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Working paper

Labour Market Integration of Migrants' Descendants in the Nordic Countries

A Scoping Literature Review

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Table of Contents

Abstract	3
Executive Summary	4
Introduction	6
Theoretical Perspectives	7
Methods	10
The Nordic Context	12
Results	15
Employment Patterns and Labour Market Outcomes	15
Employment and unemployment dynamics.....	15
Earnings and income disparities	17
Occupational attainment and occupational mismatch.....	19
Self-employment and entrepreneurial, alternative pathways	20
Educational Attainment and Human Capital Returns	21
Ethnic Discrimination in Hiring Processes.....	23
Experimental evidence of hiring discrimination.....	23
Understanding discrimination mechanisms	25
Gendered Integration Pathways	26
Comparative Context and Institutional Frameworks	28
Key Findings and Limitations.....	32
Appendix 1. Extracted studies	35
Appendix 2. PRISMA flow diagram	45
References	46

Abstract

This scoping literature review examines the labour market integration of migrants' descendants across Nordic welfare state contexts. Despite the region's comprehensive welfare infrastructure and documented patterns of intergenerational socioeconomic mobility, substantial structural disadvantages persist in this population's attainment of economic parity with peers of native parentage. Drawing upon multidisciplinary scholarship published since 2010, this review synthesises empirical evidence concerning employment outcomes, human capital utilisation and the institutional and social mechanisms underlying persistent labour market inequalities.

The synthesis identifies a pattern of incomplete integration: while migrants' descendants demonstrate measurable intergenerational advancement, they continue to experience disproportionately high unemployment rates and mismatches between credentials and occupations (overqualification). Persistent ethnic discrimination in hiring processes is a key constraint, extensively documented through field experiments showing that bias operates on the basis of perceived ethnic origin – signalled through names – independent of objective human capital indicators. Furthermore, while descendants exhibit higher levels of educational attainment – potentially reflecting a compensatory strategic response to anticipated discrimination – these credentials fail to translate into proportionate employment returns, resulting in underutilisation of acquired skills and competencies. The literature indicates earnings differentials may derive partly from occupational sorting and labour market segregation into lower-remuneration sectors, alongside potential wage discrimination. Additionally, outcomes vary considerably by parental country or region of origin, indicating labour market stratification patterns.

Executive Summary

The labour market integration of migrants' descendants – defined here as the children, grandchildren and subsequent generations of immigrant families – represents a critical area of investigation within contemporary international migration studies. This population, often born and raised within the host country and holding national citizenship, continues to navigate structural challenges in attaining economic parity with the native-born majority. The Nordic welfare states, characterised by extensive welfare systems and shared institutional frameworks, offer a distinctive setting for examining these integration processes. Although these nations are internationally recognised for their robust welfare models and high rankings on migrant integration indices, a substantial body of academic research indicates that individuals with migrant backgrounds, including their descendants, frequently encounter enduring economic inequalities, manifesting as underemployment, overqualification and hiring discrimination.

A scoping review constitutes a methodologically distinct form of research synthesis that systematically maps and synthesises documented evidence within a given field, rather than exhaustively evaluating all theoretical propositions or explanatory frameworks. This methodological approach prioritises empirically substantiated findings – specifically, patterns and determinants that have been systematically observed and documented in peer-reviewed scholarship. This academic synthesis draws upon a scoping review of literature across sociology, economics, demography and geography to identify the key factors, pathways and structural barriers shaping the employment trajectories of second-generation immigrants in the Nordic Region.

Intergenerational mobility meets persistent disparity

Research confirms demonstrable intergenerational socioeconomic mobility, with descendants generally achieving higher labour market and educational outcomes than their parents. For instance, wage differentials are typically smaller for the second generation than for the first. Nonetheless, significant disadvantages persist relative to native-born peers, marked by higher risks of unemployment, more precarious labour market trajectories and a greater likelihood of being classified as Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET). While disadvantages are sometimes traceable to parental socioeconomic background, the evidence indicates that structural factors continue to constrain full economic assimilation irrespective of family starting point.

The educational compensation strategy and underutilised human capital

A notable trend is the exceptionally high educational attainment and ambition observed among second-generation individuals, particularly those from non-Western backgrounds. They frequently enrol in higher education and select prestigious fields of study, a pattern theorised by some scholars as a "compensation strategy" – a deliberate effort to acquire credentials strong enough to counteract anticipated labour market discrimination.

Despite these high levels of human capital, many descendants struggle to translate their qualifications into commensurate employment, resulting in high rates of overqualification (or occupational mismatch). This phenomenon highlights a structural failure: even when second-generation migrants achieve educational parity or exceed the achievements of the majority population, they often experience persistent earnings gaps and are unable to fully utilise their skills, representing a tangible loss of human capital for the Nordic economies.

Discrimination as a structural barrier

A frequently cited structural impediment to integration is found in hiring processes. Empirical field experiments, commonly referred to as correspondence tests, provide systematic evidence of ethnic discrimination. This bias is often based on perceived ethnic origin, signalled by names, rather than on a lack of domestic qualifications or skill deficits. Studies demonstrate that callback rates for applicants with foreign-sounding names are frequently significantly lower than for equally qualified native applicants, a penalty that is not offset by superior experience or credentials.

Labour market sorting versus unequal pay

The primary mechanism generating income inequality for the second generation is labour market sorting and segregation. Studies using employee–employer data indicate that wage disparities are predominantly due to the concentration of migrants’ descendants in lower-paying jobs, occupations and companies. The research suggests that within the same workplace, pay gaps for equivalent work are often small or non-existent. This pattern points to crucial barriers operating at the point of labour market entry and through restricted career progression across high-status companies and sectors.

The critical influence of institutional context heterogeneity

The trajectory of integration is strongly shaped by the host country’s institutional context. Comparative research across Europe underscores that educational systems (such as the rigidity of tracking) and welfare state arrangements significantly influence outcomes. For instance, comprehensive, gender-egalitarian welfare states – through supportive policies including extensive childcare – are associated with stronger labour market attachment and more successful professional careers for second-generation mothers.

Heterogeneity

Crucially, the data reveal significant heterogeneity within the population of migrants’ descendants. A distinct ethnic hierarchy exists, with individuals whose family originates from regions such as the Middle East, Africa and specific non-Western nations consistently facing greater challenges in employment and higher levels of discrimination than those of European or Western origin. These findings highlight the need for nuanced policy responses that address the specific structural disadvantages faced by different subgroups.

Introduction

The labour market integration of migrants' descendants – encompassing the children, grandchildren and subsequent generations of immigrant families – constitutes a significant area of enquiry within contemporary migration studies. In the Nordic context, where extensive welfare systems coexist with increasingly diverse immigrant populations, examining how migrants' descendants experience economic integration across generations has become highly relevant for both policy development and theoretical advancement.

This scoping review examines the labour market integration of migrants' descendants in the Nordic countries. It draws upon research from multiple disciplines, including sociology, economics, geography and demography, and illuminates key themes emerging from studies on labour market integration patterns among this population.

Despite being born and raised in the Nordic countries and often holding citizenship, migrants' descendants continue to face barriers in the labour market (Jensen & Manning, 2024; Kim, 2024). Although the Nordic countries are widely recognised for their robust welfare states and consistently achieve high rankings on the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) (Solano & Huddleston, 2020), an expanding body of research suggests that structural disadvantages continue to affect individuals with migrant backgrounds, including their descendants (Jensen & Manning, 2024; Pupaza, Harber-Aschan, & Wilson, 2023). They frequently face persistent inequalities in the labour market, such as underemployment (Aradhya, Grotti, & Härkönen, 2023; Hermansen, 2013), discrimination (Ahmad, 2020; Akay & Cheung, 2025; Midtbøen, 2016), overqualification (Dahlstedt, 2015; Kim, 2024), limited upward mobility (Midtbøen & Nadim, 2019) and earnings disparities (Han & Hermansen, 2024; Hermansen, 2016). Importantly, parental background – particularly socioeconomic status – plays a significant role in shaping these disadvantages (Hermansen, 2016; Jensen & Manning, 2024). This report aims to review and synthesise the existing academic research literature to elucidate the factors, pathways and characteristics that create labour market barriers for second-generation immigrants in the Nordic countries.

The report begins by outlining the main theoretical perspectives employed in the academic literature to explain migrant integration processes, encompassing both sociological and economic frameworks used to examine intergenerational patterns of economic mobility and integration among migrant populations. This is followed by a methods section, which clarifies the selection criteria for papers included in this review, and then the results section. Finally, the report synthesises the key overarching findings and messages that emerge from the reviewed literature. Overall, the report seeks to contribute to our understanding of how migrants' descendants navigate labour market participation in the Nordic countries.

Theoretical Perspectives

Classical assimilation frameworks, which emerged from observations of European migration patterns in the early twentieth century in the United States, propose that migrants' descendants experience a gradual and linear process of integration into host societies. This theoretical approach suggests that, across successive generations, immigrant groups tend to progressively modify their distinctive cultural practices – including language use, traditional customs and community affiliations – while adopting elements of majority population practices.

Assimilation¹ is conceptualised as a multidimensional process that may encompass cultural adaptation, socioeconomic mobility and social integration through various mechanisms, such as intermarriage and participation in mainstream institutions (Gordon, 1964). These theories assume that assimilation processes are largely unidirectional, with adaptation occurring predominantly among immigrant populations, while host societies remain relatively stable in their normative structures, ultimately anticipating the potential dissolution of ethnic distinctions and incorporation of migrant descendants into dominant national identities. However, these traditional frameworks have faced substantial scholarly critique regarding their universal applicability to different migrant groups. Research suggests that the linear integration trajectories documented among European immigrants in the United States may not adequately represent the experiences of more recent migrant populations, particularly those from non-European backgrounds (Alba & Nee, 1997; Portes & Zhou, 1993; Zhou, 1997). This recognition has led to the development of alternative theoretical approaches that acknowledge more complex integration patterns among second-generation immigrants from diverse ethnic backgrounds.

From an **economic theory** perspective, Chiswick (1979, 2007) suggests that assimilation patterns may be observable through migrants' labour market performance. His framework indicates that immigrants often initially experience earnings disadvantages due to limited host country-specific human capital, yet these disadvantages may diminish over time as individuals acquire language proficiency, education credentials and labour market experience, potentially leading to earnings convergence with native-born populations. Borjas (1987, 1995), drawing upon this theoretical foundation, presents a more nuanced perspective. He emphasises that the rate and extent of economic assimilation may depend significantly on the human capital migrants possess upon arrival, as well as the selectivity characteristics of migration flows. Furthermore, Borjas argues that intergenerational mobility patterns are particularly significant: while first-generation immigrants may encounter persistent disadvantages, the

¹ The use of the term "assimilation" here aligns with the original literature from the 1960s and 1970s, which characterises the process as unidirectional, involving the blending of differences between groups over time. Similarly, the economic literature uses this term to describe the convergence of income or employment levels. Accordingly, when using the term within the theoretical framework, we follow this established approach.

socioeconomic positioning of second-generation individuals serves as a more reliable indicator of long-term assimilation trajectories.

Two significant theoretical developments have emerged to address the perceived limitations of classical assimilation frameworks. The **new assimilation theory**, as articulated by Alba and Nee (1997), emphasises the significance of institutional contexts in shaping integration processes, suggesting that mainstream societal receptivity towards diverse immigrant populations influences integration outcomes. This highlights the potential for institutional arrangements to either facilitate or hinder successful assimilation.

The **segmented assimilation theory**, developed by Portes and Zhou (1993) and subsequently refined by other scholars, provides a comprehensive sociological framework that challenges the assumption of uniform integration trajectories. Rather than assuming linear convergence with mainstream society, this approach identifies three potential pathways for migrants' descendants: upward assimilation into the mainstream middle class, downward assimilation into disadvantaged segments of society or selective acculturation that preserves certain ethnic characteristics while facilitating economic mobility. This framework particularly emphasises how structural factors may influence which pathway second-generation immigrants follow. According to this theoretical perspective, various barriers may impede the socioeconomic advancement of migrants' descendants, potentially resulting in persistent disadvantages across generations (Zhou, 1997). These structural constraints may include limited access to educational opportunities, employment networks and other social resources that facilitate upward mobility. This recognition of multiple integration pathways and the role of structural barriers represents a significant departure from traditional linear assimilation models, acknowledging that institutional contexts, community resources and broader societal reception can substantially shape the integration experiences of migrants' descendants.

Empirical research examining the segmented assimilation theory has yielded important insights into its predictive capacity and limitations. Large-scale longitudinal studies in the United States suggest that the anticipated "downward assimilation" pathway, while theoretically significant, occurs less frequently than initially predicted (Lee & Zhou, 2015). Contemporary research indicates that modest upward mobility relative to their parents' generation is a more common trajectory among second-generation populations, with substantial upward mobility characterising certain groups, at least in the United States (Abramitzky & Boustan, 2022) and to some extent also in Europe (Drouhot & Nee, 2019; OECD, 2017).

Nordic countries have experienced increasing demographic diversity, with growing populations of second-generation immigrants of various origins. These countries provide valuable contexts for examining labour market outcomes among children of immigrants, particularly given their shared institutional frameworks, characterised by strong welfare states, but with variation in the size and composition of their immigrant populations.

A Note on Defining Migrants' Descendants

Immigration has gained increasing attention in political and public discourse, yet substantial confusion remains about how migrants and their descendants are categorised and defined. From a general statistical perspective, a registered immigrant is someone who has legally immigrated to the country and is now recorded in the population data. The OECD/European Commission (2023) define immigrants as the foreign-born population, reasoning that while citizenship can change over time, the place of birth remains constant. Yet even within the Nordic Region, different national statistical institutes employ distinct definitions for categorising migrants, creating challenges for comparative analysis (Careja & Bevelander, 2018; Heleniak, 2024). The classification of immigrant descendants presents additional complexity. Nordic countries typically define immigrant descendants as native-born individuals with at least one foreign-born parent, though implementation varies considerably. Norway employs the most comprehensive system, using three-generation birthplace data that generate 30 distinct categories – only five of which contain over 100,000 people. Denmark uses a three-category framework based on birthplace and parental background: immigrants (foreign-born with two foreign-born or foreign-citizen parents), descendants (Denmark-born with immigrant or descendant parents holding foreign citizenship) and Danish origin (at least one Danish-born parent with citizenship) (Heleniak, 2024).

The Nordic context presents both opportunities and challenges for achieving data comparability in the classification of migration background. Although high-quality register data facilitate the classification of individuals with a migrant background, complexity is added by variations in definitions across national statistical institutes, particularly regarding the number of generations tracked. In response to these discrepancies, a collaborative initiative funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers and involving the Nordic statistical institutes has developed standardised definitions to enhance comparability in migration and integration statistics (Østby & Gulbrandsen, 2020, 2022). As a result, the Nordic Statistics Database now employs uniform definitions of the categories "foreign-born" and "descendants", which are consistently applied across all Nordic countries. According to these definitions, "foreign-born" refers to individuals born outside the country with two foreign-born parents, excluding those adopted by native-born parents. "Descendants" are defined as native-born individuals with two foreign-born parents. The remainder of the population comprises individuals who do not fall into either of these two categories, that is, the total population excluding both foreign-born individuals and descendants as defined above. A limitation of this definition is that it conflates the rest of the population with individuals who have one foreign-born and one native-born parent, who have been found in the literature to have different labour market outcomes.

Individuals born domestically to immigrant parents are frequently labelled as "second-generation immigrants", though this definition is imprecise since these individuals have not migrated themselves. Alternative terms such as "people with a migrant background" have been employed, yet this broad categorisation could theoretically encompass most individuals when genealogical histories are traced sufficiently far back. A more balanced approach, suggested by Jensen & Manning (2024), uses the term "first-generation locals" to refer to locally born children of immigrant parents. This terminology more accurately captures both their heritage and their status as native-born while maintaining analytical clarity regarding integration processes. Although this definition is more neutral, we have opted in this report to use the terminology employed by researchers in their original work, while acknowledging the problematic nature of these terms.

Methods

For this report, a scoping literature review was conducted using the five-stage framework developed by Arksey and O'Malley (2005) and later refined by Levac et al. (2010). This framework helps to synthesise heterogeneous bodies of research and identify patterns and knowledge gaps. To ensure transparency and rigour, the review process followed the PRISMA reporting guidelines (Page et al., 2021).

The review was guided by two research questions: (1) What does existing research reveal about the labour market experiences of migrants' descendants in the Nordic countries? (2) What types of barriers are most commonly encountered by this population?

A comprehensive search was conducted between August and September 2025 across Web of Science, ProQuest and Scopus. The search strategy combined terms related to second-generation migrants or migrants' descendants, the Nordic Region and labour market outcomes. The search covered literature published in English between 2010 and 2025.² In addition, reports from key Nordic research institutes that are renowned for their integration research, as well as reports published by the Nordic Statistical Institutes (NSIs) in Nordic languages and identified during the desk review, were included to further contextualise our findings from the academic literature.

Studies were eligible for inclusion in this report if they examined the labour market experiences of migrants' descendants. Eligible studies were required to focus on at least one of the five Nordic countries – Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland or Iceland – and address employment outcomes, challenges or labour market integration processes. Studies that only considered first-generation migrants were excluded, unless they reported disaggregated findings for descendants.

All records were imported into the online software platform Covidence for systematic management. Screening proceeded in two stages: first, titles and abstracts were reviewed to exclude irrelevant material and duplicates; second, full texts of potentially relevant studies were assessed against the inclusion criteria.

Data (Appendix Table 1) were extracted on author(s), year of publication, country focus, methodology, sample characteristics, labour market outcomes examined and key findings. A thematic analysis was then conducted to synthesise the evidence. Particular attention was paid to cross-country patterns and divergences within the Nordic Region. The scope of the analysis covered multiple dimensions of labour market integration: employment levels and unemployment rates; job quality indicators such as occupational mismatch, prestige, stability and career

² The search query used in Scopus was, for example, as follows: TITLE-ABS-KEY ("children of immigrants" OR "descendants of migrants" OR "second-generation" OR "migration background" OR "ethnic background") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (Sweden OR Norway OR Finland OR Iceland OR Denmark) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ("labor market*" OR "employment*" OR "wage*" OR "income*" OR "earnings*" OR "job*" OR "occupational*" OR "overeducation" OR "educational mismatch" OR "overqualification" OR "discrimination" OR "hiring" OR "occupation" OR "work") AND PUBYEAR > 2009 AND PUBYEAR < 2026.

progression; wage disparities; and forms of discrimination, particularly in hiring practices.

A PRISMA flow diagram (Appendix 2) was used to document the number of studies identified, screened, assessed for eligibility and ultimately included in the systematic review, to help ensure transparency in the selection process. Before presenting the results of the scoping review, a note on the Nordic context is provided below, including a descriptive overview of the share of migrants' descendants in the Nordic countries.

The Nordic Context

The Nordic context presents a distinctive setting for examining migrants' descendants in the labour market. These countries operate extensive welfare systems that provide comprehensive social safety nets while simultaneously emphasising active labour market policies and promoting high employment (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Greve, Blomquist, Hvinden, & Van Gerven, 2021; Powell, Yörük, & Bargu, 2020). This potentially creates unique conditions for the integration of migrants' descendants that may differ from other European contexts and from the United States model.

Despite their shared institutional foundations, the Nordic strategies for integrating immigrants and their descendants have diverged significantly, particularly in recent decades (Borevi, Jensen, & Mouritsen, 2017; Breidahl, 2017; Brochmann & Hagelund, 2012; Finnsdottir & Hallgrimsdottir, 2019; Jakobsen, Korpi, & Lorentzen, 2019; Jakobsen et al., 2019; Jensen, Fernández, & Brochmann, 2017). Additionally, the Nordic countries have undergone considerable demographic transformations in recent decades, with migrants' descendants now representing notable proportions of their populations and encompassing diverse migration histories (Heleniak, 2024). This demographic composition, combined with the variation in integration approaches within similar institutional frameworks, provides valuable opportunities to examine the labour market outcomes of migrants' descendants across varying timeframes, migration contexts and policy environments.

Figure 1 illustrates the population composition by migration background across the Nordic countries in 2022 or 2025, the most recent year for which data are available in the Nordic Statistical Database. Examining the total share of migrants' descendants, individuals born in the country with two foreign-born parents (left column in each panel), Sweden exhibits the highest proportion at 6% of the total population, followed by Norway at 4%, Denmark at 3%, and Finland at 1%. Nevertheless, when examining the share of migrants by age, it is evident that the proportion of migrants' descendants is substantially larger amongst younger cohorts. Specifically, within the 0–4 years age group, descendants represent 11% of this cohort in Finland and Denmark, and 19% and 22% in Norway and Sweden, respectively. It is also important to note that within the young working-age population, descendants represent a relatively modest share in all countries, accounting for less than 6% of all individuals aged 30–34 in Finland (0.2%), Denmark (5%), Norway (2%), and Sweden (6%). However, it should be noted that the definition of descendants employed here is restricted to the second generation, and at least in the case of Sweden, some third-generation individuals may also be entering the labour market in recent years. Furthermore, as previously noted, this definition excludes individuals with one migrant parent and one native-born parent. Consequently, the proportion of descendants reported herein represents a conservative estimate of their actual prevalence in the population. Although the absolute number of descendants remains modest, their representation among

younger age cohorts serves as an indicator of the prospective demographic composition of the labour market.

Combined with the foreign-born population (dark grey), the total population with a migration background varies substantially across countries. Sweden has the highest overall migrant-background population at 26%, followed by Norway at 19%, Denmark at 14%, and Finland at 8%. These differences reflect varying migration histories and timing across the Nordic countries. Sweden's comparatively larger descendant population reflects its longer history of sustained immigration, allowing for greater intergenerational demographic change. Finland's substantially smaller share of descendants (1%) indicates a more recent immigration trajectory, with the migrant population predominantly comprising first-generation arrivals. Denmark and Norway occupy intermediate positions, with descendant populations representing approximately one-fifth to one-quarter of their total migrant-background populations. This demographic context should be considered when interpreting the literature reviewed in the remainder of this report, as a larger proportion of the research focuses on Sweden and Norway, where descendants constitute a greater share of the working-age population.



Figure 1: Population by population category background, country and age.

Source: Nordic Statistics Database (Nordic Statistics Database, 2025). Note that data on Iceland, Greenland, Faroe and Åland are not available.

Results

The scoping literature review identified five primary themes characterising the labour market integration of second-generation migrants in Nordic countries: (1) employment patterns and labour market outcomes, (2) educational attainment and human capital returns, (3) ethnic discrimination in hiring processes, (4) gendered integration pathways and (5) comparative context and institutional frameworks. These themes reveal a complex integration process marked by significant intergenerational progress alongside persistent structural barriers.

Employment Patterns and Labour Market Outcomes

Employment and unemployment dynamics

In most Nordic countries, second-generation migrants demonstrate improved labour market outcomes compared to their first-generation parents, yet significant disadvantages persist relative to native-born populations. The papers included in this scoping review document higher unemployment rates (Aradhya, Grotti, & Härkönen, 2023; Behtoui, 2013; Jensen & Manning, 2024) and increased likelihood of being classified as Not in Employment, Education, or Training (NEET) among second-generation individuals compared to their native peers (Forslund & Liljeberg, 2020; Niknami, Schröder, & Wadensjö, 2019). The consequences of these employment patterns extend beyond immediate economic outcomes. Research indicates that, at least in Sweden, second-generation individuals experience more turbulent and precarious labour market trajectories, characterised by frequent transitions between employment, unemployment and education (although lower than the levels observed among migrants). This instability is associated with elevated risks of mental health issues in mid-life, suggesting long-term consequences of labour market disadvantage (Brydsten, Cederström, & Rostila, 2020).

However, not all studies identify disadvantages for migrants' descendants. In a study examining the consequences of educational non-completion for employment outcomes in the Norwegian context, Brekke (2014) found that the long-term labour market penalties associated with dropping out of upper secondary school for migrants' descendants are comparable to those experienced by members of the native majority. The study tested the hypothesis that negative employment consequences of educational non-completion would be more severe for descendants of immigrants compared to native-born individuals. The findings do not support this hypothesis of compounded minority disadvantage.

Some publications also suggest that gaps in employment outcomes may narrow over time. Norwegian register data, for example, show that, over the past decade, the employment rate among 25–39-year-old descendants of non-Western origin increased by 8 percentage points for women and 4 percentage points for men. By 2024, the difference in the employment rate of Norwegian women with no

immigrant background and non-Western descendant women had narrowed to less than 5 percent (Bjørn Olsen, 2024). A study using Swedish register data to estimate the likelihood of NEET status of 25-year-olds at six time points between 1995 and 2018 found that having two foreign-born parents is a strong predictor, even after controlling for demographic and socioeconomic factors. However, the estimated effect of having foreign-born parents on the likelihood of NEET status declined by 9 per cent during the period (Forslund & Liljeberg, 2020).

It should be noted that some of the reviewed papers also suggest that certain disadvantages in employment and unemployment can be attributed to parental socioeconomic background. For example, Danish research findings indicate that migrants' descendants demonstrate poorer labour market outcomes than children of native-born Danish parents, with unemployment rates approximately 12 percentage points higher, without controlling for background variables. However, this disadvantage appears largely attributable to parental socioeconomic circumstances rather than immigrant background per se. When comprehensive parental characteristics – including income, employment history, occupation and educational attainment – are controlled for, the unemployment differential diminishes substantially and reverses direction. Specifically, descendants with two immigrant parents become 2 percentage points less likely to experience unemployment than children of native-born parents from similar socioeconomic backgrounds. These findings suggest that while migrants' descendants are more likely to originate from economically disadvantaged households, their labour market outcomes are comparable to, or in some cases superior to, those of their native-born counterparts once parental socioeconomic status is taken into account, at least within the Danish labour market (Jensen & Manning, 2024).

While most studies in this scoping review focus on a single Nordic country, one exception is an international comparison examining NEET levels across the Nordic countries (Niknami et al., 2019). Using administrative data, it examines NEET trends among young people in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, comparing natives with first- and second-generation immigrants. The results indicate that native-born individuals with immigrant backgrounds face higher NEET rates than those with no migration background, even after accounting for background characteristics. However, these disadvantages are not uniformly distributed across all origin groups or destination countries; for example, Sweden exhibits wider variation based on parental countries of origin than the other countries.

Further studies corroborate the importance of parental origin in shaping employment patterns. Descendants of Turkish immigrants face elevated unemployment risks that persist even after controlling for human capital characteristics. Specifically, it was suggested that while the lower levels of educational attainment among Turkish descendants can be explained by parental background factors, the labour market gaps observed for this population cannot be accounted for by these factors alone. Along similar lines, Statistics Sweden reports that the employment rate for individuals with parents born in another Nordic

country is significantly closer to that of individuals with Swedish-born parents than to those whose parents were born outside Europe (Statistics Sweden, 2010, 2021).

In addition, a recent study investigating unemployment persistence found that while the relative impact of previous unemployment on subsequent joblessness appears consistent across demographic groups, the absolute effects differ substantially among populations with varying baseline unemployment levels (Aradhya et al., 2023). Specifically, second-generation immigrants from Middle Eastern, Turkish and Southern European backgrounds experience amplified effects due to their elevated initial unemployment rates. This pattern suggests that prior unemployment episodes may create disproportionate barriers to future employment for these groups, potentially contributing to sustained labour market exclusion and limiting opportunities for economic integration.

In Denmark, employment outcomes also differ across groups, with descendants of Western origin exhibiting a higher employment rate than those of non-Western origin (Ministry of Immigration and Integration, 2024).

While labour market outcomes appear to differ depending on parents' region of origin, several studies suggest that descendants tend to fare better in the Nordic labour markets than their parents (see e.g. Celikaksoy, 2014). For example, a comparative study of second-generation Polish immigrants in Sweden and Canada found that these groups achieved better employment outcomes than their first-generation counterparts, though their employment levels were slightly below those of the native-born majority, primarily attributed to Sweden's exceptionally high native employment levels. These findings indicate considerable intergenerational progress in labour market integration among this particular immigrant group (Pendakur & Bevelander, 2021).

Norwegian register-based employment data on individuals aged 25–39 further demonstrate that education is a stronger predictor of employment than immigrant background in Norway. Analysing the proportion of individuals active in either employment or education by background and level of education, the study found only a marginal difference between immigrants, second generation migrants and native-born individuals with Norwegian parents within the lowest education category (Bjørn Olsen, 2025).

Earnings and income disparities

As with employment and unemployment, the reviewed literature on earnings demonstrates that wage differentials between second-generation migrants and native populations in the Nordic countries are generally smaller than those observed for first-generation migrants, indicating a degree of economic assimilation across generations. However, the mechanisms underlying persistent wage gaps provide crucial insights into the nature of these disparities and the processes shaping them.

Research from Norway indicates that wage differentials are primarily attributable to occupational sorting patterns rather than to direct discrimination in wage

allocation. A series of studies by Hermansen and colleagues examines the role of workplace segregation in accounting for earnings disparities between natives, migrants and their descendants (Han & Hermansen, 2024; Hermansen, 2022; Lillehagen & Hermansen, 2025). Hermansen's (2022) analysis shows that second-generation immigrants of non-European origin are employed in workplaces with fewer immigrant coworkers and higher coworker salaries than their parents' generation. Similarly, Lillehagen and Hermansen (2025) document a reduction in workplace segregation across generations. In fact, they find that first-generation immigrants work in settings where, on average, 32% of coworkers are immigrants, compared to 16% for the second generation and 7% for natives. These compositional differences are largely explained by variation in education, occupation, industry, immigrant managers and neighbourhood composition, suggesting that both skills and networks shape integration outcomes. The findings of this series of studies suggest that wage disparities between second-generation immigrants and natives are primarily linked to the concentration of the former in lower-paying jobs and workplaces, rather than to unequal pay for equivalent work within the same establishment (Han & Hermansen, 2024).

Despite a general pattern of intergenerational improvement, considerable heterogeneity is observed across groups of origins. Research from Sweden shows substantial variation in economic outcomes, with some groups approaching earnings convergence while others continue to experience persistent disadvantages. For example, significant wage differentials remain for descendants of Turkish immigrants even after controlling for human capital characteristics (Behtoui, 2013). Similarly, Statistics Sweden reports that descendants with a background in North America and Oceania have the highest incomes, while individuals with a background in sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East and North Africa have the lowest (Statistics Sweden, 2019). In Norway, descendants of Indian, Sri Lankan and Vietnamese backgrounds exhibit higher income levels across nearly all household types compared to both natives and other descendant groups. Three quarters of Norwegian-born individuals with Indian or Sri Lankan background have completed university education and about half of those hold academic positions. The lowest income levels are found among descendants of Somali and Chilean origin, although the proportion experiencing persistent low income has decreased in the past decade (Bjørn Olsen, 2024).

Some studies suggest that earning disadvantages may even widen for some groups of descendants. For example, male second-generation immigrants from Southern Europe, the Middle East and Africa experience greater earnings disadvantages than their parents' generation, whereas other groups see improvements in their relative positions (Hammarstedt & Palme, 2012). This research also suggests that family-based human capital transmission plays a more central role in immigrant families than among natives. Similarly, Statistics Denmark (2014) reports that the average pre-tax income is lower for descendants than for immigrants and natives, especially when considering descendants of non-Western origin (Statistics Denmark, 2024).

In examining earnings differentials between natives and second-generation migrants, Hanes and Norlin (2011) investigate the role of psychological and non-cognitive factors in the Swedish context. Using both register data and military test data, they show that differences in annual earnings between second-generation immigrant and native men are largely attributable to variation in psychological traits and non-cognitive skills, rather than to differential labour market returns to those traits. However, the study classifies individuals into broad origin categories, which may obscure variation within groups. Moreover, as the birth cohort (1973) studied stems from parents likely to be relatively well integrated compared with later immigrant cohorts, whose migration was more strongly shaped by refugee movements, the findings may not be directly comparable for recent cohorts of migrants' descendants.

Occupational attainment and occupational mismatch

A significant challenge documented throughout the literature concerns the translation of educational credentials into commensurate employment opportunities. Research on occupational mismatch, often termed "overqualification", consistently reveals that second-generation individuals are more likely to be employed below their educational qualifications than majority populations.

An international comparison of occupational attainment among male migrants across six Western European countries – Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Spain and Italy – shows varied trajectories of labour market integration. Using the European Union Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS) and the European Social Survey (ESS) data, Ballarino and Panichella (2015) compare first- and second-generation migrants of European and non-European origin, testing theories of assimilation and persistent disadvantage. Their findings indicate that the "ethnic penalty" in occupational outcomes largely disappears for second-generation migrants in most countries, including Sweden, once educational parity with natives is reached. However, cross-national variation remains, with persistent disadvantages observed in the United Kingdom and France despite comparable education. These results suggest that while education is a key mechanism for occupational mobility, institutional and contextual factors continue to limit full integration in some labour markets.

Similarly Gorodzeisky and Semyonov (2017) analysed labour market incorporation of immigrants and their descendants in France, Belgium, the United Kingdom and Sweden, using the same data, focusing on labour force participation, unemployment and occupational attainment by generation, origin and gender. Their findings reveal that non-European origin is associated with greater disadvantage in finding employment across both the first and second generations, consistent with the segmented assimilation theory, whereas the likelihood of attaining a high-status job is primarily influenced by immigrant status and tends to equalise in the second generation, aligning with the classic assimilation model. Overall, the study demonstrates that patterns of labour force integration vary

significantly based on origin and generation, yet remain broadly similar across the countries examined.

When focusing on the Nordic countries specifically, Swedish research shows that second-generation individuals experience higher rates of overqualification than native populations (Dahlstedt, 2015; Kim, 2024). This disadvantage is most pronounced among individuals of non-Western origins, particularly those of Iranian and Middle Eastern/North African backgrounds and is especially severe among those holding tertiary educational qualifications (Kim, 2024). These findings suggest that even when second-generation migrants attain high levels of education, substantial proportions experience overqualification, representing both individual disadvantage and broader underutilisation of human capital.

Using a combination of interviews and register data, Midtbøen and Nadim (2019, 2022) study the pathways into elite occupations, such as medicine and law, among Norway's second-generation descendants of labour migrants from Pakistan, Turkey, India and Morocco. They find that these groups of second-generation migrants are overrepresented in these fields, often accessing them through alternative routes – such as studying medicine abroad or retaking courses to improve grades – due to strict admission requirements. However, once employed, these professionals navigate a duality in which their ethnic minority status can be both a burden, leading to experiences of doubt and intense scrutiny, and a resource that provides valuable cultural and linguistic competence in the workplace, particularly when serving diverse clients and patients (Midtbøen & Nadim, 2022).

In sum, the persistence of occupational gaps among some descendants of migrants, alongside occupational mismatch despite high educational attainment, points to barriers to equal labour market integration. This pattern suggests that while formal educational credentials are necessary, they are sometimes insufficient to secure equal employment outcomes, reflecting additional challenges in the recognition and utilisation of second-generation migrants' qualifications. In this context, it is unsurprising that one of the themes emerging from the scoping literature review concerns the returns to human capital among migrants and their educational attainment.

Self-employment and entrepreneurial, alternative pathways

Self-employment and entrepreneurial activities represent notable aspects of integration for migrants and their descendants. The reviewed literature suggests that this pattern is particularly evident in Sweden, where migrants and their descendants appear to pursue entrepreneurship as a strategic response to barriers encountered in traditional wage employment sectors.

Swedish research indicates that second-generation individuals are over-represented in self-employment compared to native populations, with gender differences evident in the transmission of self-employment propensities across both offspring and parental gender, as well as variations by country of origin (Andersson & Hammarstedt, 2011).

Klinthäll and Urban (2014, 2016) examine self-employment patterns among migrant descendants in Sweden, with particular attention to the role of network influences. Drawing on register data from Stockholm's small-business sector, they find that young adults with Turkish-born parents are more likely than native-born counterparts to work in ethnic minority businesses, possibly utilising family and co-national networks to access employment. However, their analysis suggests that family and co-ethnic employment patterns among second-generation immigrants do not differ fundamentally from those observed among native populations, indicating that dependence on family-based employment reflects broader small-business strategies rather than characteristics unique to an "ethnic economy" (Klinthäll & Urban, 2014).

Cross-national qualitative research examining career trajectories of socially mobile descendants of Turkish migrants in professional business services across Sweden, France, Germany and the Netherlands identifies three alternative career strategies: developing internationally oriented corporate profiles, leveraging personal background within organisations and pursuing self-employment when corporate opportunities are limited. The research suggests that even successful professionals may need to adapt their careers to navigate structural barriers (Konyali, 2017).

Entrepreneurship outcomes exhibit heterogeneity across gender, origin background and career trajectories. A Swedish study found that self-employment experience was evaluated more negatively by potential employers when male second-generation applicants with Arabic/Muslim names applied for wage employment positions, whereas the self-employment experience of women with similar backgrounds was valued more favourably, comparable to traditional wage employment (Aldén, Bastani, & Hammarstedt, 2021). Business performance patterns also vary by ethnic background. Analysis of second-generation-led companies in Sweden shows that companies with CEOs from OECD countries exhibit higher revenue growth than native-run enterprises, while those with CEOs from non-OECD countries demonstrate lower growth performance (Efendic andersson, & Wennberg, 2016).

These findings suggest that, while entrepreneurship may provide alternative pathways for economic integration, it does not eliminate broader structural disadvantages faced by second-generation migrants. Success in entrepreneurial activities appears to depend on factors that influence wage employment outcomes, including origin background and gender, indicating that entrepreneurship may reproduce rather than overcome existing integration barriers.

Educational Attainment and Human Capital Returns

A notable finding in migration literature concerns the exceptionally high educational aspirations and achievements demonstrated by second-generation migrants, as also evident in Nordic research. This pattern, often characterised as an "immigrant advantage" in education, shows that children of immigrants frequently outperform native-born individuals from similar socioeconomic backgrounds in educational enrolment and completion rates (Borgen & Hermansen, 2023;

Midtbøen & Nadim, 2019, 2022). In fact, second-generation individuals demonstrate higher rates of postsecondary enrolment and frequently select prestigious, high-status fields of study, including medicine, law and engineering (Midtbøen & Nadim, 2019).

The theoretical framework that can be applied to explain this pattern is the "compensation strategy" hypothesis (Urban, 2012). This framework suggests that immigrant families with high levels of education but low income, perceiving or anticipating labour market discrimination, invest more heavily in education to provide their children with stronger credentials capable of counteracting potential employer bias (Aslan, Ahmadi, Wikstrom, & Sjoberg, 2020; Urban, 2012). Swedish research supports this interpretation, demonstrating that individuals with parents from regions characterised by low labour market integration, such as Iran and Eastern Europe, are significantly more likely to attain a university degree than natives, even after controlling for parental background and school performance. The findings specifically show that for certain immigrant groups, a negative association exists between parental income and a child's educational attainment, suggesting that higher educational aspirations are a strategic response to perceived labour market disadvantage (Urban, 2012).

In the same vein, research using Norwegian administrative data shows that children of immigrants, particularly from non-European backgrounds, are more likely than children of natives to pursue higher education and enter lucrative fields of study, despite lower grades and less advantaged family circumstances (Borgen & Hermansen, 2023). In Denmark, female descendants of non-Western origin aged 20 – 24 exhibit the highest university enrolment rate of all groups, 18 percentage points higher than their Danish-origin counterparts. The same tendency is observed among men of non-Western parents, with a gap of 11 percentage points compared to men with Danish parents. Among 16 – 19-year-olds, the proportion of women with non-Western backgrounds enrolled in upper secondary or higher education also exceeds the proportion of Danish origin women in the same age group (Ministry of Immigration and Integration, 2024).

Research from Denmark and Norway also suggests that levels of high educational attainment among second-generation descendants have increased over time. During the past 13 years, the share of women descendants of non-Western background aged 25–39 who have earned a vocational or professional qualification in Denmark has risen by 20 percentage points. The share of men in the corresponding descendant group has risen by 15 percentage points (Ministry of Immigration and Integration, 2024). A similar pattern is observed in Norway, where the share of descendants with university education was 10 percentage points higher in 2023 than in 2017 (Kirkeberg, Minja Tea Dzarmrija, & Kristian Dystland, 2024).

In sum, the literature reveals a paradox whereby high levels of human capital do not translate into equivalent labour market returns for second-generation migrants. Analysis of European data indicates that ethnic penalties in employment (but not occupational status) for second-generation individuals only disappear when they achieve educational levels significantly exceeding those of native populations,

suggesting that integration is conditional upon substantial outperformance of the majority population (Ballarino & Panichella, 2015). This finding indicates that, although education represents a critical vehicle for potential upward mobility, human capital acquisition alone cannot fully eliminate disadvantages associated with immigrant background. The persistence of employment and occupation penalties, despite high educational attainment, suggests the operation of additional barriers beyond simple human capital deficits, potentially related to discrimination and structural exclusion mechanisms.

Ethnic Discrimination in Hiring Processes

Experimental evidence of hiring discrimination

Field experiments, also referred to as correspondence tests (or audit studies), provide systematic evidence of potential ethnic discrimination in hiring processes. These studies examine callback rates for fictitious applicants with identical qualifications but varying name origins, offering insights into discrimination patterns that may operate independently of human capital differences. Findings based on this type of studies exist in most Nordic labour markets (Ahmad, 2020, 2022; Aldén et al., 2021; Carlsson, 2010; Midtbøen, 2016; Midtbøen & Nadim, 2019).

Research from Finland indicates substantial disparities in employer responses based on applicant names. Findings from the Finnish Working Conditions Survey show that individuals of foreign origin report experiences of discrimination in career advancement at twice the rate of the general population (Ohto Kanninen, Tuomo Virkola, Eero Lilja, & Shadia Rask, 2022). In two studies conducted in the early 2020s, applicants with Finnish names had callback rates of 39%, while those with Iraqi and Somali names had rates of only 13.4% and 9.9%, respectively (Ahmad, 2020, 2022). The research suggests that these disparities are not mitigated by superior human capital, as providing minority applicants with additional work experience or the required vocational qualifications did not substantially improve their callback rates. It was found that even with two additional years of experience, second-generation applicants with English, Russian, Iraqi and Somali backgrounds continued to receive significantly lower callback rates than their majority counterparts (Ahmad, 2022). This finding indicates that employer bias may operate through prejudice-based rather than statistical discrimination mechanisms,³ with ethnicity appearing to serve as a direct basis for exclusion. When the study was repeated in 2024, it found that the significant disparity in callback rates based on names persists. However, callback rates for Somali and Iraqi names increased by 7 percentage points for each group during the eight years between the two studies,

³ Statistical discrimination refers to situations in which decision-makers (in this case employers) often lack complete information about applicants' true abilities or behaviours. Instead, they rely on group-level statistics, such as average education levels, employment histories or default rates as proxies for individual characteristics. This practice generates statistical discrimination, as individuals are evaluated not purely on their personal merits, but partly on the perceived average performance of the group to which they belong. Unlike taste-based discrimination – which arises from prejudice or animus – statistical discrimination is rooted in information asymmetry and rational expectations on the part of decision-makers (Becker, 1957).

whereas the disparity for Russian names became more pronounced (Ahmad, 2025). A study by the same author provides additional insights into the role of soft skills on callback rates in Finland. It found a pronounced ethnic hierarchy, with Finnish applicants contacted first and non-European second-generation applicants experiencing lower callback rates and often being contacted later. The study indicates that specifying soft skills such as "trustworthiness" did not reduce discrimination and, in some cases, may have amplified the disadvantage for non-European applicants (Ahmad, 2020).

Swedish correspondence studies demonstrate similar callback patterns. Carlsson (2010) found that second-generation immigrants with Middle Eastern names received callback rates essentially equivalent to first-generation immigrants, with both groups receiving approximately half the interview invitations of native applicants. This finding suggests that discrimination may operate based on ethnic background rather than immigration-specific factors, such as foreign birth or international qualifications. A more recent Swedish study confirms that applicants with Arabic/Muslim names receive fewer positive responses in hiring processes when assessing the effect of self-employment on callback rates (Aldén et al., 2021). Adermon & Hensvik (2022) compared callback rates among candidates with self-employment experience, wage experience and unemployment. The authors found that no form of prior work experience yielded positive returns for applicants with Arabic-sounding names. However, Bursell & Bygren (2023) report that the foreign-name penalty for men diminishes as the share of immigrants in the occupation increases, becoming insignificant once the share exceeds 50 percent. For women, this interaction effect between foreign name and share of immigrants is not observed.

In Norway, two correspondence test studies examine ethnic discrimination in hiring, focusing in particular on applicants with Pakistani names (Midtbøen, 2014, 2016). These studies indicate that second-generation applicants with Pakistani names face callback rates 25% lower than those of equally qualified applicants with Norwegian names (Midtbøen, 2016). Based on responses to 900 job openings in the greater Oslo area, the findings suggest that discrimination patterns vary by sector and gender. Discrimination appears more pronounced in the private sector, with men experiencing greater overall discrimination, while women face higher barriers specifically in gender-integrated (e.g. non gender-segregated occupations) private sector positions (Midtbøen, 2016).

Research examining discrimination against descendants of Southern European immigrants across three European countries provides additional perspectives on potential hiring discrimination. Focusing on Germany, the Netherlands and Norway, a correspondence study found that in Norway, second-generation individuals of Italian, Greek and Spanish descent appear to face disadvantages in receiving employer callbacks. However, the fact that applicants with French-sounding names face similar exclusion rates to other applicants of European descent suggests that the observed pattern may reflect a broader ingroup preference for Norwegian-

sounding names rather than explicit negative discrimination against specific foreign groups (Polavieja & Fischer-Souan, 2023).

In Iceland, results from an audit study indicate significant prejudice against Arabic job seekers, with greater prejudice towards women than men (Kristinsson & Sigurðardóttir, 2019).

Understanding discrimination mechanisms

Qualitative research examining employer perspectives provides insight into the mechanisms underlying discrimination patterns. A Norwegian article interviewed employers who had participated in field experiments. The interviews revealed that employers frequently conflate second-generation applicants with first-generation immigrants, applying stereotypes about language skills and work ethic despite applicants possessing domestic qualifications (Midtbøen, 2014). This process renders second-generation credentials effectively invisible, as employers make negative inferences based solely on foreign names. Based on a quantitative study, Ahmad (2022) provides further evidence that discrimination mechanisms may operate through employer assumptions rather than systematic evaluation of individual qualifications. Even when second-generation applicants possess superior credentials, including domestic education and more extensive relevant work experience, these advantages may be disregarded in initial screening processes (Ahmad, 2022). This pattern suggests that discrimination may occur at the earliest stages of the hiring process, before a detailed qualification assessment takes place.

Research focusing on employee perspectives suggests that second-generation individuals are aware of these discrimination patterns and adapt their strategies accordingly. For example, Aslan, Ahmadi, Wikström and Sjöberg (2020) used qualitative interviews to examine how second-generation immigrants in Sweden perceive and navigate the labour market. Their findings show that these individuals view the labour market as an ethnically segregated space and anticipate ethnic penalties in employment. In response, they develop adaptive strategies, such as selecting occupations where their immigrant background can be turned into an advantage or modifying their dispositions and practices to align with perceived labour market expectations. In addition, they suggest that many second-generation migrants believe they may need exceptional qualifications to counteract potential employer bias and secure employment opportunities (Aslan et al., 2020). This implies that awareness of discrimination practices in the labour market might influence both educational investment decisions and job search strategies, potentially creating additional challenges for second-generation job seekers.

The consistency of experimental findings across Nordic countries suggests that discrimination patterns may transcend national boundaries within the region. However, the research also indicates variation in discrimination levels and mechanisms across different contexts, sectors, demographic groups and ethnic origins, highlighting the complexity of these processes. These findings may contribute to understanding the apparent disconnect between educational attainment and labour market returns documented in the integration literature. The

potential persistence of hiring barriers despite domestic qualifications and cultural familiarity could help explain why second-generation migrants often appear to require educational credentials that exceed those of majority populations to achieve comparable employment outcomes. The evidence suggests that discrimination at the point of labour market entry may represent a significant structural barrier to integration.

Gendered Integration Pathways

The reviewed literature indicates that gender constitutes a fundamental dimension in understanding labour market integration among migrants' descendants in Nordic countries. It reveals a complex pattern in which women's educational advantages may not translate into labour market benefits in a straightforward manner, with family formation decisions appearing to play a crucial mediating role in shaping integration outcomes.

The literature documents gender differences in educational attainment among second-generation migrants, with daughters of immigrants frequently attaining higher educational levels than sons (Çelikaksoy & Wadensjö, 2018; Farris & de Jong, 2014; Nekby, 2013). Çelikaksoy and Wadensjö (2018) demonstrate that second-generation immigrants in Sweden experience higher educational mobility than their native peers, with daughters consistently outperforming sons across all backgrounds and often attaining the highest educational level within the family. This advantage is particularly notable among children of low-educated mothers, where daughters are over 10 percentage points more likely than sons to complete tertiary degrees. However, educational progress does not always translate into equal labour market outcomes (Çelikaksoy & Wadensjö, 2018; Farris & de Jong, 2014). While female employment rates are generally lower than male rates for both immigrant and native backgrounds, the gap narrows as maternal education increases. This pattern points to a complex integration process characterised by both persistent inequalities and notable upward mobility (Çelikaksoy & Wadensjö, 2018).

A study from Norway suggests that the educational advantage among women translates into elevated career ambitions and professional aspirations. Norwegian research examining highly educated second-generation women in elite professions reveals strong career commitment and active challenging of traditional gender role expectations. Based on in-depth interviews with 62 high-achieving second-generation professionals in medicine, law and business, the study reveals that second-generation women express a strong commitment to work, viewing it as a source of self-fulfilment and a central component of a meaningful life. These women aspire to maintain their careers after having children, explicitly challenging the gender-complementary roles they often grew up with. They perceive traditional expectations regarding motherhood and family obligations as a potential "threat" to their professional identities and ambitions. Consequently, they actively strategize to secure gender-equal partnerships to protect their careers and

negotiate a balance between work and family that diverges from their parents' model (Nadim & Midtbøen, 2023).

These findings suggest that the intersection of family life and career development constitutes a critical domain in which gender differences become particularly pronounced among second-generation migrants. Economic consequences of partner choice demonstrate significant gender asymmetries, with women experiencing more substantial impacts on employment and income trajectories. Norwegian research indicates that women entering endogamous unions, defined as partnerships with individuals of the same migrant background, experience the poorest employment and individual income development following union formation (Wiik & Bergsvik, 2023). Similarly, a study in Norway suggest that transnational marriage substantially reduces women's employment and earnings, while producing much smaller effects for men. Further analysis indicates that this decline among women is linked to lower educational attainment, higher fertility and a stronger motherhood penalty on employment and earnings compared to second-generation women who marry Norwegian residents of the same national-origin background. These gendered impacts reflect both cultural expectations and practical constraints associated with international marriage arrangements (Mohn, 2020).

However, Kitterod & Nadim (2020) investigate gender-role attitudes among second-generation immigrants in Norway, finding a striking convergence with the native-born majority population. While overall attitudes are similar to those of the majority, the study identifies important internal variations: second-generation women consistently hold more egalitarian views than men and attitudes differ slightly by parental country of origin, with descendants of Pakistani origin being comparatively less egalitarian. The authors conclude that exposure to Norway's gender-egalitarian institutional and cultural context is a powerful force in shaping the attitudes of the second generation.

Qualitative research on second-generation women in Norway reveals more nuanced insights into the complex dynamics surrounding transnational marriage, employment and gender expectations (Kindt, 2022; Nadim, 2014). For example, Nadim (2014) argues that second-generation women from Pakistan challenge the traditional gender-complementary ideals often held by the immigrant generation. This shift is significantly facilitated by the Norwegian welfare state's cultural and institutional context, which strongly promotes gender equality, women's employment and provides extensive, affordable childcare. Ultimately, the findings suggest that the second generation reframes what it means to be a "good mother", moving from the traditional ideal of a housewife to one that is compatible with professional life and the use of state-supported childcare (Nadim, 2014). Similarly, a study by Kindt (2022) reveals that these second-generation women aspire to prestigious careers while also valuing parent-assisted marriages within their ethnic group. This group thus seeks successful integration without complete abandonment of their family's cultural customs, redefining what it means to be a "modern" and independent woman.

The complexity of these relationships becomes evident in research examining post-childbirth employment patterns in the Swedish context. It was found that while second-generation mothers with two foreign-born parents may initially be more likely to take extended parental leave, this difference disappears once labour market activity is accounted for, with their leave patterns resembling those of native mothers more closely than first-generation mothers (Mussino, Wilson, & Andersson, 2021). However, research on post-childbirth labour market re-entry suggests variation across origin groups, with descendants of Pakistani immigrants being less likely than native women to return to work after childbirth. However, the difference between the two groups is no longer statistically significant when focusing on return to full-time employment (Lund, 2024).

In addition, this scoping review also suggests that gender significantly moderates discrimination experiences in Nordic labour markets. Men with non-European backgrounds appear to face the most severe hiring discrimination (Ahmad, 2022). However, gender patterns in discrimination are not uniform across all contexts. Norwegian research indicates that in gender-integrated private sector positions, minority women may experience greater disadvantage than minority men (Midtbøen, 2016). Similarly, gender differences also emerge in patterns of occupational mismatch. Earlier Swedish research found that male faced higher rates of over-education compared to native men, while female descendants did not experience similar disadvantages (Dahlstedt, 2015). However, more recent research indicates that overqualification gaps for tertiary-educated second-generation individuals are more pronounced among women than men across most ancestry groups (Kim, 2024). This evolving pattern suggests that highly educated women may face particular challenges in converting educational credentials into appropriate employment opportunities.

Overall, the literature reveals a paradoxical pattern: daughters of immigrants achieve higher educational levels than sons, yet this advantage does not uniformly translate into employment success. Gender differences become particularly pronounced around family formation, where women experience greater employment penalties shaped by partner choice. Evidence of convergence towards gender-egalitarian attitudes, combined with research showing that institutional contexts shape integration trajectories, underscores the importance of examining how welfare state frameworks mediate gendered outcomes across Nordic countries.

Comparative Context and Institutional Frameworks

While most of the papers reviewed here focus on single-country analyses, cross-national comparative research provides valuable insights into how institutional contexts shape migrants' descendants integration outcomes. One of the most comprehensive research reviews, conducted by Drouhot and Nee (2019), identifies general patterns of intergenerational socioeconomic assimilation in both Europe (including Sweden and Norway) and the United States and reveals important

differences in integration processes and outcomes. A key distinction concerns the persistence of ethnic penalties in employment access. While both contexts demonstrate evidence of discrimination, ethnic penalties appear more persistent for certain groups in European settings than in the United States. This difference may reflect variations in integration policies, labour market structures and social attitudes towards ethnic diversity. The primary sources of integration disadvantage also differ between contexts. In the United States, legal status represents a fundamental barrier to full labour market participation for many immigrant families. In European contexts, including Nordic countries, religious differences, particularly the Muslim/non-Muslim divide, tend to be more prominent factors in complicating assimilation processes. Importantly, the review finds little evidence in the U.S. context of "downward assimilation" into racialised underclasses as predicted by the segmented assimilation theory. However, this possibility remains a more prominent concern in European research (Drouhot & Nee, 2019).

Within Europe, some studies suggest that patterns of labour market incorporation vary by both origin and generation while remaining broadly similar across countries (Gorodzeisky & Semyonov, 2017). The authors suggest that although employment access remains ethnically stratified, occupational mobility follows more classical assimilation trajectories once employment is secured. In contrast, Ballarino and Panichella (2015) find that ethnic penalties in occupational attainment largely diminish for second-generation men once educational parity with natives is achieved – a pattern evident across most Western European countries studied, including Sweden. Nevertheless, they also identify cross-national differences, with persistent disadvantages in the United Kingdom and France, indicating that educational parity may not be sufficient to eliminate ethnic stratification in certain institutional environments.

Heath and Cheung (2012) theorise the relationship between educational systems and labour market incorporation of second-generation migrants, arguing that while second-generation minorities may achieve improved outcomes through higher human capital accumulation, the extent of improvement depends on how educational systems facilitate or constrain skill development and credential recognition. Guiraudon (2014) similarly suggests that the structure of education and training systems, which varies across different "varieties of capitalism", influences how migrants' descendants are incorporated into the labour force. Crul (2015) provides empirical support for this through a comparative analysis of second-generation Turks showing that: in Sweden's late-tracking, comprehensive educational system, 18% attain professional positions compared to 2% in Germany's early-tracking, stratified system. This difference in professional attainment for comparable origin groups illustrates how institutional arrangements may shape opportunity structures. The findings challenge culturalist explanations by showing that the same ethnic group has vastly different outcomes depending on the "integration context" of the host country. The open Swedish system appears to foster mobility primarily through education, while the stratified German system channels individuals onto alternative, often less prestigious, labour market tracks.

This underscores the role of policy and institutional design in shaping opportunities for social mobility among children of immigrants.

Research suggests that labour market incorporation is shaped not only at the national level but also by local dynamics, with cross-local variation in outcomes observed for the same ethnic groups (Guiraudon, 2014). Comparative urban research examining cities in the United States and Europe demonstrates the importance of local reception contexts for second-generation integration (Bean, Brown, Bachmeier, Fokkema, & Lessard-Phillips, 2012). Using survey data to assess economic, sociocultural, spatial and political integration among second-generation individuals of Turkish, Moroccan and former Yugoslavian backgrounds, the authors find that urban institutional contexts influence integration outcomes. Second-generation immigrants in more inclusionary cities such as Stockholm, New York and Paris demonstrate more diverse incorporation pathways and appear to achieve better outcomes than those in less inclusionary environments such as Berlin and Vienna. In the latter contexts, disadvantages appear more closely linked across integration domains, suggesting that urban institutional frameworks shape both the degree and dimensionality of immigrant incorporation.

Welfare state arrangements also appear to mediate integration outcomes through their influence on gender equality and work-family reconciliation (Farris & de Jong, 2014; Holland & de Valk, 2017; Huscsek, de Valk, & Liefbroer, 2011). Research on second-generation Turkish women across Germany, France, the Netherlands and Sweden reveals institutional variation: in Sweden, comprehensive childcare provision and policies supporting maternal employment are associated with labour force participation rates and motherhood gaps that are comparable between second-generation Turkish and majority women. In contrast, the motherhood gap (i.e. comparing mother to non-mother) was largest in Germany, while in France and the Netherlands, second-generation Turkish women experienced additional penalties in labour force participation (Holland & de Valk, 2017). Huscsek, de Valk and Liefbroer (2011) extend these findings, demonstrating that across six European countries examined, the societal context of the host country – particularly its welfare regime and family model – shapes gender dynamics, with greater sharing of household tasks in countries supporting dual-earner families. Their study also examines how gender ideology and partner choice influence the sharing of responsibilities, finding that more egalitarian attitudes are associated with greater sharing, while partnering with a first-generation Turkish migrant often correlates with a more traditional division of labour. Overall, the research suggests that gender roles among second-generation Turks are influenced by individual beliefs, spousal background and the broader institutional environment (Huscsek et al., 2011).

In sum, comparative research suggests that second-generation integration outcomes vary across institutional contexts. While ethnic penalties in employment are observed across Western settings, their sources differ: legal status appears more salient in the United States, whereas religious differences may be more prominent in European contexts. Within Europe, educational systems and welfare

state arrangements appear to influence outcomes, with comprehensive systems and supportive childcare policies associated with more favourable labour market participation. These institutional effects appear to operate at both national and local levels, suggesting that Nordic integration patterns should be understood within broader comparative frameworks.

Key Findings and Limitations

This scoping review set out to synthesise existing research on the labour market integration of migrants' descendants in the Nordic countries, examining the factors, pathways and characteristics that create barriers to equal economic participation. Drawing on a systematic review of studies across multiple disciplines – including sociology, economics, geography and demography – it presents empirical evidence on employment outcomes, discrimination mechanisms and integration patterns among second-generation immigrants in the Nordic context. The synthesis reveals the following key takeaways:

- 1. Reduced but persistent disadvantages:** A consistent finding across numerous studies is that **second-generation migrants generally achieve better socioeconomic outcomes than the first generation**, showing clear signs of intergenerational assimilation and mobility (Drouhot & Nee, 2019; Han & Hermansen, 2024; Heath & Cheung, 2012). However, they often continue to face disadvantages compared to peers with native-born parents, particularly in employment and unemployment rates (Aradhya et al., 2023; Gorodzeisky & Semyonov, 2017), over-education risks (Dahlstedt, 2015; Kim, 2024) and a higher likelihood of not being in employment, education or training (NEET) (Niknami et al., 2019). These disadvantages are partly linked to parental socioeconomic background (Jensen & Manning, 2024).
- 2. Hiring discrimination remains a barrier:** Several quantitative field experiments provide causal indication of **persistent hiring discrimination** against second-generation applicants. This discrimination appears to be based on ethnic origin, signalled by names, rather than factors like foreign education or country of birth (Ahmad, 2020, 2022; Aldén et al., 2021; Carlsson, 2010; Polavieja & Fischer-Souan, 2023). For instance, Carlsson (2010) found no significant difference in callback rates between first- and second-generation applicants with Middle Eastern names in Sweden, with both groups receiving about half the callbacks of natives. Discrimination is particularly pronounced for men with Arabic/Muslim names (Aldén et al., 2021) and in the private sector (Midtbøen, 2016). Qualitative interviews with employers in Norway reveal that they often conflate second-generation applicants with first-generation immigrants, attributing characteristics like poor language skills to them despite evidence to the contrary in their CVs (Midtbøen, 2014). This suggests that discrimination is often driven by stereotypes generalised across generations.
- 3. Education does not guarantee equal outcomes:** Second-generation migrants, particularly those from non-European backgrounds, often display **higher educational aspirations** and are more likely to pursue prestigious, high-earning fields of study than their native peers with similar backgrounds (Borgen & Hermansen, 2023). Some scholars suggest that this may be a compensation strategy to counteract anticipated labour market discrimination (Urban, 2012). However, second-generation migrants often face significant challenges in **translating these qualifications into commensurate employment**, leading to

a higher risk of over-education (Dahlstedt, 2015; Kim, 2024) and persistent earnings gaps even after accounting for educational attainment (Behtoui, 2013; Bjørn Olsen, 2025). This suggests that while they make substantial progress in education, structural barriers prevent them from fully capitalising on their human capital. This underutilisation of skills also represents a loss of human capital for the Nordic countries, as the talent and competencies of educated descendants of immigrants remain partly untapped.

4. **Heterogeneity among subgroups of migrants' descendants:** The research strongly cautions against treating migrants' descendants as a monolithic group. Outcomes vary significantly based on **parental country or region** of origin, creating a clear "ethnic hierarchy" (Ahmad, 2022). Individuals with non-European, Middle Eastern or African backgrounds consistently face greater challenges in employment, unemployment persistence and over-education compared to those with European or Western origins (Aradhya et al., 2023; Efendic et al., 2016; Gorodzeisky & Semyonov, 2017; Kim, 2024). This hierarchy is also reflected in hiring discrimination, with applicants of Somali and Iraqi origin experiencing the most severe discrimination in Finland (Ahmad, 2022) and those with Arabic/Muslim names facing significant penalties in Sweden (Aldén et al., 2021). It is important to note that parental migration pathways – particularly the distinction between refugee and labour migration – may also contribute to these disparities, as children of refugees often experience worse labour market outcomes. Beyond origin-based differences, descendants also experience heterogeneity based on parental socioeconomic characteristics. Parental education levels, economic integration success, and inter-ethnic marriage patterns create additional stratification within origin groups (Jensen & Manning, 2024). Children whose parents achieved higher education, secured stable employment have more favorable outcomes, suggesting that disadvantage is compounded by both ethnic background and family-level socioeconomic resources.
5. **Labour market sorting vs. unequal pay:** Advanced quantitative studies using employer – employee data suggest that wage gaps are primarily driven by **segregation and sorting into lower-paying jobs, occupations and companies**, rather than unequal pay for the same work within a given workplace (Han & Hermansen, 2024). For the second generation, within-job pay gaps are often small or non-existent, indicating that the main barriers exist at the point of entry and in career progression across companies (Han & Hermansen, 2024). Furthermore, qualitative research shows that second-generation professionals anticipate this segregation and develop specific career strategies to navigate it, such as choosing jobs where their ethnic background is an asset or pursuing international opportunities to circumvent national-level discrimination (Aslan et al., 2020; Konyali, 2017).
6. **The critical role of institutional context:** The reviewed sources consistently show that the country of residence plays a crucial role in shaping outcomes. Studies comparing multiple nations highlight that **welfare state**

arrangements, educational systems and labour market regulations

significantly influence the integration pathways of second-generation migrants (Ballarino & Panichella, 2015; Crul, 2015; Guiraudon, 2014). For example, the open and late-tracking educational system in Sweden is associated with better outcomes for second-generation Turks than the more rigid system in Germany (Crul, 2015). Similarly, local dynamics suggest variation in labour market outcomes among migrants' descendants, even within the same ethnic groups (Bean et al., 2012; Guiraudon, 2014). Gender egalitarian welfare states also appear to facilitate stronger labour market attachment for mothers, including those of immigrant descent (Holland & de Valk, 2017; Lund, 2024).

As a scoping review, this study maps the breadth and diversity of research on migrants' descendants' labour market outcomes across the Nordic region, identifying key themes, gaps, and patterns. By synthesizing evidence across multiple contexts and methodological approaches, the findings provide a general overview of what is currently known about this population's labour market experiences. This broad scope helps identify areas requiring further investigation and suggests that more systematic international comparison studies within the Nordic region could enhance understanding of how different policy contexts shape outcomes for migrants' descendants.

However, this scoping review also has several important limitations that should be acknowledged. First, while the systematic search was restricted to English-language publications in three major databases (Web of Science, ProQuest, and Scopus), supplemented by reports from Nordic Statistical Institutes and key research institutes in Nordic languages, this approach may still have missed relevant grey literature, working papers, or studies published in other venues. Second, as is inherent to the scoping review methodology, this study aimed to map the breadth of existing research rather than conduct a systematic quality appraisal or meta-analysis of the included studies, meaning that findings from methodologically weaker studies carry equal weight to those from more rigorous designs. Third, the heterogeneity of methodological approaches, outcome measures, and definitions of "second-generation" or "migrants' descendants" across the included studies complicates direct comparisons and may obscure nuances in the findings. Fourth, while the review identifies clear patterns of disadvantage and discrimination, the scope and search strategy may have underrepresented research on successful integration pathways or protective factors that enable positive outcomes for some subgroups. Fifth, the heavy reliance on quantitative studies from Sweden, Norway, and Denmark means that findings may not be equally representative of all Nordic countries, particularly Iceland and Finland, where research appears more limited, probably due to small share of descendants. Finally, the fast-evolving nature of migration patterns and policy contexts means that studies from earlier in the review period (2010–2015) may not fully reflect contemporary realities, particularly given recent refugee movements and changes in labour market structures across the Nordic region.

Appendix 1. Extracted studies on the integration of migrants' descendants in the Nordic labor market

Source (Author, Year)	Year	Title of the paper	Journal / collection	Volume	Issue	Country Focus	Outcome Variable(s)	Qualitative or Quantitative	Main Research Topic/Focus	Results for Second-Generation Migrants	Subgroups of Migrants Analyzed
Ahmad, A. (2020)	2021	Ethnic discrimination against second-generation immigrants in hiring: empirical evidence from a correspondence test	EUROPEAN SOCIETIES	22	5	Finland	Callback rates, the order of callbacks, and odds of receiving a callback based on required soft skills.	Quantitative (Field Experiment/Correspondence Test).	To investigate ethnic discrimination against second-generation immigrants in hiring, focusing on variations by occupation and the stated need for soft skills.	The study focuses specifically on second-generation immigrants. It finds a strong ethnic hierarchy in callback rates and in the order of callbacks (Finnish applicants are contacted first). Discrimination was not reduced when soft skills like "trustworthiness" were requested; in fact, the disadvantage for non-European applicants sometimes increased.	Second-generation immigrants with English, Iraqi, Russian, and Somali backgrounds.
Ahmad, A. (2022)	2020	Does additional work experience moderate ethnic discrimination in the labour market?	ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY	43	3	Finland	Callbacks for job interviews.	Quantitative (Field Experiment/Correspondence Test).	To test whether greater work experience reduces ethnic discrimination against job applicants of immigrant origin in the Finnish labour market.	The study includes second-generation immigrants to test human-capital-driven explanations. Findings show that additional work experience does not reduce discrimination; their callback rates remain significantly lower than their majority counterparts, even with two more years of experience. The results suggest discrimination is based on employers' preferences rather than uncertainty about skills.	Second-generation immigrants with English, Russian, Iraqi, and Somali backgrounds.
Aldén, L., Bastani, S., & Hammarstedt, M. (2021)	2021	Ethnic Background and the Value of Self-Employment Experience: Evidence from a Randomized Field Experiment	OXFORD BULLETIN OF ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS	83	6	Sweden	Callbacks (positive responses from employers, including interview invitations).	Quantitative (Field Experiment/Correspondence Test).	To investigate how self-employment experience is valued compared to wage employment, depending on the applicant's ethnic background and gender.	The study focuses exclusively on second-generation immigrants. It finds that self-employment experience is negatively perceived compared to wage employment. This is particularly true for male applicants with Arabic/Muslim names. For female applicants with the same background, employers valued self-employment and wage employment more equally.	Second-generation immigrants with Arabic/Middle Eastern backgrounds.
Andersson, L., & Hammarstedt, M. (2011)	2011	Transmission of self-employment across immigrant generations: the importance of ethnic background and gender	REVIEW OF ECONOMICS OF THE HOUSEHOLD	9	4	Sweden	Self-employment status.	Quantitative (Register Data Analysis).	To study the intergenerational transmission of self-employment among male and female immigrants from different ethnic backgrounds.	The study focuses on second-generation immigrants and finds they are over-represented in self-employment compared to natives. Having a self-employed father significantly increases the probability of self-employment for both sons and daughters in the second generation.	Second-generation immigrants from Nordic, Western European, Eastern European, Southern European, and non-European backgrounds.
Aradhya, S., Grotti, R., & Härkönen, J. (2023)	2023	Unemployment persistence among second-generation immigrants	EUROPEAN SOCIOLOGICAL REVIEW	39	3	Sweden	Unemployment status.	Quantitative (Register Data Analysis).	To analyze whether unemployment persistence (the causal effect of past unemployment on current unemployment) differs between ancestral Swedes and second-generation immigrant groups.	The study focuses on second-generation immigrants. It finds that while the <i>relative</i> effect of past unemployment is similar across groups, the <i>absolute</i> effect is greater for those from Middle-Eastern, Turkish, and Southern European backgrounds due to higher baseline unemployment. This means unemployment spells have more severe consequences for them.	Ten second-generation immigrant groups (e.g., Finnish, Yugoslavian, Middle Eastern, Turkish, Iranian) and the 2.5 generation.

Aslan, P., Ahmadi, N., Wikström, E., & Sjöberg, S. (2020)	2020	Agency and Adaptation: Strategies of Immigrants' Descendants on the Swedish Labor Market	Nordic Journal of Working Life Studies	10	3	Sweden	Occupational strategies and subjective understandings of the labor market.	Qualitative (Interviews).	To explore how employed descendants of immigrants understand labor market conditions and how this influences their occupational strategies.	The study focuses on descendants of immigrants (second generation). They perceive the labor market as an ethnically segregated space and develop strategies to counteract anticipated ethnic penalties, such as choosing jobs where their background is an asset or adapting their habitus.	Descendants of non-Western immigrant parents, with a majority from the Middle East.
Ballarino, G., & Panichella, N. (2015)	2015	The Occupational Integration of Male Migrants in Western European Countries: Assimilation or Persistent Disadvantage?	INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION	53	2	Germany, France, UK, Sweden, Spain, Italy.	Employment condition and job quality.	Quantitative (Survey Data Analysis).	To compare the occupational integration of male migrants across different European countries, testing assimilation versus persistent disadvantage theories.	The "ethnic penalty" in occupational attainment disappears for the second generation in most countries, including Sweden, once they achieve comparable education to natives. However, a disadvantage in employment opportunities persists in the UK and France.	First- and second-generation male migrants, divided into European and non-European origins.
Bean, F. D., et al. (2012)	2012	The dimensions and degree of second-generation incorporation in US and European cities: A comparative study of inclusion and exclusion	INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF COMPARATIVE SOCIOLOGY	53	3	US and European cities (including Stockholm, Sweden).	Multiple indicators of economic, sociocultural, spatial, and political incorporation.	Quantitative (Survey Data Analysis).	To compare how "more inclusionary" versus "less inclusionary" urban contexts affect the dimensionality and degree of immigrant incorporation.	The study focuses on the second generation. In more "inclusionary" cities like Stockholm, they show more favorable outcomes and more distinct pathways to mobility (greater dimensionality) than in "less inclusionary" cities (e.g., in Germany, Austria), where disadvantages across domains are more tightly linked.	Second-generation individuals of Turkish, Moroccan, and former Yugoslavian backgrounds in Europe.
Behtoui, A. (2013)	2013	Incorporation of children of immigrants: the case of descendants of immigrants from Turkey in Sweden	ETHNIC AND RACIAL STUDIES	36	12	Sweden	Educational achievements, labour market status, and salary.	Quantitative (Register & Survey Data Analysis).	To investigate the integration of descendants of Turkish immigrants in Sweden and reflect on the "segmented assimilation" theory.	The study finds that while descendants of immigrants from Turkey (DIT) have lower educational levels than children of natives, this gap disappears after controlling for parental background. A significant income gap persists, which is largely explained by occupational segregation. The author describes their experience as "subordinate inclusion".	Descendants of immigrants from Turkey.
Borgen, S. T., & Hermansen, A. S. (2023)	2023	Horizontal Advantage: Choice of Postsecondary Field of Study Among Children of Immigrants	DEMOGRAPHY	60	4	Norway	Postsecondary education enrollment and choice of field of study.	Quantitative (Register Data Analysis).	To investigate horizontal ethnic stratification in postsecondary education.	Children of immigrants from non-European countries are more likely to enter higher education and enroll in high-paying fields than comparable children of natives, despite having lower grades and more disadvantaged backgrounds. This is termed a "horizontal ethnic advantage".	Children of immigrants from various origins, including Pakistan, Iraq, Vietnam, Iran, Turkey, and others.
Brekke, I. (2014)	2014	Long-term Labour Market Consequences of Dropping out of Upper Secondary School for Second-generation Immigrants and the Native Majority in Norway	ACTA SOCIOLOGICA	57	1	Norway	Labour market outcomes 10 years after starting upper secondary education (economic inactivity, employment probability, educational enrolment).	Quantitative (Register Data Analysis).	To examine the long-term labour market consequences of dropping out of school and whether they differ for second-generation immigrants versus native youth.	The study finds that the labour market penalty for dropping out of school is comparable for both second-generation immigrants and native youth; dropping out does not appear to be more detrimental for the second generation.	Second-generation immigrants from Turkey, Morocco, Pakistan, Vietnam, India, and Chile.

Brydsten, A., Cederström, A., & Rostila, M. (2020)	2020	Young people's labour market patterns and later mental health: A sequence analysis exploring the role of region of origin for young people's labour market trajectories and mental health	SSM-POPULATION HEALTH	11		Sweden	Labour market trajectories and mental ill health.	Quantitative (Register Data Analysis with Sequence Analysis).	To identify typical labour market trajectories and analyze their association with mid-life mental health, by region of origin.	Second-generation migrants are more often found in turbulent and unstable labor market trajectories compared to native Swedes. These turbulent trajectories are also associated with a higher risk of poor mental health in mid-life.	First-generation (European and non-European) and second-generation migrants.
Carlsson, M. (2010)	2010	Experimental Evidence of Discrimination in the Hiring of First- and Second-generation Immigrants	Labour	24	3	Sweden	Callbacks for job interviews.	Quantitative (Field Experiment/Correspondence Test).	To compare ethnic discrimination in hiring between first- and second-generation immigrants.	Second-generation immigrants have essentially the same low callback rate as first-generation immigrants, which is about half that of natives. This suggests discrimination is based on ethnicity per se, not on foreign birth or education.	First- and second-generation immigrants with a Middle Eastern background.
Çelikaksoy, A., & Wadensjö, E. (2018)	2018	Chapter 5. Sweden: Intergenerational mobility patterns in immigrant and native families	Inside OECD: Catching Up? Country Studies on Intergenerational Mobility and Children of Immigrants			Sweden	Labour market situation (employment, occupation) and educational attainment.	Descriptive statistics from register data.	To investigate educational mobility and labour market outcomes for children of immigrants and natives, considering parental education and composition.	Children of immigrants show higher educational mobility than children of natives, particularly those from less educated families. The education-transmission link is weaker in families with two foreign-born parents than in mixed families. Daughters, especially from Iran and Morocco, show high mobility.	Second-generation individuals from +13 EU countries, former Yugoslavia, Turkey, Iran, and Morocco.
Cools, S., Finseraas, H., & Bergli Rasmussen, N. (2021)	2021	The Immigrant-Native Gap in Union Membership: A Question of Time, Sorting, or Culture?	TIDSSKRIFT FOR SAMFUNNSFORSKNING	60	2	Norway	Trade union membership rates.	Quantitative (Register Data Analysis).	To investigate the gap in unionization rates between immigrants and natives, examining the roles of assimilation, labor market sorting, and culture.	The raw union membership gap for second-generation immigrants is 14 percentage points lower than for natives, but this reduces to just 1.3 points after extensive controls. This indicates the gap is largely explained by sorting into firms with lower unionization, not cultural background.	First-generation, second-generation, and individuals with one Norwegian-born parent.
Crul, M. (2015)	2015	Is Education the Pathway to Success? A Comparison of Second Generation Turkish Professionals in Sweden, France, Germany and The Netherlands	EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF EDUCATION	50	3	Sweden, France, Germany, and The Netherlands.	Educational attainment and working as a professional.	Mixed-methods (Survey data and interviews).	To compare the pathways to professional positions for second-generation Turks in four countries, focusing on the role of national institutions.	In Sweden, the open educational system provides the best opportunities for second-generation Turks, with 18% working as professionals, compared to only 2% in Germany's stratified system. Pathways to success are highly dependent on the host country's institutional context.	Second-generation Turks, including some Kurdish or Assyrian individuals in the Swedish sample.
Cuzulan, S., Schultz-Nielsen, M. L., & Fallesen, P. (2025)	2025	The Demographic and Socioeconomic Consequences of Restricting Access to Marriage for Young Immigrant Women in Denmark	Demography	62	1	Denmark	Marriage behavior, transition to motherhood, educational duration, and employment.	Quantitative (Register Data Analysis).	To examine the effects of a 2002 policy reform that restricted access to marriage for young immigrant women.	The reform delayed marriages among second-generation immigrants, changed spouse composition, and delayed in-wedlock fertility. A key socioeconomic consequence was an increase in the duration of formal education obtained by these women.	First- and second-generation non-EU immigrant women.
Dahlstedt, I. (2015)	2015	Over-education amongst the children of immigrants in Sweden	Nordic Journal of Migration Research	5	1	Sweden	Occupational mismatch (over-education).	Quantitative (Register Data Analysis).	To investigate the probability of descendants of immigrants being over-educated.	Second-generation males have higher odds of being over-educated than natives, while second-generation females do not significantly differ from their native peers. Overall, the descendant generation has lower mismatch levels than the immigrant generation.	Descendants from 12 different country groups (e.g., Chile, Denmark, Poland, Turkey) and those with one vs. two foreign-born parents.

Datta Gupta, N., & Kromann, L. (2014)	2014	Differences in the labor market entry of second-generation immigrants and ethnic Danes	IZA Journal of Migration	3	1	Denmark	Job-finding rate and job-retention rate.	Quantitative (Register Data Analysis with Equilibrium Search Models).	To investigate whether firms behave differently toward second-generation immigrants at labor market entry.	After matching on background, second-generation women with lower education perform as well as or better than Danish peers, but second-generation men with vocational education face lower job arrival rates and higher layoff rates.	Second-generation immigrants, divided into Western and non-Western backgrounds.
Drouhot, L., & Nee, V. (2019)	2019	Assimilation and the Second Generation in Europe and America: Blending and Segregating Social Dynamics Between Immigrants and Natives	ANNUAL REVIEW OF SOCIOLOGY, VOL 45	45		Comparative: US, UK, France, Germany, Sweden, Norway, etc.	Socioeconomic attainment, social relations, cultural beliefs.	Literature Review.	To synthesize recent research on immigrant incorporation, focusing on the second generation.	The review finds an overall pattern of intergenerational assimilation for the second generation. In Sweden, Turks do better educationally than in Germany due to a more open school system, but an ethnic penalty in employment access persists.	Various groups, including Turks, North Africans, West Indians, Africans, Asians, and Latinos.
Efendic, N., Andersson, F., & Wennberg, K. (2016)	2016	Growth in first- and second-generation immigrant firms in Sweden	INTERNATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS JOURNAL-RESEARCHING ENTREPRENEURSHIP	34	8	Sweden	Revenue growth of small firms.	Quantitative (Register Data Analysis).	To investigate differences in revenue growth between firms run by native, first-generation, and second-generation immigrant CEOs.	A pattern of "segmented assimilation" is found: firms run by second-generation immigrants from OECD countries have higher growth rates than natives, while those from non-OECD countries have lower growth rates.	First- and second-generation immigrant CEOs from OECD and non-OECD countries.
Ekberg, J., Hammarstedt, M., & Shukur, G. (2010)	2010	Immigrant-native earnings differentials: SUR estimation applied on three generations	ANNALS OF REGIONAL SCIENCE	45	3	Sweden	Earnings differentials compared to natives.	Quantitative (Register Data Analysis).	To analyze earnings differentials between three generations of immigrants and natives.	For male second-generation immigrants, earnings differentials compared to natives were very small, indicating strong convergence. The only significantly different group was of "Other European" origin (4% lower earnings).	First, second, and third generations of immigrants from Finland, other Nordic countries, Eastern Europe, other European countries, and non-European countries.
Farris, S., & de Jong, S. (2014)	2014	Discontinuous intersections: second-generation immigrant girls in transition from school to work	ETHNIC AND RACIAL STUDIES	37	9	Comparative: Denmark, France, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, UK.	Educational achievements and labor market outcomes.	Qualitative (Interviews and literature overview).	To provide a theoretical framework (intersectionality) for analyzing discrimination against second-generation immigrant girls.	Gender seems to benefit second-generation immigrant girls at school (they outperform male peers), but becomes a disadvantage in the labor market, where they face significant discrimination.	Second-generation girls of North African and South Asian descent.
Gorodzeisky, A., & Semyonov, M. (2017)	2017	Labor force participation, unemployment and occupational attainment among immigrants in West European countries	PLOS ONE	12	5	Comparative: France, Belgium, UK, Sweden, and a pooled sample of nine countries.	Labor force status and occupational status.	Quantitative (Survey Data Analysis).	To examine modes of immigrants' labor market incorporation, focusing on generation, origin, and gender.	Second-generation immigrants of non-European origin face greater disadvantage in finding employment, especially men. However, once employed, their odds of attaining a high-status job are similar to the native-born population.	First- and second-generation immigrants, divided by European and non-European origins.
Guiraudon, V. (2014)	2014	Economic Crisis and Institutional Resilience: The Political Economy of Migrant Incorporation	West European Politics	37	6	Comparative: France, Germany, Sweden, Netherlands.	Labour market incorporation (e.g., employment, NEET rates).	Literature Review/Policy Analysis.	To analyze the labor market situation of migrants and their descendants through the lens of European political economies.	In Sweden, a strong welfare state encouraging female labor participation has led to high employment rates for second-generation Turkish women, nearly on par with native women and far higher than their counterparts in Berlin.	Second-generation Turks are used for comparative analysis.
Hammarstedt, M., & Palme, M. (2012)	2012	Human capital transmission and the earnings of second-generation immigrants in Sweden	IZA Journal of Migration	1	1	Sweden	Earnings and intergenerational earnings mobility.	Quantitative (Register Data Analysis).	To compare earnings and intergenerational mobility between immigrants and natives.	There is an overall convergence in average earnings across generations, but this hides a divergence between different second-generation groups. Those from Southern Europe, the Middle East, and Africa have their	Male second-generation immigrants from 20 different origin groups, aggregated into six regions.

										disadvantage reinforced, while others see it turn into an advantage.	
Han, J., & Hermansen, A. (2024)	2024	WAGE DISPARITIES ACROSS IMMIGRANT GENERATIONS: EDUCATION, SEGREGATION, OR UNEQUAL PAY?	ILR REVIEW	77	4	Norway	Hourly wage and annual wage growth.	Quantitative (Register Data Analysis).	To disentangle the sources of immigrant-native wage disparities.	Children of immigrants (second generation) have wage gaps that primarily reflect sorting into lower-paying jobs, not unequal pay for the same work. When doing the same work for the same employer, their wages are similar to natives'.	Children of immigrants (second generation), childhood immigrants, and adult immigrants from non-Western origins, with breakdowns for 10 national groups.
Hanes, N., & Norlin, E. (2011)	2011	Psychological Traits and Earnings Differentials among Men: A Study of Second-generation Immigrants in Sweden	SCANDINAVIAN JOURNAL OF ECONOMICS	113	2	Sweden	Annual earnings.	Quantitative (Register & Military Test Data Analysis).	To analyze the impact of non-cognitive skills on earnings differentials between second-generation immigrant men and native men.	For male second-generation immigrants, earnings differentials are explained to a large degree by differences in endowments of psychological traits, not differences in returns to those traits.	Male second-generation immigrants from Nordic and non-EU15 backgrounds.
Heath, A., & Cheung, S. Y. (2012)	2012	The Comparative Study of Ethnic Minority Disadvantage	Proceedings-British Academy	137		Comparative, including Sweden.	Labor market outcomes (employment, occupation).	Literature Review/Theoretical Framework.	To provide a theoretical and methodological framework for studying ethnic minority disadvantage.	No specific results. Outlines the expectation that the second generation will have better outcomes than the first due to improved human capital but that some disadvantage will persist due to social reproduction.	Discusses the framework for analyzing various groups, including the second generation.
Hermansen, A. S. (2022)	2022	Visualizing Intergenerational Immigrant Assimilation at Work	Socius: Sociological Research for a Dynamic World	8		Norway	Workplace segregation (coworker immigrant share and salary rank).	Data Visualization/Quantitative.	To visualize intergenerational immigrant assimilation in workplace contexts.	The visualizations show a striking pattern of intergenerational assimilation; descendants of immigrants work in places with fewer immigrant coworkers and higher coworker salaries, much more similar to natives than to the first generation.	Immigrants and descendants of immigrants (second generation) from non-European origins.
Hermansen, A. S. (2022)	2013	Occupational Attainment Among Children of Immigrants in Norway: Bottlenecks into Employment—Equal Access to Advantaged Positions?	European Sociological Review	29	3	Norway	Employment (versus not being employed); advantaged occupational positions	Quantitative (Register Data Analysis).	Examines whether second-generation immigrants experience disadvantages in access to employment and advantaged occupational positions compared to native peers with similar qualifications and social origins in Norway. It tests long-term structural integration of ethnic minorities.	Non-European ethnic minorities experience weaker labour market attachments relative to the native majority (lower probabilities of being gainfully employed). Once employment is secured, there is no evident pattern of ethnic disadvantage in access to advantaged occupational positions. Ethnic stratification is primarily reproduced at the entrance to the labour market.	Broad groups: European (including Western) and Non-European. Detailed groups: Nordic, Western, Southern and Eastern Europe, Middle East, Africa and South America (merged), Asia, Pakistan, and Vietnam.
Holland, J., & de Valk, H. (2017)	2017	Differences in labour force participation by motherhood status among second-generation Turkish and majority women across Europe	POPULATION STUDIES-A JOURNAL OF DEMOGRAPHY	71	3	Comparative: Germany, France, Netherlands, Sweden.	Labour force participation.	Quantitative (Survey Data Analysis).	To compare the labor force participation of second-generation Turkish women with majority women, focusing on the "motherhood gap".	In Sweden, the motherhood gap in labor force participation is similar for second-generation Turkish women and majority women, reflecting the strong institutional support for working mothers.	Second-generation Turkish women.
Huschek, D., de Valk, H. A. G., & Liefbroer, A. C. (2011)	2011	Gender-role behavior of second-generation Turks: The role of partner choice, gender ideology and societal context	ADVANCES IN LIFE COURSE RESEARCH	16	4	Comparative: Sweden, Netherlands, France, Germany,	Gender-role behavior (division of household tasks, childcare,	Quantitative (Survey Data Analysis).	To compare gender-role behavior of second-generation Turks across six European countries.	Second-generation Turks' gender-role behavior varies by country, with the most egalitarian behavior observed in Sweden. Gender ideology and partner choice are strong individual-level predictors.	Second-generation Turks.

						Austria, Switzerland.	finances, income).				
Jensen, M., & Manning, A. (2025)	2025	Background Matters, but not Whether Parents are Immigrants: Outcomes of Children Born in Denmark	AMERICAN ECONOMIC JOURNAL-APPLIED ECONOMICS	17	3	Denmark	Earnings, unemployment, welfare transfers, education, criminal convictions.	Quantitative (Register Data Analysis).	To investigate whether worse outcomes for children of immigrants are due to their parents' immigrant status or their socioeconomic status.	For "first-generation locals" (second generation), worse outcomes are almost entirely explained by parental socioeconomic characteristics. Conditional on background, they perform as well or slightly better than children of locals across most outcomes.	First-generation locals (second generation), divided into those with one vs. two immigrant parents, and by region of origin.
Kim, W. (2024)	2024	Overqualification Among Second-Generation Children of Immigrants in the Swedish Labour Market	European Journal of Population	40	1	Sweden	Overqualification	Quantitative (Register Data Analysis)	To examines overqualification patterns among first-generation (G1), second-generation (G2), and majority populations, with a focus on heterogeneity across G2 ancestries.	The focus is on the second generation (G2). G2 individuals have a lower probability of overqualification than G1 but moderately higher probabilities than the majority population. The disadvantage is concentrated among tertiary-educated G2 individuals of non-Western origins.	
Kindt, M. (2022)	2022	Negotiating independence and tradition: plans for career, marriage and family among daughters of immigrants enrolled in higher education in Norway	JOURNAL OF ETHNIC AND MIGRATION STUDIES	48	11	Norway	Future plans and narratives regarding career, marriage, and family.	Qualitative (Interviews).	To investigate how highly educated daughters of immigrants plan their future lives and negotiate parental expectations.	Daughters of immigrants (second generation) plan to pursue prestigious careers while wanting a parent-assisted, within-group marriage. They navigate this by creating narratives that blur the lines between "arranged" and "romantic" marriage.	Daughters of immigrants from various origins, including Pakistan, Iraq, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, etc..
Kitterød, R., & Nadim, M. (2020)	2020	Embracing gender equality: Gender-role attitudes among second-generation immigrants in Norway	DEMOGRAPHIC RESEARCH	42		Norway	Gender-role attitudes (support for the dual-earner/dual-carer model).	Quantitative (Survey Data).	To examine the gender-role attitudes of second-generation immigrants, comparing them to the majority population.	Second-generation immigrants express overwhelming support for the dual-earner/dual-carer family model, similar to the majority population. Women are more egalitarian than men, and men of Pakistani origin are less supportive than others.	Second-generation immigrants from Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Turkey, and Pakistan.
Klinthäll, M., & Urban, S. (2014)	2014	Second-Generation Immigrants in the Small-Business Sector in Sweden	Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Studies	12	3	Sweden	Employment by employer category (parent, co-national, etc.).	Quantitative (Register Data Analysis).	To investigate the importance of coethnic and family employment for second-generation immigrants in the small-business sector.	For second-generation immigrants, employment by parents is a substantial part of coethnic employment, but this is equally common among youth of Swedish origin. The authors conclude it is a general small-business class strategy, not a unique "ethnic economy" phenomenon.	Second-generation immigrants, divided into 15 origin categories.
Klinthäll, M., & Urban, S. (2016)	2016	The strength of ethnic ties: Routes into the labour market in spaces of segregation	URBAN STUDIES	53	1	Sweden (Stockholm).	Use of informal vs. formal job-finding channels.	Quantitative (Survey Data Analysis).	To analyze whether ethnic segregation leads to social isolation and lack of access to informal channels into the labor market.	Contrary to the "isolation thesis," second-generation youth with parents from Turkey use informal contacts to find jobs more often than their Swedish-origin peers in the same neighborhoods. Living in immigrant-dense areas increases the use of informal channels.	Second-generation youth with parents from Turkey, with breakdowns for Turkish, Kurdish, and Assyrian/Syriac ethnic backgrounds.
Konyali, A. (2017)	2017	International opportunities on the way up: alternative career paths of descendants of migrants from Turkey in the field of	ETHNIC AND RACIAL STUDIES	40	2	France, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden.	"Ideal type" career paths.	Qualitative (Interviews).	To examine the career paths of socially mobile descendants of Turkish migrants in professional business services.	Descendants of migrants from Turkey use three alternative career paths to overcome obstacles: (1) building an "international" profile, (2) carving out a professional "niche" using their ethnic background, and (3) becoming self-employed after experiencing blocked opportunities.	Descendants of migrants from Turkey.

		professional business services									
Lillehagen, M., & Hermansen, A. (2025)	2025	Entering the mainstream economy? Workplace segregation and immigrant assimilation	SOCIAL FORCES	103	4	Norway	Workplace segregation (immigrant coworker share, coworker salary rank).	Quantitative (Register Data Analysis).	To analyze workplace segregation and intergenerational assimilation.	A sharp reduction in workplace segregation is seen across generations. Children of immigrants work in places with fewer immigrant coworkers and higher coworker salaries, more similar to natives than to the first generation, driven largely by their improved skills.	Immigrants and children of immigrants (second generation) from non-Western origins, with analysis for 11 national origin groups.
Lund, A. (2024)	2024	Do Highly Educated Daughters of Immigrants Return to Work After Childbirth? Evidence From Descendants of Pakistani and Vietnamese Immigrants in Norway	Nordic Journal of Migration Research	14	2	Norway	Return to work following childbirth.	Quantitative (Register Data Analysis).	To investigate work re-entry following childbirth among highly educated daughters of immigrants.	Descendants of Pakistani immigrants are less likely to return to work overall than native women, but the difference is not significant for full-time work. Descendants of Vietnamese immigrants do not differ significantly from native women overall.	Highly educated daughters of immigrants (second generation) from Pakistan and Vietnam.
Midtbøen & Nadim, 2019	2019	Ethnic niche formation at the top? Second-generation immigrants in Norwegian high-status occupations	<i>Ethnic and Racial Studies</i>	42	16	Norway	Ethnic niche formation; Labour market location and work tasks.	Qualitative (Interviews).	To examines the prevalence and mechanisms of ethnic niche formation among highly educated second-generation immigrants in the upper tiers of the labour market. Focuses on three high-status professions: medicine, law, and business and finance.	Tendencies of ethnic niche formation were found both within mainstream firms and as ethnic entrepreneurship. These processes often appear as unintended consequences of the second generation's ethnic competence (e.g., language/cultural skills). The Law field showed the clearest patterns of niche formation (using ethnic advantage to attract immigrant clients and creating co-ethnic law firms as a "viable second best option" to the very top firms). The Medical field saw niche formation within mainstream firms, where doctors were regularly allocated ethnically specific tasks, such as interpreting. The Business and Finance sector showed the fewest traces of niche formation, as ethnic background was mostly deemed irrelevant or only symbolically useful.	Descendants of labour migrants from Pakistan, Turkey, Morocco, and India. (The largest single group consisted of children of immigrants from Pakistan).
Midtbøen, A. H., & Nadim, M. (2022)	2022	Becoming Elite in an Egalitarian Context: Pathways to Law and Medicine Among Norway's Second-Generation	IMISCOE Research Series			Norway	Pathways to elite occupations (medicine and law).	Qualitative (Interviews) and Quantitative (Register Data).	To examine the pathways into elite occupations for descendants of labor migrants in Norway and how their ethnic status shapes their experiences.	Second-generation immigrants are overrepresented in medicine and law, often accessing these fields through alternative pathways (e.g., studying abroad for medicine) due to high grade requirements. Once in these fields, they experience subtle exclusion and a "burden of doubt" but also use their ethnic background as a professional resource.	Descendants of labor migrants from Pakistan, Turkey, India, and Morocco.
Midtbøen, A.H. (2014)	2014	The Invisible Second Generation? Statistical Discrimination and Immigrant Stereotypes in Employment Processes in Norway	JOURNAL OF ETHNIC AND MIGRATION STUDIES	40	10	Norway	Employment decisions, employer attitudes/stereotype types.	Qualitative (Interviews with employers).	To explore employers' decision-making processes and stereotypes that lead to discrimination against the second generation.	Employers infer stereotypes associated with first-generation immigrants from ethnically distinct names, making the second generation's domestic qualifications and language fluency "invisible". Negative experiences are generalized across ethnic groups and across generations.	Descendants of Pakistani immigrants (from the associated experiment) and the second generation more broadly.

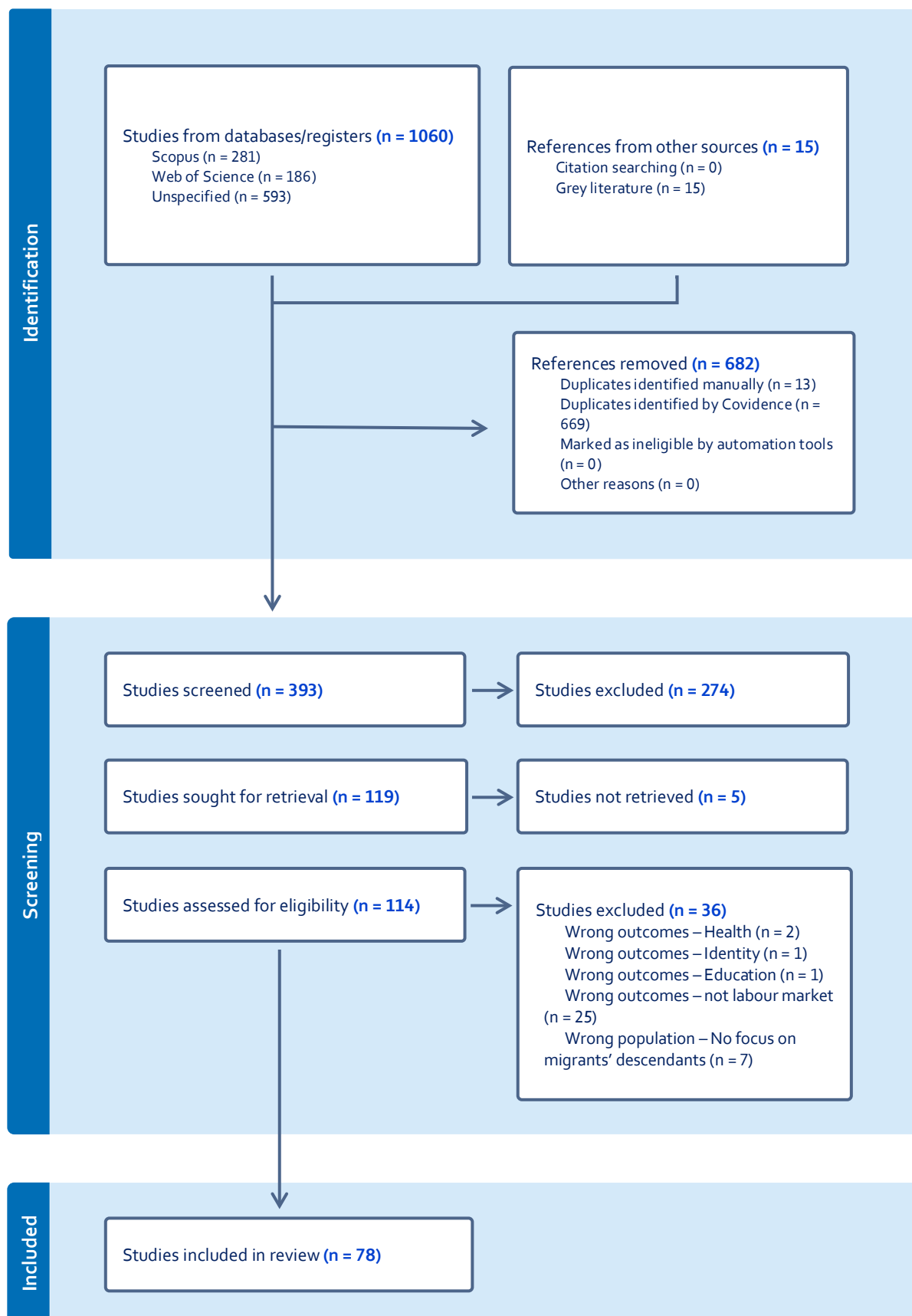
Midtbøen, A.H. (2016)	2016	Discrimination of the Second Generation: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Norway	Journal of International Migration and Integration	17	1	Norway	Callbacks for job interviews.	Quantitative (Field Experiment/Correspondence Test).	To measure employment discrimination against second-generation immigrants and explore variations by gender, sector, and occupation.	Descendants of Pakistani immigrants are 25% less likely to receive a callback than equally qualified Norwegians. Discrimination is larger in the private sector than the public, and while larger for men overall, this is reversed in gender-integrated private sector jobs.	Descendants of Pakistani immigrants.
Mohn, F. (2020)	2020	Marriage Migration and the Economic Trajectories of First- and Second-Generation Immigrants in Norway	ACTA SOCIOLOGICA	63	3	Norway	Employment and earnings trajectories.	Quantitative (Register Data Analysis).	To analyze how marrying a "marriage migrant" affects the labor market assimilation of anchor spouses.	For second-generation women, marrying a marriage migrant is associated with a negative change in employment and earnings after marriage compared to marrying a co-ethnic already in Norway. For men, there are few differences.	Immigrants and second-generation immigrants from non-Western origins.
Mussino, E., & Duvander, A. (2016)	2016	Use It or Save It? Migration Background and Parental Leave Uptake in Sweden	EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF POPULATION-REVUE EUROPEENNE DE DEMOGRAPHIE	32	2	Sweden	Uptake of parental leave (timing and number of days).	Quantitative (Register Data Analysis).	To investigate differences in parental leave use between native and immigrant mothers.	Second-generation mothers (with two foreign-born parents) are more likely to take many parental leave days in the first year after birth, but this difference disappears after controlling for labor market activity. Their leave patterns are more similar to native mothers than first-generation mothers are.	Immigrant mothers and second-generation mothers (with one vs. two foreign-born parents).
Nadim, 2014	2014	Transnational Marriages and Second-Generation Women's Employment	<i>Nordic Journal of Migration Research</i>	4	No. 3	Norway (specifically, Oslo)	Attachment to work (paid work/employment) and the organization of work-care practices.	Qualitative (Based on 19 in-depth interviews with second-generation women and some of their husbands).	Analysis of the interaction between transnational marriage (a specific transnational practice) and labour market participation (a dimension of integration) for second-generation women of Pakistani descent.	Contrary to public concern, marrying transnationally can create incentives for second-generation women's paid work. The specific characteristics of transnational marriages that influence work decisions are: conflicting expectations regarding childcare and employment, unsettled gendered power relations (often empowering the settled wife over the migrant husband), and economic instability. However, economic pressures can also postpone education or lock some women into low-skilled work.	Second-generation women of Pakistani descent in Norway who married men from Pakistan (transnational marriages), compared to those married to Norwegian-born men of Pakistani descent (same-background couples).
Nadim, M, & Midtboen, A. (2023)	2023	Gendered Consequences of Social Mobility: Second-Generation Immigrants' Work-Care Considerations in High-Status Occupations in Norway	SOCIOLOGY-THE JOURNAL OF THE BRITISH SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION	57	6	Norway	Experiences of gendered opportunities and constraints; work-care considerations.	Qualitative (Interviews).	To explore how social mobility affects the lives of second-generation immigrant men and women differently in high-status occupations.	After social mobility, both second-generation men and women share a strong dedication to work. However, this requires women to challenge gender-complementary expectations from their families, while men often rely on such arrangements with their partners.	Second-generation immigrants with parents from Pakistan, Turkey, India, and Morocco.
Nadim, M. (2014)	2014	Reinterpreting the relation between motherhood and paid work: second-generation immigrant women in Norway	SOCIOLOGICAL REVIEW	62	3	Norway	Moral understandings and practices of combining motherhood and work.	Qualitative (Interviews).	To analyze the cultural and moral understandings that shape second-generation women's practices of combining motherhood and work.	Second-generation women of Pakistani descent challenge their parents' traditional views, are strongly work-oriented, and justify using institutional childcare by framing it as beneficial for children, a narrative that aligns with the Norwegian welfare state context.	Second-generation women of Pakistani descent.

Nekby, L. (2013)	2013	Cultural Integration of Immigrants in Europe	In: Algan, Y., Bisin, A., Manning, A., and Verdier, T. (eds.). Cultural Integration of Immigrants in Europe. Oxford: Oxford University Press, Studies of Policy Reform: 172–209.			Sweden	Cultural indicators (marriage, cohabitation, divorce, partner age, female employment, education), subjective values.	Quantitative (Register & Survey Data).	To study patterns of cultural integration across first and second generations of immigrants by region of origin.	Second-generation immigrants show a clear pattern of increased cultural integration compared to the first generation on all indicators. Differences from natives are considerably smaller or non-existent for the second generation, especially when including those with mixed backgrounds.	First- and second-generation immigrants from Nordic, Western European, Eastern European, North/Central American, South American, Asian, and African backgrounds.
Niknami, S., Schröder, L., & Wadensjö, E. (2019)	2019	Ethnic Minority Youths in the Labour Markets in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden	IDEAS Working Paper Series from RePEc			Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden.	NEET rate (Not in Employment, Education or Training).	Quantitative (Register Data Analysis).	To document how the share of NEET youths has evolved, comparing first- and second-generation immigrant youths with natives.	In Sweden, second-generation immigrant youths have higher NEET rates than native youth, but lower rates than first-generation youth. The gap persists after controlling for background characteristics.	First- and second-generation immigrant youths, divided by parents' region of origin (Western and non-Western).
Pendakur, K., & Bevelander, P. (2021)	2021	Polish immigrants and their children in Canada and Sweden: Labour market outcomes and the role of context	COMPARATIVE MIGRATION STUDIES	9	1	Canada and Sweden.	Employment probability, log of market income, and percentile rank of income.	Quantitative (Census & Register Data Analysis).	To compare labor market outcomes for Polish immigrants and their children in Canada and Sweden.	Second-generation Poles in Sweden have largely caught up with their native peers. While their employment probability is slightly lower, their income rank is slightly higher than for non-Polish natives.	Polish immigrants and their children (second generation), distinguishing those with one vs. two Polish parents.
Polavieja, J., & Fischer-Souan, M. (2023)	2023	The boundary within: Are applicants of Southern European descent discriminated against in Northern European job markets?	SOCIO-ECONOMIC REVIEW	21	2	Germany, Netherlands, and Norway.	Employer callbacks.	Quantitative (Field Experiment/Correspondence Test).	To test for hiring discrimination against young nationals of Southern European descent in Northern European job markets.	In Norway, descendants of Southern European immigrants face significant discrimination. However, since French descendants face similar rates, the results suggest a general ingroup favoritism for native Norwegians rather than targeted discrimination against Southern Europeans.	Descendants (second-generation) of Italian, Greek, and Spanish parents; also French and sub-Saharan African descendants.
Rytter, M. (2011)	2011	Money or Education? Improvement Strategies Among Pakistani Families in Denmark	JOURNAL OF ETHNIC AND MIGRATION STUDIES	37	2	Denmark	Family improvement strategies (money vs. education).	Qualitative (Ethnography).	To analyze how notions of improvement and livelihood strategies have changed over time among Pakistani migrant families.	The study focuses on Pakistani families, including the second generation. It identifies a split between families pursuing a "money" strategy (self-employment) and an "education" strategy. The education strategy is increasingly seen as the most successful path for the second generation, partly to equip them for transnational careers and escape Islamophobia.	Pakistani migrants and their children (second generation).
Schnitzlein, D. (2012)	2012	How important is cultural background for the level of intergenerational mobility?	ECONOMICS LETTERS	114	3	Denmark	Intergenerational economic mobility (measured by sibling correlations in earnings).	Quantitative (Register Data Analysis).	To analyze the importance of cultural background versus institutional frameworks for intergenerational mobility by comparing different second-generation groups.	The study finds that the level of intergenerational mobility among different second-generation immigrant groups is much more similar to each other and to native Danes than to the levels in their parents' countries of origin, suggesting that the institutional framework of the host country is more important than cultural background.	Second-generation immigrants with backgrounds from Germany, Pakistan, Turkey, and Morocco.
Urban, S. (2012)	2012	University Education as a Compensation Strategy Among Second-Generation Immigrants	The International Migration Review	46	4	Sweden	Attainment of a university degree.	Quantitative (Register & Census Data Analysis).	To test the "compensation theory": whether parents with low payoffs from their education motivate their children to attain higher education.	Second-generation individuals with parents from Iran, Spain, Greece, and Asia have higher odds of obtaining a university degree than natives, even after controls. A low level of economic integration for the parent's immigrant group is negatively associated with the child	Second-generation immigrants from 18 regions of origin.

										having a university degree, supporting the compensation strategy hypothesis.	
Weber, R., & Vogiazides, L. (2023)	2023	Heterogeneity or consistency across life domains? An analysis of disparities between second-generation migrants and the Swedish majority population	RESEARCH IN SOCIAL STRATIFICATION AND MOBILITY	83		Sweden	Socioeconomic, social, and residential attainment.	Quantitative (Register Data Analysis).	To analyze the extent to which attainments across multiple life domains coincide among second-generation migrants.	Disparities are found in social and residential outcomes for second-generation migrants, while socioeconomic attainment gaps are small after controls. Turkish and Middle Eastern groups have commensurate socioeconomic attainment but differ greatly in social and residential outcomes from the majority.	Second-generation migrants from Finland, Poland, ex-Yugoslavia, Turkey, Middle East, and Latin America.
Wiik, K., & Bergsvik, J. (2023)	2023	Partner Choice and Economic Outcomes among the Children of Immigrants	INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION REVIEW	52		Norway	Employment, individual labor income, and household income.	Quantitative (Register Data Analysis).	To investigate the association between partner choice and economic outcomes of children of immigrants.	Children of immigrants who partner with natives have better economic outcomes than those who partner endogamously. After union formation, those in endogamous unions have less favorable employment and individual income trajectories, an effect most pronounced for women.	Children of immigrants (childhood immigrants and second generation) from six global regions of origin.

Table 1: *Extracted studies on the integration of migrants' descendants in the Nordic labor market.*

Appendix 2. PRISMA flow diagram



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