

Accumulation of poor living conditions among immigrants in Norway

Session 1.E: Measuring immigrant integration: filling knowledge gaps and exploring new measurement approaches?



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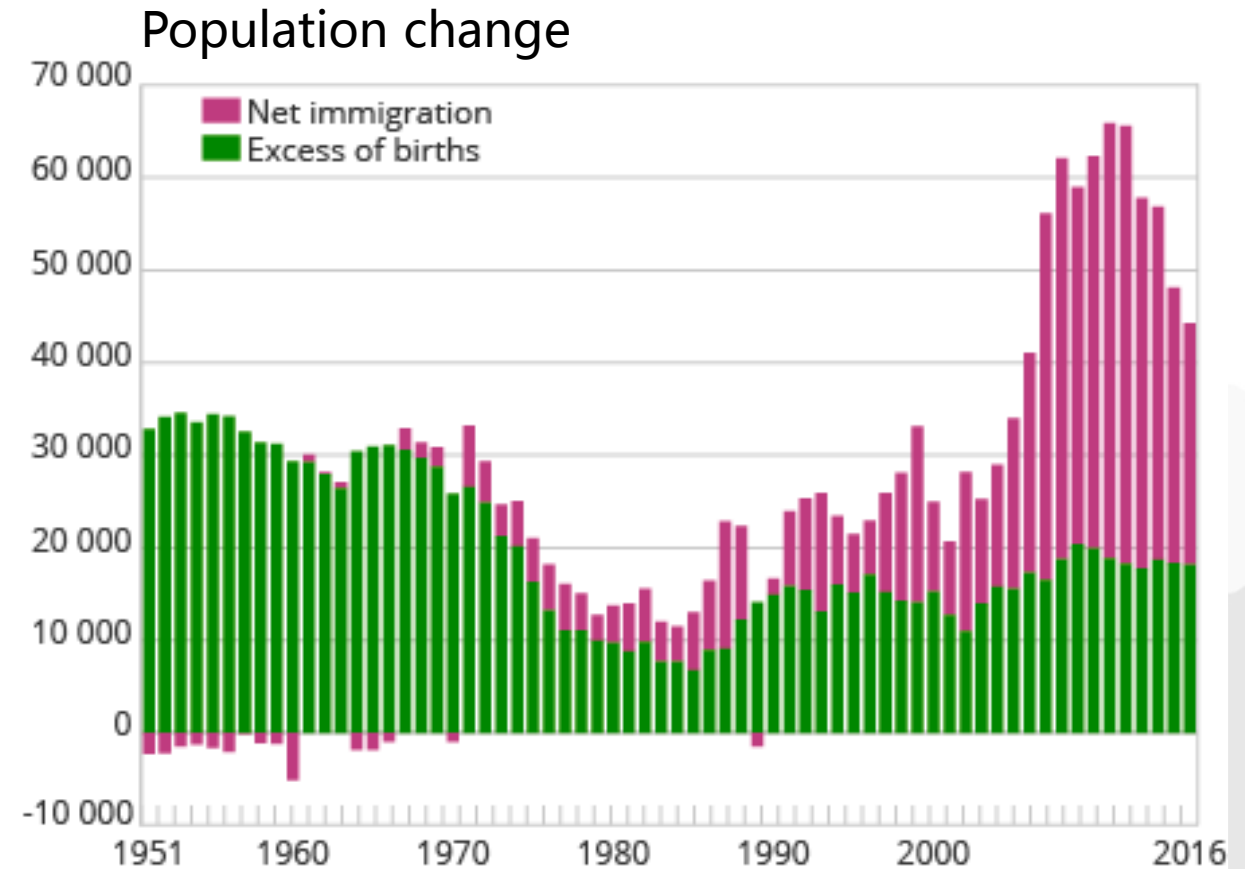
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What is at stake?

- The Norwegian welfare state:
 - High employment, taxation level is high, considerable public spending on welfare, high level of trust, and a strive for equal opportunities
- Immigration to Norway is high
 - In 2017, 17 per cent with an immigrant background
- Integration outcome not good enough
- What are the consequences of failed integration?
- Social exclusion, accumulation of welfare problems?



Source: Statistics Norway.

What have we done?

Data:

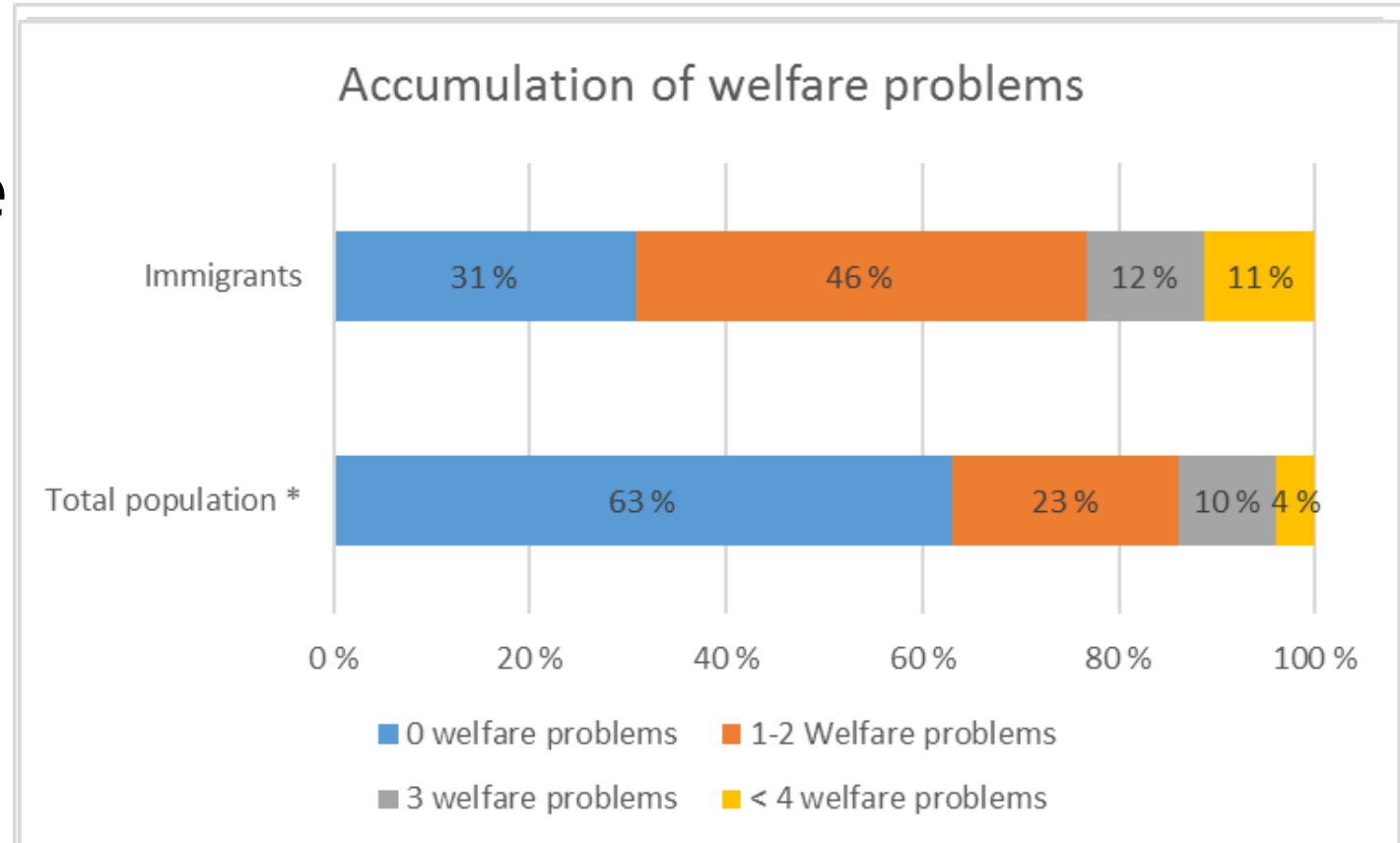
- Living condition survey from 2016 by Statistics Norway
- Sample of 4 435 immigrants
 - Background from Poland, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Eritrea and Somalia

Welfare problems:

- **Labour market**
 - No, or very low level of income from work
- **Health problems**
 - Long term illness/disability and injury restricting everyday activities
- **Economic difficulties**
 - Respondents reporting "very difficult for them to make ends meet". Cannot afford to keep house warm during winter.
- **Social isolation**
 - People without anyone to confide in or with low level of interpersonal trust
- **Mental health problems**
 - (Score < 2 on Hopkins Symptom Checklist)
- **Bad neighborhood**
 - Problems with crime/violence/vandalism or noise/pollution
- **Housing problems**
 - Owwercrowding

What did we find?

- Immigrants are experiencing more welfare problems than the rest of the population
- Overcrowding and low labour market attachment are the most common welfare problems for immigrants.
- Only 1/3 of immigrants are not facing any welfare problems. 2/3 in the total population



Source: Living conditions among immigrants 2016 and *EU-SILC 2015 (Barstad 2017)

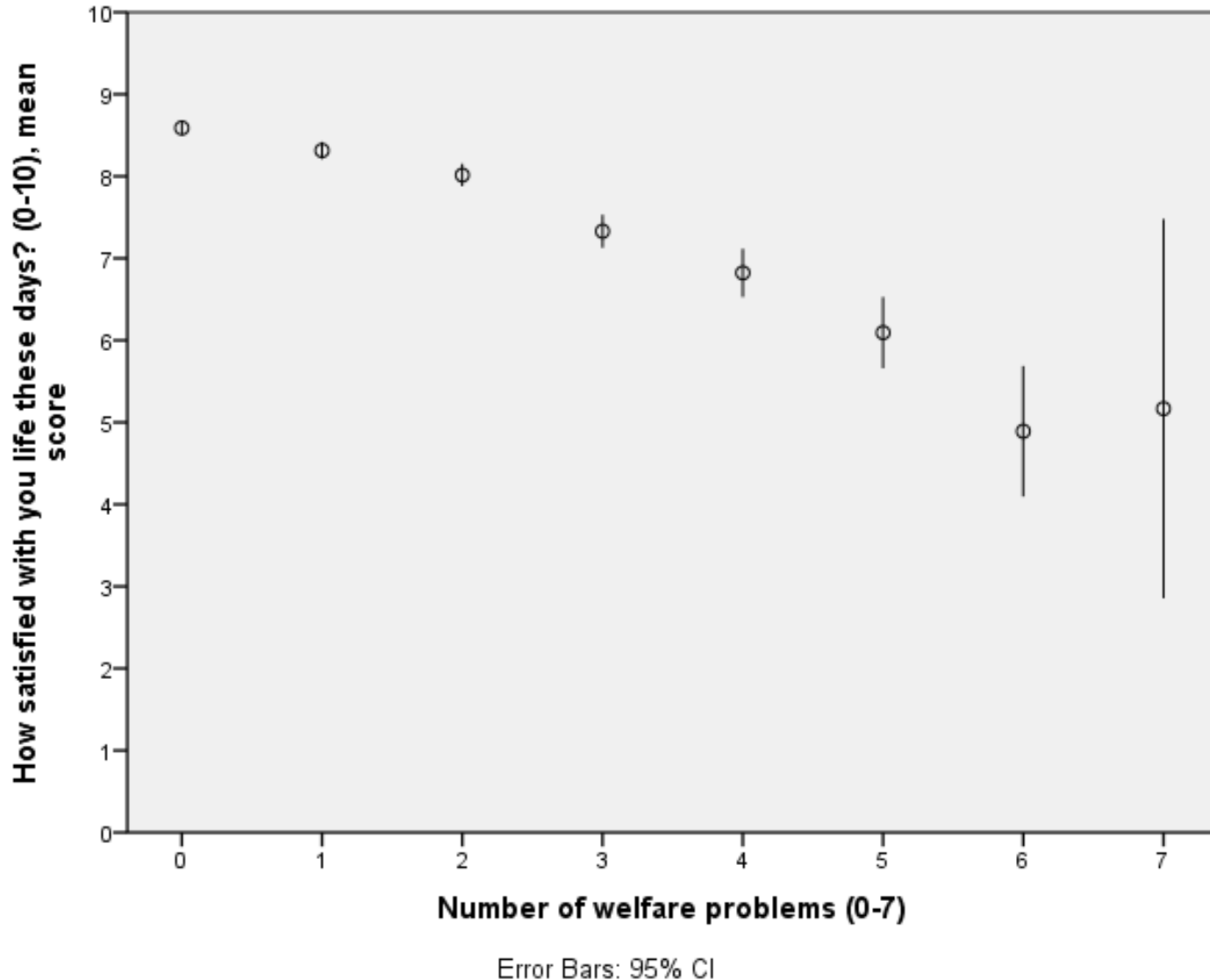
Results

- Women and older people have more welfare problems
- Educational level and duration of residence matter
- Immigrants residing in urban areas accumulate more welfare problems than immigrants in rural areas
- Singles with children do not have more welfare problems than couples with or without children among immigrants. Social policy works?
- European immigrants accumulate less welfare problems than non-western immigrants

Determinants of welfare problems among immigrants in Norway (low labour attachment omitted)

		Unstandardized Coefficient	
		B	t
	(Constant)	2,05	22,1
Gender (ref. men)	Women	0,11	2,8
Age		0,02	10,3
Educational (ref. primary school)	Secondary education	-0,09	-1,8
	Tertiary education	-0,30	-6,1
	Educational level NA.	-0,06	-1,0
Labour market	Employed	-0,60	-15,0
Domicile (ref. urban)	Rural	-0,28	-2,7
	Small city	-0,11	-2,5
	Medium	-0,15	-3,0
Duration of residence (ref. short)	Long	-0,44	-7,4
	Single with children	0,03	0,4
	Couples without children	-0,05	-0,6
Family situation (single no children)	Couples with children	0,06	1,3
	Other	-0,29	-3,0
	Poland	-0,52	-5,6
Country of origin (ref. Somalia)	Turkey	-0,02	-0,2
	Kosovo	-0,24	-2,7
	Eritrea	-0,20	-2,3
	Bosnia-Herzegovina	-0,30	-3,1
	Afghanistan	0,04	0,4
	Sri Lanka	-0,06	-0,7
	Iraq	0,26	2,9
	Iran	0,05	0,5
	Pakistan	-0,02	-0,2
	Vietnam	-0,30	-3,2
a Dependent Variable: Additive index welfare problems (0-6)			
p < ,01		R ² = ,148	

Welfare problems and life satisfaction



- Immigrants without any welfare problems are in general very satisfied with their life (mean score 8,6)
- One or more welfare problems reduce the life satisfaction significantly



Conclusion

- The analysis reveals that immigrants accumulate more welfare problems than the native population.
- Immigrants have much lower attachment to the labour market than the native population, and therefore much more economic problems.
- Economic hardship may impair the integration process. Scarce economic resources may exclude individuals from participating in activities and may lead individuals and families to live in bad neighborhoods. Economic stress may also lead to physical and mental health problems.
- Immigrants in Norway report high life satisfaction, but satisfaction decreases as welfare problems accumulate.
- Processes leading to inequality are complex and is a result of institutional factors, as well as the stress an individual suffers when experiencing hardship and worse living conditions relative to others. We need to know more about the actual process of accumulation of welfare problems.

Bivariate correlation

	Work	Health	Economy	Social isolation	Mental health p	Neighbourhood	Housing
Work	1						
Health	,318**	1					
Economy	,262**	,138**	1				
Social isolation	,147**	,073**	,185**	1			
Mental health problems	,218**	,343**	,213**	,118**	1		
Neighbourhood	,010	,073**	,054**	,033*	,122**	1	
Housing	,110**	,062**	,196**	,061**	,085**	,089**	1



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