

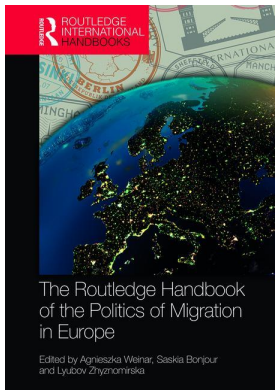
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7

MEDIA AND IMMIGRATION

A political communication perspective

Rens Vliegenthart

Introduction

Immigration has become one of the most contested political issues in many Western countries. It is fiercely debated among political elites and the general public alike. In this constellation, the role of mass media is widely discussed, both as a bounded arena in which certain actors can put forward claims on the issue, as well as an institution that actively participates and shapes the debate. Due to processes such as gatekeeping and framing, mass media determine to a considerable extent when and what citizens learn about the immigration issue.

In this chapter, I focus on the role of the media in the debate on immigration and integration and discuss various perspectives in the literature. The focus will be first of all on the *content* of media coverage, how it can be analysed and what features seem to be most prominent. Second, it looks at the *causes* of (variation in) coverage – describing the attempts made by various actors to influence the media debate, as well as more structural factors and journalistic routines that constrain those actors in their attempts. And third, it discusses the consequences of the coverage, both for politics (and policy) as well as public opinion, employing a media effects perspective.

As will become clear throughout this chapter, media coverage is clearly an exponent of the cultural context in which it comes about – and effects depend on the (political) context as well. It is thus not surprising that both content and consequences are different in Europe compared to other parts of the world, and most notably the United States, though they differ across Europe a lot as well. While theories on causes, content and consequences of media effects are generic in nature and it might thus be an overstatement to talk about ‘a European perspective’ on immigration and media, we do see that some scientific questions get more attention in the European context than elsewhere. Foremost, the question of what impact media content characteristics have on support for anti-immigrant parties is often studied in the European context. Furthermore, also the political effects of immigration news (for example in terms of parliamentary response) are relatively well documented in the European context.

A political communication perspective

Political communication essentially deals with the interactions between politics, media and the public. It is the communication and behaviour of those three entities that is key in understanding

the involvement of key political issues in current mediatized societies. A central role can be attributed to mass media: it is the most important source of information for the general public and its opinions, attitudes and (electoral) behaviour is strongly affected by it. And while the rise of the Internet and in particular social media is altering the interactions between politicians, journalists and citizens, traditional media keep playing a key role in opinion formation and political decision making processes. It is not hard to think of examples where images of immigrants in traditional media, either as victims of wars abroad or as rational fortune hunters, have moved public opinion – directly, but also indirectly, by being shared widely on social media.

Taking a functional perspective, the role of media can be considered two fold (Van Aelst and Walgrave, 2016): on the one hand, they have an information function, providing other actors with facts, opinions and background stories that affect opinion formation. On the other hand, media can be considered an arena that offers other actors, such as politicians, pressure groups, social movements, experts and ordinary citizens a platform. In both instances, the ‘carrying capacity’ of media is limited (Hilgartner and Bosk, 1988): not every fact and opinion can and will be published. Selection and gatekeeping processes (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996) determine the actual content, favouring certain events and sources over others. Since this content can affect both politicians and citizens alike, it assigns a certain degree of influence, and thus responsibility, to the individual journalist as well. Especially when it comes to politically contested issues, such as immigration, the struggle for attention is fierce and editorial and journalistic choices matter.

Methodologically, studies of immigration and media rely on a content analysis most of the time, which is not surprising, given the centrality of content characteristics in media effects research. A huge variation in approaches towards content analysis exists – ranging from more qualitative discourse analysis to large-scale, quantitative approaches. Here, I will not go into the discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of each type of study, but focus on key analytical concepts that are used, as well as the main findings. In general, these different types of studies yield overlapping or complementary outcomes.

Analysing media content

The content of media can be analysed in many different ways and analyses focus on a wide variety of content characteristics. In the European literature on immigrants and immigration in the news, two approaches can be considered dominant. The first one is a combination of *issue attention* and *framing*. The second is *political claims making*.

Attention and framing

Issue attention is the key (independent) variable in agenda setting research. It can be traced back to the sixties, when Cohen (1963, p. 13) captured the essence by stating: ‘the press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about’. This indicates that the attention that is devoted to the issue of immigration (compared to other political issues) is a relevant characteristic to investigate. For example for the Dutch situation, Vliegenthart and Boomgaarden (2007) show that attention for immigration and integration in national newspapers increased significantly during the late nineties and early years of this century. This rise of attention is not caused by figures on immigration or asylum seekers, but rather by key events such as 9/11. Also in other European countries, we see an increase in attention for the immigration issue, for example in coverage in the weeks preceding European parliamentary elections (e.g. McLaren *et al.*, 2017; Schlueter and Davidov, 2011).

General media attention to the immigration issue does not tell anything about questions such as how immigrant groups are portrayed, or which elements are central in the media coverage. If we focus on the salience of specific aspects, or interpretations, of topics, the concept of framing is often used. In communication science, but also in other social science areas, framing has become a tremendously popular concept to analyse the communication on a wide variety of political and societal issues. Immigration is no exception. In the seminal definition of Robert Entman (1993, p. 53), framing entails ‘the selection of some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described’. While this definition is widely cited, the actual conceptualization and operationalization differs considerably across different studies. Most studies relating to immigration take an ‘issue specific’ approach (De Vreese, 2005), which means that they identify and study frames that are unique for the topic at hand. One of the first studies that describes media debates on the issue of immigration and minority integration is by Roggeband and Vliegenthart (2007) who analyse the coverage in Dutch national newspapers from 1995 until 2004. They identify five frames, including an *emancipation frame* that focuses on the empowerment of minorities through education and labour and the *Islam-as-a-threat* frame. They show that the latter dominates in coverage and especially after 9/11 a majority of articles contains this frame. Also other studies find that negatively valenced frames dominate coverage, for example in single-country studies of the United Kingdom (McLaren *et al.*, 2017) and Belgium (Jacobs *et al.*, 2016), in which immigrants are presented as a threat to the host society or related to issues such as crime and unemployment. The cross-national study of Helbling (2014) provides a somewhat different picture. In a content analysis of quality newspapers in six countries for the period 1999–2006, he reveals that the most dominant frame present is a moral-universal one, focusing on aspects such as fairness, equality and human rights. Differences in those findings compared to other studies might be traced back, at least partly, to different methodological choices as how to measure frames and also to material selection and what outlets are included. Additionally, Helbling focuses on actor-level statements to determine the framing, while most other studies take the whole article as their point of reference.

The studies discussed above all make a quantitative analysis of media content, covering periods of several years in the past decades and demonstrating considerable changes. In (often) more qualitative research the idea of discourse is used as a guiding principle to provide a deeper understanding into (media) debates. Clearly overlapping with framing, (critical) discourse analysis seeks to provide a (even more) detailed account of the debate and the multiple interpretations that can be attributed to it. In relation to the immigration topic, studies focus for example on differential expressions of denial of racism in press reports (Van Dijk, 1992), (negative) categories of representation of asylum seekers (Gabrielatos and Baker, 2008) and the (re)definition of national identity in times of increasing influx of immigrants (Triandafyllidou, 1999). For Italy, Sciortino and Colombo (2004) show that during the period 1969–2001 the press focused mainly on the economic participation of illegal immigrants, more than on criminalization.

In a qualitative account of family migration in the Netherlands, Bonjour and Schrover (2015) reveal that media debates from the sixties until the nineties of the previous century throughout time contain ‘drama scenarios’ as well as ‘crisis scenarios’. In the first case, the emphasis is on individuals and the personal consequences they suffer from certain policies, while in the latter case, attention shifts to the (high) numbers, illegality and crime. There is no systematic trend in one scenario becoming more dominant over the other – it seems rather a case-specific affair.

Political claims making

The second approach to analyse media content is *political claims making*, as has been proposed by Ruud Koopmans and Paul Statham (1999). While many attention and framing studies (though not all) consider media to be an institution that follows routines and also has an independent influence on politics and public opinion (in line with the earlier information function), the claims making approach puts more emphasis on the media as a platform, or arena, in which political and societal actors put forward their opinions and views. Key concepts in the claims making framework are visibility, resonance and legitimacy. Visibility deals with how often a certain claim can be found in media coverage, resonance with the degree to which other actors respond to that claim and legitimacy with the extent to which they do so in a supportive manner. While the political claims making approach is not confined to immigration and immigrants, it has been widely applied to this issue (see e.g. Statham and Geddes, 2006; van der Brug *et al.*, 2015). Most notably, the book *Contested citizenship* (Koopmans *et al.*, 2005) provides an elaborate account of the debates on immigration and citizenship in several Western-European countries in the nineties. The analysis reveals considerable differences in the presence and types of claims of the general debate on the immigration issue, as well as those that specific immigrants and immigrant groups make. For example, in Germany, a lot more claims relating to the connection to the homeland are brought forward, compared to Great Britain and the Netherlands.

Media content as a dependent variable

While descriptions of media content might be interesting as such, understanding variation in coverage, as well as its impact on politics, policy and public are key. When it comes to explaining the content of immigration coverage, it is useful to first of all identify structural characteristics of the news making process that have an impact on the coverage and have a wider, more general application beyond the immigration issue. Here, gatekeeping processes (Shoemaker and Reese, 2013) and news values (Galtung and Ruge, 1965) play an important role. For example, negativity and conflict are important news values. It does not come as a surprise that frames that include those aspects are likely to receive more attention, as for example the ‘Islam-as-a-threat’ frame in the Roggeband and Vliegenthart study. Additionally, when it comes to the question of who is allowed to bring forward his or her perspective on the issue, mechanisms such as *indexing* (Bennett, 1990) play an important role: the more political power an actor has, the easier it is to access the media arena and bring forward his or her point of view. This might for example explain the relatively small presence of minorities themselves in many of the debates, especially in those countries where they are weakly organized and/or less-well represented in politics (Koopmans *et al.*, 2005).

While general news selection processes are important to keep in mind when trying to understand the nature of coverage, it is in many instances more interesting to look at factors that help to account for *differences* in coverage. Here, it is useful to distinguish in differences occurring due to (1) *temporal* variation, (2) *structural* characteristics (i.e. cross-national differences) of the context in which reporting takes place, as well as (3) *cross-outlet* differences: not all media report in a similar way about political issues. Finally, also (4) attempts by politicians and other actors to influence the debate are worth considering.

Starting with over-time dynamics, the past two decades have shown considerable variation. Empirical results show that both the attention for and the framing of the issue is not so much affected by immigration numbers (Vliegenthart and Boomgaarden, 2007), but to some extent

by policy changes (Bonjour and Schrover, 2015). More clearly, however, it seems that events have played a key role in the shaping of the media debate. As Vliegthart and Boomgaarden (2007) and Roggeband and Vliegthart (2007) show, the 9/11 and subsequent terrorist attacks in London and Madrid increased the attention to the issue, and shifted the framing in the direction of threat-framing.

Second, structural characteristics also matter. In their claims making analysis, Koopmans and colleagues (2005) argue that national citizen policies and configurations to a large extent determine the discursive opportunity structure, and ultimately the content of the coverage. They show that, for example, the German immigrant policies that emphasized it not to be an immigrant country, resulted in minorities that made considerably more claims relating to connection to the home country, compared to, for example, the Netherlands and France.

Third, it is attractive to talk about ‘the’ media, as if it is a homogeneous, singular entity that has no variation across different channels. While many of the selection mechanisms work similarly for different outlets and channels, this does not mean that coverage is homogeneous. Different media can differ substantially in their coverage of politics in general, and immigration in particular. Roggeband and Vliegthart (2007), for example, show that popular newspaper *Algemeen Dagblad* uses the ‘Islam-as-a-threat’ frame most frequently compared to other newspapers, while the progressive quality newspaper *de Volkskrant* employs the multicultural frame more often than its competitors. Overall, however, in absolute terms differences in framing across outlets are limited. This is in line with the findings of Lawlor (2015), who demonstrates that framing in local newspapers in the United Kingdom and Canada is largely in line with those in national newspapers.

Matthews and Brown (2012) demonstrate that, in 2003, the British tabloid newspaper the *Sun* systematically and deliberately connected asylum seekers to all kind of negative issues, including terrorism and crime. In that sense, the coverage of immigration and related issues very much follows general patterns of differences across outlets: in countries with a liberal media system such as the United Kingdom (Hallin and Mancini, 2004), commercial pressures urge especially tabloid newspapers to take a negative approach to politics and political issues. The commercial logic has dominated media markets in liberal countries such as the UK for longer periods in time already, while in Democratic-corporatist systems this commercial logic is less widespread and has a shorter history, resulting in coverage of politics and political issues that is more positive and less polarized (see Vliegthart *et al.*, 2011).

Finally, politicians, but also other societal actors, such as social movements and advocacy groups, try to impact the media debate by bringing forward claims and framing the immigration issue in a certain way. As mentioned, institutional political actors with actual decision power have a larger chance to get their views into the news, as they are preferred by journalists as sources. When applied in a framing context, we see that media indeed follow the debate that takes place in parliament – but according to a particular mechanism: those frames that are already used in the media are the ones that get even more amplified when parliamentarians also use them (Vliegthart and Roggeband, 2007).

Effects of media content on citizens and politics

Media effects are of key interest in the study of communication processes. These effects can be in multiple realms. Here, the focus is on both political effects – i.e. to what extent does media coverage impact political debates and decisions – as well as on public opinion and voting behaviour.

Effects on citizens

Starting with the latter, research has focused on effects both at the aggregate level (i.e. general developments in public opinion and electoral preferences), as well on the individual level. On the aggregate level, research has shown that the attention for immigration leads to increasing support for anti-immigrant parties, both in Belgium (Walgrave and De Swert, 2004), and in the Netherlands (Boomgaarden and Vliegenthart, 2007). The underlying mechanism is driven by agenda setting and issue ownership: if an issue receives more media attention, it will be more salient among the public as well. In a second step, it becomes a more important consideration when having to decide which party to vote for. Parties who ‘own’ the issue, i.e. are associated with the issue, are the most likely to profit.

In a similar vein, aggregate-level attitudes towards immigrants are influenced by media coverage: in their study on German newspaper coverage, Boomgaarden and Vliegenthart (2009) show that immigration problem perceptions are mainly driven by the *tone* of media coverage. The more positively immigrant actors are portrayed, the less people consider immigration a problem. This effect does depend on contextual factors: the higher the level of immigrants and asylum seekers, the larger the impact of evaluations in the news. Also Schlueter and Davidov (2011) find for Spain that negative media coverage has an impact on natives’ perceived group threat, but that this effect is especially prevalent for those regions in which the immigrant group size is small. The findings of a study by Van Klingereren and colleagues (2015) are partly in line with these findings: in the Netherlands a positive tone in news reports reduces anti-immigrant attitudes. In Denmark, however, such an effect was not found. The authors tentatively suggest that this is due to the larger number of immigrants in the Netherlands, making the Dutch public more sensitive to valenced news coverage. A recent study in the United Kingdom demonstrates a similar impact of media coverage on public concern about immigration (McLaren *et al.*, 2017). McLaren and colleagues find that if immigration is connected to other specific political issues, such as education and the economy, more frequently, it raises public concerns. The authors explain this finding by mentioning the unobtrusive and concrete character of those issues. Attention for immigration in combination with more abstract issues such as legal processes does not evoke any responses from the British public. Media coverage is not only able to impact attitudes, but can also have an effect on behavioural outcomes. In Germany, for example, Koopmans and Olzak (2004) demonstrate that visibility of and support for right-wing violent claims actually increases the number of subsequent violent events targeting asylum seekers. A decade earlier, Brosius and Esser (1995) came to a similar conclusion: their book *Eskalation durch Berichterstattung* (‘Escalation due to media coverage’) reports how violence against asylum seekers can indeed escalate due to the way journalists report about those incidents. Overall, aggregate-level studies demonstrate a variety of media effects, on attitudes, opinions, as well as behaviour. These findings are collaborated in individual level studies, looking at anti-immigrant attitudes (Bos *et al.*, 2016; Jacobs *et al.*, 2016) and support for specific policy measures related to immigrants (Bos *et al.*, 2016). The study of Bos and colleagues, for example, employs an experiment to test effects of framing and valence (tone) on support for measures that improve the position of immigrants on the labour market, as well as on more general anti-immigrant attitudes in the Netherlands. First, they demonstrate that valence has an impact on attitudes towards policies to help immigrants, with a positive tone lending more support for such measures. Second, they show that anti-immigrant attitudes are affected by frame use, rather than valence: the use of a multicultural frame decreases anti-immigrant attitudes, while the use of a victimization frame, which describes ethnic minorities by using arguments connected to inequality, disadvantage, foreigners and victims, increases anti-immigrant attitudes. These effects on anti-immigrant attitudes are mediated

by emotional responses of respondents: especially positive emotions such as enthusiasm are of importance in this process. Frames exert an influence on the presence of such emotions, which subsequently affect attitudes towards immigrants (Lecheler *et al.*, 2015). Jacobs and colleagues (2016) find for Belgium that people who use more commercial television news have stronger anti-immigrant attitudes. This commercial news is, compared to the public broadcaster, characterized by more sensational and tabloid-style way of reporting.

Effects on politics

Next to effects on citizens, effects on politics are also often investigated. This happens largely from a political agenda setting perspective (Walgrave and Van Aelst, 2006). Here, the question is first of all how attention for issues in the media affects subsequent attention for the same issues in politics, for example in parliamentary questions. This topic has generated a lot of attention in recent scholarly work, with many studies focusing on a wide variety of political issues, often including, but without specific interest in, immigration. Several studies do focus specifically on immigration. Vliegenthart and Roggeband (2007) for example demonstrate that political agenda setting effects exist for the immigration issue: more attention for the immigration issue in Dutch newspapers results in more attention for the issue in Dutch parliament, but only to a limited extent. They extend their analysis to frames and find that for certain frames, a media effect exists: for the multicultural frame, for example, they find that increased use in the media arena results in increased presence in the parliamentary realm in the subsequent months. Also van der Pas (2014) focuses specifically on the immigration issue, in both the Netherlands and Sweden. She demonstrates that political parties only respond to media coverage when the ‘framing is right’ – in other words: when the coverage reflects the framing of the issue as brought forward by the party. In this case, that means that impact is present when media coverage of immigration overlaps with the way parties discuss the issue in their party questions and speeches.

In a more recent study, van der Pas and colleagues (2017) look at the extent to which political parties follow certain media while ignoring others, with according to their ideological backgrounds. For the immigration issue, they find that patterns of parallelism indeed still exist. Most notably, they show that the left-leaning newspaper *de Volkskrant* has a stronger impact on the parliamentary behaviour of MPs who belong to political parties that have an electorate that overlaps with the readers of the newspaper. Most of the existing studies focus on media impact on ‘symbolic’ political agenda’s – i.e. those that do not have direct consequences in terms of policy or legislation. An exception is the previously mentioned study by Bonjour and Schrover (2015) who show that the media impact on policy-making increases where there is controversy between decision makers, and decreases where civil servants play a larger role in the decision making process. Also Dekker and Scholten (2017) point to the importance of conflict: in their study of sixteen important events in recent Dutch immigration policies, they find that frame contestation is a necessary condition for media coverage to change immigration policies.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of European research into media content and effects relating to the issue of immigration. In many instances, scholars treat immigration as just an issue that is particularly suitable to test general theories on the causes and consequences of content. And indeed, many general theories such as news selection, gatekeeping, agenda setting and framing are confirmed and in some instances even extended based on those studies. Considering immigration as ‘just’ a political issue, however, glosses over the tremendous importance of the

issue in political and electoral settings across Europe. Fear of immigration was one of the key issues in the campaign leading up to the Brexit referendum in 2016. Furthermore, it accounts to a considerable extent for the rise of populist right-wing parties in many European countries. Migration is an issue where media content and effects matter, more so than with many other political issues. It is therefore all the more problematic that coverage is out of sink with ‘reality’: the attention and framing of the issue is merely a consequence of newsworthy events rather than a reflection of more systematic trends in immigration figures. Similarly, the emphasis on negativity and frames that contain elements such as threat and fear contribute to a view that integration of large groups of minorities has failed, while (statistical) evidence might suggest otherwise.

Future research should be aimed at scrutinizing this distortion further. Additionally, it might also take into account the role of social media, which is altering the media landscape and communication patterns in multiple ways. On the one hand, it might offer disadvantaged or minority groups opportunities to express themselves and reach audiences without the interference of journalists and news selection processes. On the other hand, anti-immigrant opinions and views find a fertile ground on all kind of social media, trickling down to other realms where public debates take place as well.

Finally, it is worth noting that existing research is biased in two respects. First, a vast majority of the research focuses on written texts and hardly on visuals. This often has a clear practical reason: written texts are more easily accessible and widely available in electronic archives, making large-scale longitudinal research a viable option. Still, given the perceived importance of (moving) visuals when it comes to for example refugee crises, they deserve a more prominent place in empirical investigations. Second, it largely focuses on findings from West-European countries. On the one hand, this is not a surprise: it might not only reflect a structural bias in academic research, but also the fact that these countries have in recent history faced a larger influx of immigrants than Eastern European countries. It is worthwhile to extend research to include more of those countries, to get a good grip of the impact of contextual factors on both news production and effects.

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SECTION COMMENTARY

Governance

Mikołaj Pawlak

Governance of migration is an institutionalised approach to regulating immigration and its consequences in social and economic spheres across the European Union (EU). However, for the Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries that accessed the EU in 2004 and 2007 (as well as for the non-EU European countries), the governance of migration is a new concept that they have not entirely incorporated into their institutional and political systems.

While there are many differences among the Eastern European countries, in regard to migration they share a few important similarities: they are sending countries (to various degrees) but they are also receiving countries, and until recently, the issue of immigration was not a topic of public debates there. The authors contributing to the current section have presented debates largely absent from the Eastern European context; still, these debates are relevant due to the processes of policy diffusion occurring on the European continent. Indeed, both the definition of the problems and the solutions to these problems are subjects of such diffusion, which is understood as a circulation and spreading of practices and ideas across different kinds of borders (Djelic 2008). For various social actors in Eastern Europe, Western Europe is a source of models, legitimacy and inspiration, for instance with regard to best practice in migrant integration, but also the political uses of scapegoating (Pawlak 2013a; Radaelli 2000; Weinar 2006).

Governance of ignorance

Various social actors and interest groups in Eastern Europe observe Western debates and make use of them. Sometimes immigrants are a rather mythical figure of policies or discourses, for example, in the case of the rise of Islamophobia in countries where immigration from Muslim countries is nearly non-existent (Narkowicz and Pędziwiatr 2017). Therefore, ignorance studies are a useful frame for understanding migration governance in Eastern Europe: they explore how strategic ignorance and social unknowing are used in maintaining and disrupting social and political orders by 'allowing both governors and the governed to deny awareness of things it is not in their interest to acknowledge' (McGoey 2012: 4). In this approach, ignorance is not understood as simple opposition to knowledge but as its component, which may be a tool of domination (the knowledgeable dominate the ignorant) but may also open possibilities for emancipation (the ignorant can become more powerful than the knowledgeable because they lack the constraints of knowledge) (Gross and McGoey 2015). This dual dynamic is reflected in

the CEE experience in migration policy matters: before 2015, immigration was ignored by the broader public and was governed in the shadows, mostly by the lower levels of administration (Kubicki *et al.* 2017). Since 2015, immigration has been in the centre of public attention, although it is presented and debated in an extremely mythologised way.

During the time when immigration was not a debatable issue, the CEE elites did not have an incentive to build up a public debate, invest in gathering knowledge or seriously engage in policy development. This policy gap was filled by the European Commission and the instruments it offered on the early stages of migration policy formation. Weiner (2006) showed that the ‘Europeanness’ of *acquis communautaire* was a strong legitimising factor for the Parliament when voting on the migration regulations before EU accession, while Pawlak (2013a) documented that parts of the Polish Migratory Policy strategy announced in 2011 were strongly inspired by operational documentation that was produced by the Commission to support the guidelines of the European Fund for the Integration of Third Country Nationals.

Most of the studies cited by Ilke Adam and Tiziana Caponio in their chapter on multi-level governance focused on state relations with other levels of policy: European, regional and local. In the framework of multi-level governance, the governance of migration is an informed process encompassing a large number of actors cooperating and negotiating in the pursuit of policy development. In CEE countries, in some policy areas regarding migration, the national state level was bypassed. For example, as regards integration policies, the national high-level politicians were not aware of the EU Common Agenda on Integration, but its instruments were introduced in Polish law and then implemented by lower-level civil servants (Każmierkiewicz and Frelak 2011). According to the study of the Institute of Public Affairs, Polish Members of Parliament did not realise that the European Fund for the Integration of Third Country Nationals funded many initiatives implemented by Polish non-governmental organisations (NGOs) (Każmierkiewicz and Frelak 2011). The beneficiaries of the European funds were mostly NGOs, which not only provided direct assistance to immigrants but also lobbied for changes in the law that would reflect EU-level best practice in integration (Pawlak and Matusz-Protasiewicz 2015). Thus we can say that in CEE countries, governance of migration did not reflect the concepts used in Western Europe. Instead, the national level provided a scant and general legal framework, and immigration policies constituted a niche for a small group of passionate civil servants, academics and civil society activists working under the radar of the national institutions. This leads to the next consideration of a ‘gap’ debate in mainstream migration studies.

The considerations regarding the ‘control gap’ in the chapter by Blanca Garcés-Mascareñas bring our attention to the interest groups that in the CEE countries are attempting to influence migration governance. Until recently, the broader public was not paying attention to the issue of immigration, so the interest groups had to influence the policy-makers, not the public debate. To some extent, the perceived opinion of stakeholders such as the European Commission or international organisations influenced the governance of migration. For example, Karolina Lukasiewicz (2017) demonstrated that the asylum system in Poland was declaratively aiming at the integration of refugees but, as an outcome, it was placing the refugees in a situation of poverty. In the case of labour migration to Poland, it emerged as an effect of various groups lobbying for their interests: farmers in need of seasonal workers (Bieniecki and Pawlak 2012) or universities facing a decreased number of candidates (Konieczna-Salamatin 2015). Migration governance was pursued in the shadow of public ignorance, which allowed technocratic management by civil servants but was inhibiting larger reforms and purposeful coordination. The recent change of conditions for migration governance is an effect of the very high levels of public attention to the issue, triggered by the so-called ‘refugee crisis’ in 2015. Since that moment, there have been strong political declarations of a will to coordinate migration policy

and to securitise it (Kubicki *et al.* 2017). However, it remains mostly on the level of declarations; the policies themselves are still incoherent and reconciling various interests.

When looking at the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) data, one can see that the newer EU member states score quite high when a certain policy is codified in a EU directive, transposed to the national regulations. Nora Dörrenbächer and Tineke Strik, in their chapter on the implementation of migration law, use the notion of ‘the world of dead letters’, coined by Falkner and Treib (2008), to describe the regulations not used in practice. For historical reasons, Eastern Europe has a strong culture of decoupling the practices of administration from the formal rules (Hirsch and Bermiss 2009). The outcomes of the studies of the street level bureaucracy are ambiguous. On one hand, civil servants apply their beliefs and are capable of discretionary influence with regard to issuing residence permits (Skowrońska 2017). On the other hand, caseworkers often do more than required for the benefit of the refugees with whom they work (Lukasiewicz 2017; Pawlak 2013b). This discretion is also caused by the complexity of regulations that need to be navigated through and the relatively high rotation of staff employed on the front desk level (Klaus 2009). Ignorance is at work here as well: since the problems faced by immigrants in their contacts with administration are not debated by the public, there is no pressure to increase the standards of administration and social welfare services.

The chapter by Emma Carmel and Hester Kan on the use of expertise in migration governance focuses on categorisations of migrants. It touches on the very paradox of knowledge production: there cannot be knowledge without coexisting ignorance. Migration governance is structured according to migrant categories, and the categorisation supports knowledge creation. Yet there will always be blind spots between the binary categories. In case of Eastern Europe, the binary distinction between mobile EU citizens and third-country national migrants is especially confusing. For quite a long time after the 2004–2007 accession, citizens of ‘new’ member states did not enjoy full intra-EU mobility rights (the right to work) in the majority of the ‘old’ member states. Similarly, ‘new’ member states have special bilateral agreements with selected non-EU post-Soviet countries that allowed for non-EU labour circulation – these include Polish regulations for seasonal employment of citizens from selected post-Soviet countries (used mostly by Ukrainians) or special treatment of co-ethnics by Hungary and Romania. The status of third-country nationals in Eastern Europe is also much different: with increasing labour migration, there is also a well-off group of expats from non-EU Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries. The Western European focus on ‘migrant’ as coming from the global South has so far not responded to the realities of migration in Eastern Europe. Thus the knowledge produced by scholars in the Western part of the continent has not been entirely useful.

Knowledge is a tool of migration governance, but purposive ignorance of various processes is as well. Administration looks with a blind-eye on various migration-related practices. At the intersection of two binary categories, legal-illegal residence and legal-illegal employment, there is quite a large category of residents who are legal but employed in shadow economy. Although the state has a means to counter this situation, it does not because it would cause harm to certain sectors of the economy.

Informed debates: issues that matter

The West–East disconnect is clearest when it comes to actual knowledge production in the area of migration governance in CEE countries. The issues that are researched, made into policies and implemented are very different from the issues raised by the contributors to this section.

First is the case of emigration and diaspora governance. In some CEE countries, there are very interesting overlaps between the policies towards diaspora (those co-ethnics who emigrated or whose ancestors emigrated) and national minorities (those co-ethnics who are citizens of other states not because of migration but because of changes in political borders). Some CEE countries (such as Hungary, Poland or Romania), which have significant numbers of co-ethnics in post-Soviet countries, use the policies targeting them as a tool of de facto immigration policy: co-ethnics often have lower visa requirements or special documents which allow them to enter the state; do not have to apply for work permits; or they have a much easier path for acquiring citizenship. What is a very important factor, highlighted by Agnieszka Weiner in her chapter on the politics of emigration, is that emigration in the countries of Eastern Europe is recognised as a state failure. However, contrary to the declarations of decision-makers, they do not develop effective policies encouraging re-emigration (Lesińska 2013). This is not expressed openly, but it seems that decision-makers realise that return policies cannot be successful and that re-emigration is only possible when the sending country achieves a certain level of economic growth. So the policies targeting diasporas focus on maintaining cultural bonds with the motherland rather than empowering them to become more efficient political actors in the host societies (Fiń *et al.* 2013).

Another issue that matters in CEE countries and that was not debated in this section of the Handbook is intra-EU mobility and its consequences for the sending countries. As a consequence of the 2004 and 2007 accessions, large numbers of workers from the new EU member states used the new opportunities to migrate to the old member states. In case of the Baltics, Bulgaria, Poland, Romania and Slovakia, quite a substantial share of the workforce relocated. The impact of this migration on sending societies has been broadly debated and also studied by migration scholars in CEE countries. In Poland, the so-called post-accession migration has been a large source of financial as well as social remittances (Grabowska *et al.* 2016). Although quite a large share of these migrants are back-and-forth labour migrants (Fihel and Grabowska-Lusińska 2014), their relations with elderly parents have been transformed (Krzyżowski and Mucha 2014). However, the issue that drew the most public attention was that of relations between parents working in the Western EU member states and their children, who stayed behind in CEE countries (Urbańska 2015). Yet we cannot say that states developed any profound policies supporting people who became more vulnerable as a result of their relatives' migration.

Conclusions

This overview of diverse approaches to migration governance in Western and Eastern Europe shows that the thesis of European exceptionalism in migration policy and politics does not necessarily hold. We have plenty of evidence of the diversity of policy models and political debates on the continent. Peripheral states of Europe struggle with various challenges concerning migrations. They are mostly sending societies but also increasingly hosting ones. Yet the Western countries are recognised as models for the majority of them, so on various levels, inspirations are diffused from Western Europe to its other parts. This diffusion comprises not only policy best practices but also mutual inspirations between right-wing parties that use anti-immigrant rhetoric as a tool of political mobilisation. Ironically, xenophobes are quite open to learning from each other. So on many levels, we can notice convergence in Europe and the development of a European model of immigration governance with a focus on securitising migration from beyond the European continent. An important question to be asked here is: does it actually matter that there is some kind of European exceptionalism here? I believe that in regards to the migratory processes, Europe constitutes a 'cosmos' of its own and for this

reason, it is more important to make comparisons between European states than between Europe and other large regions of the world.

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PART II

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