equal people in a solidaristic society (Löfven - Den svenska modellens styrka, 2016-03-12)

Moderaterna 2014–2018

Solidarity

In contrast to the SAP, the election manifesto by *Moderaterna* employ a fundamentally inclusive discourse, with arguments that Sweden needs to take its responsibilities for refugees and the importance of being an open country. The overall theme is that Sweden has the chance to become a humanitarian great power, and it is

also argued that Sweden has done this before during the Balkan war, and that Sweden can do it again.

We live in an anxious time, where people are forced to flee for their lives from war and oppression. Not since World War II, so many people have been in trouble. [...] Many people choose to search sanctuary in our country. The Alliance government, along with the Green Party, has chosen a different path from that chosen by many other European countries. Instead of ending with the outside world, we have said that Sweden should pursue a humane asylum policy and be a safe place for those who suffer from persecution and oppression. We have shown that it is possible to put humanity first and open the door for those who need protection (Moderaterna - Valmanifest, 2014)

The manifesto is structured along the arguments such as that Sweden shall continue being a country who takes its responsibilities because we have the ability to do it. Firstly, *Moderaterna* consider the Swedish refugee reception to be a moral obligation but also an investment for the future. Secondly, similar to SAP, *Moderaterna* argue that Sweden is one of the countries taking the biggest responsibility and it is now time for other EU-countries to begin to take their responsibilities. It is further declared that

The Alliance believes that Sweden will become better if more people are moving here, to build a better future and work (Moderates - Valmanifest, 2014).

In comparison with the SAP's election manifesto, *Moderaterna* has a fundamentally different view of the refugee reception. *Moderaterna* argues that immigration will make Sweden stronger and they further pay attention to establishment for newly arrived. There is also a major focus on increased movement and openness towards the rest of the world. In general, much emphasis is directed towards integrations processes and how these processes shall become more effective. Important though is that there remain big challenges and new reforms need to be implemented. Currently the road for newly arrived persons to become a part of the society is too long and complicated. The election manifest was written before the so-called 'refugee crisis' and there is a big chance that there would be considerably different focus if it was formulated today. By following the speeches of Anna Kinberg Batra between 2015 and 2016 it becomes evident that there is now more attention to how Sweden needs to deal with the 'refugee crisis' and that the EU need to spread the burden, but also the importance for Sweden to have a credible reliance. Batra further declares:

It is obvious that the government is unable to take control of the situation [...] reorganization of migration policy. [...] order and reason in the reception. [...] A basic prerequisite for regulated immigration is to have control over who is coming here. A temporary residence permit is required (Anna Kinberg Batra - Stämmotal, 2015-10-17).

Nationalistic Discourse

In 2015, it is possible to notice the first changes in the rhetoric when Batra is talking about the refugee situation. Batra starts to blame Löfven and his Government and there is a major focus on controlled and regulated immigration. She also claimed that it is necessary to implement temporary residence permits. This in combination with the statements regarding that other EU-countries need to take their responsibility and

share the burden with Sweden, appears to be as a visible shift in the discourse. There has been a quick transformation in the rhetoric: as in 2014 and the beginning of 2015 Batra puts a major attention on the benefits of people moving here, and in the beginning of the autumn 2015 she talks about the importance of temporary residence permits. This presents as a move from an inclusive and open discourse towards a more nationalistic discourse with focus on order and control in the Swedish immigration reception.

[...] The person who has been rejected asylum shall of course not, as it is today, be entitled to compensation (Anna Kinberg Batra – Stämmotal, 2015-10-17).

The tone and the language that Batra is using is becoming tougher, and she makes clear that if an asylum seeker is not allowed to stay legally in Sweden, she/he will neither have a chance to take part of the Swedish welfare benefits. She further states that: “we cannot take our prosperity for granted”. The reason why we have such a wealthy country today is because of individual humans who have endeavoured for a better life, that struggle is the cornerstone for the Swedish social contract. She states that it is necessary with a change, that it is time to develop the Swedish model instead of striving backwards. Sweden has for a long time had generous policies that are in need of transformation. Sweden has a history of being well-organized and the citizens’ have high levels of trust for each other and the institutions. For this trust to continue, it is necessary that the society stands on a solid ground. That goes hand in hand with an organized asylum reception, and she states that it is possible for Sweden to become even stronger.

People who had a picture of our country as one of the world’s best societies, encountered a Swedish society where important parts actually did not work as they usually do (Anna Kinberg Batra – En plan för ett starkare Sverige, 2016-05-15).

By the summer 2016, Batra declared that the Swedish asylum reception had failed. During a very short period there was a large amount of people who entered Sweden with high expectations for a better life. Instead of offering a safe place with housing and job opportunities, many people faced misery and extensive wait for clearance of what is happening next – if they are allowed to stay in Sweden or if they need to go back. The ‘refugee crisis’ revealed the weaknesses of the Swedish society, and it showed that Sweden was not enough prepared for the short-term crisis or the long-term challenges. Batra argues that: “this is a threat towards the Swedish society” (Anna Kinberg Batra – Sommartal, 2016-06-06). Repeatedly, Batra declares that the ‘refugee crisis’ will aggravate the already existing exclusion of people in the Swedish society. This evolution need to stop, if Sweden shall continue to be the best country in the world it is necessary to work together and prioritize issues such as order and clear course of action.

[...] It is naïve to believe that the refugee crisis is over. It will affect us for a long period ahead. The stream of refugees to Sweden has decreased [...] We need a temporary break from refugees and continuing border checks until we get order in our refugee reception, so that we can help those in need (Anna Kinberg Batra – En plan för ett starkare Sverige, 2016-05-15).

In Anna Kinberg Batras arguments it becomes evident that it is now time to focus on Sweden as the high influx of people to Sweden will affect the country and the Swedish system for a long time. She further declared the importance of new reforms and that Löfven ignored the exclusion of people that are becoming common in Sweden. "When the society is not capable of taking care of people coming in, or granting a safety net for everyone, new societies occur where we live in parallel with each other and not together" (Anna Kinberg Batra – Jultal, 2015-12-16). In order to maintain the Swedish society and the feeling of togetherness it is according to the leader of *Moderaterna* necessary to ensure that all people have a decent life. According to the abovementioned statements, it is necessary that Sweden has control over its borders and the refugee reception. It is more dignified if a society is capable to ensure a good living standard for those people who already are here, instead of letting more people in and not be able to offer a valuable life.

5.2. Macro-level

The speeches held by Löfven and Batra and the election manifestos by the SAP and *Moderaterna* belong to the micro level of the discourse where we can observe verbal interaction and trace the evolution of underpinning values. The policies following these interactions are then formulated on the macro-level. It is thus important to establish a link between the rhetoric within the micro- and macro-levels and the respective changes taking place. On the micro-level, it is possible to argue that both parties *ignore* welfare chauvinistic concepts and actively *attack* the ideas of the SD by stating that the SAP and *Moderaterna* will never accept the inhumane refugee policies that the SD proposes. On the macro-level, however it is possible to detect that both parties change their stance on these issues. Even if not being expressed orally the implementation of the temporary laws and regulations, in relation to inclusiveness of refugees into the Swedish society the SAP and *Moderaterna* tend to *accommodate* the rhetoric of the SD, and the claims of welfare chauvinism.

5.2.1. Solidarity

The analysis undertaken here focuses on identifying the degree of welfare chauvinism embedded in the policy framework and on identifying different elements characteristic to welfare chauvinism in the political speeches. Since ideas pertaining to welfare chauvinism gained significance in the whole political spectrum of the Swedish society, from public rhetoric to actual policy, it is important to analyse how these ideas are constructed.

Fundamentally, the welfare chauvinistic discourse is predominantly focused on the tension between the inclusion and exclusion in the welfare state and who deserves to take part of welfare provisions (de Koster *et al.*, 2012).

In order for a welfare state to function in the first place, the welfare system demands some agreement on solidarity among the members of the community, in other words, a 'social contract' (Marshall, 1963). This is based on criteria regarding who is entitled to what. At the same time, there is a strong emphasis on citizens' duties and obligations. As discussed earlier in this research, welfare chauvinism can take

several expressions, for example the 'unwillingness to grant the same entitlements to all people in the society'. In other words, welfare chauvinism becomes the question of whether refugees should have the same social rights as native citizens or not (Jørgensen & Thomsen, 2016). According to Andersen and Bjorklund (1990) populist parties developed a political discourse where immigration issues were approached from the economic perspective of the redistribution of welfare provisions between 'us' and the 'others'. Important however is that welfare chauvinism is not simply based on cultural or ethnic racism, it rather touches upon a socioeconomic argument about the future protection of welfare provisions.

An essential part of the agreement about redistributive welfare arrangements is based on mutual trust. Contributors to the Swedish society want to be sure that no-one can take advantage of the benefits without contributing to the system themselves. As Eger (2009) point out, the Swedish welfare state was designed on the basis of a homogeneous population, and the Swedish economy has successfully adapted to international challenges by taking advantage of institutions built upon a powerful sense of civic solidarity. The increased influx of refugees recently, has challenged the status quo, and the Swedish population nowadays consists of diversified inhabitants. One of the reasons why it challenges the status quo is that the immigration to Sweden has got a different form, from being predominantly labour migrations contributing to the society through work towards an immigration consisting of almost only refugees who in most cases need special treatment.

The radical right in Sweden describes these challenges as "a situation that pits the hardworking natives, the 'silent (ethnic) majority' [...] against the allegedly undeserving migrant 'other'" (Norocel, 2016:373). It is however clear that there is an ongoing debate between an exclusive stance aiming to restrict immigration versus a more inclusive humanitarian position. During the refugee 'crisis' it is evident that these two standpoints have come closer to each other, even though they express themselves differently.

Recently the Swedish mainstream parties have been taking a more restrictive stance on immigration. This is clearly reflected in the adoption of the temporary laws that were implemented in 2015 and 2016. Despite this departure from the previously generous position from both the SAP and *Moderaterna*, both Löfven and Batra are talking about the importance of redistribution, togetherness and a stronger Sweden. But what is recurring throughout all the speeches, is that both Löfven and Batra repeatedly mention that we all should be very proud of Sweden for what we have accomplished together. Furthermore, they make clear that they will not cooperate with the SD and they will not accept their inhumane migration policy⁵.

However, it is interesting that during the same time as the leaders were distancing themselves and their parties from the SD, they were implementing temporary laws that can be understood as an attempt to accommodate SD's anti-immigrant rhetoric, very restrictive and harsh. Two of the most influential⁶ mainstreams parties in Sweden where during the period⁷ taking a tough policy position on immigration. This tough

⁵ 2017 *Moderaterna* has a different stance regarding cooperation with the SD and do cooperate with them within certain areas.

⁶ Most influential parties during my chosen time period, today (2017) this looks different and *Moderaterna* has a decrease in support.

⁷ 2015-2016, but this is also current in May 2017.

policy stance might have helped the anti-immigrant parties, such as the SD to overcome the barrier of non-respectability, since voters might take this as a signal that tough immigration policies are relevant and necessary.

Following Freeman (2009), we could argue that the tendency to retreat from the inclusive treatment of others becomes politically legitimate in the times when Sweden becomes more and more heterogenic and displays lower levels of support for redistributive welfare programs and lower levels of social trust. This is not the first time when welfare and asylum has been high on the political agenda. During the beginning of the 1990s Sweden received over 70.000 asylum seekers from the former Yugoslavia. There were big concerns among the Swedish citizens whether the welfare system could sustain more asylum-seekers and immigrants in search for a job. There was at the same time a big distrust towards the newcomers, the so-called 'other' were understood as people without good intentions and only attracted by the Swedish welfare system (Eastmond, 2011). When members of a society can identify with other members of the welfare community it is easier to grasp their behaviour and it is also easier to trust them. Heterogeneity on the other hand challenge trust relations and the consensus of the "social-contract" (Alesina & Glaeser, 2004). As Coenders and Scheepers (2008) argue high influx of people might cause a decrease of trust and solidarity in the Swedish welfare state and a result of this can be lower support for the welfare state in general.

In this light, the implementation of the stricter laws and regulations regarding refugees and asylum-seekers might have been undertaken in order to maintain the feeling of 'us' and the 'other' since through speeches and other political statements refugees had since 2015 were framed as a challenge to the Swedish universal welfare state. Consequently, similar to the periods of 1990s, refugees since 2015 become the 'unwanted other' that affect the possibilities of many Swedish citizens since it entails cut-backs in public spending and rising unemployment (Eastmond, 2011).

5.2.2. Deservingness

In general, deservingness is understood as the matter of reciprocity, in other words recipients of welfare benefits are judged by what they have contributed with, and what are they to contribute with to the society in the future. Discussions regarding the welfare state support have traditionally been connected with ideas about a kind of 'laziness' (van Oorschot, 2009). During the beginning of the twentieth century there were concerns that too much social provisions would make people less hard-working, less responsible and less ambitious. Although this attitude has changed during the last decades, the connection between support for redistribution and public opinions about 'deservingness' is still highly relevant. This is especially apparent when studying the attitudes that explicitly wants to deny immigrants access to welfare provisions (van Oorschot, 2000). According to van Oorschot there are several criteria that are necessary to fulfil to 'deserve' welfare provision. One criterion is whether or not a person can take control over their neediness, persons who deserve welfare are those who lack such control, such as old and sick (ibid). A welfare chauvinistic perception of this criterion would claim that if a migrant that is able to work enters a welfare state and remains unemployed, s/he does not lack control over her/his neediness and because of that, should not be able to enjoy welfare benefits. Another principle defines a social area of

accountability, in other words, those 'deserving' are incapable poor people who belong to 'us'. The 'unwanted other' who are distrusted and perceived as 'threat' to the welfare system are thus not seen as 'deserving' persons (Eastmond, 2009). It is thus evident that the 'deservingness' criteria designated by van Oorschot (2000) can easily be interpreted as welfare chauvinistic claims.

When Sweden had experienced peak in asylum seekers in 1989 there was similar type of debates regarding deserving 'others' as we can observe in 2015-2016. Now as then, concerns were raised regarding increased influx of refugees and the potential threat to the welfare benefits of the Swedish citizens. The government stated that the welfare system could no longer sustain more asylum seekers and unemployment among immigrants was frequently debated (Eastmond, 2011).

Similar to those times, Batra for instance, stated in the *Stämmotal* in 2015 that: "those who do not strive and do their best based on their own ability, take the right to demand that others will do it for them". She further argues that it clashes with the Swedish values, and the same time as the Swedish citizens have opportunities in life is it likewise important that the citizens fulfil their responsibilities towards the society.

Löfven on the other hand talks about the importance to develop the 'Swedish model' and create a welfare model where all inhabitants are included (Löfven - Den svenska modellens styrka, 2016-05-16). Löfven further states that the goal is a fair distribution among all and growing prosperity for all. Instead of making a difference between 'us' and the 'other' Löfven and Batra attempt to include everyone in the society, independently of who they are and where they come from. The most important is that everyone contributes to the society, based on their own capability. Done that, the person will then be included and welcomed to enjoy welfare benefits in Sweden. The main focus from both the SAP and *Moderaterna* is that no one should make profit from the welfare system.

5.2.3. Reclaiming Folkhemmet

Migrants in Sweden enjoy the same formal rights as the native population, this is what characterised Swedish universal welfare regime since its inception (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Borevi, 2012; Nilsson & Nyström, 2016). Furthermore, welfare policy plays an important role for the opportunity of migrants to participate in the society. As discussed earlier, equality and solidarity have since the formation been the dominant themes in the Swedish welfare state. In order to create a strong society. This can be understood as a security through an extensive universalistic welfare model serving all members of the society, a thought grown out of a long social-democratic hegemony (Eastmond, 2011). The ongoing political debates about the future of the Swedish universal welfare state reflect similar developments across the Western Europe. In the two last parliamentary elections⁸ in Sweden the need for the new policy responses to migration has been prominent subjects, particularly on the part of the SD. Relevant to mention is that both the SAP and *Moderaterna* resisted the SD and their welfare chauvinist appeals during the two last parliamentary elections (Norocel, 2016). However, approximately a year after the parliamentary election 2014, the Government implemented new temporary laws with welfare chauvinistic influences. This shift is

⁸ 2010 and 2014

potentially a forerunner for the transformation of a previously inclusive democratic society into a more selective society. By analysing the political speeches chosen for this study one can see a clear tendency to more selective attitude towards the welfare state. A subtle meaning that surfaces from the SAP is that Sweden's need to change its policies regarding migration so that Swedes can continue having rights and good opportunities in life and at the same time keep the welfare state strong.

As Schierup and Ålund (1991) maintain the Swedish multiculturalism has for a long time been seen as a solidarity project with an underlying aim to integrate the "other" to Swedish normality (Dahlstedt and Neergaard, 2016). As the analysis of the speeches illustrates the Swedish society tends to become more exclusive society, where obligations for the citizens towards the Swedish state are underlined much harder than their rights. It could be argued that there is an underlying impression that it is of highly importance to maintain the generous welfare provision for the whole Swedish population.

According to the speeches analysed and the temporary laws implemented, solidarity seems to gain a new meaning, far from being generous and inclusive. The analysis shows that both the SAP and *Moderaterna* have toyed with rhetoric similar to that of the SD. In one sense, both parties speak about *folkhemmet* in nostalgic term. This means that especially the SAP⁹ but also *Moderaterna* believe that there are limits to the ability of the *folkhemmet* to make room for migrants, particularly when it comes to solidarity with others. Both Löfven and Batra argue that it is time to reclaim the 'Swedish model' and *folkhemmet*, and it is time to develop the welfare state, and not dismantle it. Andersson (2009) for instance, has described *folkhemmet* as 'grey', since it draws on complex legacies of both discipline and emancipation. Issues such as fear of the 'other' and sterilization policies are issues that have fundamentally tainted the discussion of the past and future of the Swedish welfare state.

Nowadays it could be argued that some of the fundamental parts of *folkhemmet* are becoming visible again. *Folkhemmet* has for a long time been seen as the key that holds the Swedish notion together and it has deeply been inscribed in the Swedish political culture. It has been described as a unique kind of 'social contract' which draws on notions of historical definitions of 'Swedishness' that is closely associated with *folkhemmet* (Andersson, 2009).

Löfven and Batra speak about Sweden as a country to be proud of. Swedes according to them shall take pride in what they have accomplished in the sense of solidarity and welfare. They further declare that Sweden and its population will symbolise togetherness. These kinds of statements are recurring in all of their speeches, and it also shines through the election manifestos. Löfven and Batra put a lot of emphasis on togetherness, on the fact that Swedes need to help each other, to reach the highest level of solidarity and welfare. However, as the 'refugee crisis' escalates a clear change in attributing the responsibility for Sweden's future is taking place. In the beginning of 2015 a major focus on *spreading the burden* within the Swedish municipalities. Just a few months later the main responsibilities for the refugees had been *shifted* towards the EU. The Government decided to adjust the Swedish asylum regulation in accordance to the EU minimum requirements with a hope that refugees should apply for asylum in other countries. Batra frequently blamed Löfven and his

⁹ Based on the speeches used for this research

government for the 'refugee crisis' that Sweden faced but she also readily passed the responsibilities for managing the crisis towards the EU. When the government implemented the border controls and the temporary laws on asylum, it has been treated as a sign of Sweden's attempt to *move from chaos to control* regarding inflows of refugees. It is also evident that both Löfven and Batra chose to impose responsibilities on others rather than on themselves. The rhetorical similarities between the party leaders concerns the ways that the EU is supposed to take their responsibilities, with both leaders arguing that the crisis should be handled through the intergovernmental co-operation to solve the issues that single nation states cannot solve.

It has been debated whether increased heterogeneity change the attitudes to the welfare state. Scholars such as Hjerm and Schnabel (2012) argue that heterogeneity is seen as a threat to the existence of the welfare state since it challenges the redistributive instruments. This is reflected in the statements by Löfven and Batra as well, even if it is done covertly in the speeches. Both party leaders argue that Sweden is facing challenges regarding distribution of welfare provision due to the high numbers of newcomers. To get along with the distributive issues and make sure that all people within Sweden have access to welfare it is better to close the borders and limit the right to assistance when the refugees are denied asylum. It is rather more important to take care of those who are already living in Sweden. Even if Sweden has not implemented policies with assimilative traits so far, it is possible to trace strong similarities with the fundamental ideas of *folkhemmet* of the 1920s. For instance, if the welfare state shall survive it might be necessary to strengthen the connection between rights and obligations of its citizens but also tougher requirements for acquiring Swedish citizenship (Norocel, 2016). The implementation of the temporary laws and regulations can be understood as an attempt to strengthen and maintain *folkhemmet* and its cultural specificity by creating a gap between 'us' and the refugee 'other'.

6. Discussion and Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to conduct a critical analysis on the inclusion and exclusion of refugees in the Swedish welfare state. By analysing speeches held by the most influential political parties during 2015 and 2016 it became evident that the party leaders and the Government change their stances in times of crisis.

We have long referred to Sweden as a universal welfare state where welfare provisions shall apply to everyone within the state, thus including immigrants legally residing within its territory. Yet the most drastic decision taken by the Swedish government was to establish identity checks along the borders and consequently reject those who could not present valid identity documents at the border check points. Before 2016, the majority of all asylum seekers in Sweden, who applied for a residence permit and were granted one, received permanent residency (Swedish migration agency, 2016).

Since 20th of July 2016, it is almost impossible to receive a permanent residence permit (PUT), with the exception of unaccompanied minors as well as families with minor children, who applied for asylum before the 24th of November 2015. Until 2019, persons who apply for and are granted asylum in Sweden will merely receive temporary residence permits (TUT) for the length of 13 months and three years depending on the status granted to them. Since family reunification is only granted to persons with refugee status and it requires special circumstances according to the new law, only a limited amount of persons will be granted this right. (Regeringskansliet, 2015; 2015^a; 2015^b; Nilsson & Nyström, 2016; Swedish migration agency, 2016).

It could be argued that granting permanent residence permit and a generous law regarding family reunification, which signified Sweden's previous stand with regard to asylum, also stimulated more immigration. At the same time this kind of generous law went hand in hand with the Swedish sense of solidarity and belief that all persons living in Sweden were in the same boat. The implementation of more restrictive laws and regulations regarding asylum can thus be regarded as a starting point for drawing a line between "us" and "the others". Furthermore, it can be seen as an indication that Swedes have become less willing to include and welcome people in to the welfare system. These more restrictive implemented measures might also be seen as a tool to 'intimidate' people and reduce the number of arriving asylum seekers in Sweden. Arguably, it may signify a move from a *universal* welfare system towards a more *selective* system

This critical analysis of this paper demonstrates that there is a discursive struggle between the inclusive universal welfare state and nationalistic, selective welfare state values. The struggle is mainly articulated through the watchwords identified by *folkhemmet*. This struggle indicates a crisis connected to the identity of the SAP and *Moderaterna*. Both parties are keen to claim solidarity towards the Swedish citizens understood as an open and a universal welfare state including both Swedes and newcomers. As the numbers of asylum seekers in Sweden increased, however, the meaning of solidarity expressed by the SAP and *Moderaterna* swiftly changed profoundly

With this, the attitude towards taking responsibility for asylum seekers and their inclusion into the welfare state at a national level similarly changed. In 2015, political debates concerning migration focused on municipalities taking equal charge for the

newly arrived. When the 'refugee crisis' peaked, however, Swedish politicians highlighted the common responsibilities of EU member states for asylum seekers at the regional level. The Swedish Government now instead expressed expectation of other EU member states to execute their responsibilities pertaining to asylum seekers, as Sweden, according to Löfven and Batra, had carried out its and had reached its capacities in taking charge of asylum seekers. Responsibility here referred to equal 'burden-sharing' amongst EU member states.

Similarly, solidarity does no longer entails generous immigration policies and multiculturalism. Instead, it is linked to the crumbling capacity of the welfare state and its limits. The Government and *Moderaterna* tend to address the growing numbers of asylum seekers as a threat to the welfare state. Solidarity acquired a different meaning when the existence of the welfare state is endangered. Throughout the analysis, it becomes apparent how the nationalistic discourse has acquired a hegemonic position regarding the representation of Sweden and the inclusion of asylum seekers. There is, however, an ongoing struggle concerning the watchwords, or in other words the signifiers of *folkhemmet*.

It becomes clear that multiculturalism might not be compatible with the ideals of *folkhemmet*. The core values of the Swedish society are built upon the notion that 'we are all in the same boat', since Swedes for a long time perceived themselves as a homogeneous and equal population for a long time and therefore all inhabitants should have same access to welfare services. When the population became more diverse and Sweden identified itself as a multicultural society it becomes evident that it is important to secure the welfare state from 'needy' persons. Due to increased immigration, core values such as togetherness are threatened, Swedes can no longer perceive themselves as equal. Nowadays a multitude of people are dependent on welfare services and they are not and have never been contributing to the welfare state. In the past, most of the people who were dependent on welfare services were the elderly and the poor and not persons with the ability to work, such as the majority of asylum seekers.

There is a common idea among scholars of politics and policy that the universal welfare regime has a stronger sense of solidarity and a higher level of tolerance towards marginalised groups among majority population, compared to the liberal and conservative regime (de Koster *et al.*, 2012). This idea is probably still hold its value, however, rapidly growing numbers of refugees during a very short period of time, seem to provoke xenophobic fear among the population that the welfare system could not sustain more asylum seekers and immigrants. The question is whether this fear is reflected in the speeches by Löfven and Batra and if that is one of the reasons why they accommodate welfare chauvinistic concepts and rhetoric by the SD?

The language in their speeches is adjusted in order to justify actions taken by the present Swedish Government since 2015. The language in the speeches is further used in a such way so as to benefit the goal of the welfare state. For instance, it was stated that everyone has to have access to welfare provisions rather than having open and inclusive immigration policies. Inclusiveness has acquired a new meaning. By limiting the inflow of refugees Sweden claims to have a good establishment for those already living in Sweden.

The implementation of the more restrictive laws and policies were supposed to be a short-lived 'moratorium' and the basic idea was to return to more generous policies when the situation had 'calmed' down. However, in practice one can certainly argue that this is more than just a 'moratorium' and that there is a risk that the 'moratorium' will become a permanent stance of the Swedish government regarding the welfare inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers. According to Hinnfors *et al.* (2011) it should not have come as a surprise that the SAP chose to implement stricter policies regarding refugees, as they are the only mainstream party that has a consistent record of supporting this kind of policies. *Moderaterna* on the other hand usually criticise the SAP for implementing stricter entry policies and temporary resident permits. *Moderaterna*, together with the other liberal parties, have historically favoured permanent residence permits. Thus, one cannot claim that the SAP for adapting welfare chauvinistic concepts was due to the pressure of the SD, since they historically have had strict immigration policies.

In fact, both the SAP and *Moderaterna* reject the SD in analysed speeches. Therefore, the parties have chosen to ignore SD's rhetoric when speaking to the public. It is rather in the implemented laws and border controls where it is possible to see that they have adapted to the welfare chauvinistic concepts first pronounced by the SD.

It is easy to move the problem towards the EU or to another political party. Neither Löfven nor Batra can stand confident and acknowledge their defects, instead they blame each other by pointing out the other persons/party's shortcomings.

What is most important, as this thesis shows, is that it is not only the laws and regulations on asylum matters that have undergone transformations. When analysing the speeches by Swedish parliamentarians from the summer of 2015 and until the summer of 2016, one can identify several major changes in how political speeches emphasise and define Sweden's responsibilities as a receiving state. The most remarkable shift in the discourse is the one from the summer 2015 to the fall of 2015 and onwards, namely the speeches held by Stefan Löfven and Anna Kinberg Batra, 'on the need to open their hearts and invite people in to our society', to shifting responsibility to other EU member states for reception and protection of refugees. In the course of a few months, the emphasis and the focus of the political discourse on asylum seekers in Sweden has been transformed from the inclusive welfare to a more strained welfare that demands regulated migration.

During the time this study was conducted, a lot of changes took place in Sweden's political sphere. *Moderaterna* for instance, having for a long time rejected SD and their politics towards refugees, have now decided to deliberate with SD on individual issues (Svt Nyheter -Därför har Moderaterna ändrat sig om SD, 2017-01-24).

In the beginning of May 2017, the Government further chose to withdraw identity checks along Swedish borders and instead intensify the border controls. The withdraw of identity checks and *Moderaterna's* new stance regarding SD shows that this is a highly dynamic area where changes are taking place very quickly and unannounced.

6.1. Further Research

This study looked into the changing political discourse in Sweden regarding inclusive welfare for refugees, and how these changes has taken place between 2015 and 2016. The speeches analysed were held during a very short period of time and the discourses articulated might not have reflect the whole complexity of the issues. In order to reflect the complexity of the issues more accurate, it would be recommended for future research to study the change of discourse in Sweden's political sphere before, in between as well as after parliamentary elections. In fact, the closer parliamentary elections are the more party leaders tend to change their discourse in order to gain votes and react according to changing political situation.

Finally, it is important to examine a broader spectrum of political debates on welfare and refugee reception by including other Swedish elected parties in the Government and the opposition.

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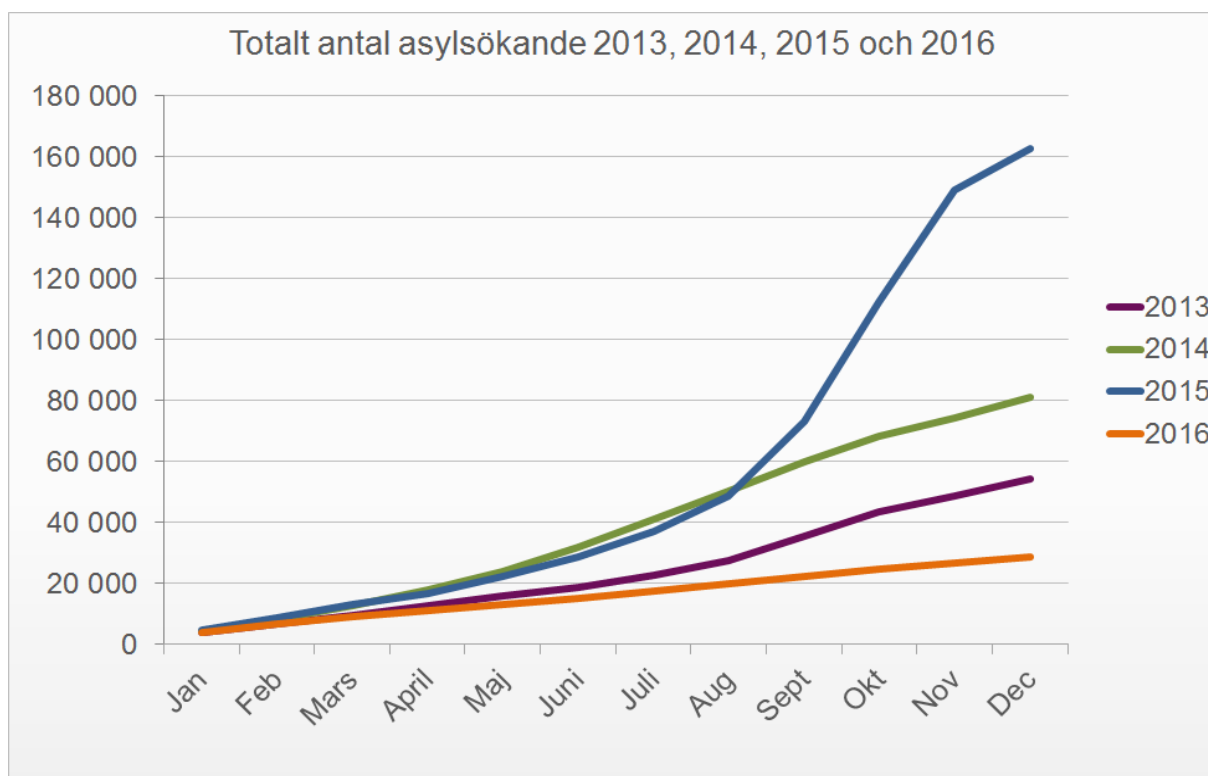
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8. Appendix

Figure 1 – Total amount of asylum seekers in Sweden 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016



(Swedish Migration Agency, 2016)

8.1. Swedish Citations - Translations

Socialdemokraterna

[1] Den som är i behov av skydd skall få en fristad i vårt land. Alla ska ha rätt till en individuell och rättssäker prövning av sina asylskäl. Alla Sveriges kommuner skall ta ett solidariskt ansvar för flyktingmottagandet. Samtidigt måste EU:s medlemsstaters förmås ta ett mer solidariskt ansvar (Socialdemokraterna – Valmanifest, 2014).

[2] Mottagningssystemet är ansträngt till sin fulla kapacitet och personalen går på knäna. Vi vill därför under en period minska antalet asylsökande som kommer till Sverige. Lagen ska tillfälligt anpassas till miniminivån i EU i syfte att fler ska välja att söka asyl i andra länder (Löfven, 2015-11-24).

[3] This quote was originally in English, taken from the Government's webpage.

[4] Sverige har i den värsta flyktingsituationen sedan andra världskriget tagit ett större ansvar än något annat land i västvärlden. Vi är ett litet land som gör en enorm

insats och det svenska folket visar stor solidaritet i en svår tid. Vi värnar den internationella asylrätten. [...] Därför föreslår nu regeringen en rad åtgärder för att skapa ett andrum för svenskt flyktingmottagande. (Regeringskansliet, 2015^b)

[5] Det måste råda ordning och reda i det svenska flyktingmottagandet. Det ska präglas av ansvarstagande, anständighet och raka vägar in i arbete. (Löfven - Sommartal, 2015-08-16).

[6] Vi avvisar Sverigedemokraternas högerextrema drev mot invandrare. [...] Vi står upp för en reglerad invandring och ett mottagande som gör att välfärden fungerar för alla. [...] Här är vi jämlikar. Det är en självklar del av den svenska modellens framtid. (Löfven - Den svenska modellens styrka, 2016-03-12)

[7] Och det vi skapar ska vara en välfärd som både tillgodoser varje människas behov av valfrihet och individuell anpassning (Löfven - Striden om den svenska modellen, 2016-02-29).

[8] This quote was originally in English, taken from the Government's webpage.

[9] Vi behöver säkra kontrollen av vår yttre gräns, genomföra omfördelningar av flyktingar inom unionen [...] där du söker asyl i EU, inte i ett enskilt land [...] måste också ta ett gemensamt ansvar för asylmottagandet (Löfven - Den svenska modellens styrka, 2016-03-12).

[10] Vi står upp för en reglerad invandring och ett mottagande som gör att välfärden fungerar för alla [...] Här är vi jämlikar. Det är en självklar del av den svenska modellens framtid (Löfven - Den svenska modellens styrka, 2016-03-12)

Moderaterna

[11] Vi lever i en orolig tid, där människor tvingas fly för sina liv från krig och förtryck. Inte sedan Andra världskriget har så många människor varit på flykt. [...] Många människor väljer att söka sig till vårt land. Alliansregeringen har, tillsammans med Miljöpartiet, valt en annan väg än den som många andra europeiska länder har valt. Istället för att sluta oss mot omvärlden har vi sagt att Sverige ska föra en human asylpolitik och vara en fristad för dem som flyr undan förföljelse och förtryck. Vi har visat att det är möjligt att sätta medmänskligheten i första hand och att öppna dörren för dem som behöver skydd (Moderaterna - Valmanifest, 2014).

[12] Alliansen anser att Sverige blir bättre om fler flyttar hit för att bygga en bättre framtid. och jobba (Moderaterna - Valmanifest, 2014).

[13] Det är uppenbart att regeringen saknar förmåga att ta kontroll över situationen [...] omläggning av migrationspolitiken. [...] ordning och reda i mottagandet. [...] en grundläggande förutsättning för reglerad invandring är att ha

kontroll över vilka som kommer hit. Det behövs tillfälliga uppehållstillstånd (Anna Kinberg Batra – Stämmotal, 2015-10-17).

[14] [...] Den som har fått avslag skall självklart heller inte, som det är idag, ha rätt till ersättning (Anna Kinberg Batra – Stämmotal, 2015-10-17).

[15] Människor som fått en bild av vårt land som ett av världens bästa samhällen mötte ett svenskt samhälle där viktiga delar faktiskt just då inte fungerade (Anna Kinberg Batra – En plan för ett starkare Sverige, 2016-05-15).

[16] [...] det är naivt att tro att flyktingkrisen är över. Den kommer påverka oss under lång tid framöver. Flyktingströmmen till Sverige har just nu minskat. [...] Vi behöver en tillfällig flyktingpaus och fortsatta kontroller vid våra gränser tills vi får ordning i vårt flyktingmottagande och kan hjälpa dem som behöver (Anna Kinberg Batra – En plan för ett starkare Sverige, 2016-05-15).