Exploring Europe's external migration policy mix: on the interactions of visa, readmission, and resettlement policies

Mathias Czaika, Marta Bivand Erdal & Cathrine Talleraas

Published online: 08 May 2023.

Submit your article to this journal 🗹

Article views: 991

View related articles 🗹

View Crossmark data 🗹

Citing articles: 3 View citing articles 🗹

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

🔓 OPEN ACCESS ✓ Check for updates

Exploring Europe's external migration policy mix: on the interactions of visa, readmission, and resettlement policies

Mathias Czaika ⓘ[a], Marta Bivand Erdal ⓘ[b] and Cathrine Talleraas ⓘ[c]

[a]UWK, Krems an der Donau, Austria; [b]PRIO, Oslo, Norway; [c]PRIO and CMI, Bergen, Norway

ABSTRACT

This article explores Europe's external migration mix, considering three policy instruments which form part of the EU's remote control of borders: (1) *visa regulations* managing entry and cross-border mobility, (2) *readmission agreements* facilitating assisted and forced return of migrants without legal right to remain, and (3) *resettlement of refugees* with refugee status via formalised programmes. The article explores the degree and nature of these policies co-evolution. Based on a collation of migration policy data for 31 European countries between 1990 and 2020, we disentangle spatial, temporal, and categorical policy patterns and interactions. We find strong evidence for spatial policy dependence *across* European countries for all three policy areas, but particularly visa policy; evidence for some categorical dependence between selected external policies *within* countries, but also between external policy instruments and other migration-relevant policies; and only weak or no evidence for temporal sequencing of external policy change. The external migration policy mix appears heterogenous across different European states, but also within single European states, and vis-a-vis third country states, with whom various migration-relevant and externally oriented policies are negotiated. As a result, and perhaps surprisingly, the role of specific migration-relevant policies seems to be underestimated in strategic and overarching migration policymaking.

Introduction

While European approaches to external migration policy have developed significantly over past decades, the relationship between external migration policy and actual patterns of migration to Europe remains complex and ambiguous. Research has increasingly focused on this puzzle, as the growing body of analyses of migration policy development illustrates (Collinson 1996; Czaika, de Haas, and Villares-Varela 2018; Geddes and Lixi 2018; Natter 2018). Much external migration policy has been centred around the border – especially in the EU context (Bialasiewicz 2012; Hampshire 2016). The

border, while in one sense territorially fixed, in the context of external migration policy is more malleable (Cobarrubias 2020; Mezzadra and Neilson 2013). European borders – or rather the externalisation of their control – are mobile and move along the migratory routes which migrants travel, in particular towards the EU (Andersson 2014; Vaughan-Williams and Pisani 2020).

The analysis in this article approaches the domain of extraterritorial ('external') migration policy through instruments which are implemented in (partnership with) non-European countries (Stutz 2023), for the purpose of managing migration to Europe or facilitating the return of migrants who do not have legal residence status in a European country. The external migration policy domain has gained increasing popularity in political circles as an approach to the effective management and control of unwanted migration in an early phase of migratory journeys, that is before migrants reach Europe's borders. Policymakers have designed and employed several separate policy instruments for these purposes, and together these comprise an 'external migration policy mix'. We explore the extent to which distinct external policy instruments show signs of complementarity, and if there is any shared rationale in their long-term policy developments.

The external migration policy domain includes instruments which are either implemented at the border or outside the state's own territory, shaping migration outcomes either directly, or indirectly (cf. Niemann and Zaun (2023) in this special issue). In this study, we focus specifically on three fundamental European external migration policy instruments, namely, (1) *visa regulations* managing entry and cross-border mobility, (2) *readmission agreements* facilitating assisted and forced return of migrants without legal right to remain, and (3) *resettlement of refugees* with refugee status via formalised programmes to Europe.

These three policy instruments form the core of Europe's original external migration policy mix, as they were key instruments when European governments increasingly sought to restrict immigration in the late 1980s (Van Mol and Valk 2016). Yet, these policies differ in terms of their target groups, the place of implementation, the level of formality and legal complexity, and their effectiveness in shaping migration processes (Cardwell and Dickson 2023; Collinson 1996). While visa and resettlement policies manage the intake of refugees and other migrants to Europe, readmission policies aim to manage the return of migrants without a legal residence status in a European country. Resettlement policies target refugees hosted in countries of first asylum where other durable solutions of integration or repatriation are not available. For this vulnerable group, resettlement programmes provide an alternative, and often the only legal pathway to Europe. However, the overall willingness of European countries to commit to resettlement programmes is limited, mostly for reasons, perceived or real, of the financial and social costs involved in selecting, resettling, and integrating refugees. Resettlement programmes are implemented by some European countries and often involve the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) in selecting refugees for resettlement.

Travel visas are probably the oldest and most established instrument for managing international migration and mobility, requiring prospective visitors and migrants to apply for and wait to be granted permission to cross a state's border and stay within its territory (FitzGerald 2020). This reflects the fact that visa policies contribute to 'remote border control' (Zolberg 1997; FitzGerald 2020), by filtering unwanted entries from wanted ones (Infantino 2017; Czaika, de Haas, and Villares-Varela 2018). Recent

research on visa policy restrictiveness indicates that higher degrees of restrictiveness deter regular entries, but simultaneously appear to increase volumes of attempts at irregular entry (Czaika and Hobolth 2016). The latter seems to be an unintended and undesired effect of restrictive visa policies.

Readmission policies are often included in analyses of European external migration policies, and the development of readmission agreements with third countries has also been analysed in relation to EU visa policy developments (Cardwell and Dickson 2023; Nicolosi 2020). With the expansion of the use of readmission agreements in the past decades, also strengthened after the 2015 European migration crisis, research has explored the negotiation processes and frameworks for collaboration between EU states and third-country states, on the way to such agreements (Tittel-Mosser 2023; Wolff 2014). In this context, third country states' interests and willingness to engage have been in focus, not least as the EU is entirely reliant on the collaboration of these states, such as in Northern and Western Africa (Adam et al. 2020; Bisong 2019; Cusumano and Ridervold 2023; Stutz and Trauner 2021; Stutz 2023).

Research on resettlement tends to focus on settlement and integration processes, often in a specific country (Böhm, Jerve Ramsøy, and Suter 2021; Jones and Teytelboym 2017). While not as frequently included in analyses of EU external migration mechanisms, recent contributions show that European states renewed political interest in resettlement schemes, relates directly to the 2015 European migration crisis (Hashimoto 2018). Refugee resettlement schemes thus have entered the realm of contentious migration politics (Fakhoury 2021; Van Selm 2020). In the context of 'external migration policies' – resettlement programmes, like visa policies, are vehicles for states to manage migration flows, filtering those who may enter the territory from those who may not, and in addition, permit states to abide by their humanitarian commitments, at least formally.

In this article, we stop short of analysing the impacts of these three policy instruments – visa policy, readmission agreements, and resettlement programmes – on complex patterns of migration flows into specific European countries, or the EU (Czaika, Bohnet, and Soto-Nishimura 2021). Instead, we focus on the policy mix itself and examine patterns and interactions of these policies and how they are employed by European states. Through this examination of European external migration policy, where we recognise that no policy operates in isolation, we unveil the interaction between policy instruments, and the related convergence, or divergence, within the overall migration policy mix. While the impacts of policies clearly matter, these are always mediated by broader socio-economic and political contexts. Therefore, we argue that to assess the scope and limitations of migration policy interventions, it is essential to understand the interaction of such different instruments within a particular policy mix (De Haas et al. 2019). Better understanding of EU external migration policies is essential to also understand better their role in global migration governance (Niemann and Zaun 2023). Our analysis of external migration policy mix, in relation to visa, readmission, and resettlement policies offers a focus on specific policy areas and related instruments, while retaining a birds-eye view of the aggregate picture over time, thus providing opportunities for new understanding.

The article proceeds with our conceptualisation of what we refer to as an external migration-*relevant* policy mix, where we explain the use of both the terms migration-relevance and policy mix, and justify their usefulness for the purposes of the present analysis. We next propose three hypotheses about how migration policy may

interact – spatially, categorically, and temporally – which guide the empirical exploration and assessment of systematic links between external migration policies. The article's empirical analysis is based on a collation of migration policy data for 31 European countries between 1990 and 2020 and provides insights and estimates on the direction and extent to which the three core policy instruments interact and co-evolve within this policy mix. In the conclusion, we highlight the value-added of placing European external migration policies within a broader theoretical context, by conceptualising them as interacting elements of a migration-relevant policy mix, thus refraining from hasty conclusions on the formation and impacts of individual external migration policy instruments in isolation.

Conceptualising an external migration policy mix

The bulk of research on the relationship between states, state policies, and migration adopts a narrow interpretation of migration policy and impact (Betts 2011; Castles 2004; Geddes and Lixi 2018; Natter 2018; Niemann and Zaun 2023). To better understand how policy instruments influence migration processes, a refining of current analytical landscapes is necessary. The following theoretical framework conceptualises external migration policies as part of a broader set of migration-relevant policies by differentiating between internal and external migration-relevant policy. It conceptualises 'policy interactions' within the 'policy mix' with a focus on spatial, categorical, and temporal interdependencies between external migration-relevant policies.

Policies of relevance to migration outcomes

Migration policies are usually explicitly targeted at specific groups or parts of migration processes, from the (de-)motivation of migration to the integration or return of migrants. Yet, a range of other, not explicitly migration-targeting policies may influence migration as much. For instance, foreign policy or military interventions, often in combination with development assistance (e.g. Zaun and Nantermoz 2023), affect migration patterns and dynamics significantly (Lanati and Thiele 2018). While none of these policy areas qualify as migration policy, they are nevertheless policies with an implicit impact on migratory outcomes, which is why these non-migration policies are relevant when exploring policy interactions within an external migration policy mix.

The locus of policy implementation is key to interpret potential implications. A crucial first step is thus to distinguish between *internal* versus *external policy* orientations. This relates to whether a policy targets goals *inside* or *outside*, i.e. ex-territorially, the borders of the policy-making state. Policies' geographic location can thus be external and internal to a state, or to a policy-making federation of states, such as the EU. Meanwhile, research on EU external migration policy is often carried out in isolation from research on internal policy, such as e.g. integration policy or intra-European mobility (Erdal, Tjønn, and İçduygu 2021; Reslow 2019).

In line with calls to 'de-center' migration governance research (Triandafyllidou 2020) and to 'globalize' migration policy theory (Natter 2018; see also Vaagland (2023), Tittel-Mosser (2023), Brumat and Freier (2023) on moving beyond Eurocentric approaches), we acknowledge the need to move beyond specific and narrow understandings of

'migration policy'. This is particularly important as an increasing bulk of research focuses on the EU's external migration policy, without having a theoretical frame that situates these policies in relation to other external policy areas and indeed, to internal policies within the EU that also have a bearing on migration outcomes.

We add to existing understandings of external migration policy by further developing the frame in which they are to be understood. We propose a typology that groups policies along two key lines of division: (1) the policy's relation to migrants as an explicit or implicit target group, and (2) the policy's geographic orientation as it is relevant to national/internal or international/external affairs. This categorisation moves beyond classic migration policy understandings as it includes both internal and external policy domains, as well as (potential) migrants as explicit or implicit targets of policy interventions. We purposefully label the policy areas included as 'migration-relevant' as both migration and non-migration policies may have an impact on migration (see Table 1).

With the growth in the number of migration-relevant policy instruments developed and implemented over the past decades, there has been a concurrent rise in the analysis of policy outcomes. Yet, research on policy, be it on policy-making processes, policy evolution, or policy effects (and effectiveness), remains largely focused on whether and how some *specific* policies evolve and influence the number, form, mode, geography, or the overall dynamics of migration (Burlyuk 2017; Castles 2004; De Haas et al. 2019; Reslow 2019; Vitus and Jarlby 2021). At the same time, it is self-evident that the migration-relevant policy toolbox, as is particularly visible on the EUs external policy scene, is increasingly complex and characterised by interlinkages between a growing number of migration and non-migration policy areas, e.g. including security, development, and trade policy. It is key to recognise that the impact on migration will depend on how one policy interacts with other policies in the policy mix in which it operates.

Policy interactions and the migration 'policy mix'

Interactions between migration policies may occur in the early stages of a policy lifecycle, e.g. when it is designed, or at later stages, when it is implemented or modified. These

Table 1. External and internal migration-relevant policies: a typology and some exemplary policy areas.

Policy Target Policy Locus	Migration	Non-migration
External	• Visa policy • Return policy • Resettlement policy • External border policy • …	• Aid policy • Peacekeeping policy • Security policy • Humanitarian policy • …
Internal	• Admission policy • Asylum policy • Integration policy • Citizenship policy • …	• Finance and tax policy • Social security policy • Health services policy • Agricultural policy • …

Source: own elaboration.

interactions can occur at different scales, spanning local and international policy levels. As this article looks at external policy interactions, international interactions are most key. Here, it is relevant to highlight the diversity of policy interactions, e.g. policies in a country of destination may interfere with policies in a country of origin or transit. Likewise, policy interactions occur between countries of origin *and* between countries of destination – the latter being the case when different European countries' external migration policies influence one another.

Taking a step back, it is worth considering how a 'policy mix' comes about, i.e. in terms of goal setting, design, formation, and implementation of individual policies. In the intricacy of the EU external migration agenda, even specific policies are rarely found to aim at a single measurable, or clearly identifiable, goal. Policy-making processes involve many actors who often have countervailing agendas. This policymaking field is marked by power divisions within and between relevant stakeholders, which in addition to political willingness, governance, and structural capacities, become crucial in shaping policy-making processes (Betts 2011; De Haas, Natter, and Vezzoli 2016; Natter 2018; Gamlen 2008; Geddes and Lixi 2018). Therefore, when analysing policy interactions, it is important to recognise the multiple actors, goals, and implementation strategies involved in each single policy process. As these policymaking facets mutually interact in a policy mix, they may also shape overall implementation processes or even final outcomes.

An illustrative example of a policy mix of national labour and external migration policies is the introduction of visa for Moroccans travelling to Spain when it joined the Schengen area in the early 1990s. While the number of regular entries of Moroccan seasonal workers to Spain has decreased, the remaining structural demand from the agricultural and tourism sector has led to a continued inflow of – now irregularly entering – labour migrants. A different example is the case of Filipino nurses who arrive in Europe as au pairs (Anderson 2009; Bikova 2015; Korzeniewska and Erdal 2021). The au pair programme of cultural exposure and exchange is not a migration policy as such; yet it regulates the immigration of third-country nationals. In this case, the nurses' long-term goal may be to take up employment within the health sector in the country of destination or another country. The policy interaction becomes apparent as a Filipino nurse seeks to shift from an au pair permit to a different residence and work permit – often also involving seeking authorisation to practice nursing in a new country, thus mobilising educational policies and approval schemes, and health-related policies (Yeates and Pillinger 2019).

In the context of EU migration policy, the expectation of policy convergence and coherence, are much-debated (Gilard and Wasserfallen 2019). This pertains to the key instruments of Europe's external migration policy, as massive budgets are spent on policies with large target groups. Three of these core policy instruments are visa policies, the negotiation of readmission agreements – central to EU policy in the early 2020s (Stutz and Trauner 2021) – and approaches to the resettlement of refugees. In a context where legal pathways to Europe are increasingly curbed, it is highly relevant to look at potential divergence and spill-over effects between policy areas. It is critical to scrutinise these policies' interaction, to understand how visa, readmission, and resettlement policies influence one another, and thereby how broader external policy mixes can affect policy outcomes, and ultimately, migration outcomes.

Hypothesising spatial, categorical, and temporal policy interactions

While we have argued for the importance of acknowledging policy interactions in Europe's external policy mix, we may ask: can we distinguish any specific and significant interactions? In this article, we explore three interaction effects as key features in an EU external migration policy mix, namely the spatial, categorical, and temporal interactions between multiple policy instruments. We draw on the awareness that (external) migration policies are defined by their spatial, categorial, and temporal functions. In other words, external policies are directed towards a specific target country or region (spatial), directed towards a specific migrant population or target group (categorical) and are introduced and adapted at specific points in time (temporal). It naturally follows that the mutual interaction of external policies can also mutually influence their spatial, categorical, and temporal features. The following three fundamental hypotheses draw on this argument and showcase the relevance of looking at these specific dimensions of interactions when scrutinising visa, readmission, and resettlement policies.

Hypothesis 1: Spatial interaction of external migration policies

Migration policies can be distinguished by their geographical scope. A key geographical functional feature of a state's migration-relevant policy is its intended location of impact (Zardo 2020). While internal migration policies focus on citizens and non-citizens residing on the state's territory, external migration instruments target populations residing outside the country's territory. These target populations may include actual and potential migrants and returnees, or citizens abroad who have left the country as (temporary) emigrants, i.e. targeted by means of their diaspora engagement policies (Erdal 2016; Gamlen 2008).

While minor administrative policy changes serve the purpose of adapting flexibly to short-term contextual changes or seek conformity with new legal requirements, they can also be the result of policy diffusion processes. Such might follow international trends for policy harmonisation or as the consequence of policy emulation by which regulatory specifications are copied by other states. This emulation can be motivated by the principle of implementing 'good practices' that other states have gained experience with or be the result of policy externalities by which states aim to reduce the negative consequences of other states' policy decisions.

For instance, European visa policies have been largely harmonised and streamlined by the Schengen acquis and the respective whitelist of visa-free nationalities (Czaika, de Haas, and Villares-Varela 2018). Before joining the EU, many Eastern European states had more restrictive mobility policies implemented on a larger range of foreign nationals, but when joining the EU, and even more when joining the Schengen area, visa policies have been fully harmonised.

Similarly, in the area of return and readmission of migrants in third countries, European states have incrementally expanded the scope for voluntary and sometimes forced return of migrants without regularised status by signing readmission agreements with countries of origin. While most EU member states had signed only very few readmission agreements in the early 1990s, many EU and EFTA member states have signed (or the EU on behalf of the member states) dozens of agreements forming the legal basis for assisted and forced return of migrants (Cassarino 2010). Figure 1(b) displays that this is a

long-term trend that includes all EU and EFTA member states alike, even though countries like Switzerland or France are forerunning this process.

However, there are also exceptions to this trend of growing international policy diffusion and harmonisation. For instance, the resettlement of recognised refugees by an EU member state is an area of external migration policy that is not showing signs of international policy convergence (Figure 1c). Only very few European countries engage in this policy area that provides a legal pathway for people seeking protection from war and of persecution to enter the European Union as already recognised refugees. Most EU member states either do not resettle at all, or only very occasionally, whereas only a few European states (France, Germany, Sweden, Norway, and the UK) resettle in larger numbers.

> Hypothesis 1: Development of national external migration policies are not independent from trends in the *same policy area in other European countries*. Policy emulation and centralized coordination may cause convergence and similarity in external migration policy trends across Europe.

Hypothesis 2: Categorical interaction in external migration policies

External migration-related policies are often directed at a specific group of (potential) migrants. The target group can be internal or external to the state's territory, depending
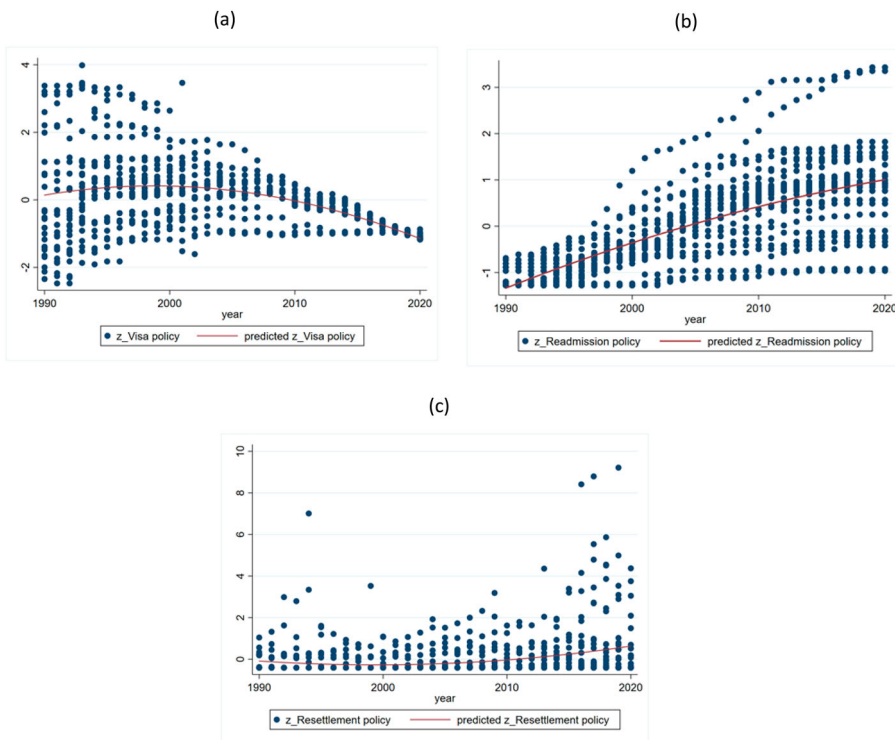

Figure 1. Trends in external policies of 31 EU/EFTA countries, 1990-2020. (a) Convergence in visa policy, (b) Divergence in readmission policy, (c) Arbitrariness in resettlement policy.

on the objectives of the policy. Such defined target groups might be specifically qualified individuals needed in the labour market, or the target group might be based on geographic context and circumstances, such as in the case of the resettlement of refugees (Bose 2022). Policies may not explicitly discriminate between groups, for instance on nationality, gender, or other grounds, but may nevertheless influence migration opportunities and behaviour differently for alternative groups of (potential) migrants. For instance, in resettlement programmes, states actively target and select specific profiles of refugees according to some explicitly pre-defined criteria (Curry, Smedley, and Lenette 2018). Targetedness as a functional feature of migration policy – as part of policy design, but also of policy interactions – is closely associated with modes of (self-)selectivity. One might distinguish targetedness as the functional feature by which policies *by design* intend to target a specific group of migrants with certain characteristics, whereas selectivity might be understood as the outcome whereby certain people or groups of people are more likely to react to certain migration policies or interactions of policy outcomes.

A good example to describe policy targetedness and (self-)selection as policy outcomes are Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR) programmes (Cleton and Chauvin 2020; Koser and Kuschminder 2015; Leerkes, van Os, and Boersema 2017). The way and extent to which potential returnees respond to AVR programme provision varies – not only in terms of their nationality, or their return location, but also in terms of whether the support offer is deemed acceptable or not. While some potential returnees engage in these programmes to prepare their return and reintegration process in their country of origin, other migrants either ignore, avoid, or use these programmes and the (financial) support they provide instrumentally, including as steppingstones for future re-migration from the country of origin (Koser and Kuschminder 2015; Schuster and Majidi 2013). Selectivity in this case refers to the wide array of possible outcomes an assisted return programme may have.

Interaction between migration-relevant policies exists when the migratory behaviour of (potential) migrants who are targeted by one policy is simultaneously affected by other external and internal migration policies. Consequently, categorical policy dependence is established when policy changes in one policy area trigger policy adaptions in another area. For instance, European states often provide development and humanitarian aid to refugee-hosting countries to stabilise those countries who suffer from resource scarcity and the burdens of managing the effects of crises and instability in their region. However, migration-relevant development aid is often provided *in combination* with other interventions such as return or resettlement programmes, but often also *in compensation* of limited or no resettlement.

> Hypothesis 2: Changes and adaptations of national external migration policies are interdependent with policy developments *in other migration-relevant policy areas in the same European country.*

Hypothesis 3: Temporal interaction in external migration policies

Migration policies adapt to new circumstances in a transitory, or semi-permanent, way as part of long-term migration policy transitions (Cerna and Czaika 2021). Migration

policies are regularly changed, refined, extended, corrected, and sometimes reversed. Policy changes and adaptations result from new political realities, or shifts in social, economic, or migratory developments. For instance, visa policies are sometimes modified (e.g. liberalised) due to a re-evaluation of the risk that a visa-free mobility regime is massively abused for irregular entry and long-term residence (Czaika, de Haas, and Villares-Varela 2018). Migration policies are also adapted when the policy objectives are not realised, e.g. when assisted return programmes are not performing the expected number of voluntary returns, or when policies cause major unintended effects, e.g. when visa liberalisation leads to a rise in asylum applications, or if policy priorities change significantly due to electoral outcomes (Bergmann and Muller 2023).

Consequently, migration policies are never 'static' but are continuously adapted and changed, for instance, because of electoral outcomes, political power shifts, a changing economic situation, or when other related policies are changed or as part of broader policy reforms. Interestingly, while electoral cycles often lead to changes in larger policy trends, administrative 'fine-tuning' of some specific policy elements can often simultaneously go in a more restrictive and liberal direction (De Haas, Natter, and Vezzoli 2016). Migration policy changes are usually embedded within broader reform packages; at the same time, minor policy changes occur relatively frequently in the form of 'fine-tuning' adaptations.

Besides electoral cycles, fundamental changes of the socio-economic environment, such as gradual demographic shifts or transitions in the economic structure, affect both policy goals and timings of policy changes. While labour migration policies, for instance, frequently adapt to calls from the business sector for implementing regulative measures supporting the private sector in attracting, selecting, and recruiting international labour (Czaika 2018), or visa policies are regularly adapted for security or public health reasons (cf. mobility restrictions in and after March 2020 due to COVID-19), fundamental shifts in the citizenship law are relatively rare. Migration policy changes and interactions should therefore not only be characterised by their frequency, or their magnitude, but also by the extent to which they are embedded into broader policy reforms.

> Hypothesis 3: Policy changes are clustered in time as part of broader policy reforms, i.e. changes across different external migration policy areas are relatively simultaneous.

Assessing spatial, categorical, and temporal interlinkages of external migration policies

Empirical model and data

In the following, we assess the direction and intensity of categorical and spatial dependence between internal and external migration-relevant policies as hypothesised in the previous section. Formally, we estimate a series of panel fixed effects models of the following specification:

$$P^a_{jt} = \beta_0 + \beta_1^{s \neq a} P^{s \neq a}_{jt} + \beta_2 \omega_{jmt} \sum_{m \neq j} P^a_{mt} + \beta_3 X_{jt} + \rho_{ja} + \pi_{ta} + \varepsilon_{jta}, \qquad (1)$$

where P^a_{jt} is the z-score of the standardised migration policy indicator of a given type $a \in$

{visa, readmission, resettlement} in the European policy-implementing destination country j in time period $t \in \{1990, \ldots ,2020\}$; $P_{jt}^{s \neq a}$ is the z-sore of other standardised migration policy indicators $s{\neq}a$ implemented in EU destination country j in time period t; $\omega_{jmt} \sum_{m \neq j} P_{mt}^{a}$ reflects the spatially lagged policy dependence term capturing the (distance-)weighted policy composite of the other European destinations regarding the respective external migration policy of type a; and ε_{jta} is the idiosyncratic error term in the model of migration policy indicator a. To control for unobserved heterogeneity and spatial clustering, we include destination ρ_{ja} and time fixed effects π_{ta}. We further control for some time-variant policy-shaping factors X_{jt}.

Our key dependent variables are three external migration-relevant policy indicators on visa, readmission, and resettlement for identifying the interlinkages between these external policies, as well as between these external and other internal migration-relevant policies. For measuring the three external migration policies we use information on visa restrictions from the extended and extrapolated DEMIG Visa database (2021).[1] The visa policy indicator describes the percentage of countries for which each European country requires a short-term travel visa to access its territory. That is, a higher score on this visa policy indicator represents a more restrictive visa policy.

For operationalising readmission policy, we use information on the number of signed and active readmission agreements from Cassarino's inventory (and our own amendments) of bilateral agreements. We interpret a higher number of signed readmission agreements as a representation of more restrictive stay policies, as the policy goal is to facilitate and enable the return of unlawfully residing migrants back to their home countries. Lastly, resettlement policy is measured by the yearly number of resettled persons, based on data provided by from UNHCR (UNHCR Resettlement Data, 2021)[2], indicating the efforts of European destination countries for providing alternative legal pathways for refugees and other persons in need of protection.

Due to differences in measurement of the three policy instruments, direct comparison of the three policy areas requires that these policy indicators are harmonised. For this reason, and since also other external and internal policy indicators are measured differently, we have standardised all (internal and external) policy indicators to z-scores. Thus, all z-transformed policy indicators follow a z-distribution with a mean of zero and standard deviation of one. To interpret all three external policy variables consistently as z-transformed levels of restrictiveness, we recode the z-score of resettlements by its negation.

Figure 1(a–c) display policy trends of these three external policies across 31 European (EU and EFTA) countries. While the trend in visa policy clearly follows convergence across these European countries, growing policy heterogeneity and divergence is the dominant trend in the area of readmission policy, while the instrument of resettlements is used very selectively. If at all, it is arbitrarily used by only a few European countries.

For visa and resettlement policies, we identify a weakly inverted U-shaped nonlinearity as the predicted average trend across Europe and over time, while readmission policy is incrementally growing in relevance as indicated by the steady rise in the number of readmission agreements signed by a growing number of European countries and/or the European Commission for facilitating and enforcing the return of migrants without the legal right to stay.

Besides external migration-relevant policies, we, moreover, incorporate four internal migration policy areas *border (and land) control*, *admission* (including legal entry and stay), *integration*, and *return*, in addition to a composite of the four. The data on internal policies comes from the DEMIG-QuantMig migration policy dataset (2021).[3] The raw policy data identifies weighted policy changes by internal migration policy area, capturing the direction of annual policy changes towards more (−1) or less (+1) restrictiveness weighted by the magnitudes of change (1–4). To estimate absolute levels of policy restrictiveness, we have further aggregated the yearly policy changes over time, using 1989 as the baseline. This transformation of the original policy data allows comparison of trends in restrictiveness across policy area and across countries.

To test spatial policy dependence of external migration policies across the 31 European policy-implementing destination countries, we created spatial lag variables for each external policy indicator. We employ the inverted distance between the European destination countries as our weight measure assuming that migration policies are geographically linked and possibly clustered. The population-weighted bilateral distance (between most populated cities) comes from the CEPII GeoDist dataset (Mayer and Zignago 2011). This procedure follows the method from Neumayer and Plümper (2010) who have used inverted distance as one of their spatial weight variables. All data on external and internal policies covers all EU member states plus the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Norway, and Iceland for the period 1990–2020, and the unit of analysis is the country-year.

Additional migration-relevant policy variables include the volume (per capita) of development aid, based on data available in the OECD/DAC database (2021).[4] This aid policy variable is often associated with the attempt of addressing the so-called 'root causes' of unwanted irregular migration.[5] As another external migration-relevant policy measure we include the annual number of personnel internationally deployed in peacekeeping operations, calculated as percentage of the respective European country's population. This information is derived from the IPI Peacekeeping Database (2021).[6]

We include the following control variables in all models, (a) the non-EU immigrant stock as a percentage of the total number of immigrants in each EU country, and (b) the number of asylum applications relative to the respective European country's population, based on data from UNHCR (2021).[7] In addition, the economic situation in Europe as a contextual factor is captured by the country-specific growth rate in real income and the unemployment rate, both from World Bank's World Development Indicators (2021).[8]

Results

Table 2 reports estimates of the prevalence of spatial and categorical dependence on external migration policies. We find evidence for the existence of spatial (pan-European) dependence on external migration policies. The effect size suggests that spatial policy interdependence is strongest in the area of visa policy, which is where the institutionalisation at the European level through the Schengen acquis is most developed. A one standard deviation (SD) increase in the visa policy restrictiveness in other European countries is associated with an average increase in a country's visa policy indicator by

Table 2. Spatial and categorical interlinkages of external migration policies.

DV:	(1) Readmission policy	(2) Visa policy	(3) Resettlement policy
Spatial policy dependence	0.460**	0.607***	0.218***
	(0.229)	(0.108)	(0.082)
Visa policy	−0.112***		−0.154***
	(0.020)		(0.041)
Resettlement policy	−0.018	−0.091***	
	(0.017)	(0.027)	
Readmission policy		−0.300***	−0.099
		(0.054)	(0.0677)
Aid policy	0.063*	0.164***	−0.283***
	(0.034)	(0.056)	(0.067)
Peace-keeping policy	0.048***	−0.152***	−0.090***
	(0.017)	(0.028)	(0.0343)
Border policy	0.017	−0.130***	−0.210***
	(0.027)	(0.047)	(0.055)
Admission policy	−0.144***	0.374***	0.083
	(0.032)	(0.051)	(0.065)
Integration policy	0.272***	−0.096**	−0.383***
	(0.028)	(0.047)	(0.056)
Return policy	0.208***	0.0261	−0.180***
	(0.023)	(0.040)	(0.048)
Migrant stock	0.035	0.180***	−0.174**
	(0.040)	(0.065)	(0.081)
Asylees per capita	−0.0213	0.057**	−0.008
	(0.015)	(0.025)	(0.030)
GDP per capita	0.039***	−0.166***	0.018
	(0.014)	(0.024)	(0.029)
Unemployment rate	−0.032*	−0.001	−0.036
	(0.018)	(0.029)	(0.036)
Constant	−0.269	−0.924***	0.081
	(0.352)	(0.144)	(0.167)
Observations	961	961	961
R-squared	0.841	0.577	0.274
Number of countries	31	31	31
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

about 0.6 SD. This suggests that also European destination countries that are (or were before their accession) not part of the Schengen area still follow a European trend in the design of their respective visa policy restrictiveness. As we have seen in Figure 1 (a), this overall trend follows an inverted U-shape, suggesting that visa policies in most European countries were tightened until the mid-2000s before they were incrementally liberalised over the course of the last decade.

Spatial dependence of the other two external policy areas, readmission and resettlement, is also statistically significant, but smaller in size. Trends in readmission policies and agreements which are increasingly coordinated among EU member states, and increasingly signed by the European Commission on behalf of member states, seem to converge across Europe, yet at different paces. While some countries have significantly increased the number of bi- and multilateral agreements on readmission for facilitating forced and assisted return of migrants without the legal right to stay, other countries were only slowly dedicating resources to this policy area.

Of the three external policies under consideration, spatial heterogeneity is strongest in the area of resettlement. Even though statistically still significant, a one SD increase in the

average number of resettled persons in the rest of Europe is only associated with a 0.2 SD increase in a particular European country. Across Europe, resettlement of third-country nationals in need of protection is still only used by a few European countries as a policy option and alternative pathway for legal entry. But even among the 'resettling countries', this policy instrument is often used on an *ad hoc* basis rather than in a systematic and institutionalised way. Even though resettlement policies have gained some relevance over the past decade, most European countries are still reluctant to fully roll out this policy.

Consequently, resettlement programmes are, if at all, only very weakly harmonised within the EU or coordinated by European institutions: it is left to the individual EU Member States to provide international protection and durable solutions in their territories to refugees and displaced persons identified as eligible for resettlement by UNHCR. This lack of centralisation, but also of policy coordination by the European Commission is reflected in the limited policy similarity and rather erratic activities in this policy area, despite calls for further engagement in the resettlement of refugees in the wake of the 2015 European migration crisis, or in the Global Compact on Refugees, where further need for resettlement policy and implementation is explicitly discussed (UN 2018).

While spatial (cross-European) policy dependence exists at different levels for each of the three external policies, interdependencies *between* these policy areas also show a mixed picture. We only identify statistically significant linkages between policy areas in the case of visa policy and readmission policy, on the one hand, and between visa policy and resettlement policy, on the other. No statistical linkage exists between resettlement and readmission policies. Interestingly though, an indication of existing categorical dependence suggests that respective policy combinations are rather employed in a *substitutive way* (as suggested by the negative associations) than in a coordinated *complementary way*, which we might expect if the notion of 'fortress Europe' were an appropriate description of policy reality. Alternative external policy instruments turn restrictive (liberal) at different points in time, and if they turn restrictive (liberal), it is largely following a common European policy trend. The latter finding of simultaneity and similarity of policy adaptations is supported by the findings reported in Table A-1.

Table 2 further reports on policy linkages between the three external migration policies in the area of visa, readmission, and resettlement, and other external and internal migration-relevant policies, which form what we refer to as a migration-relevant policy mix. Of particular interest is the link between visa restrictions, which Torpey (1998) coins as a 'first line of defense' policy, and border policy restrictions, as another ('downstream') migration barrier. We find some divergence between these two policies, which suggests that, while visa policies have turned more liberal over the past decade, border enforcement policies have simultaneously become much more restrictive. That is, while we can identify some 'policy substitution' between visa and border policies (estimate of −0.130), we find 'policy complementarity' between visa policy and admission policies (estimate of 0.374) and between increasingly restrictive return and deportation policies and readmission policies (estimate of 0.208).

Moreover, aid policies such as 'aid in place of migration' or 'tackling the root causes' strategies follow a policy paradigm that cyclically receives some popularity in political circles. The actual distribution of development aid towards countries of origin, and

migration-relevant sectors in those countries, however, has only weakly increased (as percentage of GDP). However, aid policy is weakly associated with the increase in the number of readmission agreements signed, and with the number of persons resettled. This suggests that at least with these two policy areas, some policy complementarity can be identified by which resettlement and return is partially supported financially by dedicating increasing amounts of humanitarian, emergency, and infrastructural aid towards migration-relevant sectors (estimate of 0.164). In addition, higher aid distributions targeted towards migration-relevant sectors tend to be positively associated with more restrictive visa policies, and vice versa. This suggests that European governments' objectives of 'keeping migrants in their place' (Bakewell 2008) are aimed to be realised through a combination of legal mobility barriers and an in-situ enhancement of local opportunities. Consequently, aid seems indeed to be used as an external migration control instrument, supplementing visa-induced mobility restrictions, hereby targeting those countries of origin or transit from where migrants more frequently cross European borders irregularly.

In sum, we find evidence for a well-established spatial dependence between external migration policies across European countries. The degree of spatial interdependence is associated with the degree of supranational policy coordination, which is particularly established in the area of visa policy, but also in the area of readmission policy. In the area of resettlement, where intra-European coordination is very limited, respective policy trends show only weak signs of convergence, with only very few countries resettling persons in need of protection in larger numbers. Despite the commitment to principles of asylum and protection, and simultaneous emphasis on kerbing irregular border crossings into EU territory (see e.g. EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, 2020), the lack of coordination and policy convergence across the EU in the area of resettlement as part of the European migration policy mix is striking.

Categorical dependence between policy areas within countries is less prevalent and exists only between a few policy areas, such as between visa policy and border policy, or between aid policy and resettlement policy. The overall consistency within the diverse set of policy areas in addressing migration-relevant policy objectives seems relatively weak, which suggests that policy design processes predominantly take place at the level of specific instruments rather than at a higher governance level. This assessment of statistical associations between external policy areas shows therefore a mixed picture, including some policy complementarity and convergence, some policy substitution and divergence, and some policy independence and arbitrariness, depending on the specific external migration policy areas in question.

Conclusion

While state's interest in 'remote control' of access to their borders is increasing (FitzGerald 2020), our understanding of how these policy instruments develop and interact remains surprisingly fragmented (Castles 2004; Geddes and Lixi 2018). This is despite a voluminous growth in studies on externalisation of migration policies, on an increasing array of themes and cases (e.g. Fakhoury 2021; Carrera et al. 2019). Drawing on existing knowledge, this article offers new conceptual insight and empirical evidence to address this fragmentation.

Our theoretical framework allows for fine-tuned analysis of interactions between European external migration policies, as these emerge with varying degrees of spatial, categorical, and temporal interdependence. This theoretical approach recognises the need for inclusion of a broader set of migration-relevant policies. Attention to a 'migration policy mix' explicitly considers external migration policy instruments together with policies that are internally focused, and not explicitly targeting migrants, but which are nevertheless salient to migration.

Drawing on recent conceptual development on externalisation of border control and external migration policy (Reslow 2019; Triandafyllidou 2020; Zardo 2020) – and advances in the systematic analysis of policy data (Czaika and De Haas 2013; 2017; Czaika and Hobolth 2016) – we argue for the need to understand external dimensions of migration policy as interacting with other policies that are also migration-relevant, within a broader *migration policy mix*. However, we also argue for the need to drill down to a fine-grained policy instrument level, as a necessary complement to the analysis of discourse and statements in political speeches (Lutz 2021), to understand actual policy developments and interactions over time and across space in Europe.

Through analysis of three specific policy areas, namely visa, readmission, and resettlement policies, we have shown the relevance of looking at spatial, categorical, and temporal interactions to understand how these policies operate together in Europe's external policy mix. At the outset, we sought to explore the extent to which distinct external policy instruments showed signs of complementarity, and if there was any shared rationale in their long-term policy developments. Our results show strong evidence for spatial policy dependence *across* European countries for all three policy areas, but particularly for visa policy. We find evidence for categorical dependence between selected external policies *within* countries, but also between external policy instruments and other migration-relevant policies. Our findings on temporal interactions show weak or no evidence for sequencing of external policy change. In relation to the 2015 European migration crisis, the plots shown in Figure 1(a-c) furthermore do not, based on the 2015–2020 developments, appear to reveal any radical break from previous policy trajectories, in relation to our three external policy instruments of consideration.

Thus, the overall result of our explorative analysis is that the external migration policy mix continues to appear heterogenous across different European states, but also within single European states, and it seems, also vis-a-vis third country states, with whom various migration-relevant and externally oriented policies are negotiated and agreed. This, we argue, suggests that the role of specific migration-relevant external (and internal) policies seems to be underestimated in policy at an overarching and strategic level. Rather, our results suggest that overall policy design takes place at the instrumental level. What appears, to a degree, as lack of collective effort and policy coordination in Europe, means that migration-relevant policies may mutually undermine each other's policy effectiveness, or even lead to unintended side effects (see also Bergmann and Muller 2023).

Based on the analysis presented in this article, there appears to be a need for enhanced categorical policy coordination at national levels, but also spatial policy coordination between European countries, and beyond. Since external policies target (potential) migrants primarily outside of European destination states, enhanced coordination with non-European countries (of origin and transit) across policy areas is necessary. This

may enable and harmonise external (and internal) migration-relevant policies within and between European governments and with non-European policy partners (cf. Gammage et al. 2020).

In the highly politicised, and often sensationalised field of migration politics and policymaking, it is crucial for the public, politicians, and policymakers to be aware of the ways in which different migration policy instruments may interact. As we argue and provide evidence for, policy interactions may result from uncoordinated or even conflicting policy goals and instruments, which may at times create unintended effects, either by mutually enhancing or neutralising one another. These insights are fundamental for migration policy making, and for the public's understanding of the underlying reasoning behind policymaking. Clearly, this does not remove the dilemmas that underlie policy decision-making in the field of migration, but it may be a tool to unveil and unpack the different functional linkages and joint impacts of multiple – restrictive or liberal – policy instruments. Moreover, increased awareness of policy interactions provides important insights into the implications of what may appear, perhaps surprisingly, as a rather hands-off approach to Europe's external migration policy mix.

Notes

1. https://www.migrationinstitute.org/data/demig-data/demig-visa-data
2. https://www.unhcr.org/resettlement-data.html
3. forthcoming here: https://www.quantmig.eu/
4. https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-data/idsonline.htm
5. The aid policy variable is constructed by multiplying the annual amount of Official Development Aid (ODA) allocated by each European country for the sectors 'Humanitarian Aid' and 'Social Infrastructures and Services' as a percentage of GDP of the European donor country.
6. https://www.ipinst.org/providing-for-peacekeeping-database
7. https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/
8. https://databank.worldbank.org/source/world-development-indicators

Acknowledgements

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

ORCID

Mathias Czaika   http://orcid.org/0000-0002-6525-2714
Marta Bivand Erdal   http://orcid.org/0000-0002-1398-098X
Cathrine Talleraas   http://orcid.org/0000-0003-3293-3449

References

Adam, I., F. Trauner, L. Jegen, and C. Roos. 2020. "West African Interests in (EU) Migration Policy. Balancing Domestic Priorities with External Incentives." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 46 (15): 3101–3118. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2020.1750354.

Anderson, B. 2009. "What's in a Name? Immigration Controls and Subjectivities: The Case of au Pairs and Domestic Worker Visa Holders in the UK." *Subjectivity* 29 (1): 407–424. doi:10.1057/sub.2009.24

Andersson, R. 2014. *Illegality, Inc.* Oakland, CA: University of California Press.

Bakewell, O. 2008. "'Keeping Them in Their Place': The Ambivalent Relationship Between Development and Migration in Africa." *Third World Quarterly* 29 (7): 1341–1358. doi:10.1080/01436590802386492

Bergmann, Julian, and Müller Patrick. 2023. "Spillover Dynamics and Inter-Institutional Interactions between CSDP and AFSJ: Moving towards a more Joined-up EU External Migration Policy?" *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 49 (12): 3005–3023. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2023.2193712

Betts, A. 2011. *Global Migration Governance.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bialasiewicz, L. 2012. "Off-shoring and out-Sourcing the Borders of Europe: Libya and EU Border Work in the Mediterranean." *Geopolitics* 17 (4): 843–866. doi:10.1080/14650045.2012.660579

Bikova, M. 2015. "In a Minefield of Transnational Social Relations: Filipino au Pairs Between Moral Obligations and Personal Ambitions." In *Au Pairs' Lives in Global Context. Sister or Servant?*, edited by R. Cox, 87–103. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bisong, A. 2019. "Trans-regional Institutional Cooperation as Multilevel Governance: ECOWAS Migration Policy and the EU." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 45 (8): 1294–1309. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2018.1441607

Böhm, F., I. Jerve Ramsøy, and B. Suter. 2021. Norms and Values in Refugee Resettlement: A Literature Review of Resettlement to the EU, Current Themes in IMER Research 21:1, Malmö Institute for Studies of Migration, Diversity and Welfare (MIM), Malmö University.

Bose, P. S. 2022. "The Shifting Landscape of International Resettlement: Canada, the US and Syrian Refugees." *Geopolitics* 27 (2): 375–401. doi:10.1080/14650045.2020.1781820

Brumat, L, and Luisa Feline Freier. 2023. "Unpacking the Unintended Consequences of European Migration Governance: The Case of South American Migration Policy Liberalisation." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 49 (12): 3060–3084. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2021.1999223

Burlyuk, O. 2017. "The 'Oops!' of EU Engagement Abroad: Analyzing Unintended Consequences of EU External Action." *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 55 (5): 1009–1025. doi:10.1111/jcms.12549

Cardwell, Paul James, and Rachael Dickson. 2023. "'Formal Informality' in EU External Migration Governance: The Case of Mobility Partnerships." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 49 (12): 3121–3139. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2023.2193743

Carrera, S., A. P. L. den Hertog, M. Panizzon, and D. Kostakopoulou, eds. 2019. *EU External Migration Policies in an Era of Global Mobilities: Intersecting Policy Universes.* Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill | Nijhoff.

Cassarino, J. P. 2010. *Readmission policy in the European Union. Committee on Civil Liberties*, Justice and Home Affairs, European Parliament, Brussels.

Castles, S. 2004. "The Factors That Make and Unmake Migration Policies." *International Migration Review* 38 (3): 852–884. doi:10.1111/j.1747-7379.2004.tb00222.x

Cerna, L., and M. Czaika. 2021. "Rising Stars in the Global Race for Skill? A Comparative Analysis of Brazil, India, and Malaysia." *Migration Studies* 9 (1): 21–46. doi:10.1186/s40878-021-00228-2

Cleton, L., and S. Chauvin. 2020. "Performing Freedom in the Dutch Deportation Regime: Bureaucratic Persuasion and the Enforcement of 'Voluntary Return'." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 46 (1): 297–313. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2019.1593819

Cobarrubias, S. 2020. "Scale in Motion? Rethinking Scalar Production and Border Externalization." *Political Geography* 80. doi:10.1016/j.polgeo.2020.102184

Collinson, S. 1996. "Visa Requirements, Carrier Sanctions, 'Safe Third Countries' and 'Readmission': The Development of an Asylum 'Buffer Zone 'in Europe." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 76–90. doi:10.2307/622926

Curry, O., C. Smedley, and C. Lenette. 2018. "What is "Successful" Resettlement? Refugee Narratives from Regional New South Wales in Australia." *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies* 16 (4): 430–448. doi:10.1080/15562948.2017.1358410

Cusumano, Eugenio, and Marianne Riddervold. 2023. "Failing Through: European Migration Governance Across the Central Mediterranean." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 49 (12): 3024–3042. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2023.2193713

Czaika, M., ed. 2018. *High-skilled Migration: Drivers and Policies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Czaika, M., H. Bohnet, and A. Soto-Nishimura. 2021. Spatial and Categorical Dependence of European Migration Flows. *QuantMig Background Paper D5.2*, University of Southampton, UK.

Czaika, M., and H. De Haas. 2013. "The Effectiveness of Immigration Policies." *Population and Development Review* 39 (3): 487–508. doi:10.1111/j.1728-4457.2013.00613.x

Czaika, M., and H. de Haas. 2017. "The Effect of Visas on Migration Processes." *International Migration Review* 51 (4): 893–926. doi:10.1111/imre.12261

Czaika, M., H. de Haas, and M. Villares-Varela. 2018. "The Global Evolution of Travel Visa Regimes." *Population and Development Review* 44 (3): 589–622. doi:10.1111/padr.12166

Czaika, M., and M. Hobolth. 2016. "Do Restrictive Asylum and Visa Policies Increase Irregular Migration Into Europe?" *European Union Politics* 17 (3): 345–365. doi:10.1177/1465116516633299

De Haas, H., M. Czaika, M. L. Flahaux, E. Mahendra, K. Natter, S. Vezzoli, and M. Villares-Varela. 2019. "International Migration: Trends, Determinants, and Policy Effects." *Population and Development Review* 45 (4): 885–922. doi:10.1111/padr.12291

De Haas, H., K. Natter, and S. Vezzoli. 2016. "Growing Restrictiveness or Changing Selection? The Nature and Evolution of Migration Policies." *International Migration Review* 52 (2): 1–44. doi:10.1111/imre.12288

Erdal, M. B. 2016. "Juxtaposing Pakistani Diaspora Policy with Migrants' Transnational Citizenship Practices." *Geoforum* 76: 1–10. doi:10.1016/j.geoforum.2016.08.005

Erdal, M. B., M. H. Tjønn, and A. İçduygu. 2021. *Links Between Migration Management, Development and Integration*. MIGNEX Background Paper. Oslo: Peace Research Institute Oslo.

Fakhoury, T. 2021. "The External Dimension of EU Migration Policy as Region-Building? Refugee Cooperation as Contentious Politics." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 48 (12): 1–19. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2021.1972568

FitzGerald, D. S. 2020. "Remote Control of Migration: Theorising Territoriality, Shared Coercion, and Deterrence." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 46 (1): 4–22. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2020.1680115

Gamlen, A. 2008. "The Emigration State and the Modern Geopolitical Imagination." *Political Geography* 27 (8): 840–856. doi:10.1016/j.polgeo.2008.10.004

Gammage, C., S. E. Stave, H. Ahlström, and B. Sjåfjell. 2020. SMART Guidelines: Making Policy Coherence for Development Fit for Purpose. *University of Oslo Faculty of Law Research Paper*, (2020-13), 20-11.

Geddes, A., and L. Lixi. 2018. "New Actors and new Understandings in European Union External Migration Governance? The Case of EU-Tunisian Migration Relations." In *EU External Migration Policies in an era of Global Mobilities: Intersecting Policy Universes*, edited by Sergio Carrera, Arie Pieter Leonhard den Hertog, Marion Panizzon, and Dora Kostakopoulou, 60–80. Leiden: Brill Nijhoff.

Gilardi, F., and F. Wasserfallen. 2019. "The Politics of Policy Diffusion." *European Journal of Political Research* 58 (4): 1245–1256.

Hampshire, J. 2016. "European Migration Governance Since the Lisbon Treaty: Introduction to the Special Issue." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 42 (4): 537–553. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2015.1103033

Hashimoto, N. 2018. "Refugee Resettlement as an Alternative to Asylum." *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 37 (2): 162–186. doi:10.1093/rsq/hdy004

Infantino, F. 2017. *Outsourcing Border Control: Politics and Practice of Contracted Visa Policy in Morocco*. New York: Springer.

Jones, W., and A. Teytelboym. 2017. "The International Refugee Match: A System That Respects Refugees' Preferences and the Priorities of States." *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 36 (2): 84–109. DOI: 10.1093/rsq/hdx004.

Korzeniewska, L., and M. B. Erdal. 2021. "Deskilling Unpacked: Comparing Filipino and Polish Migrant Nurses' Professional Experiences in Norway." *Migration Studies* 9 (1): 1–20. doi:10.1093/migration/mnz053

Koser, K., and K. Kuschminder. 2015. *Comparative Research on the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration of Migrants*. Geneva, Switzerland: International Organization for Migration, IOM Publications.

Lanati, M., and R. Thiele. 2018. "The Impact of Foreign aid on Migration Revisited." *World Development* 111: 59–74. doi:10.1016/j.worlddev.2018.06.021

Leerkes, A., R. van Os, and E. Boersema. 2017. "What Drives 'Soft Deportation'? Understanding the Rise in Assisted Voluntary Return among Rejected Asylum Seekers in the Netherlands." *Population, Space and Place* 23 (8): e2059. doi:10.1002/psp.2059

Lutz, P. 2021. "Reassessing the gap-Hypothesis: Tough Talk and Weak Action in Migration Policy?" *Party Politics* 27 (1): 174–186. doi:10.1177/1354068819840776

Mayer, T., and S. Zignago. 2011. Notes on CEPII's Distances Measures: The GeoDist database.

Mezzadra, S., and B. Neilson. 2013. *Border as Method, or, the Multiplication of Labor*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Natter, K. 2018. "Rethinking Immigration Policy Theory Beyond 'Western Liberal Democracies'." *Comparative Migration Studies* 6 (1): 1–21. doi:10.1186/s40878-018-0071-9

Neumayer, E., and T. Plümper. 2010. "Spatial Effects in Dyadic Data." *International Organization* 64 (1): 145–166. doi:10.1017/S0020818309990191

Nicolosi, S. F. 2020. "Refashioning the EU Visa Policy: A New Turn of the Screw to Cooperation on Readmission and to Discrimination?" *European Journal of Migration and Law* 22 (4): 467–491. doi:10.1163/15718166-12340089

Niemann, Arne, and Natascha Zaun. 2023. "EU External Migration Policy and EU Migration Governance: Introduction." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 49 (12): 2965–2985. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2023.2193710

Reslow, N. 2019. "EU External Migration Policy: Taking Stock and Looking Forward." *Global Affairs* 5 (3): 273–278. doi:10.1080/23340460.2019.1604071

Schuster, L., and N. Majidi. 2013. "What Happens Post-Deportation? The Experience of Deported Afghans." *Migration Studies* 1 (2): 221–240. doi:10.1093/migration/mns011

Stutz, Philipp. 2023. "Political Opportunities, Not Migration Flows: Why the EU Cooperates More Broadly on Migration with Some Neighbouring States." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 49 (12): 3101–3120. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2023.2193716

Stutz, P., and F. Trauner. 2021. "The EU's 'Return Rate' with Third Countries: Why EU Readmission Agreements do not Make Much Difference." *International Migration*. doi:10.1111/imig.12901.

Tittel-Mosser, Fanny. 2023. "Legal and Policy Relevance of EU Mobility Partnerships in Morocco and Cape Verde: The Role of Spistemic Communities." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 49 (12): 3043–3059. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2023.2193714

Torpey, J. 1998. "Coming and Going: On the State Monopolization of the Legitimate "Means of Movement"." *Sociological Theory* 16 (3): 239–259.

Triandafyllidou, A. 2020. "Decentering the Study of Migration Governance: A Radical View." *Geopolitics*. doi: 10.1080/14650045.2020.1839052.

UN. 2018. Global Compact on Refugees (https://www.unhcr.org/5c658aed4.pdf).

Vaagland, Karin. 2023. "How Strategies of Refugee Host States are Perceived by Donor States: EU interpretations of Jordanian Migration Diplomacy." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 49 (12): 3085–3100. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2023.2193715

Van Mol, C., and H. D. Valk. 2016. "Migration and Immigrants in Europe: A Historical and Demographic Perspective." In *Integration Processes and Policies in Europe*, edited by Blanca Garcés-Mascareñas and Rinus Penninx, 31–55. Cham: Springer.

Van Selm, J. 2020. "Complementary Pathways to Protection: Promoting the Integration and Inclusion of Refugees in Europe?" *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 690 (1): 136–152. doi:10.1177/0002716220935868

Vaughan-Williams, N., and M. Pisani. 2020. "Migrating Borders, Bordering Lives: Everyday Geographies of Ontological Security and Insecurity in Malta." *Social & Cultural Geography* 21 (5): 651–673. doi:10.1080/14649365.2018.1497193

Vitus, K., and F. Jarlby. 2021. "Between Integration and Repatriation – Frontline Experiences of how Conflicting Immigrant Integration Policies Hamper the Integration of Young Refugees in Denmark." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2021.1873112.

Wolff, S. 2014. "The Politics of Negotiating EU Readmission Agreements: Insights from Morocco and Turkey." *European Journal of Migration and Law* 16 (1): 69–95. doi:10.1163/15718166-00002049

Yeates, N., and J. Pillinger. 2019. *International Health Worker Migration and Recruitment: Global Governance, Politics and Policy*. London and New York: Routledge.

Zardo, F. 2020. "The EU Trust Fund for Africa: Geopolitical Space Making Through Migration Policy Instruments." *Geopolitics* 27 (2): 1–20. doi:10.1080/14650045.2020.1815712

Zaun, Natascha, and Olivia Nantermoz. 2023. "Depoliticising EU Migration Policies: the EUTF Africa and the Politicisation of Development Aid." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 49 (12): 2986–3004. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2023.2193711

Zolberg, A. R. 1997. "The Great Wall Against China." In *Migration, Migration History, and History: New Perspectives*, edited by J. Lucassen, and L. Lucassen, 111–121. New York: Peter Lang.

Annex

Table A-1. Temporal lags in external migration policy linkages.

DV:	(1) Readmission	(2) Visa	(3) Resettlement
Spatial dependence	1.017***	0.327***	
	(0.277)	(0.0842)	
Lag 1	−0.171	−0.00423	
	(0.447)	(0.0895)	
Lag 2	0.104	−0.0225	
	(0.445)	(0.0901)	
Lag 3	−0.246	0.116	
	(0.270)		
Visa policy	−0.108**		0.0873
	(0.0513)		(0.108)
Lag 1	−0.0170		0.0339
	(0.0636)		(0.135)
Lag 2	−0.0402		−0.0569
	(0.0624)		(0.132)
Lag 3	0.00585		0.0785
	(0.0446)		(0.0943)
Resettlement policy	−0.0328	−0.0597**	
	(0.0205)	(0.0288)	
Lag 1	−0.000991	−0.0122	
	(0.0243)	(0.0341)	
Lag 2	−0.00364	−0.00215	
	(0.0274)	(0.0384)	
Lag 3	−0.0288	−0.0349	
	(0.0251)	(0.0352)	

(*Continued*)

Table A-1. Continued.

DV:	(1) Readmission	(2) Visa	(3) Resettlement
Readmission policy		0.320*	−0.175
		(0.194)	(0.295)
Lag 1		−0.256	0.172
		(0.292)	(0.441)
Lag 2		0.221	−0.482
		(0.290)	(0.440)
Lag 3		−0.570***	0.765***
		(0.192)	(0.290)
Internal migration policy	0.143*	0.0778	0.0695
	(0.0827)	(0.113)	(0.171)
Lag 1	−0.0721	0.104	0.165
	(0.115)	(0.161)	(0.241)
Lag 2	−0.00545	0.00993	−0.247
	(0.111)	(0.157)	(0.235)
Lag 3	0.0655	−0.116	0.291*
	(0.0760)	(0.107)	(0.161)
Observations	868	868	868
R-squared	0.798	0.593	0.204
Number of countries	31	31	31
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.