Is Migrant Integration Policy Converging in Europe? A Comparison of EU-12 and EU-15 States

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IS MIGRANT INTEGRATION POLICY CONVERGING IN EUROPE? A COMPARISON OF EU-12 AND EU-15 STATES

by

STEVEN ZUARDO

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Honors in the Major Program in Political Science in the College of Sciences and in The Burnett Honors College at the University of Central Florida Orlando, Florida

Spring Term, 2017

Thesis Chair: Dr. Mirilovic
ABSTRACT

Immigration issues have dominated the political discourse of liberal democracies around the world in the 21st century. Recent elections in the United States and the Netherlands focused extensively on migrant flows, illegal immigration and migrant integration. Upcoming elections in France seem to be operating within similar parameters. These occurrences underpin a larger critique about the perceived failure of liberal democratic institutions to contend with immigration trends and successfully integrate migrants within their societies. Nowhere has this critique been more prevalent than within the public and political discourse of the European Union, the institution of focus for this paper.

As the EU member states struggle to cope with their migrant issues, scholars are increasingly looking to the larger EU governmental structure to anticipate how the region will handle these challenges. Accordingly, much of the scholarly work done on subjects such as integration policy within the EU are mainly focused upon the perceived convergence of policy amongst member states. The intent of this thesis therefore, is to evaluate the validity of claims that migrant integration policy is converging amongst EU member states, and to explain why this may be the case. This was accomplished via a cross-comparison of policy outcome scores, (provided by the Migration Integration Policy Index), over time between EU-15 and EU-12 states. The convergence of policy in the EU is a topic that has been routinely addressed by scholars, but by examining the potential trends amongst the traditionally ignored EU-12 states, this thesis hopes to contribute to the academic discourse by providing a different perspective.
DEDICATIONS

To my family, for obvious reasons

To my friends for less obvious reasons

And to the many hours of sleep I’ve lost writing this thesis
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It would be wrong of me not to acknowledge my entire thesis committee who have waited an unnecessarily long time for my work to materialize. Thank you all for your assistance during this process, and your many kind words. It made writing this paper that much easier, and gave me confidence when I was worried I would fail. To Dr. Mirilovic, you have waited the longest, and to you I owe the biggest thank you. Without you I would not have signed up for this thesis, and I most certainly would not have completed it. Your guidance has been invaluable even if I was not the most receptive of students. Finally, to Anjali, thank you for reading over my work at all hours of the day even when I was embarrassed to show it to you.
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INTRODUCTION

Migrant integration policy in the European Union is not converging as rapidly as many scholars in the field seem to think. Too much credit is being given to the ability of the EU to drive quick, demonstrable change in this field. While the EU has made great strides in economic interdependence and the creation of a single market, aspects of migrant integration policy still remain loosely in the hands of the member states. Migrant integration policy refers to

“a range of policies and actions involving a wide variety of actors across governance (subnational, national and international) that focus on forms of adaption (socially, culturally, politically, economically) by both migrants and host societies.”1

There is an evident distinction between policy fields such as anti-discrimination or naturalization laws; the EU is much more effective at exercising its influence in the former rather than the latter field. In the case of anti-discrimination policy, similar policies have been enacted across Europe, in no small part due to mandates by the EU governing structure. This has proven more difficult in the case of citizenship or naturalization laws where the EU has had a difficult time mandating policy prescriptions to members who still associate citizenship with an ethnic or national identity. These distinctions in policy amongst member states are important to note because they are crucial to identifying the speed with which convergence is (or is not) occurring. Policy convergence is defined in this paper as “any increase in the similarity between one or

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more characteristics of a certain policy across a given set of political jurisdictions over a given period of time.”

Another blow to the theory that policy is swiftly converging among the EU member states is the differences between the older EU-15 states and the more recent EU-12 states. There exists a divide between the two groupings in several policy areas, a divide which has received relatively little attention in the academic literature. There exists a tendency in the prevailing literature to focus almost exclusively on states such as the Netherlands, France, Germany and the United Kingdom, all of whom have traditionally received high levels of migrants and are members of the EU-15. The EU-12 states migrant integration policies receive very little attention. They were not included in most of the discussions that took place regarding the fall of multiculturalism, yet it was repeatedly claimed that multiculturalism was failing across the whole of the EU, not simply the EU-15 or Western Europe. It was statements such as those that prompted the initial interest in this research. Could scholars be oversimplifying the internal dynamics of the EU by ignoring the twelve newest member states? Throughout the course of this research, it was clear that the answer to that question was unfortunately, yes. There are a few explanations as to why scholars ignore the EU-12 states; historically they have faced lower levels of immigration than did the EU-15 until very recently.  

Second, there has been less available data for the EU-12 states, which can hinder research. The final reason the EU-12 is ignored is because of a somewhat dismissive view that migration policy is determined largely by the EU-

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15. The fact remains, however, that there is an overabundance of academic literature on the state of migrant integration policy in EU-15 states, and it is routinely used to make assumptions for the broader EU. This paper seeks to address that profound deficiency in logic by providing a thorough and demonstrable analysis of the differences between the EU-15 and EU-12 states in particular policy areas.

The most efficient way to do that was to operationalize policy prescriptions and track their movement over time. This was accomplished by use of data provided by the Migration Integration Policy Index (MIPEX hereafter). Data from MIPEX was used for five key policy areas: Anti-Discrimination, Family Reunion, Permanent Residence, Access to Nationality and Political Participation. That data was translated into tables for both the EU-12 and EU-15 states from the years 2007-2014 and trends were highlighted. These policy areas were chosen due to their prominence in integration debates and because of action the EU has taken in each area. Data from MIPEX was utilized due to the exhaustive and unique nature of their research (for more on MIPEX’s research process please see the Appendix).
THE EUROPEAN UNION AND MIGRATION

As a region, no single entity in the world receives as many migrants in absolute terms as the European Union does, and the EU-15 receives the majority of that burden. Migration is not new to the continent; extensive guest worker programs in the aftermath of WWII saw high levels of migration to a then war-torn Europe. A substantial number of those migrants actually never left and instead remained to start families and reside within the host states. Migrant, in the most basic sense, can be defined as “any person who lives temporarily or permanently in a country where he or she was not born, and has acquired some significant social ties to this country.” The current high inflow of migrants to the EU has led to a number of difficult challenges for member states, even those who have had a history of accepting higher levels of migrants. These challenges are compounded in part by expansive and inclusive policies generally pursued by liberal democratic regimes, of which the EU is exclusively comprised. As a rule, liberalism and democracy have proven themselves to be inherently vulnerable to issues regarding migration. Economic interests tend to demand an increase in immigration despite general public opposition or security concerns, and an expansion of rights in contemporary democracies protects migrants from widespread deportation, entry refusal or job discrimination. This means that not only are large numbers of migrants entering the EU, but they are also finding it easier to remain there.

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It follows then, that in Europe, states are increasingly dealing with the issue of integrating migrants who are already within their borders. One example of an integration policy pursued by states is the long-contentious policy of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism is premised on the notion that the integration of minorities should be pursued by officially recognizing the culture of that minority group.\(^8\) Officially recognizing the culture of a minority group in practice means establishing state-sponsored programs to pursue that goal. For example, the Netherlands for a time offered state funding for education taught in minority languages.\(^9\) The debate around multiculturalism attracted a lot of attention in the public eye, especially after the assassinations of Dutch politician Pym Fortuyn and Dutch filmmaker Theo Van Gogh. For several years, the academic literature on European migrant integration was dominated by pieces that cited a Europe-wide retreat from multiculturalism and stated that “national models of dealing with immigrants are giving way to convergent policies of civic integration.”\(^10\) This supposed trend away from multiculturalist policies was used as evidence to suggest both a general convergence of integration policy as well as a trend towards more restrictive policy prescriptions across Europe. The analogy was made of Europe as a fortress, with states adopting similar restrictive policies to limit migration and force assimilation.\(^11\) This of course was overly simplistic and somewhat blatantly ignores the EU-12.

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DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN THE EU-12 AND EU-15

EU-12 States

The EU-12 states, or the accession-12 as Howard refers to them, are: Cyprus, Malta, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Bulgaria and Romania. With the exception of Bulgaria and Romania, who joined the EU in 2007, the rest of the states became full members of the EU in 2004. Still relatively new members in an organization that has lasted decades, these states share similarities besides the timing of their entrance into the EU. Just like the EU-15 states, the EU-12 states share a common history of values, ideology, economic and political systems.

Historically, the EU-12, with the exception of Cyprus, Malta, and Slovenia, fell directly within the sphere of influence of the Soviet Union. Accordingly, EU-12 states did not become democracies until about the time the Soviet Union collapsed, which is much later than those in the EU-15. It was not until after the process of democratization completed itself that migrant patterns in these states begin to reflect trends shown in other democratic states. Migration trends were very different for the EU-12 while the Soviet Union was an influential actor. It was not rare that EU-12 members were lacking in any semblance of integration policy whatsoever prior to becoming democracies. Slovakia only recently enacted its first real policy on the issue in 2009. Even with the introduction of capitalist markets and the increasing permeability of borders, the EU-12 states have not yet seen levels of migration comparable to those of the EU-15

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states. Eight of the EU-12 states are facing net losses in migration due to their high levels of emigration.\(^{15}\) This is a markedly different trend from the EU-15, which faces both large amounts of migration and lower numbers of emigration. Another interesting distinction between the EU-12 and EU-15 states are their perspective on nationals from outside of the EU. Figures 1&2 show that both states have rather high degrees of anti-migrant sentiment, but the EU-12 has much less in the way of positive feelings towards migrants.

The EU-12 states share less distinction amongst population size, migrant flows and regional variances than do the EU-15. Tables 1&2 depict population statistics as of January 2016, and among the EU-12 the only state to have more than eleven million people is Poland. The EU-15 have several states with populations in the tens of millions. In addition the only noticeable difference in regional variation is in the Baltic states of Latvia and Estonia, which as will be shown later, remain decidedly more restrictive than the rest of the EU-12 in most instances. This most likely has to do in some part with the previous Soviet annexation and the large numbers of ethnic Russians residing in the state. With that exception noted, there are very few other notable variations amongst the EU-12.

Figure 1: Feelings Toward Migrants in EU-12 States

Figure 2: Feelings Toward Migrants in EU-15 States


**EU-15 States**

The EU-15 states are Germany, Austria, Luxembourg, Italy, Greece, Spain, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Portugal, the Netherlands, France, Ireland, Belgium and the U.K. These states share a long history of democratic governance and liberal market policies. They also share the distinction of being EU members for several decades. All facets of migrant policy have been more contentious in the EU-15 than in the EU-12. This is most likely because many of the EU-15 states have historically received high levels of migration, dating back to the end of WWII and the massive guest worker programs undertaken to help rebuild Europe.\(^\text{16}\)

The EU-15 states demonstrate greater variation than the EU-12 in terms of policy choices, regional variation and demographics. As mentioned previously, table 2 shows the population size for most EU-15 states is much greater than the EU-14, but it also shows that almost all of the EU-15 are facing net positives in migration. Regional variation plays significantly more of a role in the EU-15, with distinguishable differences in migrant trends in Northern and Southern Europe. Southern European states consisting of Italy, Portugal, Greece and Spain have only recently attracted substantial levels of foreigners, whereas the northern states have been on the receiving end for years.\(^\text{17}\) Interestingly, of the newer countries of immigration, all but Italy have suffered net losses of migrants over the last five years.\(^\text{18}\)


Table 1: Population and Population Change in EU-12 States

Population and population change
(thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EU-12</th>
<th>Population, 1 January 2015</th>
<th>Live births</th>
<th>Deaths</th>
<th>Natural change (¹)</th>
<th>Net migration and statistical adjustment (²)</th>
<th>Total change between 1 January 2015 and 2016</th>
<th>Population, 1 January 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>7,202.2</td>
<td>66.0</td>
<td>110.1</td>
<td>-44.2</td>
<td>-4.2</td>
<td>-48.4</td>
<td>7,153.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>10,538.3</td>
<td>110.8</td>
<td>111.2</td>
<td>-0.4</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>10,553.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia (³)</td>
<td>1,313.3</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1,315.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>847.0</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>-2.0</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>848.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>1,986.1</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>-6.5</td>
<td>-10.6</td>
<td>-17.1</td>
<td>1,969.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>2,921.3</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>-10.3</td>
<td>-22.4</td>
<td>-32.7</td>
<td>2,888.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>9,855.6</td>
<td>92.1</td>
<td>131.6</td>
<td>-39.4</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>-25.1</td>
<td>9,830.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>429.3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>434.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>38,005.6</td>
<td>369.3</td>
<td>394.9</td>
<td>-25.6</td>
<td>-12.8</td>
<td>-38.4</td>
<td>37,967.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>2,062.9</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>2,064.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>5,421.3</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5,426.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(¹) Live births minus deaths.
(²) Total change minus natural change.
(³) Break in series.
(⁴) Due to a lack of data on migration, the demographic balance is based exclusively on the natural change.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: demo_gind)
### Table 2: Population and Population Change in EU-15 States

#### Population and population change

(Thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Population, 1 January 2015</th>
<th>Live births</th>
<th>Deaths</th>
<th>Natural change (¹)</th>
<th>Net migration and statistical adjustment (²)</th>
<th>Total change between 1 January 2015 and 2016</th>
<th>Population, 1 January 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EU-15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium (³)</td>
<td>11,209.0</td>
<td>122.3</td>
<td>110.5</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>69.1</td>
<td>80.9</td>
<td>11,289.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>5,659.7</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>5,707.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>81,197.5</td>
<td>738.0</td>
<td>925.0</td>
<td>-187.0</td>
<td>1,151.5</td>
<td>964.5</td>
<td>82,162.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>4,628.9</td>
<td>65.9</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>-6.4</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>4,658.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>10,858.0</td>
<td>91.9</td>
<td>120.8</td>
<td>-29.0</td>
<td>-35.5</td>
<td>-64.5</td>
<td>10,793.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>46,449.6</td>
<td>417.3</td>
<td>420.0</td>
<td>-2.8</td>
<td>-8.4</td>
<td>-11.1</td>
<td>46,438.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France (³)</td>
<td>68,415.2</td>
<td>800.8</td>
<td>600.1</td>
<td>200.6</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>246.5</td>
<td>66,661.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>60,795.6</td>
<td>485.8</td>
<td>647.6</td>
<td>-161.8</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>-130.1</td>
<td>60,665.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>563.0</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>576.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>16,900.7</td>
<td>170.0</td>
<td>147.0</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>55.4</td>
<td>78.4</td>
<td>16,979.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>8,576.3</td>
<td>84.4</td>
<td>83.1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>122.9</td>
<td>124.2</td>
<td>8,700.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>10,374.8</td>
<td>85.5</td>
<td>108.5</td>
<td>-23.0</td>
<td>-10.5</td>
<td>-33.5</td>
<td>10,341.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>5,471.8</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>5,487.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>9,747.4</td>
<td>114.9</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>79.7</td>
<td>103.7</td>
<td>9,851.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>64,767.1</td>
<td>777.2</td>
<td>602.8</td>
<td>174.4</td>
<td>399.7</td>
<td>574.1</td>
<td>65,341.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(¹) Live births minus deaths.
(²) Total change minus natural change.
(³) Break in series.
(⁴) Due to a lack of data on migration, the demographic balance is based exclusively on the natural change.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: demo_gind)
MULTILEVEL GOVERNANCE, THE EU AND ITS MEMBER STATES

**Governing Bodies of the EU**

The EU exists as an entity distinct from, yet wholly connected to its 28 member states. It does not operate as a typical federal system as most probably think, yet its functions are devolved nonetheless. Instead, the EU functions as a constantly changing multilevel system of governance whose powers are based upon treaties of which the member states agree to adhere to. The EU does have the power to enforce binding treaties and resolutions, meaning that member states are facing some reduction in their ability to unilaterally pursue their own goals. Usually this reduction in sovereignty is voluntarily undertaken, and in turn the member states increase their capacity to achieve a particular goal. Geddes refers to this process as “sovereignty bargains.” The process to join the EU initially is itself a sovereignty bargain; states are knowingly entering into a supranational organization with rules and regulations in order to maximize their own benefits.

Decision making within the EU is multi-tiered and depends upon the support of member states. The most important bodies are the European Commission, the European Parliament, the European Central Bank, the Council of the European Union and the Court of Justice of the EU. These represent the legislative, judicial and executive branches of government for the EU. EU Parliament members are directly elected every five years, and are allocated for countries on a proportional basis. Policy can be enacted by either the Council or the Parliament, both per the

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20 Ibid.
advice of the Commission. Policies can typically be classified as either hard or soft in terms of the requirements associated with the policies. Hard policies bear legal provisions on how the policy must be implemented, whereas soft policy refers to “the forms of coordination facilitated by the Commission and initiated and promoted through member state agreement.” In this way the EU has slowly been influencing domestic policy for several decades now. As of 2013, policies that originated in the EU political sphere were the majority of member states’ new domestic legislation.

**EU Involvement in the Convergence of Policy**

Even with the above noted expansion of EU influence, migrant integration had largely remained outside of the scope of EU policy until relatively recently. The EU instead prioritized increased economic cooperation amongst its members, which makes sense considering that it began as an organization primarily focused on trade. As Andrew Geddes puts it, “it is the pursuit of economic objectives that has been and continues to be fundamental to the shape and form taken by European integration.” This pursuit of economic objectives has led to the creation of a single European market, a common currency, and the allowance of free-movement for EU citizens amongst member states. The integration of economic policy has by and large occurred in for EU states, both EU-12 and EU-15 alike. It wasn’t until 1999 with the Treaty of Amsterdam

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23 Ibid.
that the EU took an active role in immigration policy and embedded immigration into a chapter in the treaty and linked it to free movement in the EU. Following that treaty, numerous directives on migration were released. These directives deal with anti-discrimination provisions, family reunion, and even attracting high-skilled workers. Some, like the anti-discrimination provisions, are binding. These binding provisions then had to be adopted by any prospective EU states, thus influencing their policy prescriptions.

Based on the stance the EU has taken on economic issues or freedom of movement, it’s clear that EU legislation and directives play some role in influencing the policy of member states. This however is a rather top-down view of the manner in which influence flows in the EU that is, from the governing bodies of the EU itself down to the member states. This top-down approach to the dissemination of influence in the EU is referred to as the “Europeanization” of policy. This is in contrast to certain more state-centric views on the manner in which influence flows in the EU, from the member states up to the EU governing bodies. This has ignited a debate over the relevance of national/state models of migrant integration policy. Some academics, such as Christian Joppke, believe that national models are outdated and becoming increasingly irrelevant. Some, like Bauböck, highlight the enduring role of state-centric models

25 Ibid. 433
26 Mavrodi, Georgia, “Common EU policies on authorities immigration: past, present and future” IDEAS / London School of Economics and Political Science, 2015 http://hdl.handle.net/1814/36115
in areas such as citizenship acquisition even in the face of an expanding EU.\textsuperscript{29} This debate is simply a retooling of the now classic state-sovereignty versus supranational compulsion argument. The EU as a supranational organization does occasionally face blow back from its member states for the perceived infringement upon their sovereignty. This was seen in part by “Brexit”, and some of the policies enacted in response to the ongoing refugee crisis. It may also explain in some part why some EU member states pursue the particular policies they do.

EVIDENCE OF CONVERGENCE?

Utilizing MIPEX

The data used in this research to evaluate proof of convergence relied heavily upon the extensive work done by the Migrant Integration Policy Index. MIPEX operates in conjunction with the Migration Policy Group and the Barcelona Centre for International Affairs, and also receives funding from the European Commission.30 No other organization offers as in-depth an analysis on integration regimes across as many variables as MIPEX does. Their analysis compares 38 countries across 167 indicators in eight key policy areas: Family Reunion, Health, Permanent Residence, Anti-Discrimination, Labor Market Mobility, Education, Access to Nationality and Political participation.31 The 167 different indicators are specific questions about components of key policy designed to produce numerical values in each policy area. Each question has three options, with a maximum of three points awarded when policies meet the highest standard for equal treatment.32 In that way, MIPEX quantifies the answers to all of their questions and can assess scores to the countries in the dataset. The standards MIPEX uses to assess equal treatment are a combination of input from scholars and institutions focused on integration, and UN and EU directives.33 In short, it is a thoroughly accredited organization that goes through painstaking detail to prevent error or bias, and this is an extremely useful tool in

30 Migrant Integration Policy Index 2015 Huddleston, Thomas; Bilgili, Ozge; Joki, Anne-Linde and Vankova, Zvezda (2015)
31 Ibid.
32 Ibid.
33 Ibid.
comparing integration regimes. More information about MIPEX, their research process and their policy indicators can be found in the Appendix.

**Methodology**

For the purposes of this paper, EU-12 and EU-15 states were compared from the years 2007-2014 across five policy areas: anti-discrimination, family reunion, permanent residence, access to nationality, and political participation. For example, tables 4&5 depict the total scores of both the EU-12 and EU-15 states from the period 2010-2014. The “Total Score” is an average of the scores obtained by a state in all eight of the policy areas MIPEX provides. The graphs are color coded according to a MIPEX hierarchy of scores, also depicted below in table 3. More information about MIPEX’s methodology can be found in the Appendix.

In this format, it is relatively easy to track trends for each grouping across time. An increase in score would indicate more favorable policies towards integration whereas a decrease would indicate less favorable policies. An average shift over time would demonstrate that policy is moving in a particular direction, and if both the EU-12 and EU-15 states’ average values are moving in the same direction over the same period of time, then it would be reasonable to assume some commonality in policy outcomes. A notable shift in a particular direction over time would indicate convergence of that policy indicator. Large and consistent differences in scores would indicate that there is a significant policy gap between the two states, and scores moving in opposite directions would indicate convergence is not taking place. The same process described above was repeated for five more categories: Anti-Discrimination, Family Reunion, Permanent Residence, Access to Nationality and Political Participation. Using this method, data supporting convergence was found in the Anti-Discrimination, Family Reunion and Permanent Residence
categories, while significant variation remained in the Access to Nationality and Political Participation categories. As mentioned previously, additional information about the policy indicators is located in the Appendix.

Table 3: Legend

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IDENTIFYING TRENDS

Total Scores

In the case of the tables 4&5, the EU-12 states have maintained a twenty point difference from the EU-15 states from the years 2010-2014, while improving their score by about two points. From this we can observe that EU-12 integration policies tend to be more restrictive than those of the EU-15. Another notable observation is that there is an ever slight positive trend for the EU-12 states, not nearly large enough to demonstrate policy convergence, but it does provide a useful example for later tables. At face value it would appear that EU-12 and EU-15 states are not engaging in the same policy prescriptions as one another, hence the large difference in scores. However, when the scores are broken down further into their various policy indicators the results present a much more nuanced scenario.

Table 6: Legend

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Table 7: Anti-Discrimination Scores, EU-12

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Table 8: Anti-Discrimination Scores, EU-15

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Anti-Discrimination Trends

Anti-discrimination is the policy area in which MIPEX claims the most positive strides have been made since MIPEX has started its research. The identifiable trend in both of the graphs depicted above is a slight positive increase in anti-discrimination scores in every year for which data is available. Several states in the EU-12 grouping have even moved up in MIPEX’s categorical assessments, from slightly unfavorable to halfway favorable. Estonia and the Czech Republic in particular seem to have made the most strides in the EU-12 in 2009. For the Czech Republic’s part, they implemented part of the Racial Equality Directive of the EU in this year, and that probably made the difference in their score. The states that seem to be stalling the most are Estonia and Latvia, and this most likely reflects the issues they have historically faced with ethnic Russians, who both countries disenfranchised and marginalized after reforming in the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The data depicted in tables 7&8 indicates a variation between the EU-12 and EU-15 states, and a very slight positive trend.

Table 9: Legend

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34 Migrant Integration Policy Index 2015 Huddleston, Thomas; Bilgili, Ozge; Joki, Anne-Linde and Vankova, Zvezda (2015)
36 Howard, Marc Morjé. The politics of citizenship in Europe. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009, 175
Table 10: Total Family Reunion Scores, EU-12

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Table 11: Total Family Reunion Scores, EU-15

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Family Reunion Trends

Average Family Reunion scores for EU-12 and EU-15 states are relatively similar. Both averages reside at the cusp of the slightly favorable range throughout the given time period, and neither saw its overall average decrease significantly in score during that same time. EU-15 states did demonstrate a greater variation amongst the scores of its member states; however, three EU-15 states remained in the Slightly Unfavorable category as of 2014 compared to one from the EU-12. The U.K. is also the biggest offender of the dataset, dropping sixteen points over the seven year period. According to MIPEX, the U.K. is currently implementing the least ‘family-friendly’ immigration policies in the developed world, including long delays and high fee levels prior to acceptance.37 The average scores for family reunion in the EU-15 states are slightly lower than the previous scores in the anti-discrimination category for the EU-15. More states fall into the halfway favorable listing for family reunification. This suggests that EU-15 states are having a slightly more difficult time addressing this issue than anti-discrimination. Based on the data in tables 10&11, it is reasonable to claim that there has been a positive trend amongst most EU states, with the notable exception of the U.K.

Table 12: Legend

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Table 13: Permanent Residence Scores, EU-12

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Table 14: Permanent Residence Scores, EU-15

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Permanent Residence Trends

Like the policies before it, the trend for both EU-15 and EU-12 states in permanent residence scores is toward slightly favorable policies. Both sets of averages are again similar, within just about three points of each other at any year. Interestingly, the two lowest scoring countries in the entire dataset are France and Ireland, both EU-15 members, and the U.K. is a close fourth. For the second time the U.K. is not following the trend of other states in the dataset. It has a clear three year trend of a more restrictive policy approach, and it dropped over ten
points in just three years. The EU-12 scores seem to be more static, with relatively little amounts of change over the given time period. Most remained at least halfway favorable.

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Table 16: Access to Nationality Scores, EU-12

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Access to Nationality Trends

Here is where the first direct evidence against convergence presents itself. The EU-15 states are largely more favorable towards access to nationality, with notable exceptions being Greece and Austria. The EU-12 however has much lower scores, and most states have not improved over the seven year period. Notable exceptions here are Poland, Lithuania and the Czech Republic. The average of the EU-12 scores is actually going up from the 2007-2014 time period, but that is largely due to Poland’s 2012 Citizenship law, which liberalized its policies and drastically increased the overall score.38 Estonia and Latvia again stand out as some of the worst scores in the dataset, again due to their history with the Soviets.

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Table 18: Legend

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Table 19: Political Participation, EU-12

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Table 20: Political Participation, EU-15

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Political Participation Trends

The colors alone should demonstrate that convergence is clearly not crossing the divide between EU-12 and EU-15 states for the political participation of migrants. Not a single state in the EU-12 dataset scores over twenty-five points; Romania has five straight years at a score of zero. Each yearly average for the EU-12 falls in the unfavorable range, whereas the EU-15’s averages have fallen in the slightly favorable range for the seven year time period. Eleven states in Central Europe deny non-EU migrants the ability to join a political party or vote in local
elections.39 This would most likely include Austria because it scored along similar lines to several of the EU-12 countries.

IS CONVERGENCE OCCURRING?

Anti-Discrimination, Family Reunion and Permanent Residence

MIPEX data indicates strong commonalities between EU member states in the policy areas of Anti-Discrimination, Family Reunion and Permanent Residence. The data also indicates that in these three policy areas there is a slight positive trend common across both the EU-12 and EU-15 states. This would support the theory that integration policy is converging, albeit at a slow rate. The most reasonable explanation for this convergence is the increasing role of the EU in shaping member states policies around common goals. Having secured greater freedom to work on migrant issues in legislation such as the Treaty of Amsterdam, the EU has coerced states into modifying their policies to fit within the parameters set by the EU through binding and nonbinding measures.

Following the Treaty of Amsterdam, the EU has passed numerous Council Directives specific to integration policy. Directives 2000/43/EC and 2000/78/E focused on protection from discrimination.40 Provisions in the resolutions included banning discrimination on the basis of race, ethnic origin, religion or belief in both the public and private spheres.41 This was followed by a similar directive in 2008 with provisions to protect against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, religion or gender.42 Similar directives were passed regarding the rights of non-EU citizens in member states, family reunion and permanent residence. Since these were

40 Mavrodi, Georgia, “Common EU policies on authorities immigration: past, present and future” IDEAS / London School of Economics and Political Science, 2015 http://hdl.handle.net/1814/36115
41 Ibid.
binding resolutions, both current and potential EU members were forced to implement laws that satisfied EU requirements. A disproportionate impact was felt by the EU-12 states when they joined because most of those states did not have preexisting institutions in place to deal with those types of issues.43

It is also extremely plausible that the EU wields the most influence in these three particular policy areas because they are the most related to the economic assimilation of migrants. Migrant workers would be most directly affected by discrimination, family reunion and permanent residence. Coincidentally, those three areas are fields where the EU has been more effective in liberalizing member-state policy. In contemporary Europe, a worker does not need the ability vote in elections to hold their job, nor does he need citizenship to remain in a member-state. It would then be logical that these policies would bear the fruit of EU policy prescriptions more than political participation or naturalization laws, since as discussed earlier the EU has wider latitude when covering economic policy.

It would not be unreasonable for someone to claim based on the data provided in the tables above that convergence is occurring. It is important to keep in mind that it is clear the EU is still having a difficult time influencing state policies. For most years in the tables above, the data moves incrementally if at all. Presuming that the EU as a liberal democratic institution is attempting to liberalize its migrant integration policy, as is more generally the case for the EU-15 states and liberal democracies in general, it is clear that the EU-12 are presenting something of a

problem. It could be that their new experiences with higher levels of immigration are making it less appealing for these states to give up more sovereignty to the EU to handle issues such as these. It could also be that they are much younger on the scale of democracy than say some of the EU-15 states are.
EXPLAINING POLICY VARIATION

Access to Nationality and Political Participation

Distinct variation in the policy areas of political participation and access to nationality demonstrate the convergence is not all-encompassing as of yet. The nation-state still plays a role in determining policy prescriptions in certain areas such as citizenship. The assertion that citizenship regimes are moving in a direction of liberalizing access is not borne out by the data at all. It might be a reasonable argument for some states in the EU-15, but for the majority of the EU-12 it does not, and that distinction demonstrates again that the EU is having less of a direct impact on this area than is typically claimed.

States are still exercising large amounts of influence over their citizenship policy. Greece’s citizenship laws have historically been based around an ethno-nationalist policy, and combined with extremely high levels of anti-immigrant sentiment, their policy seems to follow a more restrictive bend, contrary to what the EU would prefer. Estonia and Latvia are also examples of states diverging from what the EU would prefer. The two states share a common history in their forceful annexation by the Soviets and in their treatment of ethnic Russians. Both states adopted a zero tolerance policy for citizenship after the Soviet dissolution, and this meant that. They are not unique in attempts of this kind in the EU-12. Bulgaria also seems to use ethnicity as a basis for limiting access to citizenship.

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Political participation also is a difficult area for the EU to exercise influence over. Historically the right to vote in elections either local or national has been tied to citizenship. EU citizenship, which is granted to individuals who hold the citizenship of a member state, does not guarantee one the right to vote in member states elections. Some states in the EU are allowing permanent residents to vote in local elections, but most are not, and of those that aren’t most are in the EU-12. Another issue for the EU-12 in political participation could be that since most allocate citizenship by blood rather than by birth, this would exclude a large number of permanent residents from voting in any type of election and thus lower their score substantially.
CONCLUSION

This research has clearly demonstrated significant commonality amongst EU member-state policy on migrant integration. The commonalities are especially strong in the policy areas of Anti-discrimination, Family Reunion and Permanent Residence, but to claim that Europeanization is driving the convergence of migrant integration policy in a singular direction would be to misinterpret the data provided in this paper. There is evidence of slight positive trends in policy scores where commonality is present, but the gains are incremental and in some cases, outliers such as the U.K. or Greece repeatedly go against the grain. It is important not to mistake policy commonality exclusively for policy convergence. Still, it could be reasonable for one to make the case that along these three policy areas convergence is occurring, and largely in a less restrictive light as opposed to the “Fortress Europe” theory.

There seem to be three key factors driving the slight convergence identified by the MIPEX data, the first being Europeanization. It is impossible to deny that the EU’s use of binding and non-binding legislation has been somewhat effective in influencing policy, if not always reliable. The second factor is the tendency of all liberal democracies to pursue expansionist migration policies. This has been challenged by some in recent years with the rise of the far-right in Europe, but it still largely holds true. Finally, it appears likely that the EU wields more influence over policy areas that have a large economic component attached to them. This was the case with the three policy areas that demonstrated some amount of convergence.

This paper also does not support the theory that national or state models have become irrelevant in the face of an expanded EU government. It seems clear that the distinct histories and
culture of each state are still playing a major role in certain policy areas, especially in the EU-12 states. The relevance of state models has certainly shifted in the face of the EU; control has been ceded in certain areas, but state interests still heavily determine policies regarding citizenship acquisition and the political participation of migrants. So, when determining why EU states are pursuing policies, it is overly simplistic to strictly look through the top-down approach of Europeanization. It is important to consider methods that account for the interests of member-states, such as Andrew Geddes’ sovereignty-bargaining concept. The sovereignty-bargaining framework is also well suited to explain variations of policy within the EU. The U.K.’s recent restrictive turn on family reunification laws is a prime example. National interests in that state supplanted EU norms and dictated policy that did not resemble the rest of the EU regardless of preexisting policy.

The last important conclusion to draw is that the EU-12 states are considerably less favorable than the EU-15 states in almost every category by MIPEX. This may be informed by their more negative view of non-EU migrants, but if one prescribes to Freeman’s perspective on the impact of perceptions on policy regarding immigrants, then that suggestion is not feasible. Regardless, the distinction between the two groupings are apparent, and scholars should focus more on the different causal factors associated with this distinction. In the future, scholars should focus on EU-12 states as a means of assessing the effects of Europeanization. A more exhaustive study may also find it useful to divide the EU into geographic regions, as MIPEX data demonstrated some commonalities in this regard. Studies may also find using MIPEX to be extremely beneficial as well. Tracking trends over time is an extremely simple process to replicate across policy areas with their available data.
APPENDIX: MIPEX, INDICATORS OF INTEGRATION POLICY

OUTCOMES
MIPEX, Indicators of Integration Policy Outcomes

Below is a picture from MIPEX’S “Who Benefits Outcome and Beneficiaries Indicators” documentation which depicts the manner in which the different policy areas are scored among policy outcome indicators.48 Each of the various policy areas, Labour Market Mobility, Family Reunion etc. are then further divided into policy outcome indicators which are each individually defined on the MIPEX website.49 The policy outcome indicators are all manifestations of quantifiable equations so that MIPEX can derive a numerical value for the outcome indicator. For example, the in-work poverty gap is equal to the in-work poverty rate of low-educated non-EU foreign-born divided by the in-work poverty rate of low-educated native born.50 There are too many definitions and formulas for each policy indicator to provide here, so those seeking more information should refer back to the methodology section on MIPEX’s website.

MIPEX has divided integration policy into 8 specific policy areas.51 From there it has divided the 8 policy areas into 167 policy indicators (distinct from the policy outcome indicators mentioned in the Appendix). These policy indicators are simply questions with three possible answers each that allow MIPEX to score policies on a 0-50-100 scale for their standards of treatment. 100% being an answer most favorable to migrant integration. Then those scores are then averaged within each of the 8 policy areas, to give that specific policy areas score, and then those policy area scores are averaged together to give an overall score for a country. More

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49 Ibid.
50 Ibid.
information about how MIPEX determines its scores can be found here:

http://www.mipex.eu/methodology

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BIBLIOGRAPHY


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Migrant Integration Policy Index 2015 Huddleston, Thomas; Bilgili, Ozge; Joki, Anne-Linde and Vankova, Zvezda (2015)


