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Perspectives on European Immigration Policies

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ABSTRACT

Three books studying European immigration from the perspectives of economics, political science and sociology reach different conclusions on some key aspects of this policy. I suggest three avenues for future research. First, there is a need to develop institutionally richer political economy models of migration to examine the conditional nature of state control over immigration. Second, case selection bias in assessing the legacy of immigration for nationality laws should be redressed starting with a more encompassing theory of policy reform. Third, the impact of national welfare policies on the mode of integration of immigrants in the receiving countries could be a promising area of investigation. I illustrate this using employment protection legislation and family policies.

KEY WORDS

- interdisciplinarity
- migration
- nationality law
- state control
- welfare state policies

There is considerable benefit in comparing and contrasting how different social science disciplines study the same phenomenon. Sometimes they complement each other neatly, providing a fuller understanding of the object under investigation. Much more interestingly, other times they widely diverge in their conclusions, generating stimulating puzzles and allowing us to explore avenues to overcome these differences in a truly Kuhnian sense. In this contribution, I rely on three books as a reference and an excuse to compare and contrast three approaches to the study of immigration in Europe.¹ These books are Anthony Messina's *The Logics and Politics of Post-WWII Migration to Western Europe*, published in 2007; Carl-Ulrik Schierup, Peo Hansen and Stephen Castles' *Migration, Citizenship, and the European Welfare State: A European Dilemma* (2006); and Alessandra Venturini's volume on *Postwar Migration in Southern Europe, 1950–2000: An Economic Analysis* (2004). These books speak predominantly to the core interests of their own disciplines but they also talk to each other to a considerable extent, without fully acknowledging it.

As one reviewer puts it, Messina is a 'veteran observer of European politics'. His book is the latest contribution in a long series of publications on this topic. Central in his work is state power, the pinnacle of many political scientists' research, which here is decoded as the ability of states to control immigration. The measures regulating immigration flows at the national level, specifically in the UK and Germany, and at the supranational EU level are studied in two empirical chapters. Additionally, Messina assesses the impact of postwar immigration on domestic policies, such as citizenship and nationality laws, multicultural and minority policies and welfare state policies. He also analyses the extent to which anti-immigration groups have managed to shape immigration policies and the incorporation of immigrants into the political institutions of the immigrant-receiving countries.

As a labour and political economist, Venturini has studied the economics of immigration for the past 20 years. Her book offers three noteworthy contributions. First, she assesses the explanatory power of three contending theories on the choice to migrate: a gravitational model, Todaro's (1969) expected income model and the migratory chain model (e.g. Massey et al., 1993; Sassen, 1988). The second contribution is a comprehensive overview and systematic assessment of the literature on the effects of international migration on labour market performance, particularly wages, native employment levels, economic growth and social expenditure. Finally, Venturini concludes with an assessment of the effectiveness of immigration policies.

The book by Schierup, Hansen and Castles, political sociologists of work, migration and ethnic studies, examines the interactions between, on the one hand, immigration policies and ethnic relations and, on the other, welfare

state policies, concentrating especially on conditions of advanced marginality such as the working poor, undocumented migrant workers, contract labourers and asylum seekers. They frame this relation as a dual crisis, namely 'that of the established welfare state facing a declining capacity to maintain equity, and that of the nation state unable to accommodate incremental ethnic diversity' (2006: 330). The analytical lenses are borrowed from the works of sociologists such as Wilson (1987, 1993) on the emergence of an impoverished and racially stigmatized underclass in the inner cities of the USA, and Sassen (1988, 1991) on the development of a new urban job hierarchy based on a polarization between new high-status, high-tech professional jobs and low-status, low-paid casual jobs carried out by new immigrants (the so-called racialized working poor). Schierup et al. assess whether these developments have also taken place in Europe (specifically looking at the UK, Germany, Italy and Sweden) and investigate how their emergence is related to a country-specific mix of immigration, incorporation, labour and welfare policies.

These books are interesting to read together because they reach strikingly different conclusions. The remainder of the article will illustrate these differences and try to suggest ways to make further progress.² Before proceeding, the next section provides a general overview of migration in Europe.

A continent of immigration

Scholars of immigration are familiar with the key European migration trends, but it is worth briefly summarizing them for the less-acquainted reader. The most commonly used data are the net migration rates available from the OECD database on annual labour force statistics. I have performed a factor analysis on these rates for the 1960–2005 period. Five factors have an eigenvalue that exceeds 1, but visual inspection of the scree plot reveals a levelling off after the second factor, which essentially means that there are two distinct groupings of countries that experienced similar migration flows over this period. The aggregated net rates of these two groups are illustrated in Figure 1.

The first group loads positively and significantly (i.e. scores exceed 0.3) on the second factor. It comprises Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Sweden and Switzerland. These were predominantly countries of immigration throughout the period, although they experienced peaks and troughs. After a period of considerable immigration in the 1960s, they started to restrict flows in the early 1970s, then the political and economic turmoil affecting Europe and beyond in the late 1980s and early 1990s, as well

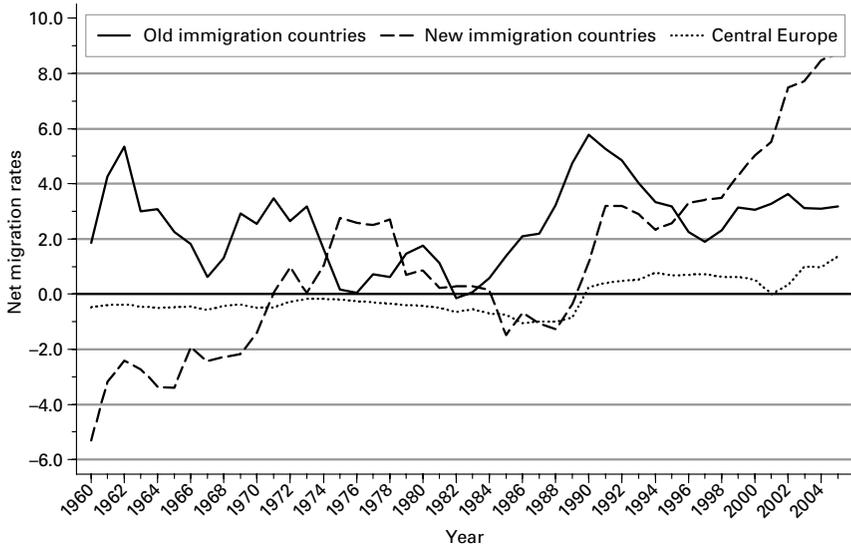


Figure 1 Net migration rates in Europe (%).

Note: My own calculations from OECD Annual Labour Force Statistics.

as the enlargement of the European Union in the 2000s, led to new highs. Over the past seven years, net immigration flows seem to have stabilized at 3% of the population, with Denmark, France and Germany at the lower end of the spectrum and Austria, Luxembourg and Switzerland at the higher end.

The Netherlands and the UK are undoubtedly old immigration countries as well, but they do not load on the second factor, indicating their outlier status. Indeed, the Netherlands started to restrict flows only in 1979, hence it received comparatively higher inflows of migrants in the second half of the 1970s. Nevertheless, the overall pattern resembles that of other old immigration countries.³ On the other hand, the UK began to limit immigration flows in 1962, hence experiencing net emigration almost uninterruptedly from 1964 to 1982. Immigration restarted in the mid-1980s. Since UK migration flows and policies have preceded those of the other old immigration countries, its net migration rates in the period under study actually resemble those of the second grouping.

The core of this second group comprises the high-emigration countries of the 1960s such as Ireland, Italy, Greece and Portugal, which had become high-immigration countries by the 2000s. Four other countries have also experienced switching flows: Finland and Iceland, though with comparatively lower immigration rates in the last 15 years, and Spain and Norway, with lower emigration flows in the first two decades. Notably, the net

migration rates of this group of countries, averaging almost 6% of the population, have exceeded those of the old immigration countries over the past decade.

Interestingly, the Central European countries in the OECD database do not form a coherent grouping. The only common traits are lower migratory flows, but these have clearly been changing over the past 15 years, as shown in Figure 1. The Czech Republic has been a country of immigration, albeit at low rates. Slovakia and Hungary have experienced limited switching flows. Only Poland cannot be associated with any group because it has remained a country of emigration.

Finally, the upward trends in net migration rates of Figure 1 neatly show how (Western and Central) Europe has predominantly become a continent of immigration over the past 15 years.

The conditional nature of state control over immigration

Immigration policy usually comprises a set of legal measures that regulate the entry and stay of foreigners in the country as well as their deportation and exclusion. It also specifies their rights and obligations and it may include provisions on border control, internal security, illegal immigration, sanctions, support and assistance (e.g. accommodation centres).

Although these measures establish a variegated set of policy objectives, whose relevance is likely to depend on personal proclivities, immigration policy is predominantly judged on its ability to regulate the inflow of migrants. Indeed, according to Messina (2007: 97), 'one of the most intriguing puzzles of the post-WWII period is why Western European political elites seemingly lost control of immigration policy'. Interestingly, Messina and Venturini reach opposite conclusions.

Messina considers five broad-based explanations of the (in)capacity of major immigrant-receiving West European governments to regulate immigration flows. The impediments to controlling immigration could be: (a) these states' commitment to open international economic markets and liberal political rights (Hollifield, 1992); (b) moral obligations to particular immigrant groups combined with the logic of domestic client politics and the autonomy of the domestic judicial system (Joppke, 1999); (c) the emergence of transnational forces, international norms and rules (e.g. Harris, 1995; Soysal, 1994); (d) path dependency resulting from the long-established ties between immigrant-receiving and immigrant-sending states (Hansen, 2002); and (e) a weakening of the decision-making capacity of executives and bureaucracies owing to the politicization of the immigration issue (e.g. Betz, 1991; Sciortini, 1999).

This list ignores several alternative explanations, primarily those derived from the political economy literature on international migration (see e.g. the comprehensive review by Massey et al., 1993). Nevertheless, Messina assesses the merits of these explanations with case studies on the UK and Germany, the former being considered a crucial case on several dimensions. After evaluating their immigration policy measures, he concludes that 'the British and German cases generally cast doubt on the validity of the assumption that Western European elites lost control of immigration' (Messina, 2007: 137). Yet he cites several mismatches between policy objectives and outcomes. For instance, it took merely three years for net migration to return to positive figures after the cessation of the German *gastarbeiter* programme in 1973. The four UK immigration acts, adopted between 1962 and 1971, were more successful in stemming immigration flows but they started to lose their effectiveness by the early 1980s, and the 1987/1988 amendments had a rather limited impact on the overall inflows of migrant workers. Indeed, Messina openly admits that 'the political control of policy can only be imperfect' (2007: 98) and his illuminating account of European postwar immigration as a cycle of three waves of immigration, each followed by (mostly restricting) national measures, offers a clear picture of such limited control.

Venturini's analysis reaches quite different conclusions. As mentioned earlier, she assesses the explanatory power of three socioeconomic theories of migration using the postwar flows from Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain to North European countries. According to the gravitational model, the emigration rate (i.e. the net flow of immigrants between two countries as a share of the population of the country of origin) is determined positively by the share of the labour force in the population in each country and negatively by the distance between them. This model works well only for Spain and acceptably for Portugal, and its performance is poor in the cases of Greece and Italy. Venturini eventually discards it in favour of the other two theories.

The first of these is Todaro's (1969) microeconomic model of the individual choice to migrate. According to this model, the emigration rate is positively determined by the per capita income differential between the destination and origin countries, the unemployment level in the origin country and the rate of increase in employment in the destination country, and it is negatively determined by the unemployment level in the destination country and the rate of increase in employment in the origin country. This model performs considerably better than the gravitational one for Spain, Greece and Italy. The variables have the expected signs, although they do not always reach conventional levels of significance. Substantively noteworthy is the result that a 1% increase in per capita income differentials leads to a 2–3% increase in the emigration rate.

The explanatory power of Todaro's model is improved across the board, especially for Spain, Greece and Portugal, if it is tested alongside the migratory chain approach, which stresses the importance of interpersonal ties connecting migrants and former migrants in origin and destination countries. These connections are operationalized by the lagged dependent variable or the stock of foreigners of the same nationality in the country of destination, which should positively affect the emigration rate. In sum, economic factors, such as income differentials between countries and the relative performance of the labour market, in combination with the existence of strong ties in the country of destination, are the most powerful factors explaining the choice of North European countries by South European emigrants.

More interestingly, Venturini doubts the effectiveness of immigration policies. In order to take into account the restrictive immigration policies introduced in the 1970s, she interacts a dummy variable with the lagged dependent variable for the post-1974 period and finds inconclusive results. Additionally, the policy analysis in the last chapter emphasizes the difficulty of regulating flows and questions the success of restrictive immigration measures (2004: 210–14, 236–7). Do these results vindicate the arguments about the incapacity of contemporary governments to regulate immigration? Venturini's operationalization of the policy variables is rather crude, not only because the turning point when restrictive measures were introduced varies across the immigrant-receiving countries, but also because the nature of these measures and their impact differ, for instance, depending on whether countries were members of the European Economic Community.

We are left then with two studies that investigate the same phenomenon but reach opposite conclusions. On the one hand, Messina's assertion that West European governments have not lost control of immigration, while acknowledging that such control can be only imperfect, is unsatisfactory because it relies on under-theorized unexpected consequences. We need to know the conditional nature of this control. On the other hand, Venturini's conclusion that 'institutional factors . . . do not seem to have had an autonomous effect on migration' (2004: 93) appears to be based on a crude operationalization of these factors and is substantively in contrast with many examples of policy impact, discussed for instance by Messina, which cannot be dismissed as anecdotes. There must be room for improvement.

The manner in which policy outputs (i.e. laws) reconcile and trade off frequently opposing objectives and the extent to which such laws produce given outcomes on the ground are conditional upon several factors and underlying theories. From a domestic institutional perspective, theories of legislative politics, with their emphasis on agenda and veto powers and on the conditions that facilitate a change in the status quo, could help scholars

to explain the variance in timing and content of policy measures across countries facing similar immigration flows. This literature's main interest is the degree of policy reform capacity of a political system and should help to refine the expectations of those works that stress the institutional roots of the difficulty of controlling immigration.

Ideally, we should try to integrate these theories with microeconomic models of immigration policy, such as Keefer and Stasavage's (2003) extension of Barro and Gordon's (1983) model of time consistency in monetary policy, from which they derive expectations on the institutional factors facilitating the control of inflation. Let us consider for instance Todaro's (1969) model, where the decision to migrate is a function of the real income differential between the origin and destination countries and the probability of obtaining a job in the destination country.⁴ In Venturini, this probability is operationalized as the relative performance of labour market indicators, specifically the relative levels of unemployment and the rates of increase in employment. But this probability is also unquestionably determined by political choices. In fact, it could be argued that a fundamental domestic cleavage in immigration policy is between those wanting to reduce the probability of immigrants finding a job, therefore making the country less attractive, and those wanting to increase this probability.

These choices should not be modelled crudely (and operationalized as simple institutional dummies). First, the possibility of domestic ministers and legislators setting up discriminatory immigration policies varies from country to country. Secondly, this implies that a government may restrict flows originating from some countries while trying to attract migrants from other countries at the same time. For instance, the UK Labour government that adopted three acts designed to stem the flows of asylum seekers in the late 1990s (in line with similar measures taken by the preceding Conservative government) was the same government that began to recruit immigrant labour through the highly skilled migrant programme in 2002. Dichotomous variables attached to time periods are inadequate for gauging the policy implications of these decisions. Finally, political economy models should not treat decision-making in parliamentary governments as a black box. The types of government in place and intra-coalitional divisions along the salient policy cleavage determine the nature and timing of policy measures, and opportunities for ministerial drift may influence policy design. These features are likely to affect the stringency of the policy and immigration flows.

Once legal measures are adopted, the literature nowadays offers quite sophisticated theoretical arguments about the conditions that facilitate ministerial or bureaucratic drift and judicial activism, two important domestic institutional sources of implementation gaps (e.g. Martin and Vanberg, 2005;

Vanberg, 2001). These theories may help the revisiting and refining of Joppke's (1999, 2001) argument about the constraints imposed by judicial decisions on executive and legislative decision-making in the field of immigration policy (see also Guiraudon, 2000). In sum, a well-developed political economy model could produce clear expectations about the conditional nature of state control over immigration flows.

Examining the nexus between immigration and domestic policies

Immigration may have some direct implications for national policies while, at the same time, domestic policies shape migration flows. The nexus between immigration and domestic policies is central to many studies in this field, including those reviewed here. I will pay particular attention to nationality laws and welfare state policies.

Nationality legislation and immigration

One of the most important domestic legacies of postwar immigration is the recasting of citizenship and nationality legislation.⁵ Venturini (2004: 232–3) acknowledges the important role of nationality laws in shaping immigration but does not investigate their impact in detail. Messina (2007: 171–81) emphasizes the endogenous path-dependent nature of their reforms and the limited cross-national convergence, whereas Schierup et al. (2006) are particularly concerned with the social consequences of excluding migrant groups from full citizenship, such as the creation of dual welfare and labour market systems.

I focus here on the reforms of nationality legislation. I therefore refer predominantly to Messina's work, but in doing so some concerns of Venturini and Schierup et al. are also addressed. There is little doubt that the origins of these policy reforms (or lack thereof) need to be sought in domestic politics. These measures are ultimately adopted by national legislatures. And, of course, the status quo – the political compromise resulting from national traditions, culture and interests and embedded in the existing legislation – does matter. Yet this does not mean that there are no causal mechanisms that are generalizable across countries or that different regulatory frameworks produce similar policy outcomes.

Indeed, old immigration countries with more liberal nationality laws (e.g. Britain, France and the Netherlands), which reserved preferential treatment for postcolonial populations, tightened their legislation during the 1980s and

1990s. Over the past decade, however, countries with a large stock of resident citizens of foreign nationality have amended their laws in a more liberal direction (e.g. France, Germany, Spain, Sweden and the Netherlands), casting doubt on Schierup et al.'s concerns about increased exclusion.⁶ There are exceptions. The liberal turn of the past decade has not touched the UK. Nor has Austria seemed to deviate from its trajectory, begun in the late 1980s, of restricting its nationality law. Greece has not amended its nationality law even though it has a larger population with foreign citizenship than Spain.

Messina assesses whether the nationality laws of European countries are diverging or converging. He refers both to Koopmans et al. (2005), who find little evidence of convergence across five old immigration countries, and to Hansen and Weil (2001), who argue that the need to integrate a large and growing non-European population has forced a convergence in European nationality law. Unfortunately, Messina does not attempt to square the different conclusions of these contemporaneous studies, and Schierup et al. complain about the increasing strictness of these laws.

An interesting research agenda would therefore be to provide a more encompassing theory of policy reform in this field that could account for both divergence and convergence. This could also address an important shortcoming in the research design of several contributions (admittedly a shortcoming that is shared by studies in other policy areas). Case selection is conducted on the basis of the dependent variable because only cases of successful reform are discussed in detail. This selection bias is problematic because the researcher tends to concentrate on the brief time period preceding the reform and to infer from this analysis the relevant causal mechanisms. However, these mechanisms can be convincing only if they also explain failed attempts at reform and policy stability. This implies that we need not only to expand the set of observations but also to take a step back and to try to produce a broader theory of reform for the relevant policy field under investigation. In my view, four building blocks of such a theory are already available.

First, any debate on policy reform has to be centred on the existing laws at a given point in time because these are the measures that remain in place when no agreement is reached. The importance of the status quo, or the best alternative to a negotiated agreement in bargaining theory parlance, is underscored by scholars who emphasize the importance of path dependency and national traditions (as embedded in the existing regulations) in debates over the reform of nationality laws (e.g. Brubaker, 1992; Mahnig and Wimmer, 2000).

Second, following Hansen and Weil (2001), the sources of preferences in policy debates on nationality and citizenship have to be sought mostly in the presence of a large permanently settled population of foreign citizens (especially of non-European origin) whose exclusion from the domestic polity may sit uneasily with core liberal democratic values of equality of treatment

(Freeman, 1995) or international norms and rules (Soysal, 1994). The first factor sets the parameters of the policy debate, the second one the salience of the issue. However, they can hardly explain the liberal turn in German citizenship law in 2000 compared with the increasingly restrictive Austrian legislation, or the liberal reform in Spain compared with the stability, if not tightening, in Greece and Italy.

The third crucial factor comprises the institutional constraints on, and strategic incentives for, reform of governing parties, including intra-party or inter-coalitional bargaining dynamics and the distribution of portfolio responsibilities on this policy within and among parties. To my knowledge, these factors are not systematically investigated in the literature but, as formal political analysis suggests, successful reform in parliamentary systems usually results from a proposal by a pro-reform agenda setter, such as a government minister, that wins over the most conservative party (or party fraction) in the parliamentary support coalition. In other circumstances, a possible reform could be thwarted even when the issues are salient and there is pressure for change.

The last important factor to consider is the link between policy output and outcome as politicians adopt the former but are ultimately concerned with the latter. Nationality laws determine the conditions in which citizenship is transmitted, acquired or lost. Therefore, they define the degree of incorporation of the migrant population that is permanently settled in the country. In 2001, Eurostat started to collect figures on the acquisition of citizenship in Europe, and Figure 2 reveals a strong correlation between the number of persons who have been granted citizenship and the stock of resident citizens with foreign nationality as a percentage of a country's population – averaged annually over the 2001–6 period (the correlation is significant at the .01 level; Luxembourg is an outlier). Hence, despite the differences in the 'dimensions of citizenship', as argued by Koopmans et al. (2005) and discussed by Messina, as well as the purported incapacity (denounced by Schierup et al.) of some domestic societies to integrate immigrant groups, the degree of incorporation of the migrant population reveals a strong common underlying logic. Switzerland, which is the country closest to the ethnic conception of citizenship, and the Netherlands, which embraces a civic-territorial conception, incorporate their foreign residents in a proportionally similar way. Figure 2 also illustrates the lower inclusiveness of new immigration countries, despite the fact that their legislation favours the principles of *jus sanguinis* as much as old immigration countries such as Austria and Sweden.

In sum, there is room for developing a comprehensive theory that takes into account indicators of salience to determine the likely timing of policy debates on these issues, causal links between outputs and outcomes to assess the need for action, the existing legislation to frame the parameters of the

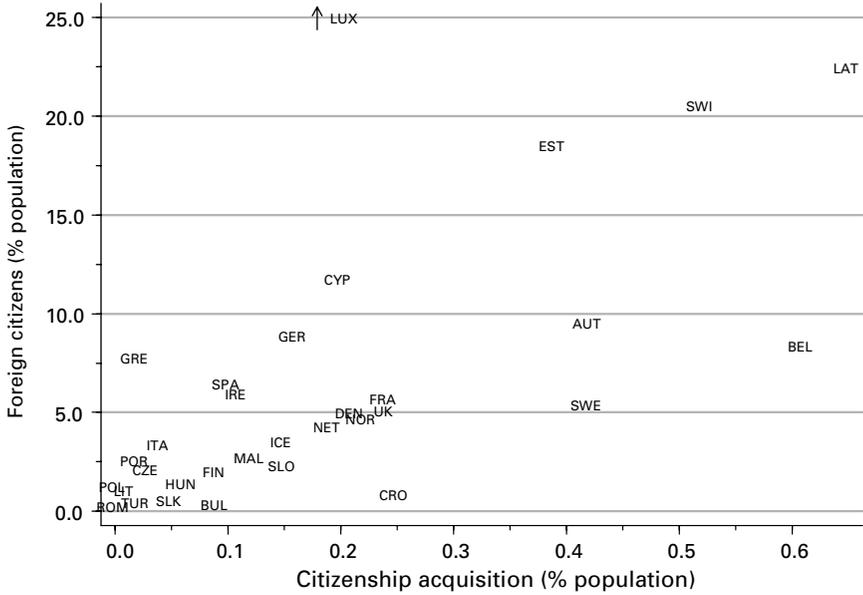


Figure 2 Foreign citizens and citizenship acquisition.
Note: My own calculations from Eurostat 2000s.

debate, and the constraints on and incentives of policy-makers to evaluate the likelihood of action.

Welfare state policies and immigration

An interesting feature of Schierup et al.’s contribution is the analysis of immigration through the lenses of the domestic labour market and welfare policies. Admittedly, some underlying themes in their volume are open to question. For instance, these scholars appear very concerned about the emergence of racist and anti-immigration groups and extreme right parties whereas Messina argues that these groups are influential in only limited circumstances. It is even more questionable whether immigration is a cause of the welfare state’s declining capacity to maintain equity. For Messina, immigration is at best a secondary component of the increased social conflict that underpins the reform of welfare state policies. Venturini argues that the impact of immigration on social expenditure for the native population is most likely neutral. In fact, there are more empirical studies showing a positive rather than a negative effect. Moreover, the impact on income growth is positive. Immigration may depress wages and native employment levels in the short term, especially for unskilled workers or first-job seekers, probably owing to the rigidity of European labour markets. Over a longer time period, however,

complementarity tends to prevail. The impact of immigration on wages and employment is positive. The rather bleak picture painted by sociologists becomes rosier when reading the economists.

Although it is open to question whether immigration has a major impact on welfare state policies, the study of how migrants' integration into the destination country is shaped by these policies is an interesting and fruitful line of research. The merit of Schierup et al.'s study is that it considers this analytical perspective.⁷ For instance, they compare the restructuring of the garment industry, traditionally linked with immigration and entrepreneurship, in the UK and the Netherlands in the 1980s. In both cases, employees who were laid off in the 1970s following competition from low-cost importers started to become contractors to the big clothing houses in the 1980s, setting up small independent sweatshops based on cheap ethnic minority or immigrant family labour. In the UK, newly settled migrant women made up the bulk of the workforce in these shops, working for low wages and in difficult conditions. However, because of the deregulated labour market, weak corporatist institutions and lower welfare provisions, this system was tolerated by the UK authorities. In the Netherlands, the workforce was made up predominantly of undocumented male migrants. Given the more generous welfare state and the corporatist political economy, the industry's dependence on undocumented immigrants developed into a public scandal and led to public control with heavy sanctions and the demise of the industry.

This example is illustrative of the consequences of the structure of welfare policies for the incorporation of foreign workers in domestic labour markets. They deserve more systematic investigation. Certainly, such an enterprise is not easy. For instance, it is likely that the size of the informal economy is correlated with the number of undocumented immigrants residing in a country, but it is difficult to find reliable longitudinal data on both dimensions. The research could be more promising in other cases. Consider for instance employment protection legislation. Since the late 1980s, five old immigration countries (Netherlands, Denmark, Belgium, Germany and Sweden) and five new immigration ones (Spain, Portugal, Norway, Greece and Italy) have eased recourse to temporary employment (OECD, 2004). The impact of these reforms on foreign-born workers seems to differ across these two groups of countries. Although immigrants represent a growing share of the labour force and display rising participation rates, their working conditions are worse. The share of temporary employment in total employment is higher for foreign-born than for native-born workers (OECD/SOPEMI, 2007: 75–6), but this difference is four times higher in new than in old immigration countries (see Table 1).⁸ The liberalization of labour markets has had a distinctly different impact on how migrants have been incorporated in these two groups of countries.

Table 1 Differences between foreign-born and native workers in temporary employment as a proportion of total employment, 2005

	%
Spain	25.91
Finland	14.01
Portugal	12.19
Czech Republic	9.62
Greece	9.01
Netherlands	5.38
Norway	5.24
United Kingdom	4.81
Sweden	4.77
Poland	4.49
Denmark	3.38
Italy	3.25
France	2.84
Belgium	2.52
Ireland	1.33
Hungary	1.02
Germany	1.00
Austria	-0.84
Switzerland	-1.35

Source: My own calculations from OECD/SOPEMI (2007: 75–6).

Note: Share of temporary employment in total employment for foreign-born workers minus the share of temporary employment in total employment for native workers.

Consider now the social policies for the family. Figure 3 plots the mean share of foreign-born people employed in domestic services and personal care in 2004–5 onto public spending on family benefits in 2003 as a percentage of GDP. Countries that spend proportionally less on family policies tend to attract proportionally more migrants in family-related service sectors (the correlation is significant at the .1 level; Luxembourg is an outlier). Additionally, the gender bias in employment in these sectors is normally high, but foreign-born women are almost four times more heavily overrepresented than native-born women (OECD/SOPEMI, 2006: 67). Hence, welfare policies can shape both the modes of migrants' incorporation and the gender structure of immigration.

Final remarks

In the past 15 years, Europe has predominantly become a continent of immigration and the extent to which this process has been managed by

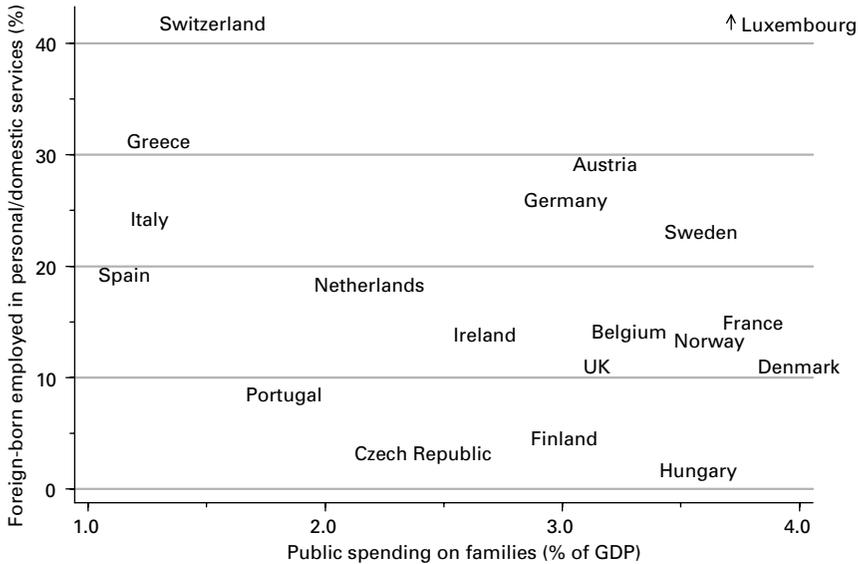


Figure 3 Employment of foreign-born workers in domestic services and spending on family policies.

Note: OECD Social Expenditure Database 2003; Eurostat 2004–5.

European political elites remains an open question. Messina is rather upbeat about the state's capacity to control migration whereas Venturini downplays the effectiveness of policy measures. I am not breaking new ground by suggesting that state control over immigration, and indeed the effectiveness of any policy measure, is likely to be conditional upon several factors; nonetheless, I suggest that the integration of microeconomic models of immigration with theories of legislative politics and implementation, plus more fine-grained operationalization in the empirical analyses, appears to be a fruitful avenue of research. These theories can also be employed, along with broader case selection and some recent data, to shed better light on the role that immigration has played in the politics of citizenship across Europe and, following Schierup et al., on how the structure of welfare states shapes the incorporation of migrants.

I have touched upon only a few areas that I considered promising in terms of future research. Whether they will bear any fruit is another matter. Nevertheless, it is worth stressing the value of comparing and integrating social sciences. Departmental and career incentives tend to keep these disciplines separated, but this may sometimes come at the expense of scientific discovery.

Notes

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- 1 Taking the lead from the recently edited volume of Brettell and Hollifield (2007).
- 2 Asylum-seeking migration is not discussed in this article. Even though economic deprivation and opportunities shape voluntary as well as forced migration, the suggestions presented here are less cogent because of the importance of personal safety in the decision to migrate (e.g. Hatton, 2009; Neumayer, 2004, 2005) and the more extensive supranational and international regulatory involvement.
- 3 The Netherlands has a high positive loading on the third factor, together with other old immigration countries such as Germany, Luxembourg and Sweden (but also Greece).
- 4 If we want to explain the content and timing of immigration policy measures and their effects on migration flows, it should be easier to integrate models of legislative politics with microeconomic models of the choice to migrate rather than with macroeconomic ones. Other micro-level theories of migration that could be used are the new economics of migration (Stark and Bloom, 1985) and, maybe, demand-driven approaches such the dual labour market theory (Massey et al., 1993: 440–4; Piore, 1979).
- 5 In view of the renewed emphasis given recently to assimilation policies, both Messina and Schierup et al. recognize that citizenship is the predominant vehicle of integration of migrants, while multicultural policies appear to be on the wane (Joppke and Morawska, 2002; but see also Castles and Davidson, 2000).
- 6 Although Messina agrees with Schierup et al. that the nascent EU immigration policy displays strong illiberal and exclusionary features (see also Geddes, 2008).
- 7 The essays edited by Bommès and Geddes (2000) have also explored the links between welfare and immigration.
- 8 Since immigrants tend to be overrepresented among the unemployed, this discrepancy could be a source of conflict in countries such as Greece and the Czech Republic, where public expenditure on labour market programmes is considerably below the European mean.

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