

# Social protection for mobile populations? A global perspective on immigrant social rights

Friederike Römer<sup>1</sup>  | Jakob Henninger<sup>2</sup>  | Eloisa Harris<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>German Centre for Integration and Migration Research (DeZIM), University of Bremen, Collaborative Research Centre 1342 “Global Dynamics of Social Policy”, Bremen, Germany

<sup>2</sup>University of Bremen, Collaborative Research Centre 1342 “Global Dynamics of Social Policy”, Bremen, Germany

<sup>3</sup>Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity, Göttingen, Germany

## Correspondence

Friederike Römer, German Centre for Integration and Migration Research (DeZIM); University of Bremen, Collaborative Research Centre 1342 “Global Dynamics of Social Policy,” Bremen, Germany.  
Email: [froemer@uni-bremen.de](mailto:froemer@uni-bremen.de)

## Funding information

Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, Grant/Award Number: 374666841-SFB 1342

## Abstract

While a growing body of work investigates the social rights of immigrants, there is a notable lack of comparative research on the topic that includes countries in the Global South. In this paper we argue that existing approaches often lack reproducibility, comparability, and adaptability beyond the cases that they focus on. To remedy this shortcoming, we propose a three-dimensional conceptualization of immigrant social rights that takes into account differences between legal categories of migrants, between types of welfare benefits, and between types of restrictions. Applying this conceptualization, we offer the Immigrant Social Rights Dataset (ImmigSR), a set of quantitative comparative measures of de jure immigrant social rights covering 39 countries in Europe, Latin America, North America, Oceania and Southeast Asia for the years 1980–2018. Our analyses show commonalities as well as differences between world regions. Rights are more inclusive in the Global North than in the Global South. There is however a slight trend towards convergence, with rights retrenchment in the North and expansions in the South. Across all regions, temporary migrant workers and asylum seekers are the groups that are granted the least comprehensive set of rights. Depending on the dimension that is taken into focus, there

This article is a product of the research conducted at the Collaborative Research Center 1342 ‘Global Dynamics of Social Policy’ at the University of Bremen.

This is an open access article under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/) License, which permits use and distribution in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, the use is non-commercial and no modifications or adaptations are made.

© 2023 The Authors. Social Policy & Administration published by John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

are however also more nuanced intra-regional differences. The findings confirm the usefulness of a multi-dimensional conceptual approach to measuring immigrant social rights in a diverse set of cases.

**KEYWORDS**

data and research, immigration, immigrant social rights, inequality, quantitative

## 1 | INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the rights of immigrants in their countries of destination have received ever-growing attention among policy-makers, researchers and the public at large. The social rights of migrants in particular have been said to be 'key to ensuring income security for all, reducing poverty and inequality, achieving decent working conditions and reducing vulnerability and social exclusion' (ILO 2021, p. 27). Accordingly, a rich and growing literature attempts to assess in how far the ideal of comprehensive immigrant<sup>1</sup> inclusion has been achieved. Early works assert that social rights are a component of citizenship and thus unavailable to immigrants (Marshall 1950) whereas later contributions argue that international norms have led to extension in non-citizens' social rights (Arendt 2017; Kymlicka 1996; Soysal 1994). Some argue that non-citizens enjoy extensive sets of rights under a status of 'denizenship' (Hammar 1990; see also Brubaker 1989a). More recently, scholars have reached a more nuanced understanding, highlighting that there are not only pronounced differences between the social rights of citizens and immigrants, but also between the rights of different legal categories of immigrants, and across various types of welfare benefits.

While existing research has thus laid important foundations for the comparative study of immigrant social rights, there is a notable lack of comparative work that includes countries in the Global South. Overcoming the 'Western Bias' of comparative welfare state research (see e.g., Leisering and Barrientos 2013; Nullmeier, González de Reufels, and Obinger 2022; Schmitt et al. 2015; see also Solano and Huddleston 2021 for the field of migration policy research) is however of utmost relevance for the study of immigrant social rights. Sizable immigrant populations exist in many countries in the Global South (UN DESA 2020) and welfare states in these countries are expanding and consolidating. From an analytical perspective, obtaining data on immigrant social rights in a broader and more diverse range of political systems, migration regimes and other contextual covariates is crucial.

In this article, we therefore ask how immigrant social rights have evolved globally between 1980 and 2018, and in how far trends of convergence between world regions can be observed. At the heart of our inquiry is a detailed and novel conceptualization of immigrant social rights which can be applied beyond the Global North. As a systematic literature review reveals, researchers have previously often used ad-hoc definitions and conceptual decisions tend to be not explicitly discussed. As a result, existing empirical measures often only cover insufficiently justified sub-sections of the concept, are not comparable to one another, lack reproducibility and also adaptability to contexts beyond the cases that they focus on—which in the majority of studies are the consolidated welfare states of the Global North. This partly explains the discrepancies between earlier assessments of immigrant social rights. In response, we develop a conceptual framework of immigrant social rights that encompasses three dimensions, namely 'type of legal category of immigrant', 'type of benefit', and 'type of restriction'.

Our second contribution is the application of this conceptual framework in the Immigrant Social Rights Dataset (ImmigSR), a new resource that measures social rights of immigrants across a set of 39 countries in five world regions, namely Europe, Latin America, North America, Oceania and Southeast Asia,<sup>2</sup> covering the years 1980–2018. The dataset allows us to generate new insights into the development of immigrant social rights in global comparison.

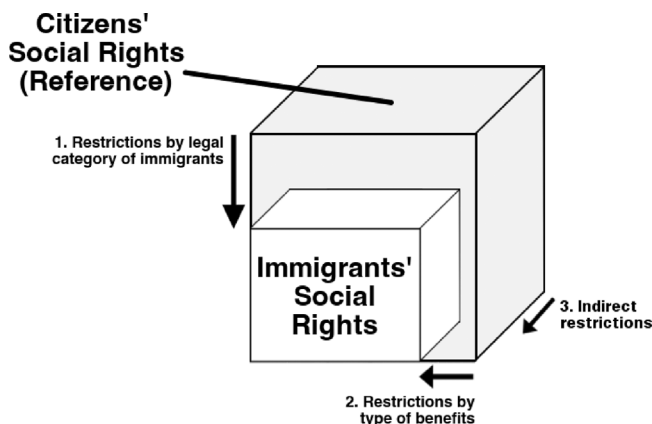
## 2 | CONCEPTUALISING ‘IMMIGRANT SOCIAL RIGHTS’

In this article, we focus on immigrant social rights defined as the legal rights of immigrants to access the array of benefits and services that the welfare state in the country of residence offers to its citizens. The terms ‘social protection’, ‘social rights’ and ‘welfare rights’ are all used in the literature, and are often taken to be synonyms. The term ‘social rights’ at times also denotes a more general set of rights beyond access to the welfare state (for example in the ‘European Pillar of Social Rights’, European Commission 2017), and the term ‘social protection’ sometimes also includes non-state providers (Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler 2004). In the remainder of the text, we use all three terms, but have reserved the term ‘immigrant social rights’ to clearly denote non-citizens’<sup>3</sup> access to benefits and services that are provided by welfare state institutions.

Immigrant social rights are a multi-dimensional construct. (1) First, rights differ by the legal category of immigrant that is considered. (2) Second, rights differ across welfare benefit schemes. (3) Third, restrictions to immigrant social rights might occur through direct or indirect measures.

Figure 1 visualises this approach, depicting a hypothetical degree of immigrant social rights (visualised as the white box) in relation to the reference category, that is, the social rights of citizens (the grey box). The concept thus can be thought of as a multidimensional continuum. At the restrictive end, all legal categories of immigrants would be excluded from all benefits the welfare state in a given country offers—the white box would disappear. At the other end of the spectrum, there would be no differentiation between immigrants and citizens, and any type of immigrant would be able to access all types of welfare benefits and services that are available to citizens, without facing any direct or indirect restrictions. In this case, the white box and the grey box would be of the same size.

In the following section, we will discuss the three dimensions and their respective manifestations, outlining how other studies have conceptualised and measured them. In order to survey the relevant literature, we conducted a systematic literature review (see Appendix A1 for details on the methodology). The overall research goal for the review was to find comparative empirical studies that include either a conceptualization or a measurement of immigrant social rights, or both. The systematic search produced 32 publications. Table A2 in the online appendix provides a more detailed overview, reporting the respective study’s research questions, the immigrant type(s), the benefits and restrictions they discuss, the data used and the geographical focus. The table illustrates that the majority of authors recognise the multidimensionality of ‘immigrant social rights’, but that there is little agreement in regard to which types of immigrants, which benefit types, and which types of restrictions are included in its conceptualization and measurement.



**FIGURE 1** The multidimensional nature of immigrant social rights. Own visualisation.

## 2.1 | The first dimension: Legal categories of immigrants

The approaches adopted by existing studies to conceptualise ‘immigrants’ or ‘legal categories of immigrants’ can be grouped in two: One set of studies focus on one or several specific legal categories of immigrant. There are, for example, studies focusing on the rights of forced migrants (Hernes 2018), intra-EU regional migrants (Barbulescu and Favell 2020; Bruzelius 2019; Bruzelius, Chase, and Seeleib-Kaiser 2016; LaFleur and Vintila 2020), low skilled labour (Kim 2021), permanent migrant workers (Boucher 2014), and older migrants (Dwyer and Papadimitriou 2006).

The majority of studies, however, use the second approach, and define ‘migrant’ more generally. Some studies completely refrain from specifying in more detail which legal categories are included, thereby implicitly suggesting that there is a unified set of rights granted to this group, referring to them as ‘foreigners’ (Guiraudon 2000, 2002), ‘non-citizens’ (Kalm and Lindvall 2019), ‘regular and irregular migrants’ (Avato, Koettl, and Sabates-Wheeler 2010) ‘third country nationals’ (Rosenberger and Koppes 2018) or ‘migrants’ (Henninger and Römer 2021). Other studies, even though speaking of ‘immigrant (social) rights’ as a unified concept, acknowledge differences and in some cases, in principle the data even allow for dis-aggregation. A closer look, however, reveals that most authors do not theorise which legal categories are relevant and why, for instance, some studies include the rights of forced migrants (e.g., Koning 2021), whereas others disregard them (e.g., Eugster 2018; Naldini, Adamson, and Hamilton 2022; Schmitt and Teney 2019).

Of course, the legal systems governing entry and residence permits are notoriously complex (Bjerre et al. 2015; Boucher and Gest 2018; Hammar 1985) and often idiosyncratic to a given country. However, most states differentiate between labour, family reunification, asylum/refugee, and ‘co-ethnic’ migration (see Bjerre et al. 2015; Boucher and Gest 2018). Regional and bilateral agreements can create additional legal categories of entry and residence (Avato, Koettl, and Sabates-Wheeler 2010; Bruzelius and Seeleib-Kaiser 2017). A sixth type are irregular (also called ‘illegal’ or ‘undocumented’) migrants (Bjerre et al. 2015, p. 559). Within these broader categories, further differentiations occur. In the field of labour migration, the different entry routes can be grouped by required skill level, or length of residence permit validity, or even type of work. In the field of asylum, there are differences between the status of recognised refugee, asylum seeker, and subsidiary protection, and often, additional categories of protection exist alongside. Similarly, in family reunification, there are differences between the type of sponsor<sup>4</sup> as well as the sponsored persons. Even within the irregular population, different status types exist. Figure 2 illustrates these categories with some examples of sub-categories. Of course, a migrant may also switch between categories over the course of their life-time.

We recognise that the analytical focus of, not to mention resources available for most empirical data collections severely limit the systematic inclusion of all existing sub-types of immigrant legal categories. Rather than including all sub-types, we therefore propose researchers refer to a theoretically-derived set of potentially relevant legal categories and explicitly justify which are in- or excluded in their measure of immigrant social rights. Referring to a

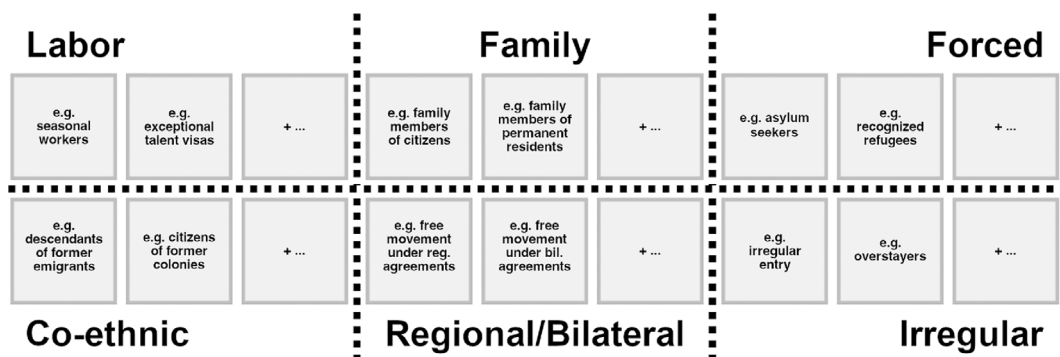


FIGURE 2 Legal categories of immigrants with examples of sub-categories. Own visualisation.

pre-defined set of relevant legal categories is especially important when expanding the scope of data collection to countries without a long-standing set of immigration policies. In many countries, certain categories such as 'recognised refugee', 'family reunification migrant', but also 'permanent migrant' are not legally recognised. When a certain legal category does not exist in all cases, this could be a reason to refrain from comparison. However, as we will outline in more detail below, the non-recognition of a certain legal category can also be interpreted as an indirect way of restricting rights. In any case, researchers need to address the issue in the context of country comparison.

## 2.2 | The second dimension: Types of benefits

As with legal categories of immigrants, existing studies encompass a broad range of relevant benefits in their conceptualization of immigrant social rights. A number of articles explicitly focus on one or several benefit types, such as social assistance (e.g., Harris and Römer 2022) employment related benefits (Gschwind 2021; Guiraudon 2002), or family and employment related benefits (Boucher 2014; Eugster 2018; Naldini, Adamson, and Hamilton 2022). A smaller number of studies includes a larger array of benefits (Guiraudon 2002; Kim 2021; Wenzel and Bös 1997). Noteworthy is especially Koning (2022) who includes seven different benefit types. However, there are also numerous studies that refer to social rights without clearly specifying which types of benefits and services are included in this concept (Avato, Koettl, and Sabates-Wheeler 2010; Bommers and Geddes 2000; Boräng, Kalm, and Lindvall 2020; Guiraudon 2000; Henninger and Römer 2021; Hernes 2018; Kalm and Lindvall 2019; Koning 2019; Peters 2015, 2017; Sainsbury 2012).

Just as the term 'immigrant' is a collective term for several different groups, there are also multiple benefits and services that can be subsumed under the term 'social rights'. In fact, existing conceptualizations of the welfare state point to nine policy sub-fields, namely medical care, sickness, unemployment, old age, employment injury, family, maternity, invalidity and survivors' benefits (ILO 1952). Increasingly, education is also considered as a component of the welfare state, particularly within studies of social investment (Garritzmann, Häusermann, and Palier 2022; Nullmeier, González de Reufels, and Obinger 2022). The lack of a clear conceptualization of included benefits and services in the majority of studies on immigrant social rights is thus problematic. In the case of non-contributory benefits, questions of deservingness tend to be more controversial (Ennser-Jedenastik 2018; van Oorschoot 2006)<sup>5</sup> and previous work has shown that more policy restrictions exist for the non-contributory social assistance benefit, compared to the contributory, unemployment insurance. It is therefore essential to explicitly state which benefits are taken into account so as not to bias the comparison.

Of course, for both pragmatic or analytical reasons, focusing on a sub-policy field can be a wholly adequate mean to answer the research question at hand. Yet, a comprehensive conceptualization that considers the different types of welfare state benefits and services is helpful in regard to comparisons between more and less developed welfare states. In many emerging welfare systems, benefits and services are more limited than in the consolidated welfare states. If in some cases included in the sample the benefit in question does not exist,<sup>6</sup> trying to measure immigrant social rights in regard to access to this benefit is simply void.<sup>7</sup> In this case, researchers could e.g. take into a focus another benefit that exist in more countries, but in any case, the motivation for selection of a given benefits and the issue of non-comparability in regard to other benefit types needs to be explicitly addressed.

## 2.3 | The third dimension: Direct and indirect restrictions

Although even early studies recognise that immigrants' rights can be indirectly curtailed (Brubaker 1989a; Freeman 1986), a number of perspectives on the distinction have emerged in the literature to date. In synthesis, direct restrictions concern additional eligibility requirements immigrants have to fulfil to access benefits,

whereas indirect restrictions may 'prevent' immigrants from accessing benefits through a number of other mechanisms.

Direct restrictions form the main focus for roughly half of the studies on immigrant social rights, although which form such restrictions take is often not made explicit (Avato, Koettl, and Sabates-Wheeler 2010; Boräng, Kalm, and Lindvall 2020; Chueri 2021; Schmitt and Teney 2019). Koning (2022) suggests to differentiate between residence requirements, 'integration requirements' and 'required location'. Numerous studies include references to indirect restrictions to immigrant rights. Noteworthy is especially Sainsbury (2012), who theorises the interplay of immigration regime and welfare regime as decisive for immigrants' social rights. She points out that there are restrictions which 'make use' of immigrants' limited residency rights, for example, by withdrawal of residence permits in case of unemployment. Others mention states' attempts to regulate the population of benefit recipients by setting high entry thresholds for immigrants - high income requirements for family reunification are an example of such a policy (Careja, Emmenegger, and Kvist 2015).

Any conceptualization of immigrant social rights thus needs to take into account such indirect restrictions because focusing on direct restrictions only might result in policies looking misleadingly generous. As mentioned earlier, the most extreme form of restriction is the non-existence of certain legal categories of migrants. For example, if a country does not offer refugee protection at all, this is arguably more restrictive than a country that grants asylum seekers limited access to welfare benefits.

### 3 | COLLECTING DATA ON IMMIGRANT SOCIAL RIGHTS

Based on the previous section one could argue that an all-encompassing measure of immigrant social rights would need to include *all* legal categories of immigrants across *all* types of welfare benefits and services offered, also recognising *all* indirect and direct ways of restricting access. However, we acknowledge that constructing such an ideal measure might not be feasible for pragmatic reasons, and, depending on the research question, also not necessary or desirable. Instead, we maintain that a measure of immigrant social rights needs to consider these three dimensions by being specific which types of immigrant legal categories, which types of benefits, and which types of restrictions are accounted for.

#### 3.1 | Existing datasets

To the best of our knowledge, there are six existing datasets which attempt to measure immigrant social rights, as shown in Table 1. They provide a valuable resource for comparative empirical research and are impressive in their thematic, temporal and geographical scope. Most of them include data on a wide range of immigration policies alongside immigrant social rights (DEMIG, IMISEM, IMPIC, MIPEX and Peters). DEMIG and Peters provide data on immigration policies over a particularly long stretch of time, both covering more than 200 years. With 45 and 56, respectively, DEMIG and MIPEX boast the largest number of countries included; along with IMISEM and Peters, they venture well beyond the established welfare states of the Global North. Still, the dataset that offers the most precise information on immigrant social rights is IESPI, which takes into account both all legal categories of migrants and as many as seven different types of welfare benefits. IESPI however limits itself to 22 Western welfare states. None of the datasets simultaneously allows for a differentiation between immigrant types, benefit types and direct and indirect restrictions for a large set of countries and years going beyond comparisons within the Global North (see also Solano and Huddleston 2021 for migration policy indices).

TABLE 1 Overview of quantitative comparative datasets that include measures of immigrant social rights.

Name	Countries covered	Years covered	Migrant types covered	Benefits covered	Direct/indirect	Methodology
DEMIG POLICY (DEMIG 2015a)	45 (Europe, Asia, South & North America)	1945–2013 mostly <sup>a</sup>	Variable 'target group': all migrants; all migrant workers; low-skilled workers; skilled/high-skilled workers; family members; international students; irregular migrants; refugees, asylum seekers, and other vulnerable groups; diaspora	Access to social security, health system, education system and unemployment benefits, benefits cannot be differentiated easily, though	Partly included in the DEMIG database, but not conceptualised as part of social rights	Desk research by DEMIG team
IESPI (Koning 2021)	22 Western welfare states (Europe & North America)	1990–2014 (4 time points: 1990, 2000, 2010 and 2015)	In theory all existing legal categories, but cannot be empirically separated/disaggregated	Tax-paid pension, public health care or subsidies, contributory unemployment benefits, contributory pension, housing benefits, social assistance, active labour market policies	Included in some items, but not conceptualised	Desk research by IESPI team
IMISEM (2023)	32 (Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe)	Cross-sectional data (collected 2017–2019)	Refugees, co-ethnics, labour migrants (domestic workers, agricultural workers, medical doctors)	'Social policies' including retirement benefits, unemployment benefits, health care, education	Not conceptualised	Desk research using a standardised questionnaire
IMPIC (Helbling et al. 2017)	33 (OECD)	1980–2010	Temporary and permanent labour migrants, asylum seekers, recognised refugees, persons with subsidiary/humanitarian protection, family reunification migrants	Social assistance, unemployment insurance	Conceptualised and can be empirically differentiated	Expert survey using standardised questionnaire

(Continues)

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Name	Countries covered	Years covered	Migrant types covered	Benefits covered	Direct/indirect	Methodology
MIPEX (Solano and Huddleston 2020)	56 (mainly Europe, part North/South America, Asia + South Africa, Australia, New Zealand)	2007–2020	Depends on variable, some include 'long-term residents'; residents on temporary work permits (excluding seasonal), residents on family reunion permits (same as sponsor); others ask specifically for asylum seekers and undocumented.	Items on social rights are included in the strands labour market mobility, family reunification, permanent residence, citizenship, anti-discrimination, education, health	Included, but not conceptualised	Expert survey using a standardised questionnaire
Peters (2015, 2017)	19 (Europe, East Asia, Persian Gulf, Settler States)	1783–2010 (depending on the state)	By country of origin, low/high skilled immigrants, refugees, labour migrants	Labour prohibitions, 'social rights'	Not conceptualised	Desk research based on primary and secondary sources

<sup>a</sup>The focus of DEMIG POLICY was the post-1945 period therefore historical policy changes are less comprehensively tracked' (DEMIG 2015b).



### 3.2 | The ImmigSR dataset

The ImmigSR Dataset aims to close this gap. It builds on a methodology and set of questions that was developed in the realm of the Immigration Policies in Comparison (IMPIC) project (Bjerre et al. 2016; Helbling et al. 2017).<sup>8</sup> Table 2 illustrates the distribution of items across the dimensions. In regard to the first dimension, ImmigSR differentiates between temporary and permanent labour migrants, asylum seekers, recognised refugees, and family reunification migrants. On the second dimension, it allows to compare two different of benefits that are targeted towards the able bodied, working-age adult, namely non-contributory social assistance benefits and contributory unemployment insurance. These two benefits are considered especially relevant, as the migrant population tends to be of working age, and political debates in the field often evolve around income maintaining and poverty alleviating

**TABLE 2** Overview items immigrant social rights dataset.

3rd dimension direct/indirect	2nd dimension type of benefit	1st dimension type of migrant	Item	
Direct restrictions	Social assistance	Permanent migrant worker	<i>Access to social assistance for perm. migrant workers</i>	
		Temporary migrant worker	<i>Access to social assistance for temp. migrant workers</i>	
		Recognised refugee	<i>Access to social assistance for recognised refugees</i>	
		Asylum seeker	<i>Access to social assistance for asylum seeker</i>	
	Unemployment Insurance	Permanent migrant worker		<i>Cash or in-kind benefits for asylum seekers</i>
				<i>Access to unemployment insur. for perm. migr. workers</i>
		Temporary migrant worker	<i>Access to unemployment insur. for temp. migr. workers</i>	
Indirect restrictions	Social Assistance	Permanent migrant worker	<i>Conseq. dependence on soc. assi. for perm. migr. workers</i>	
		Temporary migrant worker	<i>Conseq. dependence on soc. assi. for perm. migr. workers</i>	
	Affects several benefit types	Family reunification migrants		<i>Were TCN sponsors required not to rely on welfare?</i>
				<i>Were citizen sponsors req. not to rely on social welfare?</i>
				<i>Were TCN sponsors req. to have a specific income?</i>
				<i>Were citizen sponsors req. to have a specific income?</i>
	Affects all benefit types	Migr. Work. by entry route	<i>Did loss of employ. result in permit withdrawal?</i>	
		Permanent residents	<i>Did the legal status of permanent resident exist?</i>	
		Rec. refugees/asylum seekers	<i>Did the legal status of rec. refugee/asylum seeker exist?</i>	
		Family reunific. migrants	<i>Did the legal status family reunification migrant exist?</i>	

benefits. On the third dimension, a distinction is made between direct and indirect restrictions. In total, this amounts to 17 items measuring access to social assistance for temporary and permanent labour migrants, asylum seekers and recognised refugees, access to unemployment insurance for temporary and permanent labour migrants, type of benefit for asylum seekers, consequences of job loss and benefit receipt, and income requirements for family reunification. While ImmigSR therefore is not an example of an ideal measure that includes all specifications on all dimensions, it makes transparent which legal categories, types of benefits, and types of restrictions are accounted for. Furthermore, it encompasses 39 countries in Europe, Latin America, North America, Oceania, and Southeast Asia for the years 1980–2018.<sup>9</sup>

ImmigSR uses a standardised questionnaire and works with legal experts to extract qualitative information from legal texts. The qualitative data is then scored independently by a team of researchers. The individual scoring decisions of team members are then compared, and the final score is determined.<sup>10</sup> Higher scores denote more rights. More specifically, a score of 1 denotes that immigrants enjoy rights equivalent to those granted to citizens, whereas 0 indicates that all rights are being denied; at intermediate values, immigrants have to fulfil additional requirements like years of residence in the country, or face certain consequences which citizens do not face. We thus conceptualise the ImmigSR scores as denoting a level of restrictiveness<sup>11</sup> (see Appendix A3 for an overview of scores; for more details on the data collection, see Römer et al. 2021; see also Bjerre et al. 2016; Helbling et al. 2017). The set-up of the data then allows for analyses based on individual items, but also to construct indices at different levels of aggregation.<sup>12</sup>

As was pointed out in the conceptualization section, not in all countries do certain benefits exist in all years. The same can be said in regard to legal categories of migrants. If a benefit does not exist, no scores are assigned, as a comparison is considered not meaningful. If a certain *legal category* of immigrant does not exist however, this is scored as ‘most restrictive’. The rationale for this can best be illustrated through the example of asylum/refugee migration: When immigrants that might qualify for refugee status want to enter a country that does not award this type of residence title, they cannot easily enter through another channel, as these (e.g., permanent track entry, but also family reunification, even temporary work permits) come with eligibility requirements or are subject to quotas. Many of those migrants will therefore enter through an irregular channel. As a result, they are then granted the rights that come with the respective status that is available to them. For irregular migrants this in most cases means no rights, for temporary workers this often means a very restricted set of rights.

The effect of the conceptual decision to assign ‘most restrictive’ to such cases is that overall scores of countries where categories of migrants do not exist are generally lower than if we scored these items as missing (an item scored as 0 pulls down the overall average). While we believe that the former approach captures the policy environment better than the latter, we also tested how much this scoring decision affects our results, recalculating all scores setting those cases to missing (Appendix 7). We find that the scoring decision leaves us with more missing values in Southeast Asia, but the overall patterns and between country comparisons remain highly similar. Furthermore, the methodology of ImmigSR allows researchers that are using the data to change such coding decisions autonomously: As both raw and scored data are being made available, people can choose to alter scoring decisions taken by the ImmigSR team.

### 3.3 | Comparing existing measurements with the ImmigSR data

Index building is an important and useful method to comparatively assess policy restrictiveness, especially in the face of multidimensional constructs. However, ensuring validity and replicability is key. We therefore compare the ImmigSR to two other existing measures of immigrant social rights. This comparison is hampered by stark differences in conceptualization and coverage that characterise the field. Of the six datasets listed in Table 2, only MIPEX and IESPI allow—at least to some extent—to identify and disaggregate the relevant items for comparison. Appendix A4 gives an overview of the items chosen for comparison.<sup>13</sup> None of the items are fully comparable, (see Appendix A4

for more details) but to approach comparability, we constructed a number of sub-indices. The chosen MigSP and IESPI items correlate at around  $-0.5$ .<sup>14</sup> The correlation is lower in the case of MIPEX and MigSP, where the correlation is at approximately 0.45. Also MIPEX and IESPI correlate only at around  $-0.44$ .

We interpret this relatively low correlation as evidence for the importance of transparent scoring and the possibility to trace back specific scores to specific policies. In the case of MIPEX, there is no way to disentangle which exact policy (or set of policies) experts considered when assigning a given score. The score instead is said to denote a very general construct of 'immigrant access to benefits' and it is not specified which types of benefits or types of migrants fall within the scope of this concept. This is not to argue that the MIPEX is not a useful resource – it is the longest standing dataset aiming at a comparative measure of social rights, and covers a very large set of policies in the field of integration, social rights being just one of its sub-components. Nevertheless, the exact meaning of MIPEX scores on immigrant social rights remains opaque.

This is illustrated by the fact that in many countries, MIPEX scores remain the same over longer periods of time, even though there is evidence that policies changed in those years. An example would be the UK, which is assigned a 0 across all years in MIPEX on the social rights indicators. ImmigSR data however shows that a nuanced policy change occurred between 2011 and 2012, when the income requirement for family reunification was raised from 'equal to social assistance' to a higher amount. In a similar vein, Argentina is assigned a 0 on the item for 'access to social security and assistance' for all years in MIPEX, but ImmigSR attests to expansions in immigrant social rights in 2009, when temporary workers and forced migrants started being eligible for some support.

However, not only over time do MIPEX score miss some of the variation. Also the cross country comparison is hampered by the relatively coarse scores. According to the score of 0 MIPEX assigns, both UK and Argentina are among the most restrictive cases in the whole sample. According to the data collected within the ImmigSR framework on the other hand, both countries are less restrictive (overall ImmigSR Index score in 2018 UK: 0.64, Argentina: 0.65) than e.g. the United States (ImmigSR: 0.53) or Poland (ImmigSR: 0.58), two countries which in MIPEX are also scored as 0.

The IESPI index on the other hand covers an impressive number of benefits. However, when IESPI scores change, it is not possible to determine if the change affected all migrants alike, or was targeting a specific group of immigrants. A good illustration for the complications that stem from this is the case of Belgium. Whereas IESPI scores indicate that between 2010 and 2015 policies did not change, ImmigSR indicates retrenchment. Upon closer inspection, ImmigSR scores reflect a policy change which curtailed the rights of temporary workers. Maybe this is not reflected in IESPI because the rights of another group expanded and thus changes equaled out. However, this remains hard to reconstruct, as de-aggregation between migrant types is not possible. Furthermore, because IESPI data is measured in 10, respectively, 5 year intervals, it is also harder to track the timing of a policy change, and some changes are lost completely: for example, in Denmark, there was a rights expansion in 2011 which was retracted in 2014.

Taken together, while ImmigSR contains fewer benefits and migrant types than MIPEX and IESPI, the upside of ImmigSR's more narrower scope is the opportunity to pay more attention to detail, and build more fine-grained measures which can be disaggregated, allowing to track the policy or set of policies that manifest in a given score.

## 4 | IMMIGRANT SOCIAL RIGHTS IN GLOBAL COMPARISON: THE RESULTS

How have immigrant social rights developed across countries from 1980 to 2018, and to what extent do we see a convergence across the globe? In this section we answer these two research questions using descriptive evidence from a number of ImmigSR sub-indices. We compare (1) social rights of temporary workers versus permanent workers versus refugees versus asylum seekers, (2) restrictions in regard to unemployment insurance versus social assistance benefits, and (3) restrictiveness in regard to direct versus indirect restrictions (see Table 2 for the

respective items). For the sub-indices, we constructed aggregate measures using a simple method of averaging across the respective items (for details on the methodology of aggregating these sub-indices, see Appendix A5.) We chose additive aggregation because it is a simple and easily reproducible method of aggregating data, following approaches of the established indices in the field (MIPEX; IMPIC; IESPI) for a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of different approaches to aggregation (see also Bjerre et al. 2015). Finally, we will also present results for the overall index, which aggregates all items to measure the degree to which immigrant social rights are restricted overall.

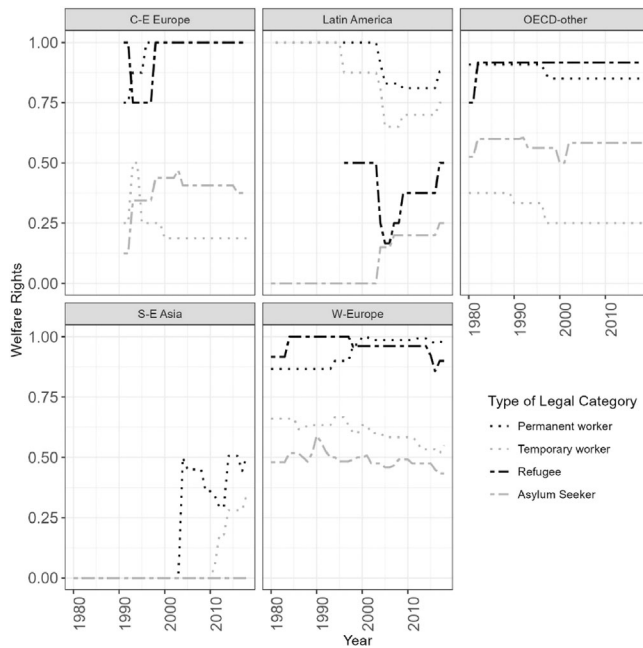
We present descriptive evidence by region. The graphs report the scores for nine countries in South-East Asia (aggregating across Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and Myanmar), Europe—Western Europe (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland), Central and Eastern Europe (Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, Slovakia), other advanced capitalist economies of the OECD (Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, United States of America and United Kingdom), and Latin American countries (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Venezuela and Uruguay). In Appendix A6, we report all figures differentiating by country. The by country figure are also informative illustration for how policy change affect score. For example, in Brazil, in the years 2004–2016, access to social assistance (Bolsa Familia) was controversial, which is reflected in relatively low scores in these years. After the ruling of the Supremo Tribunal Federal of April 20, 2017 (Recurso Extraordinário 587.970 São Paulo) confirming this right as per Article 203(V) of the Federal Constitution of Brazil, we accordingly see rights expansion. In Denmark in 2011, the left government rectified the retrenchments put in place by the right-wing government in 2002 that imposed a work/residence requirement of 2.5 years from the last 8 to access social assistance (Jørgensen & Thomsen, 2016), leading to an increase in scores. In Italy, the Decree 251/2007 also led to an increase in rights, by setting minimum standards for the social and economic rights that refugee and asylum seekers can access (Finotelli & Sciortino, 2008, p. 4).

#### 4.1 | First dimension: Variation across immigrant categories

Figure 3 reports how immigrant social rights differ between four categories, namely permanent workers, temporary workers, refugees, and asylum seekers, and how this has changed over time and differs across regions. For temporary and permanent immigrants, the sub-indices represent averages for access to social assistance and unemployment insurance, whereas for asylum seekers and refugees they represent access to social assistance only, respectively for asylum seekers, access to other types of support such as in-kind benefits.

There are a number of patterns to be noted here. Across all regions, the rights of recognised refugees and permanent workers are relatively far-reaching. South-East Asian countries are the exception here, where until the 2000s there are no rights for permanent workers.<sup>15</sup> In later years, there are gradual increases in the rights of permanent migrant workers in South-East Asia too. However, the countries in the region receive very restrictive scores regarding the social rights of forced migrants: Most of the countries are not signatory to the Geneva Convention, thus granting now official refugee or asylum seeker status. The only exceptions are Cambodia and Indonesia, which nevertheless have no state-managed benefit schemes for these groups. The graph also shows that even in those regions where the rights of refugees are relatively far-reaching, they are not sacrosanct. In recent years there have been decreases in the rights attached to this legal category in Western Europe for example in Denmark and Germany.

The rights of temporary workers and asylum seekers, on the other hand, are strongly restricted in all five regions. In Latin American countries, however, temporary workers enjoy a relatively far reaching set of rights. In four out of five regions, there is however a downward trend in regard to the rights of temporary workers. An exception is South-East Asia, where the rights of temporary workers have seen somewhat of an expansion, but still, the level of rights remains below that of all other world regions.



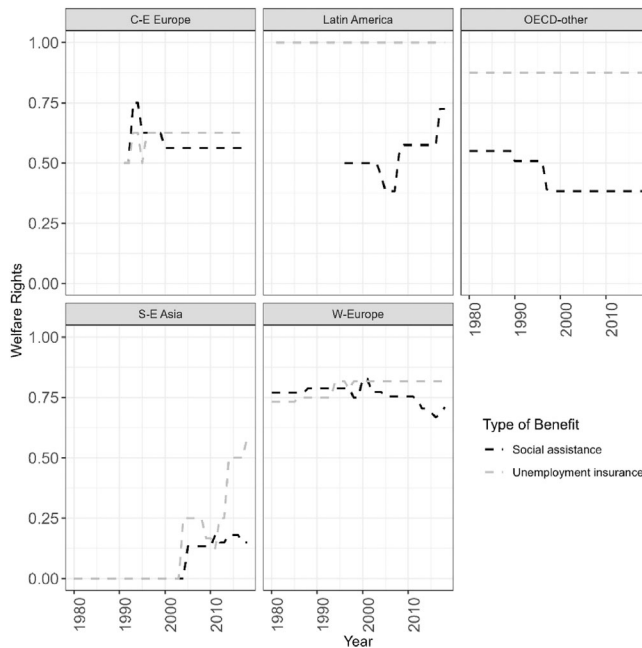
**FIGURE 3** Variation between four immigrant categories across five regions, 1980–2018. For C-E Europe, data starts in 1990 only. Graphs represent averages across countries, that is, only missing when missing for all countries in the region. For graphs by country see Appendix A6.

The graph clearly testifies to the fact that none of the categories can serve as a proxy for ‘immigrant social rights’ as a whole. Comparing the rights of temporary migrant workers, Latin America appears most inclusive, with Western Europe second, OECD other and Central Eastern Europe as intermediates, and South-East Asia as least inclusive. This picture partly reverses if the rights of asylum seekers are considered. For this group, South East Asia remains most restrictive, but Western Europe and OECD other extend more rights than Central-Eastern Europe and Latin America. Overall, it can be said that there is a tendency, but no clear hierarchy, in regard to which legal category of immigrant is granted most rights, a fact that becomes even more pronounced when looking at the data disaggregated by countries (Appendix A6). It furthermore follows that methods of data reduction would be problematic.

## 4.2 | Second dimension: Variation across types of benefits

In Figure 4 we present the differences in restrictiveness in regard to two benefits, social assistance and unemployment insurance. The two sub-indices represent the averaged values of items that measure the rights of temporary and permanent migrant workers for the respective benefit.

With the exception of Central Eastern Europe, the graphs show that indeed access to unemployment benefits tends to be less restricted than access to social assistance. The graphs thus support the Brubaker (1989b) argument that non-contributory benefits are more likely to exclude non-citizens than contributory benefits. Nevertheless, there is interesting regional variation. In South-East Asia, the two benefits are similarly restricted in earlier years, but there are notable expansion in access to contributory benefits in later years. In Western Europe, at a level of relatively high inclusiveness, the difference between the two benefits is also relatively small, but as restrictions have started to take a hold especially in regard to the social assistance, that gap is growing. The figure clearly testifies that



**FIGURE 4** Variation between social assistance and unemployment insurance across five regions, 1980–2018. For C-E Europe, data starts in 1990 only. Graphs represent averages across countries, that is, only missing when missing for all countries in the region. For graphs by country see Appendix A6.

there seems to be a different logic at play for different types of benefits. Again, no benefit should serve as a proxy for immigrant social rights as a whole.

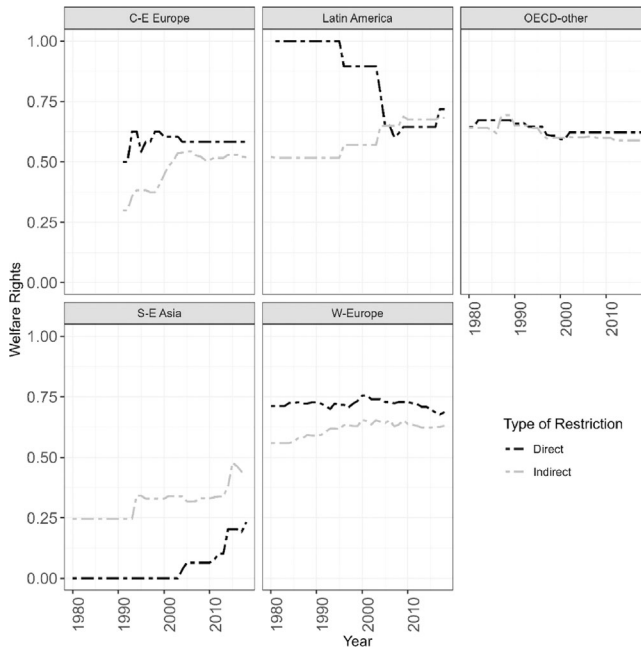
### 4.3 | Third dimension: Variation between direct and indirect types of restrictions

Finally, we want to take a look at differences between types of restrictions. Figure 5 reports the restrictiveness of direct and indirect measures and how they have changed over time and differ across regions.

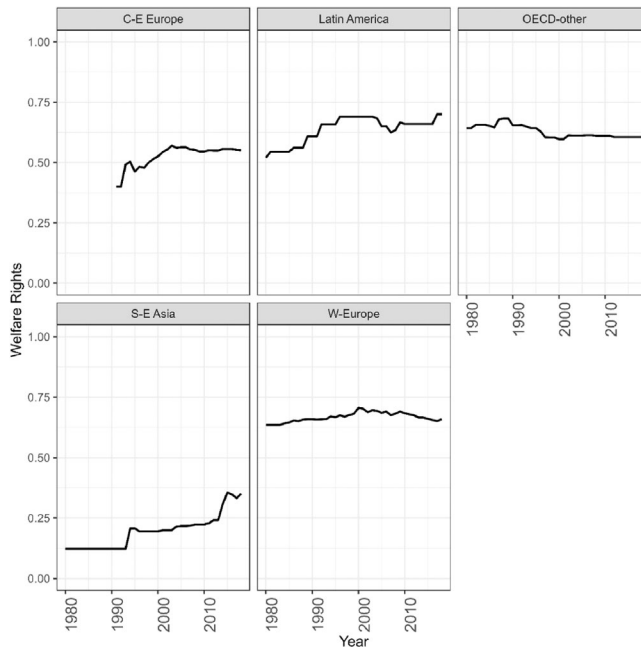
The figure shows that in all regions, states use both direct and indirect types of restrictions to govern immigrant access to social assistance and unemployment benefits. However, there are regional differences in this regard. In Western Europe, the OECD, and in later years also in Central-Eastern Europe and Latin America the two types of restrictions run largely parallel, suggesting that indirect restrictions are not used as compensation. Instead it seems that states equally use both direct and indirect instruments to restrict rights. Notably in Western Europe though, indirect restrictions tend to be more obstructive than the policies that govern direct access, suggesting that not considering these types of restrictions would make Western European countries look more generous than they really are.

### 4.4 | Variation in immigrant social rights overall

The previous descriptive analyses show that disaggregating the data in the logic of the three dimensions unveils interesting variation. However, of course the data can also be aggregated to represent a measure of ‘immigrant social



**FIGURE 5** Variation between direct and indirect types of restrictions across five regions, 1980–2018. For C-E Europe, data starts in 1990 only. Graphs represent averages across countries, that is, only missing when missing for all countries in the region. For graphs by country see Appendix A6.



**FIGURE 6** Immigrant Social Rights in five World Regions, 1980–2018. For C-E Europe, data starts in 1990 only. Graphs represent averages across countries, that is, only missing when missing for all countries in the region. For graphs by country see Appendix A6.

rights' as a whole. Figure 6 presents the overall index  $I$  across the five geographical regions in our sample. The aggregate index is informative in that it allows to compare regions and countries using one single statistic.

A number of patterns become clear at this aggregate level: In richer economies such as Western Europe and non-European OECD countries, rights do not vary as substantially compared to other regions. Whereas in Central-Eastern Europe, Latin America and Southeast Asia we see a gradual move towards inclusion, Western Europe and the other OECD countries exhibit exclusionary tendencies since the beginning of the 2010s. There is also no evidence for a trade-off—in fact, emergent welfare states seem to grant less rights than developed welfare states. Taken together, there is furthermore some evidence for a trend of convergence. In the interpretation of such a trend two things are however important. First, it is a matter of speculation whether such a trend will continue to play out in the years to come. As it stands, the differences between the Global South and North are still pronounced. Furthermore, recall that ImmigSR measures rights relative to those granted to citizens, and gives no information on the quantity or quality of the respective benefits. The same degree of in- or exclusion on the ImmigSR scale will therefore mean something different in a country with a high benefit level for citizens than in a country with a low benefit level for citizens.

## 5 | DISCUSSION AND AVENUES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This article set out to further the field of research on immigrant social rights in a number of ways. By systematically reviewing the theoretical and empirical work that exists on the topic, we shed light on the different conceptualizations employed in the field. The results showed that, although there are a number of existing approaches to measuring this construct, a systematic conceptualization indeed seems to be missing from the literature. We thus brought forward a conceptualization that recognises three dimensions, namely the type of legal category of immigrant, the type of benefit and the type of restriction that need to be considered. We showed that different approaches to empirical measurement of the concept is also reflected in the relatively low degree of correlation between measurements.

Moreover, this article demonstrates the benefit of a clear and systematic conceptualization of immigrant social rights in pursuit of expanding beyond countries in the Global North. We put our three-dimensional approach to the test by applying it to an empirical data collection which covers a larger set of countries and years than existing resources and makes the conceptualization and data generation transparent. Our descriptive results highlighted that by differentiating between immigrant types, benefit types and types of restrictions, research can assess differences within countries, between countries and between regions in a way that was not possible previously.

Nevertheless, there are also a number of shortcomings. ImmigSR so far includes only two types of benefits, namely social assistance and unemployment insurance benefits. It seems highly relevant to collect systematic data on other benefits. Notably access to child benefits and (social and contributory) pensions likely varies between countries and years, but also legal categories. Similarly, it makes sense to also include more legal categories of immigrants, notably the rights of irregular migrants. More fine-grained policy changes, as well as sub-national variation can also not be picked up by the ImmigSR instrument for the time being. Complementing this resource with de-facto measures such as take up rates, and case studies on implementation thus seems to be of utmost importance.

Furthermore, the index only depicts the social rights of immigrants as compared to those of citizens. This makes it difficult to use the index to compare the scope of benefits immigrants have access to, because the scope of benefits granted is not taken into account. Indeed, it would therefore make sense to bring our data together with other datasets that measure the size and nature of welfare provision. Methodologically, a multiplicative index combining generosity indices from the Comparative Welfare Entitlement Project (CWEP, Scruggs, 2022) and ImmigSR scores would be one way to assess immigrant welfare rights not only relative to citizens' rights, but in more absolute terms. However, there are several challenges to this endeavour: CWEP covers few countries outside of the OECD and



focuses on specific types of benefits, namely unemployment insurance, sick pay insurance and public pensions (Scruggs, 2022). While the extension of the dataset to further types of benefits is planned (Scruggs, 2022, p. 5), for the moment the overlap between ImmigSR and CWEP is limited in this regard. A number of projects are currently compiling generosity data for a larger number of countries and recent years (see, e.g., Öktem, 2020 for a global approach to measuring welfare states). In the meantime, as a proxy, spending data could also be used, despite well-known short-comings (Öktem, 2020, pp. 106–107).

Our conceptualization and the dataset provided by this article lay the groundwork for further empirical comparative research in at least two ways. Using immigrant social rights as a dependent variable, researchers can investigate how factors such as party politics, civil society engagement, but also institutional factors such as the welfare and immigration regime, explain changes in policy. Equally, the data can be used as an independent variable, to explain other outcomes, such as poverty, employment, or migration flows. For all of these purposes, a combination with generosity or spending data as outlined above would however be of utmost importance. Overall, regardless of theoretical focus, we suggest that future research maintains clarity regarding the measurement of the concept—namely, which benefits, which immigrants and *how* restrictions and expansions in rights occur—to ensure meaningful communication between studies and data collection efforts.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Open Access funding enabled and organized by Projekt DEAL.

## FUNDING INFORMATION

The centre is funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation)—project number 374666841—SFB 1342.

## DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study is available upon request at [immigrsr@uni-bremen.de](mailto:immigrsr@uni-bremen.de).

## ORCID

Friederike Römer  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1935-3602>

Jakob Henninger  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2620-180X>

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Here and in the remainder of the paper the term ‘immigrant’ denotes people that do not hold the citizenship of the country they are residing in.
- <sup>2</sup> Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Cambodia, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Singapore, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay, Venezuela and Vietnam.
- <sup>3</sup> Accordingly, this also includes second generation immigrants that do not hold the citizenship of the country that they are residing in, but excludes first generation immigrant that have attained citizenship.
- <sup>4</sup> In the context of family reunification policies, ‘sponsor’ refers to persons already residing in the country (citizens or third country nationals) who seek to bring in their family members.
- <sup>5</sup> This has been researched in studies at the individual level, too, suggesting that citizens tend to have more sympathy for immigrants accessing benefits when an element of reciprocity is involved (Eick & Larsen, 2022).
- <sup>6</sup> That is, is not even available for citizens.
- <sup>7</sup> This is different in the case of a non-existent immigrant category, as we will argue in more detail below.
- <sup>8</sup> ImmigSR differs from IMPIC not only in regard to spatial and temporal coverage. The ImmigSR team has reviewed and corrected IMPIC data, and re-conceptualised some of the scoring steps.

- <sup>9</sup> Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Cambodia, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Singapore, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay, Venezuela and Vietnam. The selection of cases in the Global South is motivated by the following reasoning: With Southeast Asia and Latin America, we cover two regions in which welfare policies have developed substantially over the past decades. There is also significant migration within both regions, making immigrants' social rights a highly salient topic. Within both regions, we focus on the member states of relevant regional organisations—the Southern Common Market (Mercosur) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), respectively. Countries with a population below 500,000 are excluded for pragmatic reasons. Therefore, Brunei Darussalam is not in the sample. Since we are aware that we are so far not covering several important countries of destination for migrants, we are planning to expand our sample in the future.
- <sup>10</sup> While in the majority of cases, the team agreed on the what the appropriate score would be, there were also instances of ambiguity. These cases were discussed and documented. An example for such a case are consequences of social assistance receipt in Singapore: Permanent residents who receive social assistance may not be issued a re-entry permit and therefore lose their permanent residence title if they leave the country. After discussing this among the team members, we decided to score this question as intermediate restrictive (0.5), even though the loss of permanent residence only occurs in case the person leaves the country. We based our decision on our assessment that even though social assistance receipt does not have immediate consequences, the consequences in case of leaving the country likely have a strong deterring effect against claiming social assistance. However, as both raw and scored data will be available to the research community, such decisions can also be altered when using the data.
- <sup>11</sup> Another term that might be fitting in this context is the term conditionality (Clasen & Clegg, 2007). However, we would maintain that many of the conditions that are imposed on immigrants actually, intentionally or not, restrict access.
- <sup>12</sup> A large literature exists discussing the advantages and shortcomings of policy indices. Indices reduce complexity. This parsimony might be an advantage, but also a shortcoming (Bjerre et al., 2015; Munck & Verkuilen, 2002).
- <sup>13</sup> In regard to country and year coverage, ImmigSR includes 39 countries from 1980 to 2018, IESPI reports data for 22 countries for four time points (1900, 2000, 2010 and 2015), and MIPEX includes the years 2007 to 2019 for 56 countries. For the correlations, we focused on the respective subsets of years and countries which overlap.
- <sup>14</sup> Negative, because IESPI measures restrictiveness, whereas ImmigSR measures rights.
- <sup>15</sup> This can be attributed to the fact that in many of these countries this legal category does not exist in these years, which, in the logic of ImmigSR, is scored as the most extreme form of indirectly restricting the rights of this group.

## REFERENCES

- Arendt, H. (2017). *The origins of totalitarianism*. Penguin Random House UK.
- Avato, J., Koettl, J., & Sabates-Wheeler, R. (2010). Social security regimes, global estimates, and good practices: The status of social protection for international migrants. *World Development*, 38(4), 455–466.
- Barbulescu, R., & Favell, A. (2020). Commentary: A citizenship without social rights? EU freedom of movement and changing access to welfare rights. *International Migration*, 58(1), 151–165.
- Bjerre, L., Helbling, M., Römer, F., & Zobel, M. (2015). Conceptualizing and measuring immigration policies: A comparative perspective. *International Migration Review*, 49(3), 555–600.
- Bjerre, L., Helbling, M., Römer, F., & Zobel, M. (2016). The immigration policies in comparison (IMPIC) dataset: Technical report. WZB Discussion Papers No. SP VI, p. 201. <http://hdl.handle.net/10419/145970>
- Bommes, M., & Geddes, A. (2000). *Immigration and welfare: Challenging the Borders of the welfare state*. Routledge.
- Borång, F., Kalm, S., & Lindvall, J. (2020). Unions and the rights of migrants in the long run. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 30(5), 557–570.
- Boucher, A. K. (2014). Social security for migrant workers and their families in Australia. In *Social security and migrant workers: Selected studies of cross-border social security mechanisms* (pp. 187–214). Bulletin of comparative labour relations, Alphen aan den Rijn.
- Boucher, A. K., & Gest, J. (2018). *Crossroads: Comparative immigration regimes in a world of demographic change*. Cambridge University Press.
- Brubaker, R. (Ed.). (1989a). *Immigration and the politics of citizenship in Europe and North America*. University Press of America.
- Brubaker, R. (1989b). Membership without citizenship: The economic and social rights of noncitizens. In R. Brubaker (Ed.), *Immigration and the politics of citizenship in Europe and North America* (pp. 145–162). University Press of America.
- Bruzelius, C. (2019). Freedom of movement, social rights and residence-based conditionality in the European Union. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 29(1), 70–83.

- Bruzelius, C., Chase, E., & Seeleib-Kaiser, M. (2016). Social rights of EU migrant citizens: Britain and Germany compared. *Social Policy and Society*, 15(3), 403–416.
- Bruzelius, C., & Seeleib-Kaiser, M. (2017). European citizenship and social rights. In P. Kennett & N. Lendvai-Bainton (Eds.), *Handbook of European social policy*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Careja, R., Emmenegger, P., & Kvist, J. (2015). An American dilemma in Europe? Welfare reform and immigration. In *Race* (pp. 128–149). Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Churi, J. (2021). Social policy outcomes of government participation by radical right parties. *Party Politics*, 27(6), 1092–1104.
- Clasen, J., & Clegg, D. (2007). Levels and levers of conditionality: Measuring change within welfare states. *Investigating Welfare State Change: The 'Dependent Variable problem' in Comparative Analysis*, pp. 166–97.
- DEMIG. (2015a). *DEMIG policy, Version 1.3* (Online ed.). International Migration Institute, University of Oxford. [www.migrationdeterminants.eu](http://www.migrationdeterminants.eu)
- DEMIG. (2015b). *DEMIG total. 1.5*. International Migration Institute, University of Oxford. [www.imi-n.org](http://www.imi-n.org)
- Devereux, S., & Sabates-Wheeler, R. (2004). *Transformative social protection*. Institute of Development Studies.
- Dwyer, P., & Papadimitriou, D. (2006). The social security rights of older international migrants in the European Union. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 32(8), 1301–1319.
- Eick, G. M., & Larsen, C. A. (2022). Welfare chauvinism across benefits and services. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 32(1), 19–32.
- Enser-Jedenastik, L. (2018). Welfare chauvinism in populist radical right platforms: The role of redistributive justice principles. *Social Policy & Administration*, 52(1), 293–314.
- Eugster, B. (2018). Immigrants and poverty, and conditionality of Immigrants' social rights. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 28(5), 452–470.
- European Commission. (2017). European pillar of social rights. [https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2017-11/social-summit-european-pillar-social-rights-booklet\\_en.pdf](https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2017-11/social-summit-european-pillar-social-rights-booklet_en.pdf)
- Finotelli, C., & Sciortino, G. (2008). New trends in Italian Immigration Policies: 'To change everything in order to keep everything the same'. *Elcano Newsletter*, 51, 1–7.
- Freeman, G. P. (1986). Migration and the political economy of the welfare state. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 485(1), 51–63.
- Garrizmann, J. L., Häusermann, S., & Palier, B. (2022). *The world politics of social investment: Volume I: Welfare states in the knowledge economy*. Oxford University Press.
- Gschwind, L. (2021). Generous to workers ≠ generous to all: Implications of European unemployment benefit Systems for the Social Protection of immigrants. *Comparative Political Studies*, 54(9), 1629–1652.
- Guiraudon, V. (2000). The Marshallian triptych reordered: The role of courts and bureaucracies in furthering Migrants' social rights. In M. Bommès & A. Geddes (Eds.), *Immigration and welfare: Challenging the Borders of the welfare state* (pp. 72–89). Routledge.
- Guiraudon, V. (2002). Including foreigners in National Welfare States: Institutional venues and rules of the game. In B. Rothstein & S. Steinmo (Eds.), *Restructuring the welfare state: Political institutions and policy change* (pp. 129–156). Palgrave Macmillan US.
- Hammar, T. (1985). *European immigration policy: A comparative study*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hammar, T. (1990). *Democracy and the nation state*. Avebury.
- Harris, E., & Römer, F. (2022). Contextual welfare chauvinism: Left-wing governments and immigrant welfare rights in Western Europe. *European Journal of Political Research*, 62, 443–462.
- Helbling, M., Bjerre, L., Römer, F., & Zobel, M. (2017). Measuring immigration policies: The IMPIC database. *European Political Science*, 16(1), 79–98.
- Henninger, J., & Römer, F. (2021). Choose your battles: How civil society Organisations choose goals and activities to fight for immigrant welfare rights in Malaysia and Argentina. *Social Policy & Administration*, 55(6), 1112–1128.
- Hernes, V. (2018). Cross-National Convergence in times of crisis? Integration policies before, during and after the refugee crisis. *West European Politics*, 41(6), 1305–1329.
- Jørgensen, M. B., & Thomsen, T. L. (2016). Deservingness in the Danish context: Welfare chauvinism in times of crisis. *Critical Social Policy*, 36(3), 330–351.
- ILO. (1952). C102–Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102). [https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100\\_ILO\\_CODE:C102](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C102)
- ILO. (2021). *Extending social protection to migrant workers, refugees and their families guide for policymakers and practitioners*. International Labour Organisation (ILO).
- IMISEM. (2023). *Every immigrant is an emigrant: How migration policies shape the paths to integration (IMISEM)*. German Institute for Global and Area Studies | Leibniz-Institut für Globale und Regionale Studien. <https://www.giga-hamburg.de/en/research-and-transfer/projects/immigrant-emigrant-migration-policies-shape-paths-integration-imisem>
- Kalm, S., & Lindvall, J. (2019). Immigration policy and the modern welfare state, 1880–1920. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 29(4), 463–477.

- Kim, K. (2021). An intersection of east Asian welfare and immigration regimes: The social rights of low-skilled labour migrants in Japan and Korea. *International Journal of Social Welfare*, 30(2), 226–238.
- Koning, E. A. (2019). *Immigration and the politics of welfare exclusion: Selective solidarity in Western democracies*. University of Toronto Press.
- Koning, E. A. (2021). Accommodation and new hurdles: The increasing importance of politics for Immigrants' access to social Programmes in Western democracies. *Social Policy & Administration*, 55(5), 815–832.
- Koning, E. A. (Ed.). (2022). *The exclusion of immigrants from welfare programs: Cross-National Analysis and contemporary developments*. University of Toronto Press.
- Kymlicka, W. (1996). *Multicultural citizenship: A Liberal theory of minority rights*. Clarendon Press.
- Lafleur, J.-M., & Vintila, D. (Eds.). (2020). *Migration and social protection in Europe and beyond. Comparing access to welfare entitlements*. Springer International Publishing.
- Leisering, L., & Barrientos, A. (2013). Social citizenship for the global poor? The worldwide spread of social assistance. *International Journal of Social Welfare*, 22(1), 50–67.
- Marshall, T. H. (1950). *Citizenship and social class and other essays*. Cambridge University Press.
- Munck, G. L., & Verkuilen, J. (2002). Conceptualizing and measuring democracy: Evaluating alternative indices. *Comparative Political Studies*, 35(1), 5–34.
- Naldini, M., Adamson, E., & Hamilton, M. (2022). Migrant Families' access to ECEC and family policies: The Australian and Italian case compared. *Frontiers in Sociology*, 7, 894284.
- Nullemeier, F., de Reufels, D. G., & Obinger, H. (Eds.). (2022). *International impacts on social policy: Short histories in global perspective*. Springer International Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-86645-7>
- Öktem, K. (2020). The Welfare state as universal social security: A global analysis. *Social Inclusion*, 8(1), 103–113.
- van Oorschot, W. (2006). Making the difference in social Europe: Deservingness perceptions among citizens of European welfare states. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 16(1), 23–42.
- Peters, M. E. (2015). Open trade, closed Borders: Immigration in the era of globalization. *World Politics*, 67(1), 114–154.
- Peters, M. E. (2017). *Trading barriers: Immigration and the remaking of globalization*. Princeton University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400885374/html>
- Römer, F., Harris, E., Henninger, J., & Missler, F. (2021). *The Migrant Social Protection Data Set (MigSP). Technical Report*. Bremen: SFB 1342. <https://www.socialpolicydynamics.de/f/fcedb0990c.pdf>
- Rosenberger, S., & Koppes, S. (2018). Claiming control: Cooperation with return as a condition for social benefits in Austria and The Netherlands. *Comparative Migration Studies*, 6(1), 26.
- Sainsbury, D. (2012). *Welfare states and immigrant rights: The politics of inclusion and exclusion*. Oxford University Press.
- Schmitt, C., Lierse, H., Obinger, H., & Seelkopf, L. (2015). The global emergence of social protection: Explaining social security legislation 1820–2013. *Politics and Society*, 43(4), 503–524.
- Schmitt, C., & Teney, C. (2019). Access to general social protection for immigrants in advanced democracies. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 29(1), 44–55.
- Scruggs, L. (2022). Comparative welfare entitlements project data set, version 2022-12. Codebook. <http://cwep.us/>
- Solano, G., & Huddleston, T. (2020). *Migrant integration policy index 2020*. CIDOB & MPG. [www.mipex.eu](http://www.mipex.eu)
- Solano, G., & Huddleston, T. (2021). Beyond immigration: Moving from Western to global indexes of migration policy. *Global Policy*, 12(3), 327–337.
- Soysal, Y. N. (1994). *Limits of citizenship: Migrants and Postnational membership in Europe*. University of Chicago.
- UN DESA. (2020). *International migration 2020: Highlights*. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. <https://www.un.org/en/desa/international-migration-2020-highlights>
- Wenzel, U., & Bös, M. (1997). Immigration and the modern welfare state: The case of USA and Germany. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 23(4), 537–548.

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Additional supporting information can be found online in the Supporting Information section at the end of this article.

**How to cite this article:** Römer, F., Henninger, J., & Harris, E. (2023). Social protection for mobile populations? A global perspective on immigrant social rights. *Social Policy & Administration*, 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1111/spol.12955>