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What Accounts for the Variation of Immigration Policies in Western Democracies since 9/11?

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What Causes the Variation of Immigration Policies in Western Democracies?

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Honors Research Project

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I. Introduction

Across the globe, refugee crises are occurring in Central America, the Middle East, and Africa that significantly impact immigration policies in Western Democracies. These crises greatly affect countries' economies, national security, and resources. There is a significant variation of immigration policies within and between countries. For instance, several democracies have changed their approach to handling refugees because of the change of leadership along with other factors. This paper examines the variation of immigration policies and refugees admitted in the United States, Germany, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Italy since 9/11.

The United Nations estimates that “An unprecedented 70.8 million people around the world have been forced from home by conflict and persecution at the end of 2018” (United Nations). When these people flee their homes to seek refuge in other countries, they often face many dangers ahead and sometimes will not even make it to their desired destination. Several factors contribute to refugee migration, including, war, poverty, disease, natural disasters, and political instability. Most refugees come from three specific countries: Syria, South Sudan, and Afghanistan. (Angelica, et.al 2019). Since 2011, Syria has been engaged in a Civil War that has destroyed the country and its people. As noted by Fargues and Fandrich (2012),

...the Syrian regime has remained at the helm overseeing a conflict that has shifted from limited protest to all-out political struggle marked with the risks of ethno-sectarian civil war. It has claimed the lives of over 20,000 people and forced almost 400,000 Syrians to flee their homeland (p.1).

In South Sudan, two years after its establishment in 2011, violent attacks started to erupt that involved sexual assault, disease, and hunger. According to the USA for the office of the

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Refugee Agency, South Sudan is the largest refugee crisis in Africa and the third-largest refugee crisis in the world (2019). Recently, there has been a flow of persons from Central and South America seeking refuge in the United States and other neighboring countries. “By the end of 2018, more than 3 million Venezuelans had left their homes, travelling mainly towards Latin America and the Caribbean. It is the biggest exodus in the region’s recent history and one of the biggest displacement crises in the world” (Angelica et. al, 2019 p. 24). Thus, there is currently an abundant number of refugees coming from different locations and several democracies have various approaches to dealing with the issue.

This paper will examine the refugee acceptance rates of Italy, Germany, the United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States for several reasons. First, Italy has a direct impact of refugee flow through its country because of its location in the Mediterranean Sea. Second, Germany has become the desired endpoint for refugees, where before it was reluctant to accept refugees. Third, the United Kingdom is geographically separate from other parts of Europe, it left the European Union, and it is a culturally diverse country. Canada and the United States both have histories of accepting refugees; however, unlike European countries, they receive refugees from both the Western and Eastern Hemispheres.

Previous research has been conducted regarding a comparison of western democracies’ responses to refugees; however, there are some limitations in their research. Nicole Ostrand compared the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Sweden’s response to the Syrian refugee crisis. In her research, she identified three limitations. “First, there is a disparity in how the number of submitted asylum applications is calculated by states” (Ostrand, 2015, p.260). According to Ostrand’s research, these countries categorize asylum applications

differently, which makes it difficult to compare the four countries' approaches to refugees. The second limitation Ostrand discusses is that the European Union and the United States include different people in their statistics who are granted asylum. In these limitations, Ostrand includes definitions from Bitoulas (2015) and Martin and Yankay (2014). As mentioned by Bitoulas, "In the EU, a person granted asylum (referred to as a recipient of international protection), means an individual who has received refugee or subsidiary protection status" (as cited in Ostrand, 2015, p.261). However, the United States only includes Syrian refugees in their statistics based on the refugee standard. As claimed by Martin and Yankay, "In the United States, a person granted asylum (an asylee) generally refers to persons who received protection based on the refugee standard and does not include related forms of protection such as withholding of removal" (Ostrand, 2015, p. 261). Thus, the United States' data is narrower whereas the European Union's data is broader. Lastly, the United States reported the number of applicants during its fiscal year, while the European countries reported their numbers during the calendar year. Furthermore, there are limitations when it comes to conducting a comparison of other countries' responses to refugees.

Immigration is an important topic to research because of its influence it has on government and society. People migrate from other countries to seek religious freedom, greater economic opportunities, and safety. However, the inflow of persons can reduce job and housing availability, which can create resentment among different groups in a community. Hence, citizens often experience job loss because of immigrants. Moreover, all these countries set standards for other countries with regards to human rights. For instance, even though Canada and the United States are neighbors, they differ in their refugee acceptance rates. Also, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Italy are all located in different parts of Europe and have unique

demographics that influence their approaches to refugees. Since the 9/11 attacks in the United States, there has been a shift in national security and a rise in discrimination against Muslims. These two factors have impacted the United States’ approach to refugees within the last nineteen years. However, within those years, there have been changes in leadership and immigration policies in the United States.

II. Background: Immigration Trends

Immigration has always been a major issue in the United States because of its history. The country is built on its melting-pot culture and throughout the decades, immigrant statistics have dropped and risen. As represented in this graph below from the Migration Policy Institute, U.S. Refugee Admissions have significantly decreased since 1980.

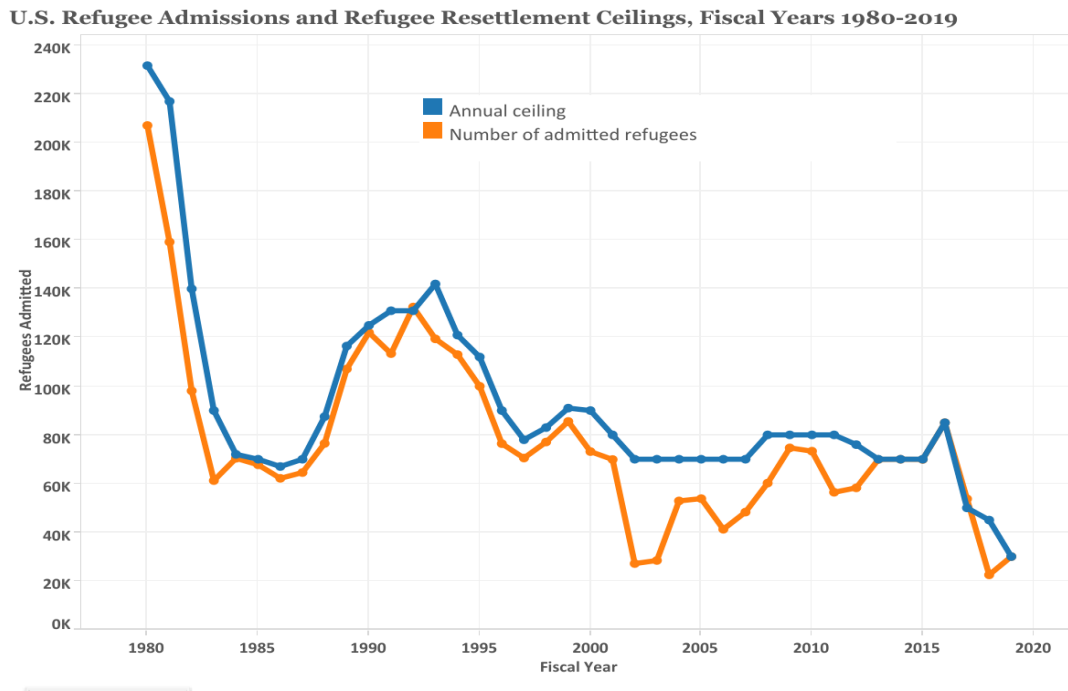


Figure 1. U.S. Refugee Admissions 1980-2019 (U.S. Immigration Trends, 2019).

Since 9/11, there has been a change in refugee acceptance rates in the United States because of stricter requirements for asylum. The 9/11 terrorist attacks caused political leaders to

strengthen national security, which ultimately impacted the number of refugees being admitted. As shown in *Figure 1*, in 2001, approximately 70,000 refugees were admitted to the United States but decreased to about 30,000 from 2002-2003. The Obama administration developed less restrictive policies, so the number of admitted refugees rose. For instance, in *Figure 1*, in 2007, there were approximately 50,000 refugees admitted then in 2009, about 70,000 were admitted. However, during the Obama administration, there were domestic terrorist attacks such as the Boston Marathon Bombings that raised a general fear of potential terrorists. Citing the fear of terrorist attacks, the next presidential administration implemented stricter refugee acceptance requirements.

During the beginning of the Trump administration, in 2017 President Trump signed Executive Order 13769: Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry, which prohibited persons from several countries into the Middle East from traveling to the United States. These countries included Syria, Sudan, Somalia, Yemen, Iran, Iraq, and Libya. According to Pierce and Meissner (2018), through the executive order, the refugee resettlement program was suspended for 120 days. Also, Syrian refugees were suspended from entry to the United States (Pierce & Meissner, 2018). Consequently, Trump's executive order has contributed to the decreased number of admitted and resettled refugees.

Besides the travel ban from seven countries, Executive Order 13769 has decreased the United States' resettled refugees by other means. For instance, the order prioritized resettlement for refugees who are fleeing their countries due to religious persecution. Before the order, "To be admitted as a refugee, individuals must demonstrate a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a social group. There is no preference based on the type of persecution suffered" (Pierce & Meissner, 2018, p. 3). Therefore,

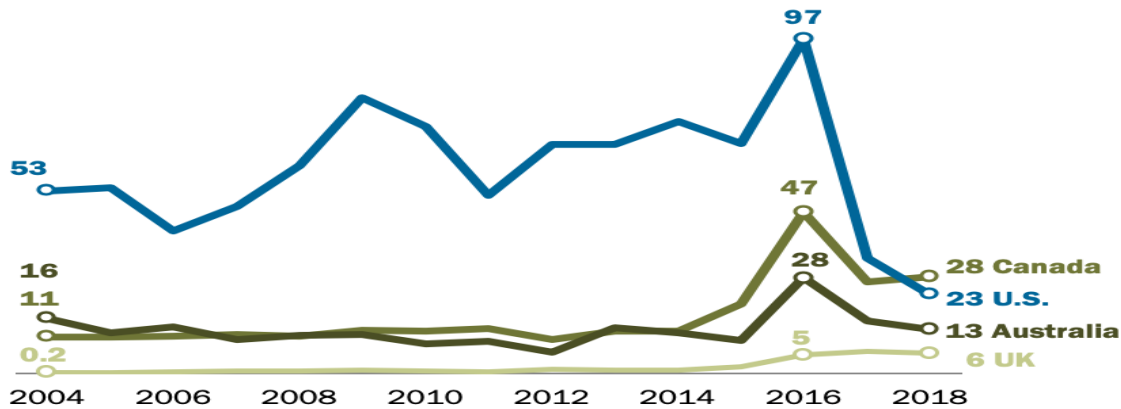
by prioritizing refugees based on one type of persecution, the United States admitted fewer refugees in 2017 and 2018. Additionally, the order allowed state jurisdictions to be involved in the determination of refugees' placements, whereas before, states were permitted with limited involvement (Pierce & Meissner, 2018). Moreover, the combination of these factors within Trump's executive order decreased the number of admitted and resettled refugees in the United States from previous years.

As noted by the Pew Research Center, "The slower pace of U.S. refugee admissions in fiscal 2018 is also because the current administration restricted admissions for several months as part of a review that resulted in tougher security screening measures." (Connor & Krogstad 2018). As seen in *Figure 1*, 2018 had the lowest number of admitted refugees in the United States since 1980 because of these restrictive policies. Furthermore, the administration eliminated Obama-era programs, hired more border-patrol officers, and eliminated categories for refugee acceptance. For instance, the Trump administration ended the Central American Minors Refugee and Parole Program. "The program was created by the Obama administration to allow parents lawfully present in the United States to request a refugee resettlement interview for their children if they are nationals of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras" (Pierce et.al, 2018 p. 17). Additionally, Trump started to build a wall on the U.S./Mexican border to deter refugees and immigrants from Central and South America from entering the country illegally. Yet, the data in *Figure 1* shows that there was not a significant increase of refugee acceptance rates that resulted from programs during the Obama administration. Furthermore, *Figure 1* explains the disparity of numbers among presidential administrations, starting from Ronald Reagan to Donald Trump. For over thirty years, the United States paved its way to resettle the most refugees than any other country but is now no longer the leader in refugee resettlement. As presented in the

graph below from the Pew Research Center, in 2018 Canada resettled the most refugees instead of the United States.

U.S. refugee resettlement drops, falling below Canada in 2018

Number of resettled refugees, in thousands



Note: Nations shown are top four resettlement countries. Complete data for UK prior to 2004 is not available through the UNHCR. Figures rounded to the nearest thousand. Source: Pew Research Center analysis of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees data, accessed June 12, 2019.

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Figure 2: Refugee Resettlements from 2004 to 2018 (Radford & Connor, 2019).

The findings in *Figure 2* exhibits the United States resettling fewer refugees in 2018 than in 2016. Furthermore, refugees must be granted asylum first before they can be resettled, so if there are fewer applications, fewer refugees will be resettled (Amnesty International, 2019). The data from *Figure 2* shows that Canada and the United Kingdom also resettled fewer refugees in 2018 than 2016, so the United States was not the only country to resettle fewer refugees. However, from 2004 to 2015, the number of resettled refugees has remained constant in the United Kingdom, except for a slight increase in 2016 as shown in *Figure 2*. Additionally, from 2012- 2014, Germany granted asylum to 39, 965 Syrian refugees, whereas the United Kingdom granted 3,548 and the United States granted 1,986 (Ostrand, 2015). Besides, resettled refugee

numbers, the number of accepted refugees has differed little in the United Kingdom from 2004-2018. For instance, in 2007, 5,903 asylum applications were granted and in 2018, 5,818 applications were granted. (Sturge, 2019, p.9). However, from 2004-2018, the highest number of granted applications was 15,414 in 2015. (Sturge, 2019, p.9). Therefore, both the resettlement and granted application rates in the United Kingdom have remained fairly constant from 2004-2018. Additionally, in 2019 the United Kingdom granted 15,000 while Italy granted 18,400, and Germany granted 70,300 on basis of first instance decisions. (Sturge, 2019, p. 22). Furthermore, out of the European countries, the United Kingdom granted asylum to the least amount of people in 2019.

From 2004 to 2016 the United States resettled more refugees than Canada and the United Kingdom. However, when President Trump was elected, he changed policies and permitted fewer refugees to stay in the United States. As noted previously, Trump's Executive Order temporarily banned the resettlement program for 120 days, which contributed to the decrease in resettlement numbers. Also, other countries surpassed the United States' resettlement numbers per capita. For instance, "Canada led the world on this measure by resettling 756 refugees per million residents" (Radford & Connor, 2019). Nevertheless, other factors contribute to the United States' decline in refugee resettlement. As noted by the Pew Research Center, "The decline in refugee resettlement comes as the global refugee population increased by 2.75 million, and reached a record in 19.9 million in 2017, according to UNHCR. This exceeds the high in 1990, following the fall of the Berlin Wall" (Connor and Krogstad, 2018). The number of refugees has significantly increased over the past couple of decades, even surpassing the fall of the Soviet regime. Furthermore, the resettlement process can take months because refugees must be approved before they are entered into a country. Therefore, the rise of refugees slows down

the resettlement process. Although the United States resettled fewer refugees in 2018, it still surpassed the number in other countries such as the United Kingdom. Even though the United States has admitted fewer refugees in the past couple of years, it is still a country that is built on immigration whereas in other countries, like Germany, recently started accepting refugees.

As mentioned previously, there are more refugees than in recent decades, however, compared in 2018, several countries received fewer asylum applications. Based on the graph below from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United States received the most asylum applications, surpassing Canada, Italy, and Germany. Unlike the European countries, the United States is near Central America and South America, so it receives many asylum applications from Venezuela and nearby countries. Also, as mentioned before, the United States has been a land of immigration since its establishment, which is why it receives asylum applications from the Middle East. Therefore, the combination of applications from the Middle East and Central America contributes to the United States leading the number of asylum applications.

Major recipient countries of new asylum applications | 2017-2018

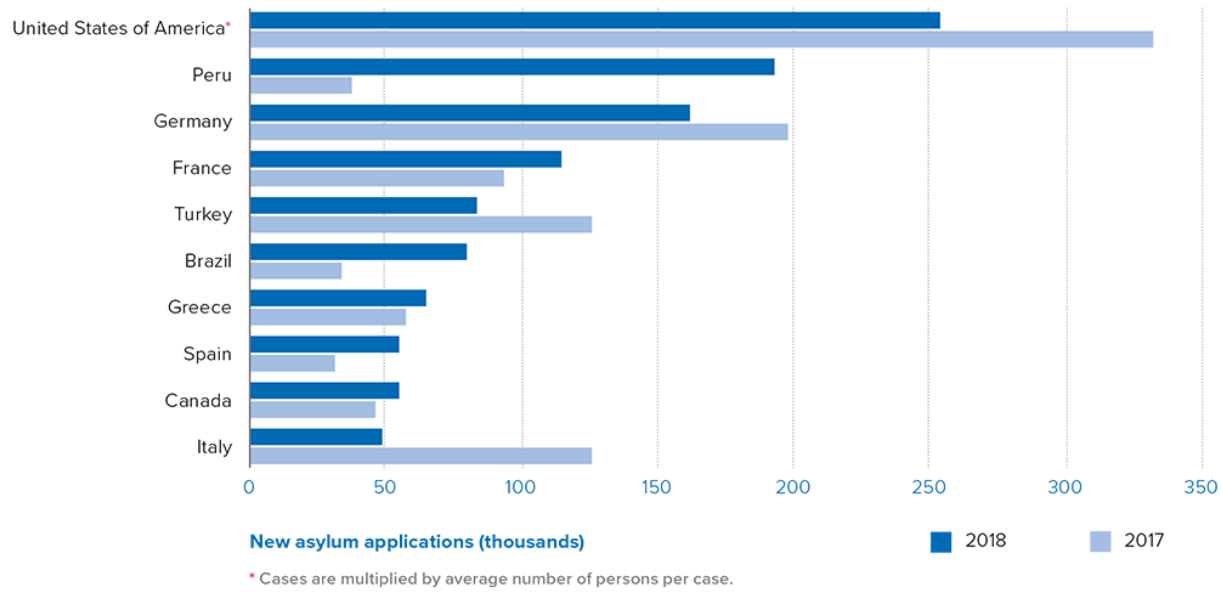


Figure 3: Countries that received the most asylum applications 2017-2018 (Angelica et. al 2019 p. 43).

Nevertheless, *Figure 3* shows that Germany received the second-highest asylum applications, which is contributed to its recent willingness to host refugees in the last couple of years. In comparison, Canada received more applications in 2018 than 2017, unlike the United States, Germany, and Italy. However, in the last couple of years, Germany’s and Italy's asylum applications have decreased while the applications in the United Kingdom have increased based on Sturge (2019) findings. Furthermore, in 2017, Italy received 128,900 asylum applications while Germany received 222,600 and the United Kingdom received 34,800. (Sturge, 2019, p.19). However, in 2019, Italy received 43,800 applications, Germany received 165,600 applications and the United Kingdom received 44,800 applications. (Sturge, 2019, p.19). Moreover, the United Kingdom and Canada have seen a surge in their asylum applications while, Italy, the United States, and Germany has not.

Research conducted by the United Nations shows that currently, Germany is one of the top refugee-hosting countries, where there are about 1.1 million refugees (United Nations). However, Germany did not consider itself to be an immigrant country for most of the 20th century but had guest-worker programs. These programs consisted of foreign laborers who fulfilled the lack of workers in Germany. “Millions of so-called guestworkers, mostly unskilled laborers from Italy, Turkey, Spain, and Greece, arrived in the economic boom years between 1955 and the early 1970s” (Rietig & Müller, 2017). Soon after, Germany ended its guest worker program and adopted restrictive policies in the 1990s. “In 1993, the state continued to intensify the restrictive policy, thus adopting the Asylum Seekers’ Benefits Act, which separated welfare provisions for asylum seekers from general welfare, therefore regularly providing most benefits in kind on a minimum level only” (Muzalevskaya 2016 p.19). Germany during that time made it difficult for refugees to gain access to asylum and limited the amount of welfare they would receive. One reason Germany now accepts many refugees is because of their aging population as, “demographic change and a shrinking population brought about the realization that Germany needed to attract skilled foreign workers if it wanted to maintain its economic standing and generous welfare system” (Rietig & Müller, 2017). Germany’s population lacks young skilled laborers that can support its economy, so Germany’s Chancellor Angela Merkel saw the refugee crisis as a solution. Nevertheless, not every European country has this philosophy in mind when dealing with refugees.

Some countries receive more of an influx of refugees compared to others because of their geographic location. Since Italy is in the Mediterranean Sea, it is a major port of entry for refugees to enter Europe. However, Italy has recently become a refugee-hosting country and thus, is unclear in how to best handle the crisis. For instance, “In Italy alone, 154,000 asylum

seekers and migrants arrived in 2015 and 181,000 in 2016” (Scotto, 2017). This represents the rapid growth of asylum seekers in a country that historically was not a major location for refugees. Also, many refugees use Italy as a pathway to northern European countries like Germany.

As Catarci (2016) notes,

Furthermore, many of the asylum seekers arriving in Italy aim to reach northern European countries in search of better working and social conditions, but the European Dublin Regulation imposes that the state through which the asylum seeker first entered becomes the member state responsible for the examination of his or her asylum claim in Europe (p. 25).

Nevertheless, many neighboring countries to Italy have imposed stronger border controls, leaving Italy to handle the major flow of refugees with little assistance from the European Union. In the past couple of years, there were several cases when Italy blocked ships loaded with migrants. For instance, in 2018, Italy blocked a ship that contained over 600 migrants, because of its populist government. (Pianigiani et. al 2018). Italy’s foreign minister, Matteo Salvini, made immigration reform a priority since Italy was receiving an increase of persons seeking refuge, which has not happened in decades. Furthermore, Salvini’s policies included, “In addition to closing ports to migrants, he has ushered through a law imposing fines of up to \$57,000 for boat captains and owners who dock in Italy without permission” (Parker, 2019). Overall, compared to other European countries, Italy has stricter refugee policies, since it is near countries where refugees come from.

III. Explaining the variation in Refugee Trends

Several variables influence the disparity in refugee acceptance rates among democracies. Policy changes through political parties, the court system, labor shortages, and population demographics are variables that impact a country's refugees acceptance rates. Therefore, the dependent variable that this paper is focusing on is refugee acceptance rates.

Court System

Hamlin (2012) examines the differences in refugee status determination (RSD) in the United States and Canada. Hamlin argues that the court system is an independent variable for the variation for refugee acceptance rates. Hence, her research includes noteworthy theories that explain the disparity in policies. First, "Domestic divergence theory is right to suggest that we cannot assume this shift to be uniform or international human rights law to work the same in every place it settles" (Hamlin, 2012, p. 962). This theory is applicable because different democracies have unique demographics and different forms of government (parliamentary and presidential) that prevent the same international law to be effective. For instance, a law in the United States and the United Kingdom will not have the same impact nor will it be enforced the same because they have different types of government. The United States' legislative branch operates independently of the executive, unlike in the United Kingdom, where the executive leader is the prime minister who is a member of parliament. Moreover, the differences in court systems influence the disparity in refugee numbers.

Policy Changes through Political Parties

Wike et. al (2016), analysis of European views towards refugees includes partisan divides. "For instance, fears that the surge of refugees will lead to more terrorism and harm the economy are considerably more widespread among supporters of the UK Independence Party (UKIP)..." (Wike et. al, 2016, p. 7). Moreover, parties that are governing a country influence a

country's refugee acceptance rates. Additionally, political parties' different policies create a variety of refugee acceptance rates from previous years. Woroby (2015) examination of immigration reform in Canada and the United States includes the changes in government that affected refugee acceptance rates. When new leaders are elected, they add changes to previous policies or create new ones. Additionally, some countries like the United States, have different branches of government that oversee the other branches of government. Likewise, these branches contain different leaders that are from different parties and thus, have different approaches to refugees. Woroby (2015) presents several examples of immigration reform attempts that failed to become valid laws in the United States after 9/11. For instance, S. Bill 744: The Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act. "This bill addressed many aspects of immigration, including border and enforcement issues, the legalization of the undocumented who arrived as minors..." (Woroby, 2015, p.432). Although the bill passed in the Senate, it was never voted upon in the House of Representatives due to partisan differences. Moreover, Woroby's inclusion of this bill represents the difficulty of passing legislation in the United States, compared to Canada. She notes that the United States "Unlike in Canada, there is no parliamentary system where a Minister of Immigration...can issue Orders in Council and make significant changes to existing laws" (Woroby 2015, p.432). Throughout her study, Woroby notes the fact that the presidential system in the United States prevents legislative independence because of the oversight from the other branches of government. Furthermore, Woroby (2015) research presents the growth and the decline of immigration policies that occur due to a change of leadership.

Population Demographics

The age and homogeneity of a population influence the variation of acceptance rates among countries. Momin (2017) examines the United States' and Germany's response to the Syrian refugee crisis. Moreover, Momin compares the two countries and their rationale for the numbers of refugees they admitted throughout the last couple of years. In this study, Momin (2017) explains that the prospects of admitting younger refugees arguably has a stronger economic impact for Germany because of its aging worker population. However, Momin (2017), notes the difficulties for refugees to enter the German workforce,

An issue with this economic rationale is that although most of the Syrians entering Germany are in their 20s and 30s, the refugees barely speak German or English and do not have the skills or qualifications desired by the German labor market. (p.70).

Thus, based on Momin's study, economic prosperity had a small role in Germany's decision to accept 1 million refugees, but it was not the sole reason. However, this is an example of how population demographics is an independent variable for governments to admit more refugees. Some countries with a homogenous population, such as white Christian, view refugees as a threat to their culture. Holmes and Castañeda (2016), analyze the effects that population demographics have on European countries' approaches to refugees. For instance, the two authors emphasize that refugees are often seen as a threat to some European countries' cultures. "On a related note, the UK Independent Party leader recently stated that the refugee crisis is a 'conspiracy to make Europe more multicultural' with 'multicultural' framed as a threat" (Ross, 2015, as cited in Holmes & Castañeda, 2016, p. 18). Unlike other countries such as the United States and Canada, European countries are rooted in maintaining their white, Christian population. However, Holmes and Castañeda (2016) note that some European countries, like

Germany, are trying to evolve and are willing to welcome refugees. Moreover, some countries see refugees as a threat to their culture and homogenous population.

Labor Shortages

Some countries are experiencing a shortage of laborers and thus need refugees to fill those vacancies. Kancs et.al (2018) analysis emphasizes that refugees provide economic benefits to EU countries by decreasing labor shortages. “By and large, from this analysis we can see that, if the EU economy would expand through the integration of refugees into the labour market, then economic benefits would be eventually greater than fiscal costs” (Kancs et.al, 2018, p. 2613). Additionally, Wike et. al (2016), includes that Germany views refugees will improve its country because of their contribution to the labor market, whereas Italians feel refugees will take away employment opportunities. However, Momin (2017) argues that economic factors did not have a strong role in the United States’ accepting refugees. For instance, “However, because U.S. public opinion fears that immigrants and other migrant communities are taking jobs away from U.S. citizens, it is unlikely that this argument could have persuaded the government to take on Syrian refugees” (Momin, 2017, p. 76). Moreover, it is plausible to presume that countries like Germany, have accepted more refugees than the United States to increase laborers.

IV. Hypotheses and Model

As mentioned previously, this paper analyzes what accounts for the variation of refugee acceptance rates in Western Democracies since 9/11. Specifically, policies that deal with refugees. Several hypotheses can arise from this research question because of all the different independent variables.

1. If a country’s economy is experiencing labor shortages, it will be more likely to accept refugees.

This is a positive relationship because these countries wish to strengthen their economies, so they will accept more refugees.

2. If a country has a high percentage of people over 60, it will be more likely to accept refugees.

For instance, if a country needs younger workers, it is more willing to accept refugees. Some countries have an aging population and have more retired people than people who are capable of working. This prompts a country to open its borders, so it can have more workers to support its economy. Therefore, this is a positive relationship because job vacancies will cause countries to create policies that will increase their refugee acceptance rates.

3. If a country has a homogenous population, it will be less likely to accept refugees.

Some countries have more ethnically diverse populations, which can correlate to their high numbers of admitted refugees. This is a negative relationship because if countries have homogenous populations, they will implement strict policies, so fewer refugees are admitted.

4. If a country is led by a Conservative government, it will be less likely to accept refugees.

Therefore, a reason the number of accepted refugees fluctuates in the United States is that each newly elected President is from a different political party and has different approaches. This hypothesis is also applicable to Canada, Italy, and the United Kingdom because these countries have experienced changes in leadership.

5. If a country has a complex court system, it will have a decreasing rate of accepted refugees.

Therefore, a country's court system impacts the number of persons who are permitted refuge. Furthermore, the relationship between these variables is both a positive and a negative depending on the court system. If the court system's procedure with refugees is efficient and accepts more refugees, then it is a positive relationship.

V. **Research Design**

To measure these independent variables, this paper will conduct qualitative research by analyzing literature that takes these variables into account. Hence, the four independent variables that will be studied include political parties, labor shortages, population demographics, and court systems. Likewise, the dependent variable measured is the acceptance rates of refugees. There were about 20 works of literature utilized, including comparative analyzations, policy briefs, and case studies. For this research, the peer-reviewed articles are published in 2007 and the following years. The rationale for this is to have updated information and a long enough period to witness changes over time. Moreover, my research question focuses on the variation of acceptance rates after the 9/11 attacks, which occurred in 2001. Also, the articles were selected if the independent variables were focused throughout the article and if there was a comparison between countries or leaders within a country. Additionally, an issue brief about Trump's Executive Order 13769, written by Pierce and Meissner (2018) was used to summarize the conditions and rationale of the order. Also, Kalkmann (2019) report on Germany's asylum procedure was to test the fifth hypothesis. Additionally, population statistics from the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2017) was used to measure which country had the oldest population. Hence, qualitative research is imperative for this research because the hypotheses test the motivation for refugee acceptance rates. One possible limitation of this research method is it is difficult to determine causality because there are many underlying reasons for the development of certain

policies. Also, there is a limitation to research regarding Italy's court system and its impact on refugee acceptance rates. To begin, this analysis will test the correlation between labor shortages and high numbers of refugee acceptance rates.

1st Hypothesis: If a country is experiencing labor shortages, it will be more likely to accept refugees.

First, this paper will test if countries will accept fewer refugees, so the country can gain more workers from refugees. After the European Union expanded its membership to Eastern European countries, Prime Minister Blair enforced refugee policies to benefit the United Kingdom's economy. According to Wagner (2012), "Tony Blair believed that by opening up the United Kingdom's labor market to the Eastern European citizens of the European Union, he could fill low-skilled jobs with migrants from these countries" (p. 31). The United Kingdom has accepted refugees to fill low-skilled job vacancies. Therefore, because the United Kingdom needs more workers to maintain its growing economy, it will continue to accept refugees. However, some countries do not feel the need to fill jobs with refugee workers.

After the recession (2008-2009), Italy was hit financially hard and since then, there has been high unemployment. Dixon et.al (2018) conducted surveys that analyzed Italy's beliefs towards refugees, where they found economic factors played an important role. "Given these findings, few Italians support the passage of special labour laws or regulations to help refugees find work" (Dixon et.al, 2018, p. 87). This public unfavourability against the passage of laws to assist refugees could be an explanation as to why Italian leaders have sent refugee ships back. Additionally, Dixon et.al (2018) note,

Despite support for asylum in principle, Italians are much less supportive of receiving more refugees in the current environment. This reflects a combination of factors, such as

perceptions of Italy's economic weakness, the challenges associated with absorbing the large intake of migrants in recent years, and the fact that many asylum seekers who have come across the Mediterranean do not qualify as refugees under international law (p.92).

This finding provides an excellent perspective as to Italy's hesitation to accept as many refugees as countries like Germany. A huge influx of refugees can be overwhelming to some countries, especially those who are not economically equipped to handle them. Moreover, "Within the gap of a few years, the refugee crisis overlapped with the economic crisis" (Federico & Maggini, 2018, p. 363). In contrast, Germany, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States have strong economies that can support major flows of refugees. However, Germany is experiencing high levels of labor shortages, which is a reason that it accepted more refugees than the other countries. Furthermore, Italy has faced challenges with dealing with the mass migration of refugees in the last couple of years, which explains their adoption of restrictive policies.

In comparison, the United States is not experiencing a labor shortage, but rather an unwillingness to work for low wages. "When employers today complain of a 'labor shortage', what they really mean is there are not enough Americans willing to work at the wage employers want to pay" (Richwine, 2019, p.2). Therefore, the United States has not resettled nor accepted as many refugees as Germany for example, because there is not a labor shortage in the country. Additionally, Cappelli (2015) explains that "These arguments are puzzling in part because the basic claim that the population and potential labor force is or will be shrinking seems to be a simple misreading of the facts: Only the rate of increase in the labor force was expected to slow, assuming baby boomers did not delay retirement..." (p. 256). Furthermore, the United States does not accept refugees because it needs to fill job vacancies, but unlike Italy, it has a strong enough economy to support them.

Canada, however, is experiencing a labor shortage and has created programs to incorporate refugees into its labor market. For instance, the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* of 2002, the Federal Skilled Trades Program, and other immigrant programs were created to combat job vacancies and integrate immigrants into the market. (Ferrer et. al, 2014). Moreover, "...the possibility of a looming general labour shortage associated with the aging of the population, increased retirement levels and rising replacement demand" (Ferrer et. al, 2014, p. 16) has contributed to Canada's policy implementations and consistent acceptance of refugees. Therefore, it can be confirmed that there is a correlation between labor shortages and high numbers of resettlement/acceptance of refugees in Canada.

2nd Hypothesis: If a country has a high percentage of people 60 or over, it will be more likely to accept refugees.

Besides, the need to fill low-skilled jobs, refugees offer other economic benefits to countries as well. Some countries have an aging population, where there are more elderly people and fertility rates are decreased. For instance, in Germany, "Population aging is a severe problem for the German welfare state. In contrast to other Northern or Western European countries or to the United States, fertility levels in Germany are low..." (Kluge, 2013, p. 38). Germany has a huge economy, which requires a lot of laborers; however, with an aging population, it is difficult to fill job vacancies. "In Europe in particular, there are large skill gaps that migrants can fill, especially since the European birth rate is falling and the population is aging" (Karyotis, 2007, p. 10). Thus, with low fertility rates, the population in Germany is getting older, with more people retired than able to work. Therefore, there is a correlation between an aging population and relaxed border policies. In contrast, the United States is not experiencing an aging population as severe as European countries, so it does not need as many

foreign laborers. According to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2017), in 2017, 22% of the United States population was 60 years and older, while Germany's was 28%, Italy's 29%, Canada's 23%, and the United Kingdom was 24%. Moreover, out of all the countries, the United States has the youngest population, whereas Italy has the oldest. This correlates to Canada resettling more refugees in 2018 than the United States. However, as mentioned in the background section, the United States accepted more refugees than Italy and the United Kingdom. Therefore, other factors besides an aging population, contribute to Italy and the United Kingdom admitting fewer refugees than the other countries. Furthermore, Germany's aging population correlates to its flexible refugee policies.

3rd Hypothesis: If a country has a homogenous population, it will be less likely to accept refugees.

Lombardi-Diop and Romeo (2015) discuss the impact that Italy's post-colonial culture has on its refugee policies. Italy's culture places importance on its unity and homogeneity. "Italy's historical internal fractures and the formation of a sense of belonging based on racial and religious self-definitions all contribute to Italy's polarised opposition to the entry and settling of migrants and refugees" (Lombard-Diop & Romeo, 2015, p. 368). The recent refugee crisis consists of persons from different countries, religions, and different ethnicities. Furthermore, it is plausible to presume that this cultural identity is the causation of Italy's reluctance to accept more refugees.

Besides, Italy, other countries have homogenous populations that impact their rates of admitted refugees. According to Gören (2013) case study on the economic effects of countries' diversity, European countries are more culturally homogenous than countries in the Americas, like Canada and the United States. Although, Germany is a culturally homogeneous country,

within the last couple of years it has made attempts to accept more refugees. In the United Kingdom, asylum seekers are viewed as a threat to British identity.

Innes (2010) notes that,

The Government's White Paper in 2002, *Secure Borders, Safe Haven*, is representative of the transition in the construction of the asylum seekers as a homogeneous collective that presents a threat to British identity...The White Paper focuses heavily on the need to strengthen 'British identity' and 'sense of belonging', with immigrants being presented as a threat to both of these (p. 472).

This is an example of the United Kingdom's government incorporating its priority of nativism into its immigration policy. Moreover, the United Kingdom's homogenous population is inflicted on its refugee acceptance numbers. Another instance the United Kingdom did this was, "The 'Asylum Tribunal' was formed as part of the 2004 Immigration and Asylum Act and there is no right to appeal in any human rights or asylum claim that is deemed unfounded" (Innes, 2010, p. 473). Thus, this act was created to limit the number of refugees to be admitted to the United Kingdom. Therefore, this correlates to the low numbers of accepted refugees in Italy and the United Kingdom compared to other countries. Even though prejudice exists in the United States and Canada, they are still willing to accept refugees because they have accepted immigrants since their founding. Moreover, a country's demographics influence the flexibility of policies that it will implement.

4th Hypothesis: If a country is led by a Conservative government, it will be less likely to accept refugees.

A change in leadership significantly alters many policies, which impact a country's acceptance rates. Policies will be altered even further if the new leader is from a different

political party than the previous one. Conservative leaders around the world have placed a priority in strengthening their national security by admitting fewer refugees since most are from countries where terrorist organizations are based. In the United States, this correlation is evident. According to Bruno (2014), By law, the annual number of refugee admissions and the allocation of these numbers by region of the world are set by the President after consultation with Congress” (p. 1). As mentioned previously, there has been a variation in the number of admitted refugees among the presidential administrations. When Republican George W. Bush was President from 2001-2009, he enacted strict immigration policies that reduced refugee admissions. After the 9/11 attacks, fear of terrorism and prejudice of Middle Eastern persons rose, so Bush amended the refugee program to avoid backlash. “The U.S. refugee program was greatly impacted by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. In the aftermath of those attacks, a review of refugee-related security procedures was undertaken, refugee admissions were briefly suspended, and enhanced security measures were implemented” (Bruno, 2014, p. 2). After 9/11, the Bush Administration passed two acts that significantly reduced refugee admissions. These acts aimed to strengthen national security and to prevent future terrorist attacks by foreigners. According to Keith and Holmes, 2009, as cited in Barkdull et. al (2012),

The USA PATRIOT Act of 2001 and the Real ID Act of 2005 were officially passed to prevent future acts of terrorism on U.S. soil and to formalize immigration as a national defense concern, but the unintentional consequences meant that refugee protections were undermined even though public safety was not always well-served (p.109).

These two pieces of legislation enlarged the requirements to be considered a terrorist, which resulted in more deportations and less protection for refugees. The PATRIOT Act labeled more groups as terrorists and intensified security in the United States. In its provisions, the Act

excluded the protection of those who received material support that could be considered terrorist activity. (Bardull et.al, 2012). The REAL ID Act caused more deportations due to its expansion of the terrorist admissibility bar. After the 9/11 attacks, Conservative leaders prioritized strengthening the country's national security, which impacted refugees. However, Liberal leaders like Obama, continued to accept more refugees, even when terrorist attacks were happening, such as the Paris attacks and the Boston Marathon attack. For instance, in 2017, through Executive Order 13769, Trump lowered refugee admission numbers set by Obama from 110,000 to 50,000 (Pierce & Meissner, 2018). This executive order is an example of the changes that are made to refugee admission rates when designated by a different party. Trump signed this order within the first month of his administration and was from a different party than Obama. Additionally, the purpose of Trump's executive order on the travel ban was to detect persons that were terrorists from entering the country.

According to Pierce and Meissner (2018),

The executive order asserts that numerous foreign-born individuals have been convicted or implicated in terrorism-related crimes since 9/11, and that the United States must be vigilant during the visa-issuance process to ensure that those approved for admission do not intend harm and have no ties to terrorism (p.1).

Trump's travel ban is an excellent example of when leaders enact strict refugee policies to avoid terrorist attacks. Moreover, the fear of domestic terrorist attacks in the U.S. prompted the Trump administration to prohibit persons from Middle Eastern countries that have large amounts of refugees, such as Sudan and Syria, from entering the United States. Nevertheless, Trump's conservative ideology influenced him to enact this order and set a lower number of admitted refugees than Obama. Additionally, Trump's efforts to build a wall on the United

States' Mexican border represents his conservative values. Furthermore, there is a correlation between the President's party and the number of admitted refugees set by the President.

The United Kingdom has experienced a variation in handling refugees, even among members of the same party. This is evident when comparing Prime Minister Tony Blair and Prime Minister Gordon Brown. Although both men were members of the Labour Party, they adopted different policies, which is explained by Wagner (2012).

According to Wagner (2012),

Tony Blair's governments were much more concerned with issues pertaining to asylum seekers, and adopted the idea of deterring asylum seekers, while simultaneously encouraging economic migration into the United Kingdom. Under Gordon Brown's government, he dealt with issues concerning the new points-based visa system and questions revolving around past and present issues of British citizenship (p.39).

Blair and Brown implemented different policies because of the circumstances during the times as Prime Minister. Brown led the United Kingdom during a Recession, while Blair was in office for a longer-term. Also, Blair was Prime Minister when the 9/11 attacks occurred, which explains his enactment of stricter policies and a low number of admitted refugees. Additionally, Blair was Prime Minister during the suicide bomber attacks in London in 2005. When David Cameron was Prime Minister of the U.K. from 2010- 2016, he was a member of the Conservative Party and was reluctant to increase refugee admission rates. "The British government, under the leadership of Prime Minister David Cameron, has vowed to reduce net migration numbers, and resettling a large number of Syrian refugees could be perceived as contradictory to this goal" (Watt and Mason 2014, as cited by Ostrand, 2015, p. 272). Therefore, Cameron's membership in the Conservative party influenced his hesitation to admit more

refugees. Thus, political parties contribute to the variation of refugee admissions because of different beliefs and different events.

Canada witnessed a drastic change of leadership since 9/11, which resulted in a variation of refugee policies. A transition from a Liberal to a Conservative government significantly alters refugee admissions because of law changes. Starting, “In 2001, the Liberal government’s Minister of Immigration Elinor Caplan passed the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (Bill C-11). Section 11 (1) stated that all foreign nationals shall be issued immigration visas if they pay a small fee and meet the requirements of the Act...” (Grubel, 2013, p. 20). This legislation increased the number of people that were eligible for asylum protection. From 2001 to 2006, Canada was ruled by a Liberal government, but from 2006 to 2015, Canada was ruled by a Conservative government. When Jason Kenney became Minister of Citizenship, Immigration, Culturalism in 2006, he implemented changes to previous policies, since he was part of the majority Conservative government. For instance, Kenney adopted a policy that confronted the issue of refugees entering Canada in large groups. “Under the new provisions, the Minister of Public Safety can declare such individuals ‘irregular arrivals’ and have them detained” (Grubel, 2013, p. 26). This is one example of a restrictive policy that resulted in a change in government leadership. From the late ’90s to 2008, Canada’s refugee process was lengthy, where refugees would be denied asylum and would wait for years for an appeal (Woroby 2015). After Jason Kenney was appointed as Minister of Immigration, Canada’s refugee process became more efficient. “Beginning in 2010, the Canadian government launched a series of changes to Canada’s refugee policies, including the 2012 Protecting Canada’s Immigration System Act (Bill C-31) and The Balanced Refugee Reform Act” (Woroby, 2015 p. 437). Based on Woroby (2015) analysis, those two acts decreased the length of an appeals process but increased the number of

deportations because it was created during a conservative government. This is an example of how a change of the majority political party influences the number of denied asylum applications and deportations. Also, Kenney implemented a policy that shortened the length of time for court hearings for persons who are from countries that have no human rights violations. (Grubel, 2013, p. 26). Additionally, under this policy, Kenney gained the ability to declare those countries as designated countries of origin. These policy changes explain the correlation between conservative leadership and decreased refugee acceptance rates.

In the last several years, Italy has witnessed a change in leadership, which has affected its approach to the refugee crisis. From 2014- 2016, under the leadership of Prime Minister Renzi, a member of the Centre-Right Party, Italy rescued refugees that were near the Italian border of the Mediterranean (Quaranta & Martini, 2019). Later, under different leadership, Italy started to send refugee ships back, instead of willingly accepting them. For instance, in 2018, Matteo Salvini became the Interior Minister and was a member of the Northern League, a conservative party. According to Quaranta and Martini (2019), “The process of more exclusory policy eventually culminated during the first Conte government and Salvini’s doctrine of strengthening the sanctions on non-governmental boats that take migrants rescued in the Mediterranean sea to Italy (June 2018-August 2019)” (p. 134). In 2018, Italy’s refusal to accept refugee ships became known worldwide, which was a result of its conservative leadership. However, Germany’s Chancellor, Angela Merkel has a liberal approach towards refugees even though she is a member of the Christian Democratic Union (a center-right party). Therefore, in all the countries discussed except for Germany, conservative leaders accept fewer refugees than liberal leaders.

5th Hypothesis: If a country has a complex court system, it will have a decreasing rate of accepted refugees.

A country's court system significantly impacts the country's refugee process in several ways. This paper will test whether a complex court system decreases the rate of accepted refugees. The foundation of the United States court system slows the process for people receiving asylum for several reasons. Kerwin (2012), study presents the barriers to asylum eligibility. For instance, the "IIRIRA added the requirement that asylum-seekers file their claims within one year of entry" (Kerwin, 2012, p. 22). The Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRIRA) has contributed to the decrease of admitted asylum seekers because many are unable to file within one year. Furthermore, the failure to meet the deadline has been attributed to the immigration case backloads.

In the U.S. court system, a normal asylum case goes through the expedited removal process. "In some cases, however, the master calendar hearing (at which the applicant can first 'file' for or formally request asylum) is not scheduled until one year after the applicant's entry or admission. In such cases, asylum-seekers- who have tried to comply with the law-cannot meet the filing requirement" (Kerwin, 2012, p. 24). Thus, since the United States reviews many cases, it is challenging for asylum-seekers to meet their filing deadline. For instance, the United States' system reviews cases from Central America, where another refugee crisis occurs, in addition to the refugee crisis in the Middle East. Another barrier that Kerwin (2012) writes about the legal representation of asylum-seekers. Kerwin (2012) explains that "Most removal proceedings suffer from a fundamental deficiency: immigrants cannot effectively represent themselves in these complex proceedings, but most cannot afford legal counsel" (p.25). Some asylum-seekers cannot represent themselves due to language barriers and ignorance of the legal system. Also, many seekers come to the United States with little money, so they most likely are unable to find affordable representation. Moreover, the case backlog and the lack of adequate legal

representation in the U.S. court system attribute to the delay of admitting refugee's asylum. In the United States, the Refugee Status Determination process consists of many channels. According to Hamlin (2012), affirmative applicants go through the Department of Homeland Security, then the Executive Office of Immigration Review, then the Board of Immigration Review, and lastly, the Federal Court. Hence, the U.S. court system has many areas of veto points because of its complexity, which impacts its policies and the number of admitted refugees. However, it is worth noting that the United States has not always had a decreasing level of admitted refugees. Nevertheless, the complex U.S. court system explains the variation of the rate of accepted refugees.

Similarly, in the United Kingdom, there is a lack of legal aid and a multitude of channels for the refugee status determination. According to Burrridge and Gill (2017), in the late '90s, legal representation for asylum-seekers was free and provided by the Home Office. However, in 2004, "The Legal Services Commission (LSC) imposed cost limits on legal practitioners, which equated to only five hours work per asylum case" (Singh and Webber 2010:2, as cited in Burrridge & Gill, 2017, p. 28). Thus, the clients had limited casework hours and often their hours would be used by the time they were transferred to a different representative. Besides the hour restrictions, the system itself contains many pathways. When refugees are denied asylum after being interviewed several times, they can attempt to appeal their case. As summarized by Burrridge and Gill (2017), appeals are made at the First-Tier Tribunal Court, then appeals could be granted by the Home Office or appealed to a higher court. Also, refugees are often unrepresented while in court, much like the United States. Therefore, the United Kingdom's court system impacts its low number of accepted refugees.

In the European Union, member states such as Italy and Germany must abide by certain laws in their refugee status determination process. For instance, asylum applicants must go through a confidential interview (Fribergh & Kjaerum, 2014, p. 97). Additionally, “Under EU law, Article 46 of the Asylum Procedures Directive provides the right to an effective remedy before a court or tribunal” (Fribergh & Kjaerum, 2014, p. 102). Moreover, applicants have the right to appeal their status decision in court. Although the EU set these guidelines for its member states, there are still variations among the member states’ processes.

In Italy, refugees take their appeals through the civil courts instead of separate court, which causes backlogs and delays. Additionally, Italy’s appeal system has been overwhelmed by the increasing amounts of refugees entering Italy.

According to Sorgoni (2019), after refugees apply for protection,

They are usually hosted in different types of centres while they wait for their hearing in front of a Territorial Commission (TC), the administrative board in charge of the first evaluation of asylum applications. If they get a negative decision, or a lesser protection than the one expected, they can appeal in front of one civil tribunal out of the 26 presently competent on asylum and, in case of a second negative or unsatisfactory decision, they have a right to a second-level appeal at a Court of Appeal (p.221).

Also, refugees can challenge the decision to the Supreme Court. Thus, since the appeals go through the civil court system, there are no separate judges to hear the case. Moreover, the complexity of the Italian system causes backlogs and delayed timelines. “In theory, the Territorial Commission will interview the asylum seekers within thirty days, but, in reality, asylum seekers wait several months” (Fullerton, 2016, p. 77). Moreover, the decision process in Italy is delayed, which impacts the number of admitted refugees. Additionally, the Italian

court system was not adequately prepared to handle the recent refugee crisis. “What the Italian Government had not anticipated was the clogging of both the TCs—which collapsed under the pressure of such high numbers—and the tribunals, which started to receive appeals from those denied” (Sorgoni, 2019, p. 228). Furthermore, the delayed process of judicial process within the Italian courts contributes to its low number of accepted refugees.

In contrast, as summarized by Hamlin (2012), the Canadian courts have a paper-screening system that eliminates most of the cases, so they do not have to go through judicial review. In her research, she notes that courts have a different level of impact in the United States and Canada. “Unlike in the heavily judicialized US RSD regime, once Canadian courts receive an application for judicial review in an immigration case, they use a paper screening process that weeds out about 85 percent of cases and lets the IRB decision stand without a court hearing” (Hamlin, 2012, p. 950). Based on Hamlin (2012), the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) in Canada has more authority and all the refugee applications go through the IRB before they reach the courts. Furthermore, the United States’ process includes more channels of departments that oversee the other department’s decision in reviewing applications. “There are different points of access to the process, different sites and forms of decision making...” (Hamlin, 2012, p. 946). Hence, there are more veto points in the United States’ system. Thus, the efficiency of the Canadian court system correlates to the increased rate of accepted refugees.

Much like the other countries included in this research, Germany’s court system permits refugees to appeal their cases, if they are denied acceptance in their first initial decision. However, Germany’s system operates differently than in other countries. For instance, in the regular procedure in Germany, there is prioritized examination and fast-track processing (Kalkmann, 2019, p. 14). Moreover, this allows refugees to go through the process quickly, but if

they do not go through these two processes, it can take about 8 months. Nevertheless, “If no decision has been taken within 6 months, the BAMF has to notify asylum seekers upon request about when the decision is likely to be taken” (Kalkmann, 2019, p. 20). Besides the regular procedure, there is an accelerated procedure for people from safe countries of origin that takes approximately one week. (Kalkmann, 2019). The BAMF (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees) oversees all the different types of procedures except the appeals process. Like the other countries, there are three levels of appeals in Germany for refugees, the Administrative Court, the High Administrative Court, and the Federal Administrative Court. “There are 51 Administrative Courts competent to deal with asylum matters” (Kalkmann, 2019, p. 26). Unlike Italy for instance, Germany has separate appellate courts for refugees to appeal their decision. However, there are short deadlines for the appeals to be submitted and the process can take about a year and there is a backlog of cases. Additionally, there is a lack of legal assistance in the first part of the procedure but, “During court proceedings, asylum seekers can apply for legal aid to pay for a lawyer” (Kalkmann, 2019, p. 29). This legal aid is dependent on the probable success of the outcome of the appeal, so it is not easy for refugees to gain. However, Germany’s process correlates to its high refugee acceptance rates because of its points of acceleration and is overseen by one organization, unlike other countries. Furthermore, this represents the variations of court structures among countries that impact the number of refugees admitted.

VI. Conclusion

First, it is concluded that if countries are experiencing labor shortages, they will be more likely to accept refugees. This is evident in Germany, where there is a lack of young workers and a need to fill jobs to support its economy. In the past, the United Kingdom Prime Minister, Tony Blair emphasized the importance of having young workers fill low-skilled jobs. Thus, he

implemented refugee policies that enabled them to fill those vacancies. Additionally, Canada is experiencing a labor shortage and has enacted programs to incorporate refugees into its labor market. Other countries, such as the United States, do not have an aging population and do not need refugees to fill job vacancies. Moreover, countries such as the United Kingdom and Germany have enacted flexible policies, so refugees can contribute to the labor market.

However, Italy's economy has been struggling since the Recession and there are few jobs available for its citizens. Therefore, Italy implemented stricter policies because refugees could not benefit the economy since there is a lack of job vacancies.

Second, it is confirmed that countries with high percentages of people over 60 will be more likely to admit refugees. Specifically, this is evident in Germany with Merkel's declaration to accept 1 million refugees in 2015. However, Italy has the oldest population out of all countries but has enacted stricter policies and has deterred refugee ships from entering its borders. The rationale for this could be the fact that there is a lack of jobs in the country for refugees.

Additionally, the United Kingdom resettled fewer refugees than Canada and the United States, even though it has a high percentage of people over 60. Moreover, the hypothesis is confirmed for the Germany case, but not for Italy and the United Kingdom.

Third, it is confirmed that if a country has a homogenous population, it will be less likely to accept refugees, such as Italy and the United Kingdom. Although prejudice does exist in the United States, and Canada and, they have stronger histories of immigration and have diverse populations. In contrast, Italy takes pride in maintaining a white, Catholic population. Although Germany has a homogenous population like most European countries, it has made efforts to accept refugees. Therefore, there is a correlation between population demographics and the variation of policies.

The research in this paper concludes that if a country is led by a Conservative leader, it will accept fewer refugees. This has occurred in several countries, including the United States, Canada, Italy, and the United Kingdom. Although Germany's Chancellor is from a center-right party, the country has witnessed an increase in refugee acceptance rates. Likewise, there are even policy changes made when the elected official is from the same party as the previous one, as evidenced in the United Kingdom. Therefore, it can be concluded that because the United States is currently being led by a conservative government, there are fewer refugees admitted. In contrast, Canada is being led by a liberal government, which is increasing its number of admitted refugees.

Lastly, it is supported that if a country has a more complex court system, it will have a decreasing rate of refugees. As mentioned previously, Canada's system has fewer avenues of veto points, so refugees are admitted quickly. Hence, Canada's court system has contributed to its increased number of admitted refugees. In comparison, the United Kingdom's court system has many channels that explain its lower number of refugees compared to Canada. Likewise, the United States' court system has refugees go through more avenues and is not independent of Congress nor the President. Additionally, Italy's refugee cases go through its civil courts which causes a high rate of case backlogs. Therefore, Italy's court system explains its low number of admitted refugees. However, Germany's system is overseen by one organization and has several acceleration points, which correspond to its acceptance rates. Furthermore, court systems correlate to the variation of refugee acceptance rates in the last decade.

My colleagues may object to the conclusion that the United States does not need as many foreign workers as other countries. Also, my colleagues may argue that Canada's court system is not as efficient and that it has many areas of veto. Lastly, people could raise arguments that non-

European countries wish to maintain a homogenous population and thus, are reluctant to accept refugees.

There are avenues for further research. For example, researchers can analyze more literature and compare the countries by conducting surveys. Also, researchers could interpret statistics and define correlations between those statistics and policies. These researchers could study each of the countries' court systems and see if the systems impede on the number of refugees admitted annually. Researchers could measure the timelines that cases go through the court system. Additionally, further research in the European Union's impact on European countries' policies could be done. Lastly, researchers could conduct surveys about countries' feelings towards refugees and interview leaders.

Several variables cause the variation of refugee acceptance rates among democracies. Economic factors such as lack of employees for low-skilled jobs, influence leaders to accept refugees. More importantly, there is a correlation between a country's demographics and its refugee policies. Furthermore, whether a country is led by a conservative or a liberal government, determine its number of admitted refugees and its policymaking. Countries have different demographics, government structure, and culture, so they are bound to have different approaches to deal with the refugee crisis. Moreover, the recent refugee crises have brought unprecedented challenges to Western democracies that have prompted a contrast in immigration policies.

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