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The Political, Fiscal and Economic Effects of Immigration on Welfare States

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Abstract

This chapter reviews existing research analysing the relationship between immigration and welfare states. This relationship is analysed in both directions, namely how immigration affects the welfare state, and how the welfare state affects migration. The chapter focuses on 6 prominent research questions in the field, namely 1) how different welfare regimes accommodate immigrants 2) how immigration may affect political support for the welfare state 3) the fiscal effects of immigration on the welfare state, 4) whether migrants make residence decisions based on welfare ('welfare magnet hypothesis'), 5) whether the public supports excluding migrants from welfare ('welfare chauvinism') and 6) the extent to which welfare states depend on immigrant labour. The chapter then draws on available evidence to highlight two relevant research agendas for the future.

Introduction

The welfare state is often presented as one of the major political achievements of the 20th century, providing security to individuals against life-course and labour market risks such as old age, illness, poverty or unemployment. International migration, for its part, is often named as one of its greatest challenges in the 21st century, threatening its foundations through economic, fiscal and political channels. Marshalled in support of this idea is the striking difference in welfare state development between the United States and Europe. The residual nature of the social safety net in the United States has been explained by immigration and ethnic diversity, which are said to have prevented the emergence of a generous system of redistribution as found in Europe, either by undermining political support for redistribution or overburdening its budget (Alesina and Glaeser 2004; Lipset and Marks 2001). By contrast, limited immigration and ethnic homogeneity in Europe up until recent decades could allow, according to this thesis, for extensive and generous safety nets, as well as higher levels of redistribution. By extension, increasing immigration levels in European countries in the 21st century raises the spectre of the "Americanization" of European welfare and declining levels of political support.

In this chapter we examine these claims critically through an overview of the literature on the relationship between the welfare state and immigration. We focus on six prominent research questions, namely how different welfare regimes accommodate migrants, how immigration may affect political support for the welfare state; how immigration may affect it fiscally; whether the characteristics of welfare states may influence migration flows (the so-called "welfare magnet" hypothesis), the issue of welfare chauvinism, and the reliance of the welfare state on migrants. We conclude this overview with a discussion of two potential research agendas.

What Determines Immigrants' Access to Welfare States?

The classic definition of the welfare state sees it as "government protected minimum standards of income, nutrition, health, housing and education, assured to every citizen as a political right, not charity" (Wilensky 1974, 1). Broadly, welfare state research analyses the various public policy interventions aimed at supporting individuals in the face of a wide range of life-course and labour market risks such as old age, sickness, unemployment or poverty. Since T.H. Marshall (1950), social protection has often been seen as an integral part of citizenship. Indeed, if being a citizen of a country did not provide much in the way of economic security up to the late 19th century, from the early 20th century onwards, membership of an (advanced industrialised) nation started to guarantee a degree of protection provided by the state against social risks. This is what T.H Marshall described as the transformation of citizenship from *civil* to *social citizenship*.

It is precisely this conception of the welfare state as something tied to citizenship that makes immigration a contentious issue for welfare protection: which rights should be granted to individuals who are not citizens of the country where they reside? Much of the research on welfare states since the early 1990s, and more precisely since Esping-Andersen's (1990) groundbreaking work on welfare regimes, has focused on the diversity of welfare arrangements across countries. Beyond a minimum safety net protecting individuals from indigence and death, welfare arrangements in advanced industrialized countries have diverged significantly in the size, scope, generosity, mode of financing, and aims of their social protection schemes (Van Kersbergen and Vis 2013, 53ff.). Esping-Andersen notably highlighted the differences between the Liberal, Conservative (Bismarckian) and Scandinavian (Social Democratic) welfare states, corresponding to different principles of organization and entitlement. While the Liberal welfare regime found in the United States or Britain focused on poverty reduction but did not provide much protection for middle and upper classes, the generous Scandinavian welfare regime provided a large amount of tax-funded services and benefits to recipients across the income spectrum (Korpi and Palme 1998). Conservative welfare regimes, for their part, focus on integration in the labour market as a principle of entitlement. Along the lines of social insurance, payroll taxes and contributions fund benefits, which are granted to those who have contributed for enough time. The side-effects of this structure have traditionally been a strong bias toward male breadwinners and high levels of segmentation (between genders, types of contract, occupations).

Social scientists have explored whether the institutions of a welfare system affect migrant inclusion. Sainsbury (2012) examines Esping-Andersen's welfare regime typology against the social rights of non-citizens across six OECD countries: the US, UK, Germany, France, Sweden and Denmark. One of her main findings is major discrepancies, across all regimes, in the social rights of citizens and immigrants, who are, in comparison, less likely to enjoy a socially acceptable standard of living, receive benefits in

relation to their needs, and to be lifted above the poverty line if they receive benefits. Still, she finds that the gap is the widest in Liberal regimes and the narrowest in Social-Democratic regimes, which have traditionally relied on citizenship rather than work or occupation as a principle of entitlement. The Conservative Bismarckian regime lands somewhere in the middle; at first sight, its strong work orientation offers a channel of inclusion for immigrants as long as they are employed, independent of citizenship or place of birth. Yet, in practice, demanding contribution requirements have resulted in foreign workers being systematically disadvantaged in the receipts of benefits in Bismarckian countries such as Germany (Höhne et al. 2014, 15).

For others, the welfare rights of migrants depend less on welfare regimes, and more on a country's ability to restrict immigration. Building on the idea that cost-benefit calculations underpin migration policy-making, Ruhs (2015) argues that, if and when the extension of certain rights creates net costs for the receiving country, these can be offset by reducing openness to immigration. In an analysis of the labour immigration programs and legal rights of migrants in 46 countries in 2009, Ruhs finds evidence for the idea that migrant's access to welfare is partly a function of the country's opnness to immigration: countries with liberal immigration policies are more likely to restrict access to their welfare state and vice versa. However, the trade-off between openness and rights takes on different forms depending on the type of right in question. For example, the extent to which migrants can access retirement benefits, unemployment benefits, and public education do seem to be associated with reduced openness (2015, 86). The potential for this trade-off complicates any conclusions about the inherent generosity or exclusiveness of any given welfare regime. In addition, a simple dichotomy between welfare rights and immigration rules can be misleading, because the ease or difficulty with which a non-citizen can acquire citizenship varies across cases, with significant consequences for their welfare rights. Either way, in no case do the boundaries of citizenship and the boundaries of welfare overlap perfectly, and, indeed, the relationship between the two changes based on the context.

Does Immigration Undermine Political Support for the Welfare State?

In recent years, a prevalent argument in political science and sociology has been that immigration can reduce support for the welfare state (Afonso and Devitt 2016). In the 1870s already, Marx described the erosion of British class consciousness due to Irish migration or, more precisely, the ways in which the capitalist class exploited the divide between English and Irish proletarians (Marx 1870). In the United States, the absence of a genuine socialist party during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was frequently attributed to high ethnic diversity, which obscured class identity. Because immigrants in the United States tended to organize along ethnic and linguistic lines, it was difficult for a broader class consciousness to emerge, thereby obstructing the establishment of a comprehensive social safety net (Lipset and Marks 2001, Ch. 4). According to research by Luttmer (2001) into the attitudes of US

Americans, support for redistribution *decreased* as the number of welfare recipients increased, but *increased* as the number of welfare recipients *of the same race* increased. These findings are consistent with other studies in the US (Fox 2004; Gilens 1999).

The alleged incompatibility of social solidarity, ethnic diversity and immigration is often linked to a psychological logic in which individuals prefer to redistribute to members of their "in-group" compared to outsiders (Alesina, Glaeser, and Sacerdote 2001, 29). Much of this idea is predicated on a finding from social psychologists concerning "group loyalty". In early experiments conducted in the 1970s, individuals were more likely to allocate resources to members of their own in-group, and preferred maximizing the difference between their own group and others even if this meant lower gains (Tajfel et al. 1971). The explanation given is that group identity and status influence individual pride and self-esteem, driving people to construct firm lines between "us" and "them." It has been commonly invoked to explain the United States' low level of redistribution, for instance in the 1935 Social Security Act, from which most African-Americans were excluded (Fox 2017; Gilens 1999; Lieberman 2001). Committing to this explanation carries political implications. If immigration increases diversity, and diversity reduces solidarity, then higher immigration levels will reduce the level of welfare support in the host country and ought to be avoided.

In Europe, some studies focusing on immigrants rather than racial minorities have found that immigration reduces support for redistribution. A study in Sweden found that individuals living in localities where greater numbers of asylum seekers had been allocated showed lower levels of support for redistribution, with an especially strong effect registered among higher-income individuals (Dahlberg, Edmark, and Lundqvist 2012). In Germany, Schmidt-Catran and Spies (2016, 256) also found that the support of native-born German citizens[1] for redistribution decreases as the proportion of foreign nationals living in their region increases, at least initially and especially in regions with unfavorable economic conditions (see however Auspurg, Brüderl, and Wöhler 2019).

As a complement to these single-country studies, a wealth of cross-national studies have investigated the relationship between immigration and welfare attitudes in the past decade and a half. An early study into this relationship wave by Mau and Burkhardt (2009) found using different measures of migration, that immigration had a consistent negative effect on support for redistribution. Looking at survey data from 17 affluent democracies in 1996 and 2006, Brady and Finnigan (2014) actually found more support for the opposite effect, namely that high levels of immigration create *more* demand for welfare protection, for instance to compensate for the increased labour market risks caused by immigration. Several cross-national studies have used measures of migration at the subnational level. These studies have consistently found a negative effect of migration measured at the regional-level and support for the welfare state (Alesina, Murard, and Rapoport 2019; Eger and Breznau 2017). This may be explained by

[1] The authors refer to these as "native" Germans, p. 247.

the fact that migration at a more local-level is more visible and may therefore be more likely to shift preferences.

It has become increasingly common for studies into this topic to explore not only whether immigration reduces support for redistribution, but also under what conditions this may occur. To this end, some researchers have emphasized the importance of migrants' characteristics in determining whether migration undermines support for the welfare state. Cappelen and Peters (2018) found that non-Western immigration did not depress support for redistribution in Europe. In contrast, intra-EU immigration had a negative impact on solidarity. They attribute this counterintuitive finding to the fact that EU nationals residing in another EU member state cannot be excluded from the social systems of that member state. Burgoon (2014) showed that the effect of immigration depends on how well-integrated immigrants were in the host country. Immigration depresses support for the welfare state if immigrants are unemployed or dependent upon the social system toa. Greater extent than natives are, or if their cultural beliefs and values differ significantly from natives'.

Theoretical and empirical caveats apply here. For one, there is nothing innate about the constitution of in- and out-groups. In fact, early experimental research in social psychology demonstrates the potency of in-group preferences but equally, shows that these preferences form after researchers have fabricated relevant groups by assigning participants into arbitrary categories (Rabbie and Horwitz 1969; Tajfel et al. 1971). Similarly, a growing body of scholarship points to the ways in which race and ethnicity are social constructs; both group membership and discrimination may be socially engineered by political entrepreneurs exploiting existing phenotypical differences for political or economic gain (see, for instance, scholarship on how Jewish and Irish Americans were racialized as 'white' – Hattam 2007; Ignatiev 2008; Roediger 1999).

Additionally, largely because of historical patterns of dispossession, racial and socio-economic divisions often correlate; on top of this, whites tend to grossly overestimate the proportion of the country's poor who are black (Gilens 1999). Europeans appear to similarly overestimate the incidence of unemployment and the welfare dependence among immigrants (Dylong and Uebelmesser 2022; Negash 2022). As such, the tempered enthusiasm toward the welfare state may result from a sophisticated assessment by middle-class citizens about their propensity to benefit from tax-financed, pro-poor and/or pro-immigrant policies, as research in the US and Western Europe indicates (Röth, Spies, and Schmidt-Catran 2022; Spies 2018).

Are immigrants Net Contributors or Net Recipients of Welfare?

A common argument in political debates is that a generous welfare state with open borders acts as a "magnet" for low-skilled international migrants, who would be receiving more benefits and services than what they would pay in taxes. Following this argument, the welfare state ultimately becomes

unsustainable because there are more recipients than contributors. Hence, a "rational" policymaker concerned with the survival of the welfare state would adopt either a restrictive immigration policy or a selective one admitting immigrants that are less likely to resort to welfare services.

Research by economists has suggested that, though the logic is compelling, there are reasons to view skeptically any generalized conclusion about the fiscal effects of immigration. Indeed, several variables, including the age and skills of immigrants in any given country and for any given welfare scheme, will affect their net fiscal position. For instance, assuming that the immigrant population in a country is usually younger than the average, it will typically contribute more to the old age pension system than what it receives. However, because the unemployment rate of immigrants tends to be higher than the average, they are likely to be net recipients of unemployment benefits. Hence, the total balance depends on the mix of spending in different programs of different countries. Furthermore, different countries will have different mixes of skills within the immigrant population; high-skilled immigrants who are less likely to become unemployed and command higher wages will arguably contribute more in taxes than what they receive in benefits. The likelihood of (un)employment may vary with country of origin as well as with skill. Dustmann and Frattini find for instance that the net fiscal impact of migrants in the United Kingdom is positive if they are from the EU and negative if they are not (Dustmann and Frattini 2014). Finally, the fiscal balance of immigration is likely to change over time, so that "snapshots" of tax and spending receipts at one point in time are likely to be different from measurements over the life course. If the immigrant population is often younger than the national average, this is susceptible to transform across generations as immigrant populations settle and integrate.

These challenges have not stopped the research agenda, but the empirical evidence for the view that immigrants are net beneficiaries of welfare is mixed at best and contradicted by several studies. Boeri (2010) finds that, because immigrants have on average lower incomes than citizens, and income taxes are progressive in all European countries, they contribute less in taxes than their share in the population. This, however, says nothing about their net fiscal situation since they might also receive less in benefits. In fact, Boeri argues that their likelihood to receive benefits compared to citizens depends on the type of welfare scheme in question, as they are less likely to receive contributory benefits (e.g pensions or unemployment insurance) but more likely to receive non-contributory ones (e.g social assistance and housing benefits). However, the picture becomes complicated if one looks not only at the likelihood of receiving benefits at all, but also at the amounts received and contributed: migrants may well be net beneficiaries of contributory schemes as well because a higher exposure to the risk of joblessness may create gaps in their contribution careers, and minimum benefit thresholds (that increase the benefits of people who cannot secure a minimum out of their contributions alone) may top up their benefits.

Still, Boeri finds that although immigrants in his sample are more likely to receive non-contributory transfers than their citizen counterparts, the overall average net fiscal position is positive in all countries (i.e. immigrants contribute more in taxes than what they receive in benefits) (Boeri 2010, 658). A recent

analysis by the OECD lends further support to this: the 25 OECD countries with available data and on average during the 2006-18 period, immigrants contributed more in taxes and contributions than governments spend on their welfare (OECD 2021, 11–112)**.** There is even some reason to believe that welfare states might be free-riding on migrant contributions, rather than vice versa (see for instance Baldwin-Edwards 2004, 319; Lyons 2009, 96).

Do Generous Welfare States Attract Migrants?

Scholarly interest in the extent to which migrants rely on benefits is closely coupled to notion that immigrants move *in order to* access these benefits. Economists and political scientists have studied this "welfare magnet" hypothesis for the better part of two decades. Borjas (1999) found that immigrant welfare recipients were more likely to live in US states with generous benefits than either citizen[2] welfare recipients, or immigrants in work. His explanation was that, because immigrant welfare recipients are less constrained in their location choices within a country than citizens (assuming they are less likely to have family or contacts in a particular place), they are more likely than citizens to choose to live in places where welfare benefits are higher.

The evidence in favour of the welfare magnet hypothesis is mixed. In the US context, Allard and Danziger (2000, 363) compared the benefit generosity of single-parent migrant families' state of origin and destination, and found more migration to lower-benefit states than to higher-benefit states. Kaushal (2005, 79) finds that inter-state differences in access to means-tested benefits had at best a weak effect on the location choices of newly arrived migrants. Some findings from single-country research outside the US do align with the magnet hypothesis. Studies using changes in eligibility rules and benefit levels in Denmark and Norway both found sizable effects on immigration flows, providing some support for the idea that welfare arrangements affect migration choices (Agersnap, Jensen, and Kleven 2019).

Cross-national research into welfare migration using a broader sample of countries has also produced contradictory evidence. Several cross-national studies present results in line with Borjas' argument: Razin and Wahba (2015), for example, provide evidence that low-skill migrants make up a larger share of migrant flows in European countries where per capita social expenditures are higher, for instance Scandinavian countries. Contrary to this, Giuletti, Guzi and Zimmermann (2013) find that higher unemployment spending has no statistically significant effect on the inflow of non-EU migration inflows. Generous benefits are not only not consistently associated with higher migration inflows, some studies even indicate they may repel migrants: for instance, Ponce (2019) shows that more generous benefits and higher social spending actually reduce immigration inflows into the generous Nordic welfare states. The direction of the relationship is reversed when living costs are controlled for,

[2] The term he uses is "native," but we again, we eschew "native" to avoid intimating that current US citizens were the original inhabitants of that territory.

potentially because higher spending is associated with higher living costs which then discourages immigration.

Others have highlighted the importance of distinguishing between different functional areas of the welfare state. One important reason for doing so is that most prospective migrants are working-age individuals. As such, some social risks may be more salient to them, e.g., unemployment and child care. If benefit levels in the destination do affect their residential choices, it is unclear why immigrants would be drawn by the amount spent on old age pensions, which constitutes the largest spending item in most European welfare states. In this vein, De Jong & De Valk (2020) show the need for adopting a 'life cycle' perspective to how welfare might impact intra-EU migrants' migration decisions. They find that the amount spent on benefits that working-age individuals typically benefit from, such as family benefits, increases inflows of migrants in child-rearing age. However, pension spending has a negative effect, perhaps because migrants would be net contributors.

That the findings across studies often conflict should not be surprising, as there is reason to doubt the viability of the causal mechanisms underpinning the magnet hypothesis. To choose the countries with the most generous benefits, immigrants need to possess a high level of information and be able to compare the generosity and eligibility requirements of benefits between countries when making migration choices. The thesis assumes that migrants are income maximisers with perfect information who prefer welfare considerations over all others. These assumptions are unlikely to hold. Surveys of potential migrants are indicative. A survey experiment asking potential migrants in North Africa and the Middle East to decide between hypothetical host countries found that welfare was a fairly marginal consideration compared to work and democratic conditions (Ferwerda and Gest 2021). This is consistent with cross-country studies. Even where an effect of benefits levels on migrant flows is found, other determinants such as wages or employment opportunities in the destination country typically have far stronger effects (De Giorgi and Pellizzari 2009).

More importantly, many of the prospective migrants that took part in the survey experiment were unable to provide accurate assessments of levels of generosity and accessibility of benefits for migrants across countries (Ferwerda and Gest 2020). Similarly, Lamis Abdelaaty (2022) holds up refugee arrivals and asylum applications, on the one hand, against a dataset measuring the rights that refugees receive around the world. Although this dataset does not capture welfare (rather detainment, judicial rights, and the ability to work), she finds that better treatment of refugees in general is not associated consistently with changes in the number of asylum applications. In fact, the right to travel freely and the likelihood of physical protection from refoulement – being sent back to the country a refugee is fleeing – are actually associated with a decrease in asylum applications. This lends credence to skepticism that migrants are weighing their location decisions with reference to the rights profiles of their destination countries.

Welfare generosity in and of itself does not say anything about migrant access to that welfare. Most country comparative studies also ignore the eligibility requirements that structure access to welfare benefits (Kahanec and Guzi 2022). The use of contributory schemes such as unemployment benefits is conditioned by qualification periods and contributions requirements that vary from country to country. Even for non-contributory benefits such as social assistance, access is rarely without conditions – especially for migrants. In many countries, immigrants with temporary residence permits endanger the renewal of their residence permits when they make use of these benefits (Vintila and Lafleur 2020). If in addition to or instead of benefit levels, eligibility rules also affect destination choices, this raises questions about how the results from studies that only account for generosity should be interpreted.

What Drives Welfare Chauvinism?

Welfare chauvinism is one of the reasons why access to benefits is often so heavily conditioned for migrants. This can be understood as an attitude favoring welfare redistribution among the in-group while excluding out-groups (Reeskens and Van der Meer 2019, 166). Because public attitudes can meaningfully impact the range of policy options considered viable, we can expect to see welfare chauvinist attitudes reflected in policy agendas conditioning access to benefits on nationality or length of stay. The term was first used by Andersen and Bjorklund (1990) to describe the desires of Danish and Norwegian populist right-wing parties to exclude migrants from welfare (cited in Albrekt Larsen 2020). In this section, we review literature analysing drivers of welfare chauvinism both at the level of individual attitudes and in party agendas and concrete policies, at a more macro level.

A growing body of work in political science and sociology focuses on the logic of deservingness at the individual level - that is, the ways in which the public decides whether an individual is worthy or unworthy of social rights, based on their actions, characteristics or identity (Kootstra 2016, 327). Van Oorschot (2000) argues that the public uses a number of criteria to assess a potential welfare claimant's deservingness for said welfare. Claimants in greater need, with less "fault" over their need, whose attitudes toward welfare are docile and grateful, with a propensity to financially reciprocate and, crucially, with a "proximate" identity, will be more likely to be viewed as deserving of welfare assistance. The notion of what constitutes a proximate identity remains somewhat obscure in the empirical research. Experimental surveys, where respondents are presented with vignettes and asked to rate the deservingness of hypothetical welfare claimants, are a commonplace method of testing for welfare chauvinism. In these studies, identity is usually operationalized either as foreign origin or migrant status, or race or ethnic identity; though combinations are also sometimes used.

Existing evidence suggests that welfare chauvinistic attitudes do exist at the individual level. Ford (2016) finds that foreign birth alone is enough to decrease a claimant's perceived deservingness - in his study, UK respondents rated the Irish claimant less deserving than a "native" Brit - but that ethnicity

matters as well. Furthermore, the two attributes have a cumulative negative effect on deservingness. The findings of Reeskens and van der Meer (2019) suggest that foreign origin is among the three most important factors for a claimant's deservingness, alongside job-seeking efforts and control over their need. In a vignette experiment conducted in Britain and the Netherlands, Kootstra (2016, 2) in contrast finds that ethnic background is not decisive once other factors (efforts to find a new job, level of need, and work history) are accounted for. However, she also finds that ethnic minorities exhibiting low scores on the other factors are punished more severely, and, in general, ethnic minorities are punished more severely in Britain than in the Netherlands.

At the same time, welfare chauvinism is not inevitable. Certain qualities of the respondent can affect the extent of their welfare chauvinistic expressions. Kuhn and Kamm (2019) find that, among Dutch and Spanish respondents, support for unemployment assistance for recipients living in other countries is somewhat tempered by education level, attachment to Europe, and in general more pro-immigration attitudes. In addition, national institutions may dampen the effect. This is the subject of Crepaz and Damron's (2009) work. The authors conduct individual, aggregate and multilevel analyses and find that Scandinavian welfare regimes are associated with lower levels of welfare chauvinism compared to other regimes. Their theory is that the "moral logic" underpinning universal welfare states stamps out exclusionary impulses. Similarly, using data from Denmark, the Netherlands and Germany in 2015, Albrekt Larsen (2020) indicates the presence of an institutional path dependency, finding that the entitlement criteria of existing institutions influences the public's perception of how deservingness criteria *ought* to be determined. This suggestion runs counter to the trade-off mechanism we introduced earlier, according to which more generous welfare states will find it more costly to include migrants (Ruhs 2015). In other words, prioritizing moral over fiscal logics and vice versa yields different predictions as to the nature of the relationship between welfare regimes and migrant rights.

Welfare chauvinism has not aged without criticism. Carmel and Sojka (2020: 2-3) consider it a thinly veiled disguise for racism, and also poorly placed to capture the complexities of beliefs surrounding migrants. They argue that the public may have preferences not just on whether or not a migrant belongs, but also *how far* they belong and under which conditions. The distinction made by Reeskens and van Oorschot (2012), between welfare chauvinism in the *soft sense* (as the view that migrants may be less deserving, but still entitled to some help) and the *strict sense* (as the view that migrants ought to be excluded entirely) attenuates, to some extent, the latter critique. Still, drawing from a qualitative transnational case study of policymakers in Poland and the UK, Carmel and Sojka (2020) propose an alternative framework to welfare chauvinism which they call "rationales of belonging." Identity concerns are captured by their *ethno-cultural* rationale which is based on a collective imaginary of belonging to 'the nation,' whilst concerns as to "who was here first," behavioral patterns, work ethic and discipline, and cross-border rights regimes are captured in *welfareist, labourist*, and *transnational* rationalities respectively.

To What Extent do Welfare States Rely on Immigrant Labour?

One final area of research concerns the contributions made by migrants, not just to the financing of social insurance, but to the staffing of social care and services. This is especially important if we're interested in the relationship between migration and employment. A large body of social policy research has been devoted to exploring the nature of these contributions. To varying degrees across time and space, families and employers have recruited migrant workers to meet shortages in social care sectors (Van Hooren 2011).

The contribution of foreign doctors, nurses, cleaners, porters and support staff to public health services has been substantial throughout the twentieth century. In the UK, in the 1950s and 1960s, the labour of Irish, Caribbean, Indian and Pakistani migrants played a crucial role in the expansion of the National Health Service (NHS) (Simpson et al. 2010, 392). According to recent estimates, up to one-third of NHS doctors may be from overseas " (Esmail 2007, 827). In France, a quarter of all hospital doctors are foreign or naturalized, and German hospitals recruit nurses from Eastern Europe (Kofman, cited in (Williams and Gavanas 2008).

Elderly and childcare sectors are equally important employers of migrant workers, and in some respect, the private employment of migrants has acted as a substitute for deficient deficient public policies, especially in Southern Europe (Afonso and Devitt 2016; Van Hooren 2011). Many rich countries are experiencing an ageing population, thus facing the simultaneous increase in the need for elderly care and a decrease in the number of working-age individuals available to provide it. The increased entry into the paid workforce of women, who have historically been disproportionately burdened with domestic care responsibilities, has increased the demand for care work considerably as well (Afonso 2018). As a result, migrant workers have been recruited either by individual households, such as in Southern Europe where care services are usually provided by the family, or by care agencies. In the UK, Moriarty (2010, 132) estimates the proportion of foreign-born workers in the childcare sector at 19%, the second highest proportion in all the care sectors she studies.

In recent years, a new interest in the comparative politics of migrant care work has emerged to accompany analyses that have a more global focus. One area of interest has been the variation in reliance on migrant labour across different welfare states. Williams and Gavanas (2008) explore the extent to which (welfare) state policies impact their employment. The policies of interest include the extent and nature of childcare provisions (by both state and market), policies facilitating parents' involvement in paid employment (like maternity, paternity and parental leave), and family allowances/cash benefits for childcare. The authors' findings suggest that better maternity leave and flexibility, coupled with tax credits associated with childcare, reduce the demand for migrant workers in Britain.

As for migrant labour in elderly care services, a comparative analysis by van Hooren (2012, 134) of Italy, the Netherlands and the UK finds that migrant workers are relatively underrepresented in this sector in the Netherlands. Her work also lends credence to the idea that the character of public provisions may shape the use of migrant labour of a given country. Specifically, the attractiveness of migrant labour in Italy is boosted by the high cost of formal care agencies. In contrast, the strong means-tested character of public services in England produces high demand for private providers of care, where migrant workers are recruited for their willingness to meet the grueling demands of long and asocial work hours. In the Netherlands, universal public services shrink the demand for private migrant care work (2012, 140-142).

Future agendas

First, there is a need for a more long-term, historical perspective on the dynamics in question. A rich body of literature has explored the conditions under which welfare generosity emerged. Thanks to these efforts, the importance of the labour movement, the middle class, and Christian doctrine for the emergence of the welfare state has been thrown into sharp relief (Baldwin 1990; Huber and Stephens 2001; Korpi 1983; Manow and van Kersbergen 2009). Yet, when it comes to the relationship between insiders and outsiders, and its impact on broader political support for redistribution, most studies focus on more recent histories, largely a period of welfare retrenchment. Boräng, Kalm and Lindvall's (2020; 2019) research into the relationship between union strength and migrant rights across 18 countries of the Global North between 1900 and 2010 constitutes a noteworthy exception. Otherwise, the nature of inclusionary and exclusionary dynamics across countries and across different phases of welfare development remains obscure. This represents a missed opportunity since, on the one hand, the US case suggests that contestation over the inclusion of foreigners and racial minorities in welfare programs has a long history (Fox 2017; Lieberman 2001), and, on the other hand, research into the history of immigration control has revealed significant variation over time. Students of welfare and of immigration in Europe would benefit from adopting a similar long-term view.

Second, more attention is owed to how individuals perceive the trade-offs that arise between social and immigration policy objectives. Policymakers have to balance several potentially competing objectives when making immigration policy: the optimal number of immigrants to be recruited; the rights accorded to these immigrants post-entry; ensuring that immigration does not strain public finances; successfully integrating immigrants into the host society; maintaining the country's social cohesion. At the intersection of immigration and welfare policy preferences, researchers rarely investigate the preferred combination of these policies (see Hainmueller and Hopkins (2014) for an exception). Instead, scholars have relied on studies using observational designs to study how welfare and immigration attitudes correlate, without being able to speak to these trade-offs (Kulin, Eger, and Hjerm 2016; Reeskens and

van Oorschot 2012). By contrast, researchers studying public preferences of welfare state reforms have increasingly started to analyze potential trade-offs using conjoint survey experiments ((Bremer and Bürgisser 2022; Häusermann, Kurer, and Traber 2019). There is much to be gained by studying how the public perceives the trade-offs between immigration and welfare. Doing so can help uncover whether immigration necessarily depresses support for social policy, and under which conditions generous benefits can be combined with greater openness.

Finally, the designation of 'in-' and 'out-' groups deserves much more scrutiny. The lion's share of studies into how migration impacts solidarity take as their point of departure that immigration introduces a diversity of identities. However, the idea that identity is not static, but pliable and responsive to context is by now widely acknowledged (Sen, 2006). As mentioned above, Roediger (1999: 12), for instance, shows how "whiteness" became an identity once the advantages of assuming that identity - in terms of higher wages, access to the judicial system, the right to vote, etc. - increased. Welfare system also contribute to create these identities, since welfare plays a critical role in (re)distributing market income, which in turn influences the class structure in which identities such as race are forged (see Balibar 2005, for instance, on 'race' as a political object). For another, welfare has a reputation for operating as a disciplinary force, as policymakers employ the conditionality and substance of different schemes in order to regulate populations deemed "problematic" (Carmel and Sojka 2020: 6). In short, bringing an appreciation of welfare as a "people-processing" institution (Wacquant 2010: 202) into dialogue with the discussion of solidarity between in- and out-groups is sure to yield promising insight into the drivers of redistributive attitudes and efforts across time and space.

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