



Scandinavia Today: Migration, Populism and Threats to the Welfare State

The fact that Denmark and Sweden experienced a need for foreign labor in the 20th century, allowed them to develop a broad welfare system based on principles of universalism and equality of rights since social differences were less marked. But as time went by, today migrants' high unemployment rates and participation in various social services and programs made them 'heavy' clients of the welfare system. Alongside these perceived economic burdens, the fear of cultural threat was invoked in both societies, as shared national identity is claimed to be the basis of the solidarity required to keep the welfare state going. As reported extensively by the public media outlets in recent years, these aforementioned economic and cultural concerns with regards to absorbing the new migrant populations have been advanced repeatedly by populist right-wing political elites in both countries, yielding electoral success and public support, also by more centrist-left sides of the political spectrum. These sentiments were voiced alongside others which called for a more humanitarian-based reception and multi-cultural social openness. This open lecture will shed light on the intriguing contemporary intersection between migration, welfare policies and populist sentiments in Sweden and Denmark and how these social components may be shaped and altered in the future.

HCGES Open Lecture

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**Staffan Jonsäter, Embassy of
Sweden in Tel Aviv**

Chair: Dr. Adi Hercowitz-Amir

Thursday, December 5

Library Auditorium, Room 146

**The Lecture will be held in English and
will be open for the public!**
