

# Skilled Immigrant Labour Market Integration in Denmark

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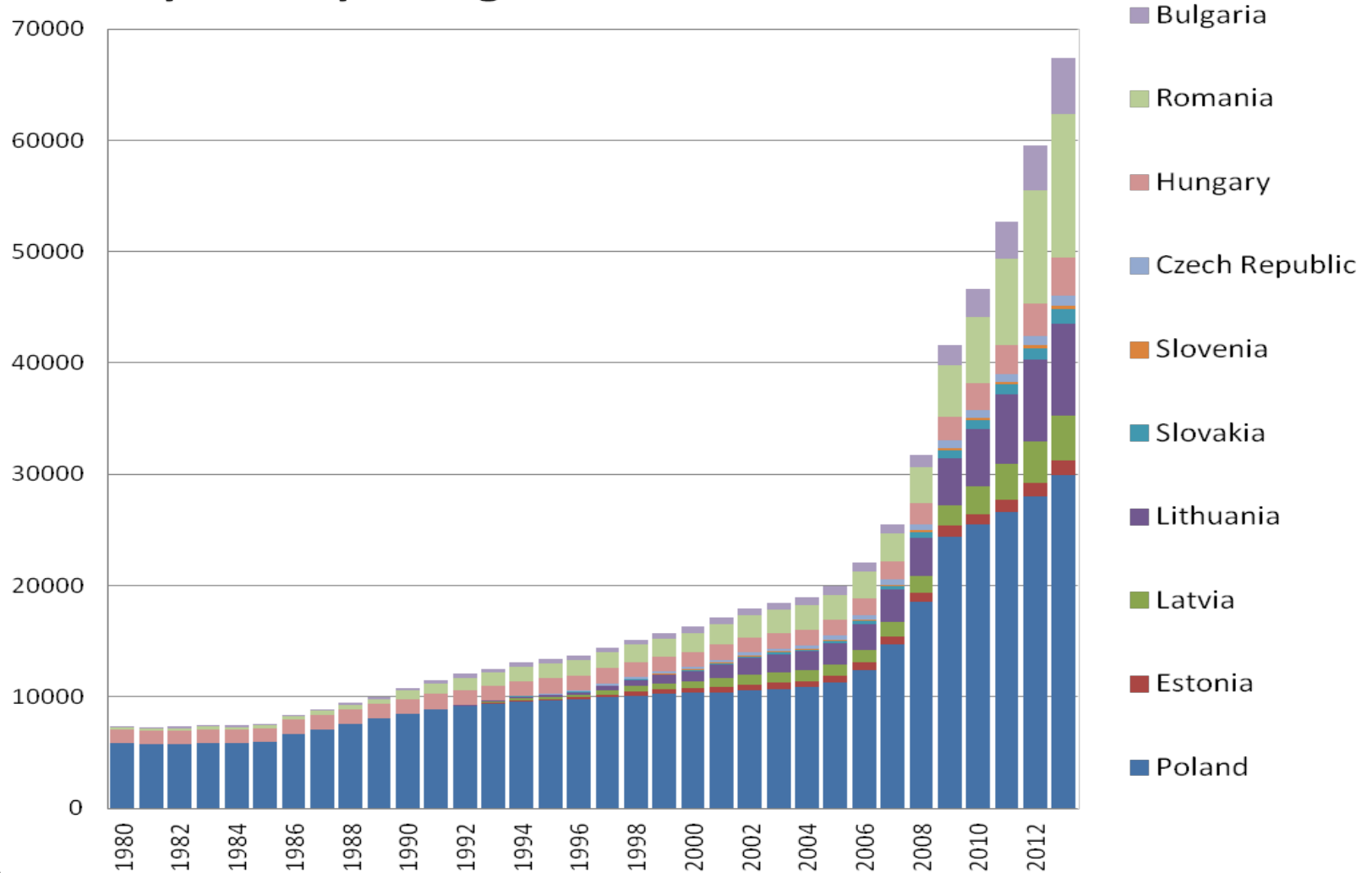
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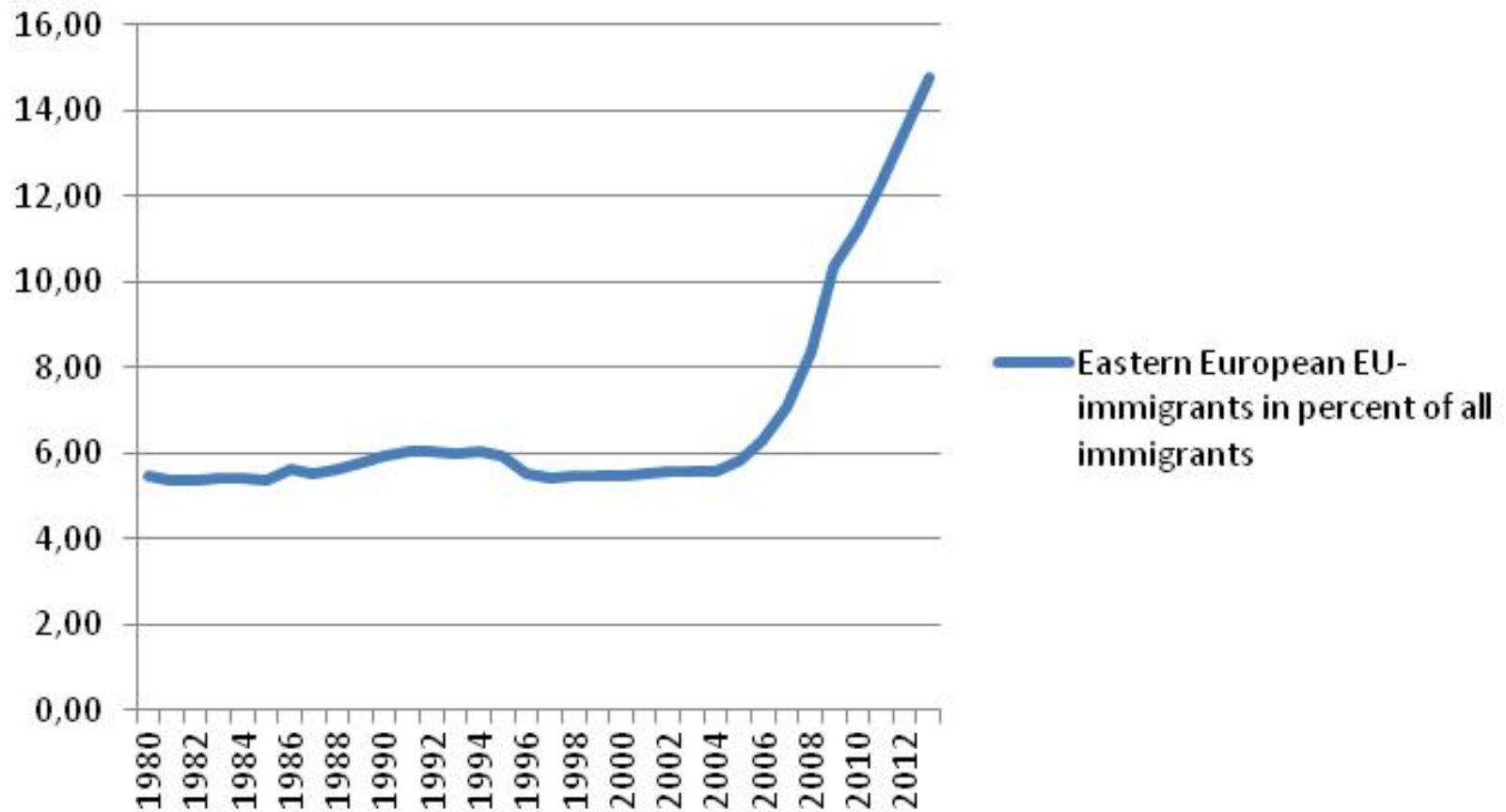
# Migration to Denmark after the EU enlargement

- About 1/3 of the people who came to Denmark in 2008, emigrated again after three years. The employment rate among those who have been in the country increased from 67 per cent. the first year after they immigrated to 71 per cent. after three years.
- The employment rate for immigrants from the new EU countries who immigrated in 2008, is in line with the population average. Among those still living in Denmark is thus a relatively large association to the labour market, which is a prerequisite for a positive contribution to public finances.
- Employment rate of persons from the new EU countries is higher than those of the old EU countries

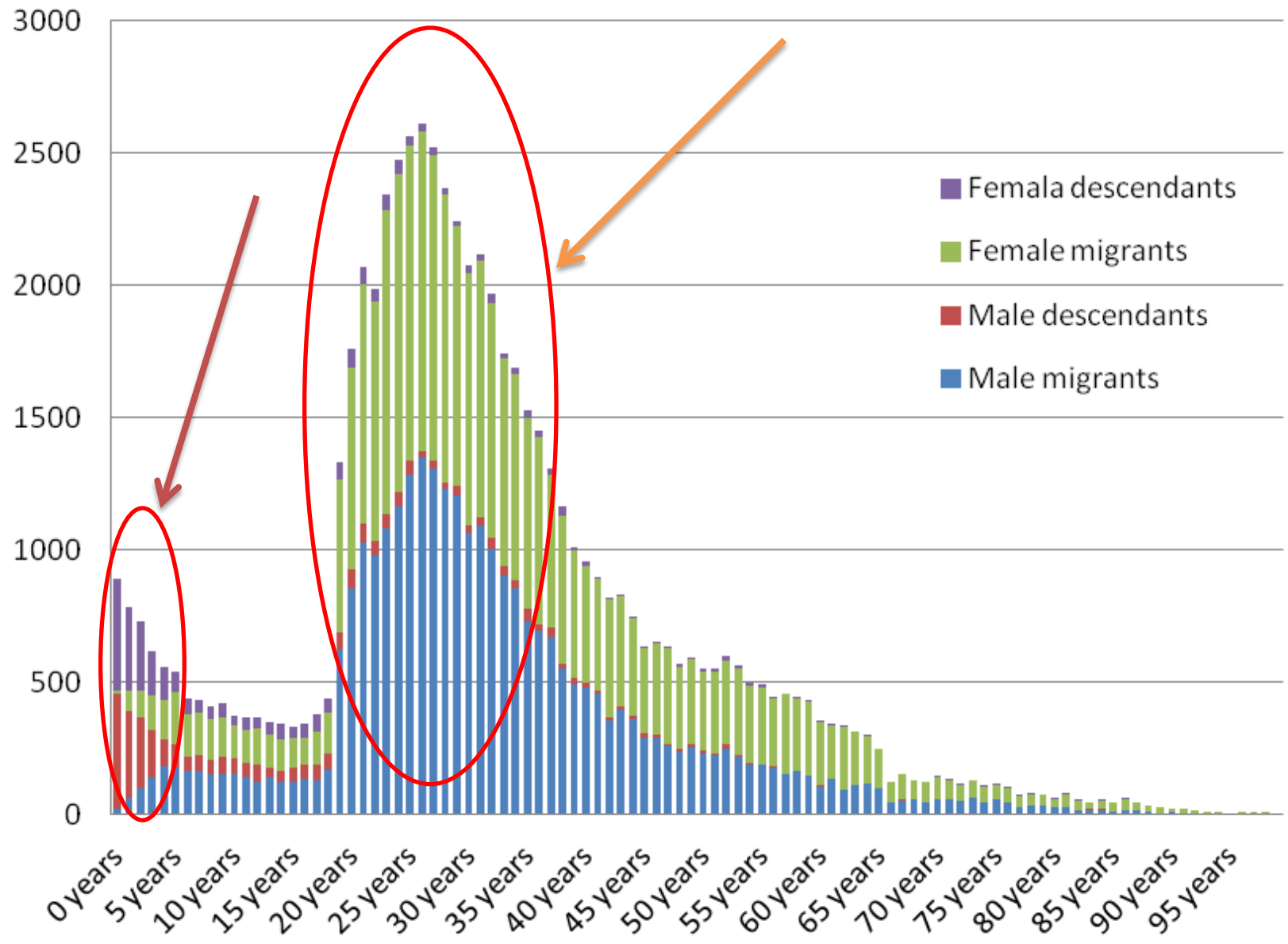
# Number of immigrants in Denmark from Eastern EU-countries by country of origin 1980-2013



## Eastern European EU-immigrant in percent of all immigrants 1980-2013



# East European migrants and descendants 1. January 2012



# Reception and perception of labour migrants

- Economic situation
- High skilled vs low skilled
- Benefits vs burdening

# Policy level

| <b>Welfare state regime</b> | <b>Immigration regime</b> | <b>Labour market regime</b> |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Social democratic           | Restrictive               | Flexicurity                 |

# Policy narratives

| Policy Narrative                                    | Target Group   | Narrative portrayal  | Anticipated Policy Tool                                | Policy Tools supported through narratives                              |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Economic contribution and development/growth</b> | Higher skilled and specialized labour migrants               | <p>Creating a diverse and innovative labour market</p> <p>Making Danish industries more competitive.</p> <p>Recognition/redistribution</p> | <p>Selective migration control</p> <p>Point-system</p> | <p>Special schemes (labour market access)</p> <p>Attracting talent</p> |
| <b>Social dumping - welfare scrounging</b>          | Lower skilled labour migrants vs Non-selfsupportive migrants | <p>Wanted/unwanted</p> <p>Deserving/undeserving</p>  | Labour migration management                            | Open borders, closed coffers (welfare servicers)                       |



# Economic contribution narrative

- The Danish labour market need highly skilled foreign workers. But Denmark cannot afford to pay for foreigners who cannot support themselves. Therefore, we need 'open borders and closed coffers'.
- If you work, you are welcome. Are you foreigner, and you have been offered a job in Denmark, you are welcome (Liberal alliance).

# Social dumping narrative

- The social dumping narrative has been fuelled by the accelerated migration from Eastern European EU countries as well as the economic crisis causing increased unemployment.
- Current debates in Denmark regarding restriction on the rights to social welfare services and benefits will challenge the motivation and possibilities of integration of the many newly-arrived immigrants.

# The liberal paradox

- “the economic logic of liberalism is one of openness, but the political and legal logic is one of closure [...]. How can states escape from this paradox?” (Hollifield, 2004: 887).
- A presupposition is that the on-going economic recession has made the liberal paradox even stronger.

# Assumption

- The on-going crisis has spurred the construction of deserving and undeserving groups and has been contextualized in both discursive and material retrenchments of rights and developed new forms of exclusion and inequalities.
- Immigrants as a group, have become 'the new undeserving poor' in the European welfare states (Bommes & Geddes)

# Drivers of integration/disintegration

- Language: level of proficiency
- Education/skills: overqualified-underemployed-underpaid.
- Political/civic participation: rights/segregation
- Social mobility: low/high
- Culture/gender: prejudgements and stereotypes of ethnic groups
- Social exclusion: access to social relations and institutions

# Main obstacles for integration

- Lack of rights
- Lack of social network
- Lack of information
- Language barriers
- Discrimination – structural and social

# Social integration initiatives

- Highly skilled: Expat (the official national network for foreign professionals in Denmark), The Association New Dane - Nydansker (Diversity and integration of ethnic minorities onto the labour market).
- Low or unskilled: The Association New Dane (Nydansker), informal social networks

# Measures to strengthen social integration

- Social protection of the migrant workers needs to be strengthened – social security, health care etc.
- Anti-discriminating measures and prevention of the scapegoat syndrome
- Availability of information in various languages
- Strengthening flows and sites of information



Thank you for your attention

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