I Z A Institute
of Labor Economics
Initiated by Deutsche Post Foundation

DISCUSSION PAPER SERIES

IZA DP No. 16272

Diluted Blood Still Better than Water? The Beneficial Effects of Politicians' Birthplaces on Refugee Acceptance

Hai-Anh H. Dang
Trong-Anh Trinh

JUNE 2023

I Z A Institute
of Labor Economics

Initiated by Deutsche Post Foundation

DISCUSSION PAPER SERIES

IZA DP No. 16272

Diluted Blood Still Better than Water? The Beneficial Effects of Politicians' Birthplaces on Refugee Acceptance

Hai-Anh H. Dang
World Bank, IZA, Indiana University and
International School, Vietnam National University, Hanoi

Trong-Anh Trinh
World Bank and Monash University

JUNE 2023

Any opinions expressed in this paper are those of the author(s) and not those of IZA. Research published in this series may include views on policy, but IZA takes no institutional policy positions. The IZA research network is committed to the IZA Guiding Principles of Research Integrity.

The IZA Institute of Labor Economics is an independent economic research institute that conducts research in labor economics and offers evidence-based policy advice on labor market issues. Supported by the Deutsche Post Foundation, IZA runs the world's largest network of economists, whose research aims to provide answers to the global labor market challenges of our time. Our key objective is to build bridges between academic research, policymakers and society.

IZA Discussion Papers often represent preliminary work and are circulated to encourage discussion. Citation of such a paper should account for its provisional character. A revised version may be available directly from the author.

ISSN: 2365-9793

IZA – Institute of Labor Economics

Schaumburg-Lippe-Straße 5–9
53113 Bonn, Germany

Phone: +49-228-3894-0
Email: publications@iza.org

www.iza.org

ABSTRACT

Diluted Blood Still Better than Water? The Beneficial Effects of Politicians' Birthplaces on Refugee Acceptance*

In parliamentary systems, elected representatives often have power to direct resources to their preferred areas. Foreign-born politicians, those who were born in countries other than the country where they hold policymaking positions, may exhibit a strong preference for refugees. We provide the first empirical evidence on the relationship between politicians' birthplaces and refugee acceptance. Employing an instrumental variable approach to analyze a newly-constructed panel data set comprising 17 destination countries in the OECD during 2002-2019, we find that countries with higher shares of foreign-born politicians have higher recognition rates and offer more aid to refugees. Our findings remain robust for different outcome variables, model specifications, and birthplaces' income levels. Some evidence also suggests that countries with more foreign-born politicians affiliated with left-wing parties tend to show more favouritism toward refugees. Finally, we find that favourable asylum policy and positive public opinion are possible explanations for increased acceptance of refugees.

JEL Classification: F22, F35, D72, O15

Keywords: foreign-born politician, refugee acceptance, recognition rate, refugee aid, asylum policy

Corresponding author:
Hai-Anh H. Dang
World Bank
1818 H Street
N.W. Washington DC 20433
USA

E-mail: hdang@worldbank.org

* We would like to thank David McKenzie, Russell Smyth, Paolo Verme, and participants at the World Bank Young Fellows Workshop for helpful feedback on an earlier version. Dang would also like to thank the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office for additional funding assistance through various Knowledge for Change (KCP) grants, including for the World Development Report 2021 "Data for Better Lives" and the Data and Evidence for Tackling Extreme Poverty (DEEP) Research Program. Trinh acknowledges support from the World Bank Young Fellows Program in Forced Displacement.

1. Introduction

Refugees are a distinct class of migrants that are among the most vulnerable groups in society, since they were often subject to persecution, violent conflicts, and other life-threatening situations in their origin countries. They usually embark on dangerous journeys with the aim of finally reaching a host country that offers them safety, stability, and opportunities to rebuild their lives. The global number of forcibly displaced people is rising and is projected to reach 117.2 million in 2023, roughly a ten-fold increase from just less than ten years before (UNHCR, 2023). Finding long-term solutions for the refugee situation has become a major challenge worldwide.

The acceptance of refugees in host countries is determined by a number of factors including refugee policy and public opinion. These determinants, in turn, can be shaped by policymakers' background, particularly their birthplaces. Indeed, there exist recent examples of foreign-born politicians who use their influence to advocate for refugee acceptance. For example, Congressman Ted W. Lieu introduced a House Resolution reaffirming the United States commitment to the protection of refugees and displaced persons in 2020. Afzal Khan provided strong support for the Lift the Ban campaign in United Kingdom, which allows asylum seekers the rights to work without any restrictions on the type of job. Another example is Maria Vamvakinou, who fought against the Australian Prime Minister's proposed lifetime ban on refugees in 2016. At the same time, it could be the case that politicians with a migrant (or refugee) background take a nationalistic view to overcome voter skepticism.[1]

In this paper, we provide the first empirical evidence of the relationship between politicians' birthplaces and refugee acceptance. Indeed, there can be at least two channels through which birthplaces can influence beliefs toward refugees between foreign-born

[1] An example is Priti Patel from UK who introduced a controversial new borders bill (also called 'Anti-Refugee Bill'), which considered refugees who entered the country illegally to be subject to prison sentences.

politicians and native-born politicians. First, foreign-born politicians who were migrants themselves often have a unique individual history that could shape their preferences toward other refugees, particularly those who have personally experienced adverse events (e.g., conflicts, economic recessions) (Piketty, 1995). More generally, migrants can bring cultural values from their countries of origin, which influence their preferences for redistribution and inequality (Alesina and Giuliano, 2011; Luttmer and Singhal, 2011). Second, foreign-born politicians' preferences toward refugees may be influenced by their parents. Cultural values are transmitted from parents to children, and these norms tend to persist from generation to generation (Bisin and Verdier, 2000; Tabellini, 2008). Benabou and Tirole (2006) demonstrate that parents may even intentionally transmit their views about inequality and social mobility to their children in order to shape their incentive. Furthermore, the cultural heritages between parents and children born in different countries may impact economic outcomes, such as work behaviour (Fernández and Fogli, 2009).[2] It is therefore reasonable to expect foreign-born politicians to exhibit more favorable attitudes toward refugees.

We hypothesize that countries with a higher proportion of foreign-born politicians provide more favourable conditions for refugees, including higher acceptance rates and increased aid. However, empirically teasing out this relationship poses a challenge due to potential endogeneity issues. Unobserved country-specific factors related to political institutions or refugee support could simultaneously influence the proportion of foreign-born politicians and refugee policies. To address this challenge, we employ an instrumental variable (IV) approach to identify the causal effects (of the share) of foreign-born politicians. Our instrument is the interaction term between an indicator representing whether a country employs plurality representation in the electoral rules and its share of foreign-born politicians in the previous election. The rationale of our instrument is motivated by insights from the political science

[2] This is perhaps the reason that only a natural-born citizen is eligible for running for the U.S. presidency.

literature, which suggests that plurality voting promotes higher representation of immigrants in the political system (Trounstine and Valdini, 2008; Bloemraad and Schönwälder, 2013). The interaction between the indicator and the lagged variable enables us to capture both persistent and contemporary determinants of the share of foreign-born politicians. Additionally, we employ panel data econometric models for analysis, controlling for a wide range of country characteristics and year fixed effects. To test our hypotheses, we construct a novel dataset with unique information on politicians' birthplaces in 17 OECD countries over the past two decades (2002 to 2019), which is supplemented with data from various other sources.

We find strong evidence that more foreign-born politicians lead to more favourable outcomes for refugees. Specifically, a one-percent increase in the share of foreign-born politicians raises the refugee recognition rate and refugee aid by 3.14 percent and 0.52 percent, respectively. These results remain robust when considering different measures of refugee acceptance, varying shares of foreign-born politicians, and their birthplaces' income levels, as well as different model specifications. Furthermore, our analysis reveals heterogeneous effects, indicating that left-wing party politicians tend to exhibit more favouritism toward refugees. Finally, governments with higher representation of foreign-born politicians are associated with favourable asylum policies and positive public opinion toward refugees.

In this study, we contribute new insights to the existing literature that investigates the flow of refugees, including asylum seekers, to the destination countries. Previous studies traditionally focus on the "push factors" in origin countries, such as political and economic conditions (e.g., Ibáñez and Vélez, 2008; Hatton, 2009), as well as more recent factors like climate change and conflicts (Missirian and Schlenker, 2017a; Bosetti *et al.*, 2020). However, less attention has been given to the "pull factors" in destination countries. For example, Hatton (2016) shows that important factors explaining asylum migration to the Europe Union include economic conditions, the stringency of asylum policies, and the migrant stock in the destination

countries. Yet, a crucial cultural factor, namely politicians' birthplaces, has not been thoroughly investigated in this context.

Additionally, our study makes contributions to two other bodies of literatures, one on forced migration and the other on foreign aid (Ruiz and Vargas-Silva, 2013; Dreher *et al.*, 2019; Murat, 2020). Previous studies have shown that the level of foreign aid provided by donors is not solely driven by altruism, but is also influenced by strategic factors (e.g., election cycles and leadership turnover) and economic conditions (e.g., banking crises) in donor countries (Alesina and Dollar, 2000; Dang *et al.*, 2013). We provide a new perspective by examining the impacts of politicians' birthplaces on the amount of refugee aid.

2. Data

We compile a new database from multiple sources. We manually collect annual data on politician background over the period 2002 – 2019 from 17 OECD countries—Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK, and the USA—that make these data publicly accessible on their government (or congress) websites. We define politicians as legislators or representatives who were elected to a specific term in parliament or congress. We classify politicians as foreign-born if their birthplaces are different from the country where they hold policymaking positions. Using the 2014 United Nations country classification, we group politicians into two categories: those born in richer countries and those born in poorer countries. Our focus in this paper is on first-generation politicians, but we also provide additional analysis for second-generation politicians (i.e., those whose parents were immigrants). After gathering information on politicians' birthplaces and other characteristics, we calculate the share of foreign-born politicians by dividing the number of foreign-born politicians by the total number of congress members.

Figures on refugee and asylum seeker come from estimates provided by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). We are interested in the recognition rate from the host country's perspective, which we define as the percentage of positive decisions (full-status recognitions) out of all the decisions made by a country in a year. We measure refugee aid as the annual share of refugee expenditure in the host country over the total Official Development Aid (ODA) available for different categories and types of aid from the OECD Statistics (OECD, 2023).

To construct our IV regarding political plurality, we employ the 2020 update of the Database of Political Institutions, which provides data on whether a country uses plurality representation in the electoral rules (Beck *et al.*, 2001). Our final sample is an unbalanced panel that consists of 228 country-year observations from 17 countries in the period 2002 – 2019.

For the mechanism analysis, we analyze data from different sources. First, we use the country asylum policy index for 2002 – 2012 provided by Hatton (2016). Hatton's index captures changes in laws/regulations related to three broad components: (i) limiting access to the territory; (ii) processing of asylum claims; and (iii) living conditions of asylum seekers. Second, we analyze public opinion toward immigrants using the European Social Survey (ESS), conducted every two years since 2002, which provides multiple dimensions of citizens' attitudes across 12 countries in Europe. We further supplement this analysis with the World Values Survey (WVS), which covers countries outside of Europe (e.g., Australia and United States) but only provides a single indicator of altitude toward immigrants.

We also supplement our analysis with various other data sources, including the World Bank's World Development Indicators (WDI), Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI), and Emergency Events Database (EM-DAT). We provide a more detailed description of the data sources and the summary statistics of the main variables in Appendix B.

3. Analytical framework

3.1. Conceptual model

We propose a simple conceptual model to explain how foreign-born politicians influence refugee acceptance. This model suggests three channels for this influence: (i) asylum policy; (ii) public opinion; and (iii) positive signals for asylum applications. We illustrate these relationships in Figure 1.

For the main channel, politicians may directly increase refugee acceptance through asylum policy. While restrictive policies in the destination countries may increase the cost of displacement, more relaxed policy can further attract refugees (Hatton, 2009). Governments are motivated to provide protection to genuine refugees but also aim to minimize the number of asylum applications that their countries receive, considering the administrative costs, expenses for care during this process, and societal costs if the asylum seekers are admitted (Dustmann *et al*., 2017). In more favourable economic and political times, governments can afford the recognition rate to go up; however, when economic conditions are deteriorating, electorates often turn against immigrants, creating incentives for politicians to adopt anti-refugee rhetoric and tighten admission standards. In this context, politicians can play a role through legislative reform or changes in law application standards, such as lowering standards for asylum recognition and making entry into the country more accessible (Hatton, 2009).[3]

The second mechanism through which politicians may affect refugee acceptance is public opinion. Existing evidence suggests that members of host communities may feel threatened by refugees due to real or imagined factors, such as the size of the refugee group, perceived competition for scarce resources like jobs and health care, zero-sum beliefs about cultural values, perceived threats of disease and violence, perceived threats to the status quo, and perceived threats from terrorists (Stephan *et al.*, 2005). Such threats not only predict negative

[3] We discuss asylum policies and provide some anecdote evidence in Appendix D.

attitudes and prejudice towards refugees but also lead to reduced support for policies that aim to provide assistance and empower refugees, and increased support for restrictive refugee policies (Hangartner *et al*., 2019). At the same time, public opinion is sensitive to and can be shaped by their political leaders' views (Broockman and Butler, 2017; Grewenig *et al.*, 2019; Jetter and Molina, 2022). In this context, politicians can potentially use their powers and influence to reduce the prejudicial attitudes toward refugees, thereby increasing refugee acceptance.

Regarding the third channel, countries with a higher number of foreign-born politicians might be seen by asylum seekers as offering a higher chance of acceptance, leading to an increase in asylum applications. It is reasonable since asylum seekers are assumed to act strategically by maximizing their chances through the selection of the country in which they lodge their application, which is influenced by political and economic factors (Hatton, 2020). However, a higher number of asylum applications may result in a lower acceptance rate (Missirian and Schlenker, 2017b). Therefore, our framework suggests that the net effects of foreign-born politicians on refugee acceptance should be considered given the dynamics of all three mechanisms discussed above.[4]

3.2. Empirical specification

We first examine the effect of foreign-born politicians on refugee acceptance using the following naïve model

$$RA_{it} = \beta FB_{it} + \lambda X_{it} + c_i + \tau_t + \epsilon_{it} \quad (1)$$

[4] It should be noted in Figure 1 that all channels are influenced by economic conditions in the destination country such as GDP and unemployment rate. These channels are also intercorrelated. For example, asylum policy is strongly correlated with public opinions. Policies that frame refugees as a potential threat to the host community—for example, those that are premised on potential danger to the host population—will lead to negative attitudes toward refugees and toward their resettlement in one's country, particularly when citizens perceive a lack of control. Similarly, asylum policy also has an effect on the relative number of applications that a country gets.

where RA_{it} is a measure of refugee acceptance for host country i in year t. We focus on two main outcomes (i) the refugee recognition rate (i.e., the ratio of asylum applicants awarded refugee status over the total number of decisions) and (ii) refugee aid. We also examine several other related outcomes such as asylum policy, public opinion, and the number of applications. FB_{it} represents the share of foreign-born politicians over the number of congress members and β is the coefficient of interest.

Equation (1) is estimated using a country random effects (RE) model. Due to small within-country variation in the share of foreign-born politicians (and the limited degree of freedom) in our estimation sample size, we are unable to include country fixed effects. However, we control for a range of host country characteristics in the control variables X_{it}.[5] These characteristics include a country's GDP per capita, population size, share of the young population age below 15, unemployment rate, number of disasters, political stability, and government effectiveness, which can represent the pull factors in the destination country. For example, countries with greater wealth have more opportunities to accommodate immigrants in the economy and in society, and GDP per capita represents a country's income level. The population size and the unemployment rate can proxy for the size of the labor market and job opportunities. Finally, following previous studies (e.g., Dreher *et al.*, 2019), we also control for the number of natural disasters that occur in year t and the quality of government as measured by government effectiveness. In all the regressions, standard errors are clustered at the country level. We also include in Equation (1) the year fixed effects (τ_t) to absorb the effects of unobservable time characteristics.

The estimates based on Equation (1) might suffer from endogeneity bias since both the share of foreign-born politicians and refugee acceptance may be jointly determined by the

[5] In our sample, the standard deviation of the share of foreign-born politicians between country is 3.237, while its variation within country is only 0.996.

unobservables that we cannot control for in our analysis. These factors could include cultural influences or the degree of openness of the political system. In addition, reverse causality may occur if a higher rate of refugee acceptance leads to stronger support for more foreign-born politicians and a higher chance of foreign-born residents being elected as policymakers.

To address these issues, we employ an IV strategy where the instrument consists of an indicator representing whether countries use plurality voting system (P_i), interacted with the share of foreign-born politicians in the previous election (FB_{it-k}), with subscript k identified by the term of congress (i.e., 1-5 years). The first stage regression is as follows

$$FB_{it} = \delta(FB_{it-k} \times P_i) + \theta X_{it} + c_i + \mu_t + \varepsilon_{it} \quad (2)$$

We now discuss the validity of the instrument used in our analysis. A good instrumental variable is exogenous to the dependent variables such as refugee acceptance and refugee aid (exogeneity condition) and strongly correlated with the share of foreign-born politicians (relevant condition), but it should only affect the dependent variables through the share of foreign-born politicians (exclusion condition).

We first argue that the exogeneity condition of our instrument is satisfied since the political institution of a country is stable over time; thus it is exogenous to time-varying indicators such as refugee acceptance and refugee aid.[6] Indeed, a large body of literature use historical institutions as the instrument when examining contemporaneous policy outcomes (e.g., Levine *et al*., 2000; Acemoglu *et al.*, 2001; Tabellini, 2010). At the same time, a number of recent cross-country studies have employed lagged values of endogenous regressors as instruments such as the determinants of economic growth, the underlying causes of democracy (Acemoglu *et al.*, 2008), demographic transition (Murtin, 2013), and corruption (Bhattacharyya and Hodler, 2010). Our IV strategy is consistent with the spirit of these cross-country studies.

[6] Figure B2 (Appendix B) shows that 47 percent of our sample (8 out of 17 countries) use plurality voting system, and it remains constant over our study period.

Regarding the relevance condition, our IV is constructed based on evidence from studies that examines the political underrepresentation of immigrants in the political system (e.g., Dancygier *et al.*, 2015; Dancygier *et al.*, 2020). Personal traits such as income and education levels have been identified as critical variables in explaining variation in electoral participation and representation of immigrants (Lindgren *et al.*, 2017). On the other hand, opportunity structures, which consist of party systems, electoral rules, and other context-level factors, also influence political representation of distinct social groups (Trebbi *et al.*, 2008). We leverage the fact that an electoral system based on majority representation (or plurality) is generally associated with higher representation of immigrants.[7] While some studies show that plurality electoral systems tend to generate incentives for politicians to appeal to majority interests and thus are likely to exclude disadvantaged groups such as women (e.g., Wängnerud, 2009), immigrants may often reside in concentrated areas, and thus may benefit from majority systems which allow them to use group mobilisation in particular localities to their advantage (Trounstine and Valdini, 2008; Bloemraad and Schönwälder, 2013).

To exploit the variation in the share of foreign-born politicians over time, we interact the plurality index with an indicator of the share of foreign-born politicians in the previous election. Although the lagged share of politicians may be correlated with refugee acceptance, it is uncorrelated with the error term because there is no reverse causality from contemporaneous refugee acceptance to the past share of politicians. Furthermore, by interacting the lagged indicator with the plurality index, we can capture the persistent response of political representation to the electoral voting system. This aligns with recent IV strategy approaches, such as the interaction between variations in the oil price and a country's distance to its nearest oil-producing countries, or the interaction between a donor's total aid budget in a

[7] The key difference between systems of proportional representation (PR) and majoritarian electoral (plurality) systems lies in the number of politicians elected by each electoral district. In majoritarian systems, each constituency elects a single politician, giving that electoral system a district of one. In PR systems, on the other hand, each constituency is responsible for electing more than one politician.

year with the recipient-specific probability of receiving aid from that donor (Nunn and Qian, 2014; Asatryan *et al.*, 2017).

However, the validity of our IV will be violated if somehow a correlation exists between the instrument and variables that we cannot observe. As discussed in Reed (2015) and Bellemare *et al.* (2017), using the lagged value may shift the endogeneity problem back by one time period and prevent the causal identification. In our specific context, one may argue that the share of foreign-born politicians in the previous election might be determined by refugee acceptance in the same period, which in turn is potentially correlated with refugee acceptance in the current period. Similarly, using the institutional quality variable as the instrument may lead to a violation of the exclusion restriction as there are reasons to expect that political plurality affects refugee acceptance in the historical period (i.e., by affecting share of foreign-born politicians in the past), and thus also affects refugee acceptance in the contemporary period (Casey and Klemp, 2021).

While the exclusion condition is not testable, we conduct a falsification test to examine these potential hypotheses. The results, presented in Table A1 (Appendix A), uncover a non-statistical relationship between recognition rate and its lagged value, suggesting that the use of a lagged explanatory variable can be sufficiently justified for this outcome (Bellemare *et al.*, 2017). However, we acknowledge that there is evidence of the correlation of refugee aid over time. Consequently, we follow a multi-pronged approach to provide further support to our results. First, we report Anderson-Rubin confidence intervals (AR CI) together with the estimates (Dufour and Taamouti, 2005; Cameron and Miller, 2015).[8] Second, we conduct additional analysis using alternative IVs, and finally, we relax the assumptions of the IV model to provide lower bound and upper bound estimates that can encompass the true point estimate.

[8] Recent studies using Anderson-Rubin confidence intervals include Nunn and Quian (2014) and Asatryan *et al.* (2017).

4. Results

4.1. Main findings

We first report the estimates of Equation (1), treating foreign-born politicians as exogenous and using a set of country characteristics and year fixed effects to account for differences across time periods. Given the intuitive expectation that foreign-born politicians are more inclined to favour refugees, we expect to see a significant effect of foreign-born politicians on refugee acceptance. The results are presented in Columns (1) and (3) of Table 1, which show a positive relationship between foreign-born politicians and refugee acceptance, as measured by both recognition rate and refugee aid. Specifically, we find that a one-percent increase in the share of foreign-born politicians is associated with 1.66 and 0.52 percent increases in recognition rate and refugee aid, respectively. Still, the results obtained using the random effects model do not fully consider unobserved factors that correlate with both the shares of foreign-born politicians and refugee acceptance rates.

We then move to our main RE-IV model in Equation (2), which addresses the potential endogeneity of foreign-born politicians. The results are presented in columns (2) and (4) of Table 1. It is worth noting that the number of observations is lower in the IV model compared to the original model, as our instrument incorporates the lagged explanatory variable. The first-stage results of the RE-IV model indicate that the interaction between political plurality and share of foreign-born politicians in the previous election serves as a highly significant predictor of the current share of foreign-born politicians. We test for weak instruments using the Kleibergen-Paap Wald F-statistic and the critical value suggested by Stock and Yogo (2002). The test values hover around 100 and strongly reject the null hypothesis of weak instrument for both recognition rate and refugee aid, supporting the strength of the selected instrument. In the second stage of the RE-IV model, we find a strong impact of foreign-born politicians on refugee acceptance, and the impacts are statistically significant. Specifically, for a one-percent

increase in the share of foreign-born politicians, recognition rate and refugee aid increase by 3.14 percent and 0.52 percent, respectively. In both regressions, the Anderson-Rubin confidence intervals do not encompass zero, reaffirming that the IV is not a weak instrument and does not introduce bias into the estimates.

Next, we examine the impact of foreign-born politicians on refugee acceptance separately by those born in poorer countries and those born in richer countries using our main RE-IV model. While politicians born in poorer countries may show favouritism toward refugees for altruistic reasons, the effect of those born in richer countries is uncertain. The results presented in Table 2 confirm our findings for both types of politicians. Using our main measure of refugee acceptance, we find that a one-percent increase in the share of politicians born in poorer countries and richer countries leads to 7.00 and 3.12 percent increases in recognition rate, respectively. Notably, the magnitude of impact is greater for those born in poorer countries, as confirmed by the results of the equality test.

A higher share of politicians born in poorer countries is also associated with more refugee aid, while there is no evidence of such impact for those born in richer countries. A possible explanation for the significant impact of politicians from developed countries on refugee acceptance could be cultural differences. For example, immigrants take cultural values with them from their countries of origin, and these cultural values may influence preferences for redistribution, regardless of their context (Luttmer and Singhal, 2011).

4.2. Robustness tests and further extensions

We conduct sensitivity analysis following the procedure proposed by Conley *et al.* (2012) to assess the robustness of our results against possible violations of the exclusion restriction. In brief, we rewrite Equation (1) as

$$RA_{it} = \alpha FB_{it} + \gamma(FB_{it-k} \times P_i) + \eta X_{it} + c_i + \mu_t + \nu_{it} \qquad (3)$$

where our instrument enters in the second stage linearly with coefficient γ, with all other the covariates and year fixed effects as specified in Equation (1). Standard errors are also clustered at the country level. It is worth noting that in the traditional 2SLS estimation, γ is assumed to be zero. Here, by assigning different values to γ, we allow the IV to directly affect refugee acceptance, and thus, α reveals how the 2SLS estimation is influenced when the IV is plausibly exogenous. In other words, this approach implies producing alternative confidence intervals (referred to as the Union of Confidence Intervals, UCI) for the true effect of foreign-born politicians on refugee acceptance, given plausible assumptions about the true value of γ.

Table A3 (Appendix A) reports the bounds of our estimates in columns (2) and (3), while showing the point estimate and its standard error from our preferred baseline specification in column (1). The results in Panel A of Table A3 reaffirm our main finding that a higher share of foreign-born politician leads to higher recognition rate. This is also supported by Figure A1 (Appendix A), which reveals that a significant and positive impact of foreign-born politicians on recognition rate is consistently observed across different values of γ. We also note that the lower bound for the impacts on refugee aid is negative, as shown in Panel B (Table A3). Still, interpretation of results using refugee aid should be exercised with caution due to inconsistent reporting practices across countries.

We further examine whether these effects differ based on the background of politicians. In this analysis, we obtain information on policymakers including their age, gender, educational level, political experience, and their political party. We then interact these characteristics with the share of foreign-born politicians. The results in Table 3 show that i) the impacts are stronger for female politicians than male politicians, ii) older politicians and those with more political experience or higher education play an important role in the relationship between foreign-born politicians and refugee acceptance, and iii) foreign-born politicians from the left-wing parties exhibit more favouritism toward refugees than those from the right-wing parties.

We also conduct a number of tests to check the robustness of our results. These include using alternative measures of refugee acceptance and categories of refugee aid, constructing different measures of foreign-born politicians, examining the impact of the second generation, and using different clustering and alternative IVs. The estimation results, which are presented in Appendix C, Tables C1 to C9 and further discussed in Appendix C, remain robust.

4.3. Potential mechanisms

We attempt next to explore the channels through which foreign-born politicians increase refugee acceptance. In the discussion that follows, we focus on three potential channels discussed in our conceptual framework, namely (i) asylum policy, (ii) public opinion, and (iii) number of applications. While we do not have detailed data to disentangle these mechanisms, we provide suggestive evidence of the likely pathways by using proxies from various sources. Overall, results in Table 4 confirm that asylum policy and public opinion are important channels, while no evidence points to the number of applications as the driver.

We first examine the relationship between foreign-born politicians and asylum policy in Column (1) of Table 4. Given the difficulty of quantifying asylum policy, we employ Hatton's (2016) index. The results in Column (1) of Table 4 show that countries with higher share of foreign-born politicians are associated with more generous policies toward asylum seekers, and the impact is statistically significant at the five percent level. We further investigate the components of asylum policy index in Table A4 (Appendix A) and find that the results are driven by positive changes in all dimensions.

Next, we turn our attention to the role of public opinion, which we proxy by citizens' attitudes toward immigrants using data from the European Social Survey (ESS). We construct a simple index with a higher score indicating positive attitudes toward refugees. The results in Column (2) of Table 4 confirm our expectation, although the impact is statistically significant

at the 10 percent level. Further exploration of the dimensions of the public opinion index reveals that foreign-born politicians are associated with citizens' attitudes that immigrants will make the country a better place to live, and immigrants will diversify the country's culture (see Columns (2) and (3) of Table A5, Appendix A). Interestingly, there is no evidence of the relationship between foreign-born politicians and perception about the economy, as shown in Column (1) of Table A5 (Appendix A). In fact, recent studies have highlighted the role of 'cultural' factors rather than purely economic ones that shape public opinion toward immigration (Alesina and Tabellini, 2020).

Since our public opinion index is available for European countries only, we further complement this analysis with data from the World Values Survey. A single indicator is constructed based on attitudes of respondents about immigrants' impact on job availability (i.e., when jobs are scarce, employers should give priority to people of this country over immigrants). We interpret our index as a higher value is associated with more openness toward refugees. The results in Column (4) of Table A5 (Appendix A) provide supports for our expectation. Still, these results may be less accurate, potentially due to the smaller sample size.

5. Conclusions

The number of refugees across the globe has reached alarming levels and is expected to continue to rise in the foreseeable future. The literature highlights that one of the major solutions to the refugee crisis must be refugee resettlement in new host countries. However, the success of such a solution relies on relatively favourable attitudes by members and governments of the host countries, the protection of refugees' well-being, and effective integration of refugees into the new host societies. In this context, our research examines the openness of richer countries to accepting refugees for resettlement by focusing on the birthplaces of politicians.

Using a sample of 17 countries in the OECD, we provide the first piece of evidence that countries with a higher share of foreign-born politicians have a higher recognition rate and more refugee aid. Our findings are robust to a range of alternative measures of refugee acceptance and foreign-born politicians. We also find suggestive evidence of asylum policy and public opinion as potential drivers of this relationship. To address potential endogeneity, we employ the interaction of political plurality and the lagged explanatory variable as the instrument and conduct a number of sensitivity tests.

We close by discussing some of the limitations of our research. First, while we provide evidence of the impact of foreign-born politicians on refugee acceptance, the data that we have do not allow us to examine all OECD member countries, including those that host a large number of refugees such as Turkey. Second, our definition of politicians excludes high-ranking government officials, such as prime ministers or presidents, who can have even stronger influence on immigration policies. Finally, our choice of instrument requires a strong assumption that there are no dynamics among the unobservables, which can be challenging with certain outcomes such as refugee aid. While we have provided a number of sensitivity tests to support our IV, future research that seeks to identify better instruments would be useful.

Despite these limitations, our paper provides policy implications that focus on optimizing the resettlement of refugees in richer countries that have the potential capacity to receive them. Our research suggests that foreign-born politicians take a crucial role in influencing these factors, ultimately leading to higher levels of refugee acceptance.

References

Acemoglu, D., Johnson, S., & Robinson, J. A. (2001). The colonial origins of comparative development: An empirical investigation. *American Economic Review*, *91*(5), 1369-1401.

Acemoglu, D., Johnson, S., Robinson, J. A., & Yared, P. (2008). Income and democracy. *American Economic Review*, *98*(3), 808-42.

Alesina, A., & Dollar, D. (2000). Who gives foreign aid to whom and why? *Journal of Economic Growth, 5*(1), 33-63.

Alesina, A., & Giuliano, P. (2011). Preferences for redistribution. In *Handbook of Social Economics* (Vol. 1, pp. 93-131). North-Holland.

Alesina, A., & Giuliano, P. (2015). Culture and institutions. *Journal of Economic Literature*, *53*(4), 898-944.

Alesina, A. F., & Tabellini, M. (2020). The Political Effects of Immigration: Culture or Economics?. (No. 15486). Centre for Economic Policy Research.

Asatryan, Z., Bittschi, B., & Doerrenberg, P. (2017). Remittances and public finances: Evidence from oil-price shocks. *Journal of Public Economics*, *155*, 122-137.

Basile, L., & Olmastroni, F. (2020). Sharing the burden in a free riders' land: The EU migration and asylum policy in the views of public opinion and politicians. *European Journal of Political Research, 59*(3), 669-691.

Beck, T., Clarke, G., Groff, A., Keefer, P., & Walsh, P. (2001). New tools in comparative political economy: The database of political institutions. *World Bank Economic Review*, *15*(1), 165-176.

Bellemare, M. F., Masaki, T., & Pepinsky, T. B. (2017). Lagged explanatory variables and the estimation of causal effect. *Journal of Politics*, *79*(3), 949-963.

Benabou, R., & Tirole, J. (2006). Belief in a just world and redistributive politics. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *121*(2), 699-746.

Bhattacharyya, S., & Hodler, R. (2010). Natural resources, democracy and corruption. *European Economic Review*, *54*(4), 608-621.

Bloemraad, I., & Schönwälder, K. (2013). Immigrant and ethnic minority representation in Europe: Conceptual challenges and theoretical approaches. *West European Politics*, *36*(3), 564-579.

Bisin, A., & Verdier, T. (2000). "Beyond the melting pot": cultural transmission, marriage, and the evolution of ethnic and religious traits. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *115*(3), 955-988.

Bosetti, V., Cattaneo, C., & Peri, G. (2020). Should they stay or should they go? Climate migrants and local conflicts. *Journal of Economic Geography*, https://doi.org/10.1093/jeg/lbaa002

Broockman, D. E., & Butler, D. M. (2017). The causal effects of elite position-taking on voter attitudes: Field experiments with elite communication. *American Journal of Political Science*, *61*(1), 208-221.

Cameron, A. C., & Miller, D. L. (2015). A practitioner's guide to cluster-robust inference. *Journal of Human Resources*, *50*(2), 317-372.

Casey, G., & Klemp, M. (2021). Historical instruments and contemporary endogenous regressors. *Journal of Development Economics*, *149*, 102586.

Conley, T. G., Hansen, C. B., & Rossi, P. E. (2012). Plausibly exogenous. *Review of Economics and Statistics*, *94*(1), 260-272.

Dancygier, R. M., Lindgren, K. O., Oskarsson, S., & Vernby, K. (2015). Why are immigrants underrepresented in politics? Evidence from Sweden. *American Political Science Review*, *109*(4), 703-724.

Dancygier, R., Lindgren, K. O., Nyman, P., & Vernby, K. (2020). Candidate supply is not a barrier to immigrant representation: a case–control study. *American Journal of Political Science*, 1-16. DOI: 10.1111/ajps.12553

Dang, H. A., Knack, S., & Rogers, F. H. (2013). International aid and financial crises in donor countries. *European Journal of Political Economy*, *32*, 232-250.

Dreher, A., Fuchs, A., & Langlotz, S. (2019). The effects of foreign aid on refugee flows. *European Economic Review*, *112*, 127-147.

Dufour, J. M., & Taamouti, M. (2005). Projection-based statistical inference in linear structural models with possibly weak instruments. *Econometrica*, *73*(4), 1351-1365.

Dustmann, C., Fasani, F., Frattini, T., Minale, L., & Schönberg, U. (2017). On the economics and politics of refugee migration. *Economic policy*, *32*(91), 497-550.

Facchini, G., & Mayda, A. M. (2008). From individual attitudes towards migrants to migration policy outcomes: Theory and evidence. *Economic Policy*, *23*(56), 652-713.

Fernández, R., & Fogli, A. (2009). Culture: An empirical investigation of beliefs, work, and fertility. *American Economic Journal: Macroeconomics*, *1*(1), 146-77.

Grewenig, E., Lergetporer, P., Werner, K., Woessmann, L., 2019. Do Party Positions Affect the Public's Policy Preferences? IZA Discussion Paper #12249.

Hangartner, D., Dinas, E., Marbach, M., Matakos, K., & Xefteris, D. (2019). Does exposure to the refugee crisis make natives more hostile?. *American Political Science Review*, *113*(2), 442-455.

Hatton, T. J. (2009). The rise and fall of asylum: What happened and why?. *Economic Journal*, *119*(535), F183-F213.

Hatton, T. J. (2016). Refugees, asylum seekers, and policy in OECD countries. *American Economic Review, 106*(5), 441-45.

Hatton, T. J. (2020). Asylum migration to the developed world: Persecution, incentives, and policy. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, *34*(1), 75-93.

Ibáñez, A. M., & Vélez, C. E. (2008). Civil conflict and forced migration: The micro determinants and welfare losses of displacement in Colombia. *World Development*, *36*(4), 659-676.

Levine, R., Loayza, N., & Beck, T. (2000). Financial intermediation and growth: Causality and causes. *Journal of monetary Economics*, *46*(1), 31-77.

Lindgren, K. O., Oskarsson, S., & Dawes, C. T. (2017). Can Political Inequalities Be Educated Away? Evidence from a Large-Scale Reform. *American Journal of Political Science*, *61*(1), 222-236.

Luttmer, E. F., & Singhal, M. (2011). Culture, context, and the taste for redistribution. *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, *3*(1), 157-79.

Missirian, A., & Schlenker, W. (2017a). Asylum applications respond to temperature fluctuations. *Science, 358*(6370), 1610-1614.

Missirian, A., & Schlenker, W. (2017b). Asylum applications and migration flows. *American Economic Review*, *107*(5), 436-40.

Murat, M. (2020). Foreign aid, bilateral asylum immigration and development. *Journal of Population Economics, 33*(1), 79-114.

Murtin, F. (2013). Long-term determinants of the demographic transition, 1870–2000. *Review of Economics and Statistics*, *95*(2), 617-631.

Nunn, N., & Qian, N. (2014). US food aid and civil conflict. *American Economic Review*, *104*(6), 1630-66.

OECD (2023). Net ODA (indicator). doi: 10.1787/33346549-en (Accessed on 28 June 2023).

Piketty, T. (1995). Social mobility and redistributive politics. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *110*(3), 551-584.

Reed, W. R. (2015). On the practice of lagging variables to avoid simultaneity. *Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics*, *77*(6), 897-905.

Ruiz, I., & Vargas-Silva, C. (2013). The economics of forced migration. *Journal of Development Studies*, *49*(6), 772-784.

Stephan, W. G., Renfro, C. L., Esses, V. M., Stephan, C. W., & Martin, T. (2005). The effects of feeling threatened on attitudes toward immigrants. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *29*(1), 1-19.

Stock, J. H., and Yogo, M. (2002). Testing for weak instruments in linear IV regression. National Bureau of Economic Research Cambridge, Mass., USA.

Tabellini, G. (2008). The scope of cooperation: Values and incentives. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *123*(3), 905-950.

Tabellini, G. (2010). Culture and institutions: economic development in the regions of Europe. *Journal of the European Economic Association*, *8*(4), 677-716.

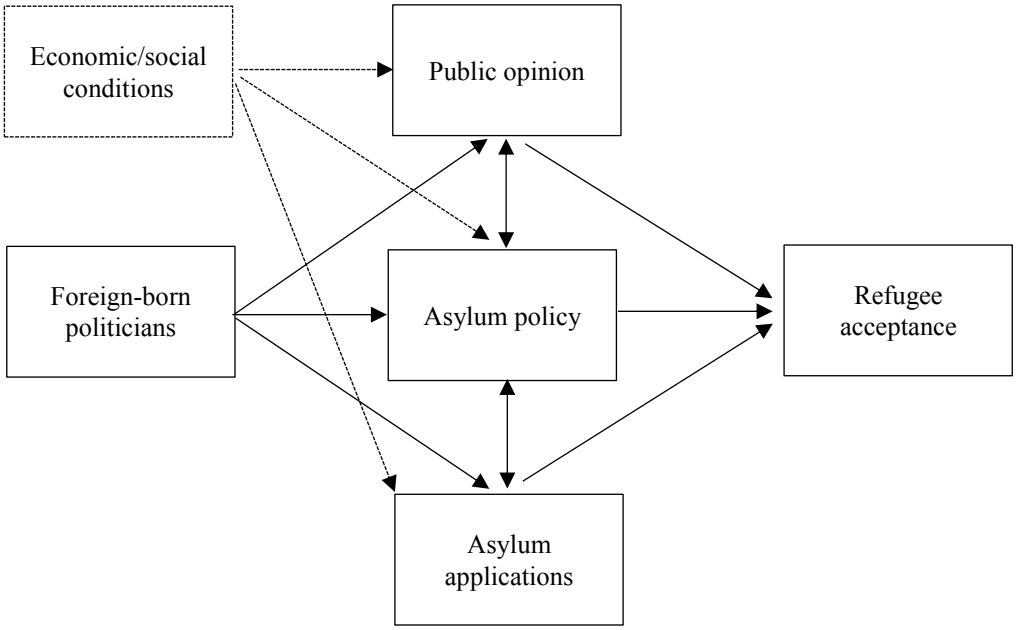
Trebbi, F., Aghion, P., & Alesina, A. (2008). Electoral rules and minority representation in US cities. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *123*(1), 325-357.

Trounstine, J., & Valdini, M. E. (2008). The context matters: The effects of single-member versus at-large districts on city council diversity. *American Journal of Political Science*, *52*(3), 554-569.

UNHCR. (2023). *Global Appeal 2023 update*. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Wängnerud, L. (2009). Women in parliaments: Descriptive and substantive representation. *Annual Review of Political Science*, *12*, 51-69.

Figure 1: Impacts of foreign-born politicians on refugees flows – Conceptual framework



Source: Authors' calculation.

Table 1: Impacts of foreign-born politicians on refugee acceptance – Main results

Dependent variable	Recognition rate		Refugee aid	
	RE model	RE-IV model	RE model	RE-IV model
	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)
Foreign-born politicians	1.659***	3.145***	0.522***	0.516*
	(0.245)	(0.557)	(0.179)	(0.282)
First stage of 2SLS (dependent variable is foreign-born politicians)				
Plurality*Lag of foreign-born politicians		0.619***		0.611***
		(0.057)		(0.063)
Kleibergen-Paap test		117.677		94.068
AR 95-CIs		[2.324, 4.109]		[0.015, 1.037]
Hausman test (p-value)	0.295		0.210	
Other controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	228	164	208	150
R-squared	0.427	0.358	0.343	0.355

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Robust standard errors (clustered at the country level) in parentheses. Control variables are GDP per capita, population size, share of young population, unemployment, number of disasters, political stability and government effectiveness. Dependent variables are in percentage. Foreign-born politicians are adjusted by total members of congress. Full results are reported in Table A2 (Appendix A). The critical value of the F-test from Stock and Yogo (2002) is 16.38.

Table 2: Impacts of foreign-born politicians on refugee acceptance – Country of birth

Dependent variable:	Recognition rate		Refugee aid	
	Poorer country	Richer country	Poorer country	Richer country
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Foreign-born politicians	7.000***	3.124***	1.507**	0.412
	(1.399)	(0.596)	(0.662)	(0.336)
Equality test	*p-value* = 0.001		*p-value* = 0.025	
First stage of 2SLS (dependent variable is foreign-born politicians)				
Plurality*Lag of foreign-born politicians	0.655***	0.686***	0.622***	0.691***
	(0.097)	(0.039)	(0.103)	(0.045)
Kleibergen–Paap F stat.	45.294	305.513	36.729	240.609
AR 95-CIs	[4.902, 10.225]	[2.099, 4.237]	[0.329, 2.829]	[-0.161, 1.034]
Other controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	164	164	150	150
R-squared	0.088	0.347	0.362	0.329

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Results of random effects model with instrument. Robust standard errors (clustered at the country level) in parentheses. Control variables are GDP per capita, population size, share of young population, unemployment, number of disasters, political stability and government effectiveness. Foreign-born politicians are adjusted by total members of congress. The critical value of the F-test from Stock and Yogo (2002) is 16.38.

Table 3: Heterogeneity tests

	(1)	(2)
Dependent variable	Recognition rate	Refugee aid
Panel A: Share of female politicians		
Foreign-born politicians*Female politicians	0.018*	0.000
	(0.011)	(0.008)
Panel B: Average age		
Foreign-born politicians*Average age	0.092**	0.056***
	(0.040)	(0.018)
Panel C: Years of experience		
Foreign-born politicians*Years of experience	0.074*	0.032*
	(0.039)	(0.017)
Panel D: Share of politicians with higher education (i.e., master and PhD)		
Foreign-born politicians*Higher education	0.053**	0.005
	(0.025)	(0.014)
Panel E: Share of left-wing politicians		
Foreign-born politicians*Left-wing politicians	0.036***	0.016***
	(0.007)	(0.004)
Other controls	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes
Observations	165	151

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Results of random effects model with instrument. The instrument is the interaction of plurality and lag of foreign-born politicians. Robust standard errors (clustered at the country level) in parentheses. Control variables are GDP per capita, population size, share of young population, unemployment, number of disasters, political stability and government effectiveness. Foreign-born politicians are adjusted by total members of congress.

Table 4: Mechanism analysis

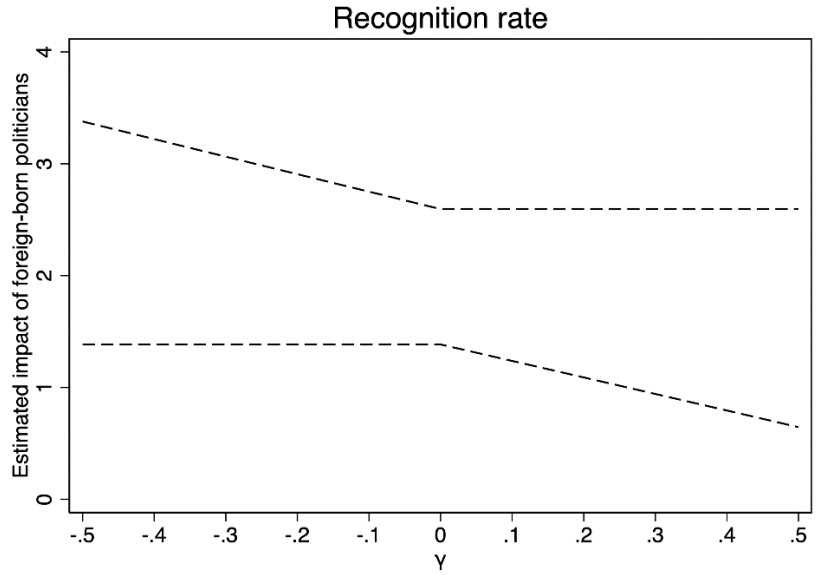
Dependent variable	(1) Asylum policy index	(2) Public opinion	(3) Total applications
Foreign-born politicians	-0.246**	-0.104*	-0.009
	(0.106)	(0.058)	(0.016)
Other controls	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	100	123	208
R-squared	0.350	0.707	0.855

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Results of random effects model with instrument. The instrument is the interaction of plurality and lag of foreign-born politicians. Robust standard errors (clustered at the country-year level) in parentheses. Control variables are GDP per capita, population size, share of young population, unemployment, number of disasters, political stability and government effectiveness. Foreign-born politicians are adjusted by total members of congress. Higher asylum policy index indicates strict policies toward refugees; higher index of public opinion is associated with higher openness toward refugees.

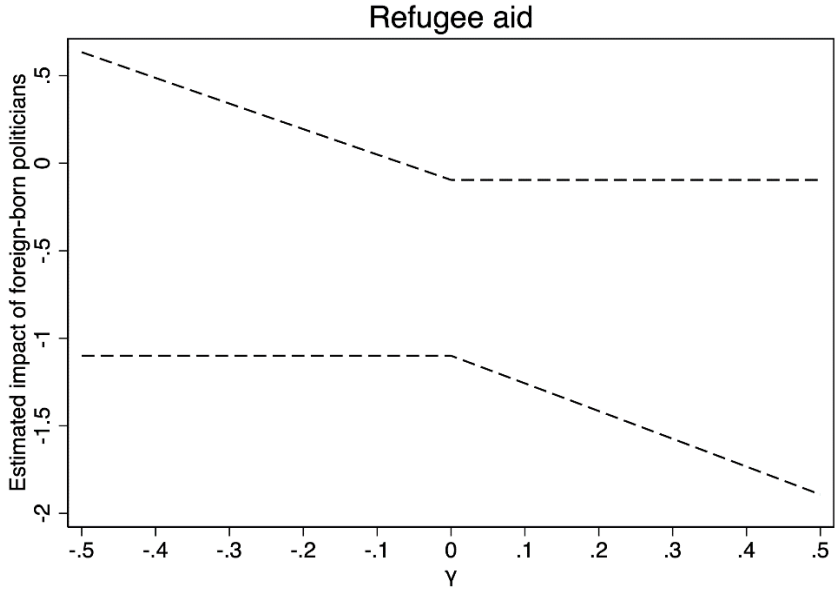
Appendix A: Additional Tables and Figures

Figure A1: Bounding IV estimates

(a) Recognition rate



(b) Refugee aid



Notes: The dashed lines represent the 95 percent confidence intervals. Confidence intervals and point estimates are calculated according to Conley *et al.* (2012).

Table A1: Test of dynamics of dependent variable

	(1)	(2)
Dependent variable	Recognition rate	Refugee aid
Recognition rate (previous election)	0.363	
	(0.242)	
Refugee aid (previous election)		0.570***
		(0.072)
Year FE	Yes	Yes
Observations	165	149
R-squared	0.668	0.899

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Results of panel model. Robust standard errors (clustered at the country level) in parentheses. Dependent variables are in percentage.

Table A2: Impacts of foreign-born politicians on refugee acceptance – Full results

Dependent variable	Recognition rate		Refugee aid	
	RE model	RE-IV model	RE model	RE-IV model
	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)
Foreign-born politicians	1.659***	3.145***	0.522***	0.516*
	(0.245)	(0.557)	(0.179)	(0.282)
GDP per capita (log)	2.339	19.189***	9.856***	9.801*
	(3.737)	(5.529)	(2.966)	(5.121)
Population size (log)	1.638	-1.188	-5.581***	-6.201***
	(1.028)	(1.949)	(1.123)	(1.867)
Share of young population (percent)	-1.223**	-2.841***	-1.373***	-1.788***
	(0.544)	(0.791)	(0.287)	(0.494)
Unemployment rate (percent)	-0.146	0.119	0.116	0.003
	(0.357)	(0.478)	(0.208)	(0.224)
Number of disasters	0.286	0.677**	0.498***	0.654***
	(0.179)	(0.341)	(0.133)	(0.215)
Political stability	2.212	-5.055	-15.891***	-14.872**
	(3.441)	(5.839)	(4.122)	(6.554)
Government effectiveness	2.957	2.193	15.343***	10.629
	(4.057)	(5.362)	(5.750)	(7.298)
First stage of 2SLS (dependent variable is foreign-born politicians)				
Plurality*Lag of foreign-born politicians		0.619***		0.611***
		(0.057)		(0.063)
Kleibergen–Paap F stat.		117.677		94.068
AR 95-CIs		[2.324, 4.109]		[0.015, 1.037]
Hausman test (p-value)	0.295		0.210	
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	228	164	208	150
R-squared	0.427	0.358	0.343	0.355

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Robust standard errors (clustered at the country level) in parentheses. Dependent variables are in percentage. Foreign-born politicians are adjusted by total members of congress. The critical value of the F-test from Stock and Yogo (2002) is 16.38.

Table A3: Impacts of foreign-born politicians on refugee acceptance with plausibly exogenous instrument

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Point estimate	Lower bound	Upper bound
Panel A: Dependent variable is recognition rate			
Foreign-born politicians	3.145***	0.645	3.378
	(0.557)		
Observations	164	164	164
Panel B: Dependent variable is refugee aid			
Foreign-born politicians	0.516*	-1.893	0.634
	(0.282)		
Observations	150	150	150
Other controls	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Robust standard errors (clustered at the country level) in parentheses. Control variables are GDP per capita, population size, share of young population, unemployment, number of disasters, political stability and government effectiveness. Foreign-born politicians are adjusted by total members of congress.

Table A4: Mechanism analysis – Components of asylum policy index

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Dependent variable	Access policies	Processing polices	Welfare policies
Foreign-born politicians	-0.073***	-0.141***	-0.274***
	(0.027)	(0.048)	(0.059)
Other controls	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	100	100	100
R-squared	0.803	0.860	0.685

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Results of random effects model with instrument. The instrument is the interaction of plurality and lag of foreign-born politicians. Robust standard errors (clustered at the country level) in parentheses. Control variables are GDP per capita, population size, share of young population, unemployment, number of disasters, political stability and government effectiveness. Data is provided by Hatton (2016). Higher asylum policy index indicates strict policies toward refugees. Foreign-born politicians are adjusted by total members of congress.

Table A5: Mechanism analysis – Components of public opinion

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Dependent variable	Economy	Culture	Place to live	Public opinion - WVS
Foreign-born politicians	0.001	0.049***	0.035*	0.031**
	(0.015)	(0.018)	(0.019)	(0.013)
Other controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	123	123	123	65
R-squared	0.644	0.690	0.712	0.558

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Results of random effects model with instrument. The instrument is the interaction of plurality and lag of foreign-born politicians. Robust standard errors (clustered at the country level) in parentheses. Control variables are GDP per capita, population size, share of young population, unemployment, number of disasters, political stability and government effectiveness. Foreign-born politicians are adjusted by total members of congress. Data for regressions in Columns (1)-(3) are taken from the European Social Survey, data for regression in Column (4) is taken from the World Value Survey. Higher index of public opinion is associated with higher openness toward refugees.

Appendix B: Data Sources

1. Politician background

The empirical analysis in this paper is based on data drawn from multiple sources. We collect data on politician background from 17 countries in the OECD – Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK and the USA—each year during 2002 – 2019. These countries were selected on the basis of the availability of politician background and refugee data. The sample therefore covers the most recent congresses as presented in Figure B1 (Appendix B). It should be noted that the term of congress varies across countries and over time. In each country, we collected information on the list of politicians elected from the government (or congress) websites (see Table B3, Appendix B). Politicians, as we define in this paper, are legislators/representatives who were elected to a specific term serving in parliament or congress. To avoid potential selection issues, we also checked and matched politicians' profile from other institutions (i.e., Pew Research Center) and media sources. Our key information in this analysis is politicians' birthplaces. Politicians are classified as foreign-born if their place of birth is different from the country where they are the policymaker. We do not include those born in remote territories such as Puerto Rico for the case of United States, or Greenland for the case of Denmark. We group politicians into two categories, those born in richer countries and those born in poorer countries, using the United Nations classification (United Nations, 2014). We also attempt to collect information on the birthplace of politicians' parents in order to examine the impact of the second generation. Unfortunately, this information is not available for a large number of countries in our sample. Still, we are able to construct a small sample of politicians from five English-speaking countries (i.e., Australia, Canada and New Zealand, United Kingdom, and United States). Therefore, our primary of interest in this research is the first generation, and we provide additional analysis of the second generation to support our main findings.

Other information pertaining to the age, gender, education, political experience, and political party of politicians are also collected in this analysis. For political experience, it is measured from the year that they started their political career (i.e., holding government office or participating political party). The party of politicians is classified into left-wing party and right-wing party with the former assumed to be more opened toward refugees. For those who are independent politicians, we treat them as missing, although the proportion is not significant (4 percent of our sample).

Once we have information on politicians' birthplaces and other characteristics, we calculate the share of foreign-born politicians, measured by the actual number of foreign-born politicians divided by the total member of congress. We use the same approach for other characteristics of politicians such as share of female politicians, share of politicians with higher education, and share of left-wing politicians. As elections were made any time during a year, we took note of the exact time the new congress was announced. For example, if an election takes place in July, we use information on politicians of the previous congress, while the opposition is applied for election held before June. Our final sample is an unbalanced panel that consists of 228 country-year observations from 17 countries in the period 2002 – 2019.

2. Refugee acceptance

Refugee and asylum seeker figures come from estimates compiled by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). The UNHCR provides standardised cross-country data on refugees and asylum seekers since 1950. The definition of a refugee is derived from the 1951 Geneva Convention on Refugees, namely someone who, owing to a wellfounded fear of persecution, is outside his or her country of normal residence and who is unable or unwilling

to return to it. In this analysis, we are interested in the recognition rate from the host country perspective. It is defined as the percentage of positive decisions from all decisions taken in a country in a year.[10] We only consider full-status recognitions as a refugee according to the Geneva Convention standards and exclude decisions that allow asylum seekers to stay for humanitarian reasons or that offer complementary protection while denying full recognition. These forms of alternative protection differ a lot between countries (many countries do not use them at all) and over time as well, while the Geneva Convention standards of refugee protection are rather stable, hence providing a comparable yardstick. We also use asylum decisions rather than asylum applications in the denominator because in some years more decisions are made than new applications lodged, which would lead to biased results if the number of positive decisions is greater than the applications. As we will show in the robustness checks in Appendix C, our findings remain consistent when using alternative constructions of the recognition rate.

While the main outcome of our analysis is recognition rate, we also collect data on refugee aid, measured by the expenditure spent on refugees in the host country. The data is taken from the OECD Statistics, available yearly by different categories and types of aid. We use the expenditure on refugees reported in constant price (2018 USD). We measure refugee aid as the share of refugee expenditure over total Official Development Aid (ODA). A potential issue with the refugee aid is that in-donor refugee costs may vary across country depending on the reporting practices (i.e., categories of refugees included, types of expenditures covered, and methodology used to assess costs). Therefore, our findings using refugee aid should be interpreted with caution.

Figure B3 (Appendix B) shows how the proportion of foreign-born politicians and recognition rate have varied over time. The highest share of foreign-born politicians is recorded in Australia, Canada, and New Zealand, while it is relatively low in United States, Norway and Finland. There is also evidence of the variation of foreign-born politicians within each country. Overall, the trend in foreign-born politicians is in line with the refugee recognition rate which lends support to our hypothesis.

3. Other variables

In the mechanism analysis, we collect data on potential channels from different sources. First, we use data on asylum policy index provided by Hatton (2016) available from 2002 to 2012. Given that asylum policies are difficult to quantify, Hatton (2016) constructs an index of asylum policies for a range of countries that captures changes in laws/regulations in three broad components: (i) policies that limit access to the territory; (ii) those that related to the processing of asylum claims; and (iii) those that represent living conditions of asylum seekers. Each category is divided into five subgroups, as shown in Table B1 (Appendix B). These are intended to reflect 'major' changes in policy, i.e., those that amount to significant changes in the conditions facing a substantial share of asylum seekers. For each category, the index increases by one unit when policy becomes significantly tougher, i.e., less advantageous to asylum seekers. If policy becomes significantly more favourable towards asylum seekers, then the index decreases by one unit. We then use a combined index which is the sum of all components. A higher asylum policy index is thus associated with more restrictive policy toward refugees. Figure B4 (Appendix B) provides a comparison of toughness of asylum policy in our sample. The figure reveals that countries in the OECD tend to put more restricts on policies over time. Across countries, Denmark and United Kingdom are countries with the most restrictive policy toward refugees, while the opposite is found in Canada and Sweden.

[10] The advantage of using the number of decisions being taken is that it is less of a subject to a shock than the number of applications.

Second, we collect information on public opinion toward immigrants from the European Social Survey (ESS). The survey has been conducted every two years since 2002, and widely used in the literature to examine public opinion toward refugees (e.g., Card *et al.*, 2005; Huber and Oberdabernig, 2016). The sample consists of about 2,000 observations per country/round covering most countries in EU and others such as Norway and Switzerland.[11] We use the following set of questions to measure public opinion toward immigrants: (i) "Is it good or bad for the economy that people come to live here from other countries?"; (ii) "Is country's cultural life generally undermined or enriched by people coming to live here from other countries?"; and (iii) "Is country made a worse or a better place to live by people coming to live here from other countries?". The response for each question is then measured by a scale of 10 points with higher point indicates positive attitude toward refugees. From this information, we construct an overall index of public opinion that is the average value of three dimensions per country/round. We present summary statistics of the index in Figure B5 (Appendix B). Unlike the asylum policy index, Figure B5 shows that public opinion toward refugees appears to be more positive over time. The highest index (positive attitudes) is found in Iceland and Sweden, while Austria and United Kingdom report the lowest values (negative attitudes).

A potential shortcoming of the ESS data is missing information for countries outside the Europe, such as Australia and United States. We thus supplement our analysis with data from the World Values Survey (WVS). The WVS is a set of integrable national surveys that ask the same questions in each country and contain information on a variety of demographic and social characteristics of the respondents. We use the last four waves of WVS in this analysis (i.e., waves 4 – 7 from 1999 to 2020). We measure attitudes toward immigrants through the following statement: "When jobs are scarce, employers should give priority to people of this country over immigrants". Answers from respondents are scaled from 1 (Agree) to 3 (Disagree).[12] We then construct an index of public opinion by taking the average value of respondents within a country in a given year, and a higher index is associated with positive attitudes toward refugees.

Finally, we collect data on a range of country characteristics taken from the World Development Indicators database including Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita (in 2010 constant term), unemployment rate, population and the share of young population (population aged between 0 and 14). These factors have been shown in previous studies as important determinants of flow of refugees to the recipient countries (Annen and Strickland, 2017; Murat, 2020). We further collect information on quality of government taken from the Worldwide Governance Indicators. Finally, we include number of natural disasters which is available from the Emergency Events Database (EM-DAT). In order to assure the exogeneity of the events, our analysis focuses on natural rapid onset disasters such as droughts, earthquakes, extreme temperature, floods, storms, etc. similar as in Strömberg (2007). To construct our instrumental variable, we collect data on political plurality derived from the 2020 Database of Political Institutions. We provide more details on our variables used in this analysis and the data source in Tables B2 and B3 (Appendix B), and we present the summary statistics in Table B4 (Appendix B). The average recognition rate (full-status) in our sample is 22 percent, while about 5 percent of our sample are foreign-born politicians. In terms of demographic characteristics, approximately 41 percent of foreign-born politicians are female, and 16 percent of those have higher education qualification (i.e., master's degree and doctoral degree). Finally, majority of foreign-born politicians (58 percent) are from the left-wing parties.

References

[11] While the number of countries has increased over time, not all of them are surveyed in each round.

[12] An exception is wave 7 when the response is recorded from 1 (Agree strongly) to 5 (Disagree strongly). We recode this information to ensure consistency across waves.

Annen, K., & Strickland, S. (2017). Global samaritans? Donor election cycles and the allocation of humanitarian aid. *European Economic Review, 96*, 38-47.

Card, D., Dustmann, C., & Preston, I. (2005). Understanding attitudes to immigration: The migration and minority module of the first European Social Survey (No. 0503). Centre for Research and Analysis of Migration (CReAM), Department of Economics, University College London.

Hatton, T. J. (2016). Refugees, asylum seekers, and policy in OECD countries. *American Economic Review, 106*(5), 441-45.

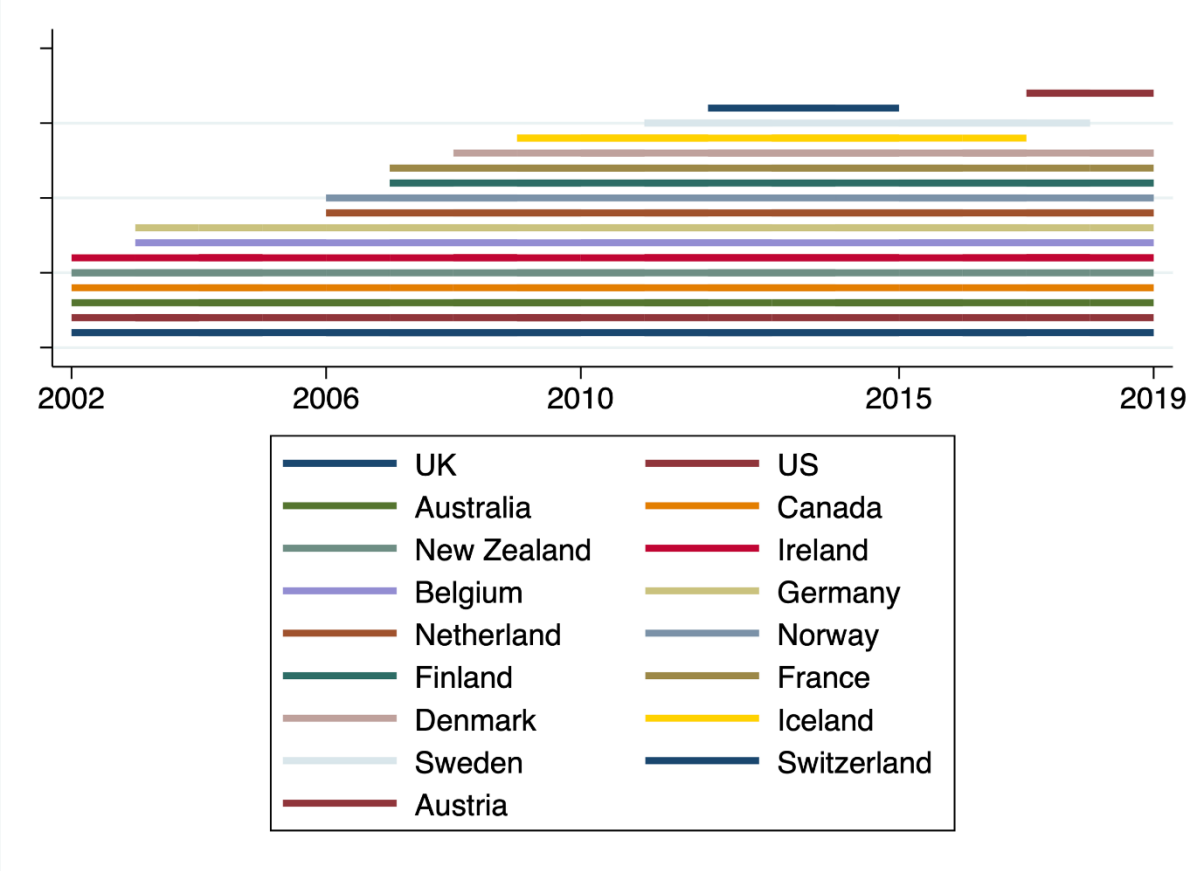
Huber, P., & Oberdabernig, D. A. (2016). The impact of welfare benefits on natives' and immigrants' attitudes toward immigration. *European Journal of Political Economy*, *44*, 53-78.

Murat, M. (2020). Foreign aid, bilateral asylum immigration and development. *Journal of Population Economics, 33*(1), 79-114.

Strömberg, D. (2007). Natural disasters, economic development, and humanitarian aid. *Journal of Economic Perspectives, 21*(3), 199-222.

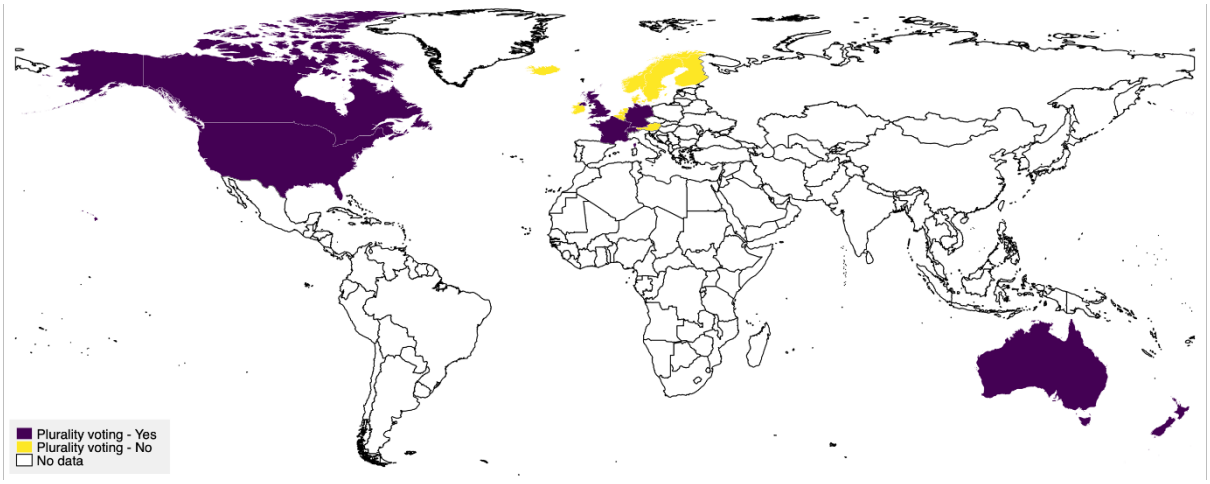
United Nations. (2014). World economic situation and prospects 2014. United Nations Publications.

Figure B1: Sample description



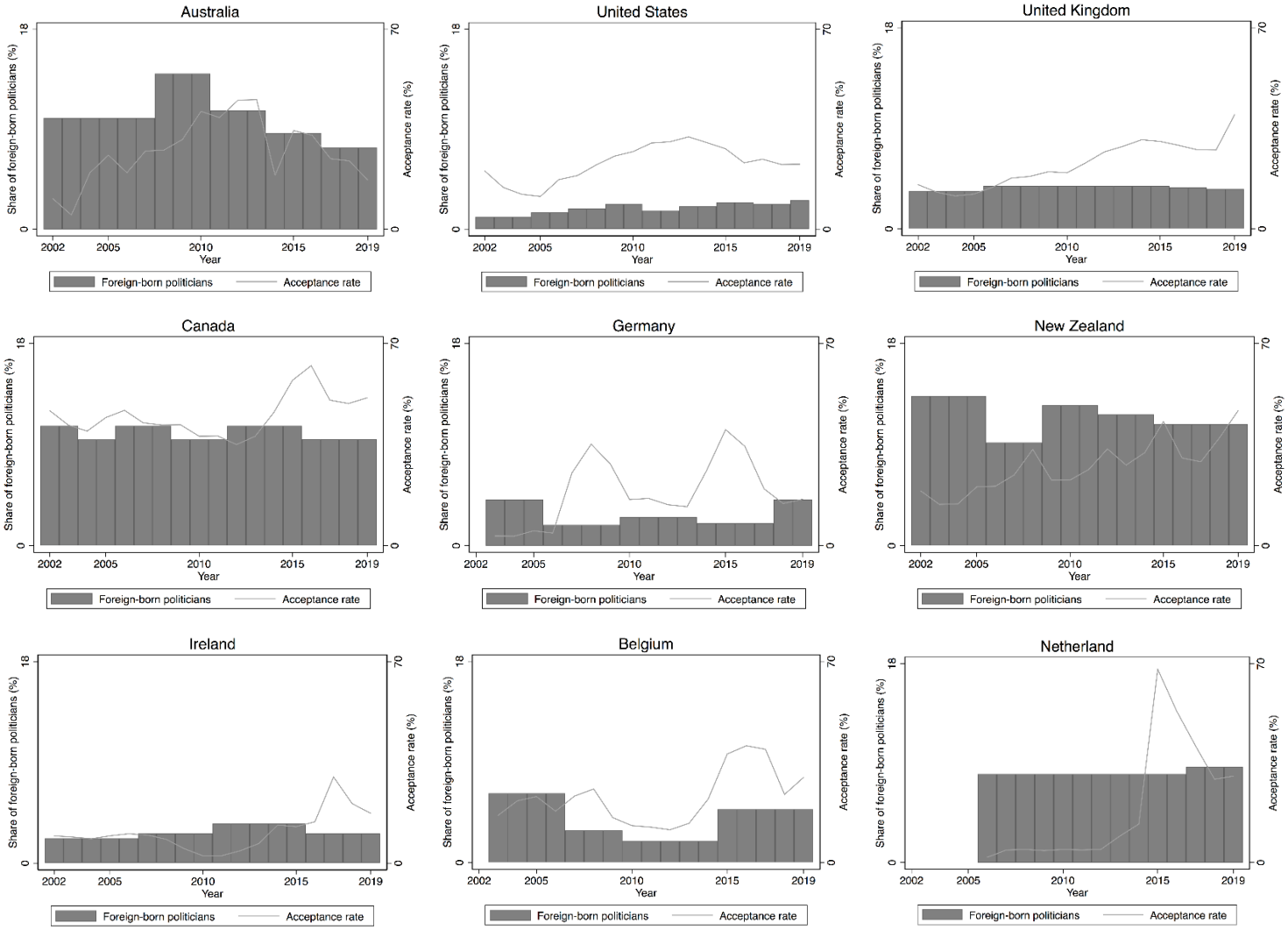
Source: Authors' calculation.

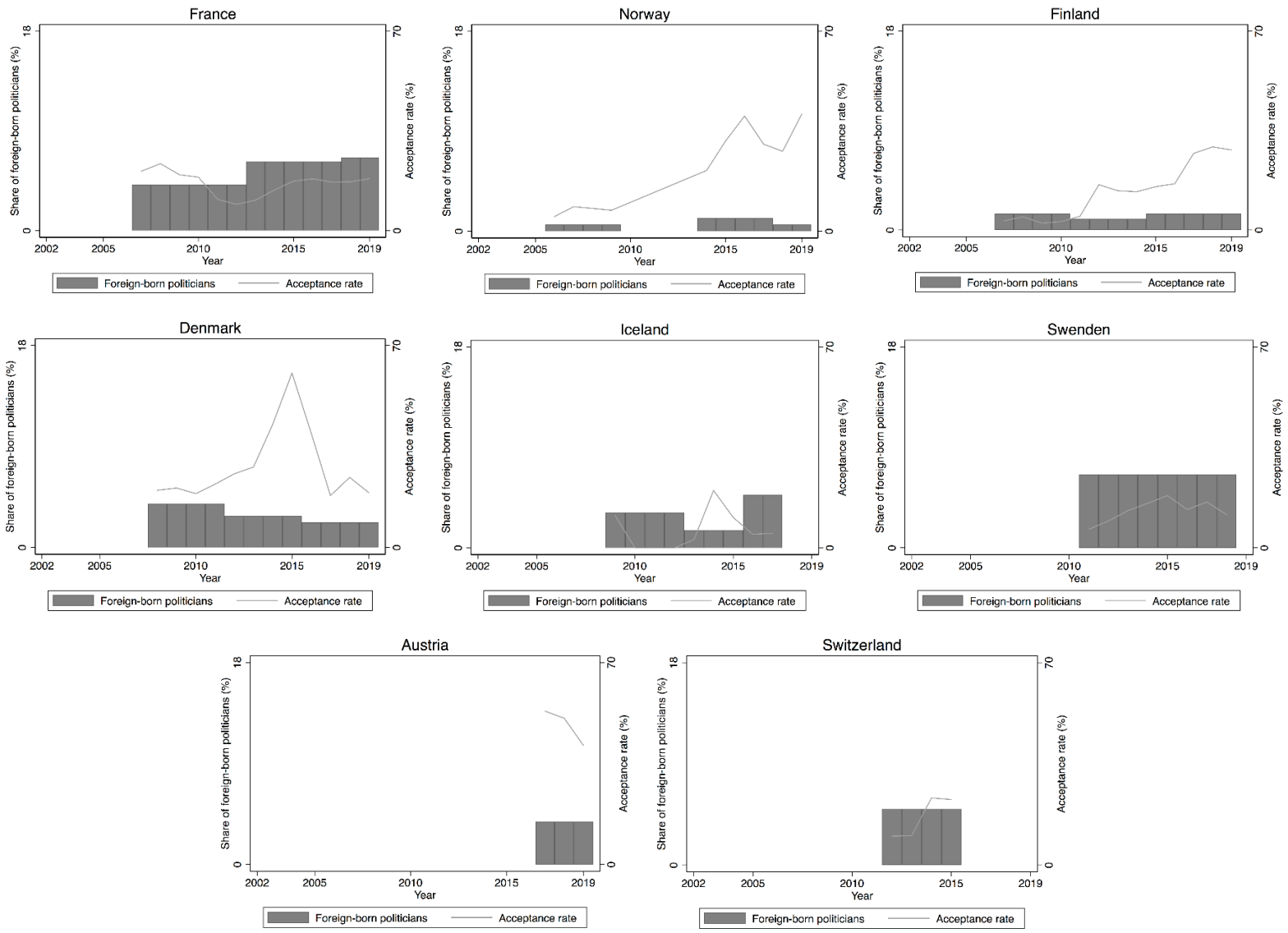
Figure B2: Plurality voting by country



Source: Authors' calculation.

Figure B3: Foreign-born politicians and refugees acceptance rate

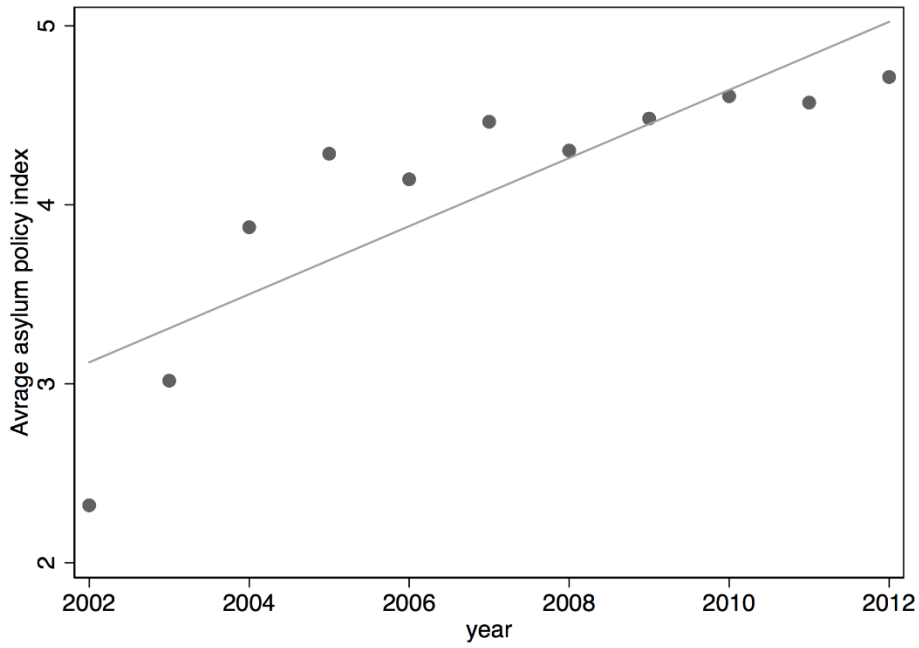




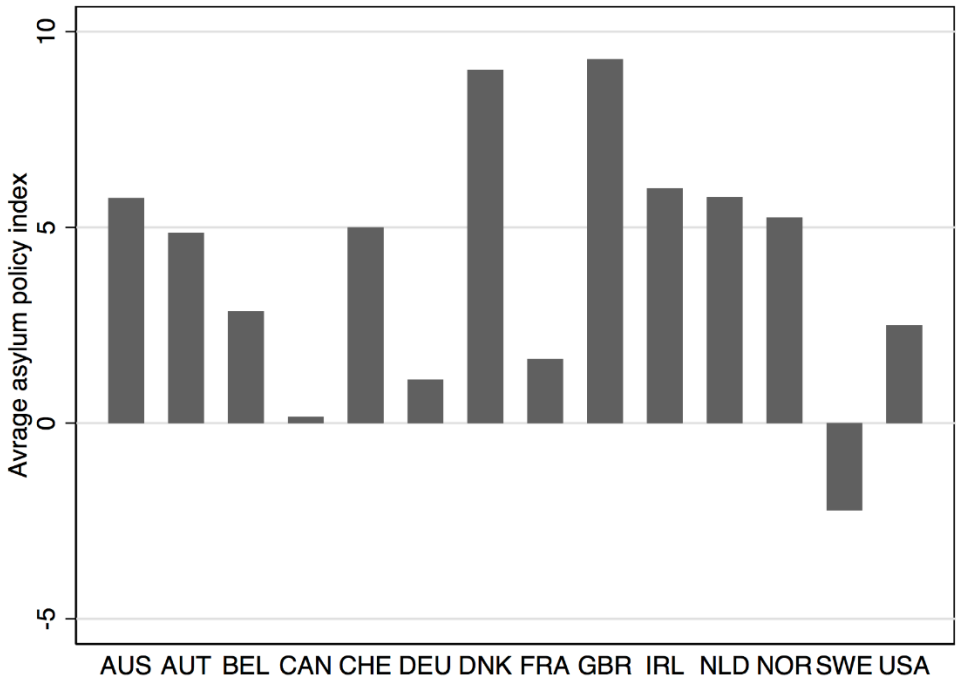
Source: Foreign-born politicians are adjusted by total members of congress. Refugees data is provided by UNHCR.

Figure B4: Asylum policy index

(a) Asylum policy index over time



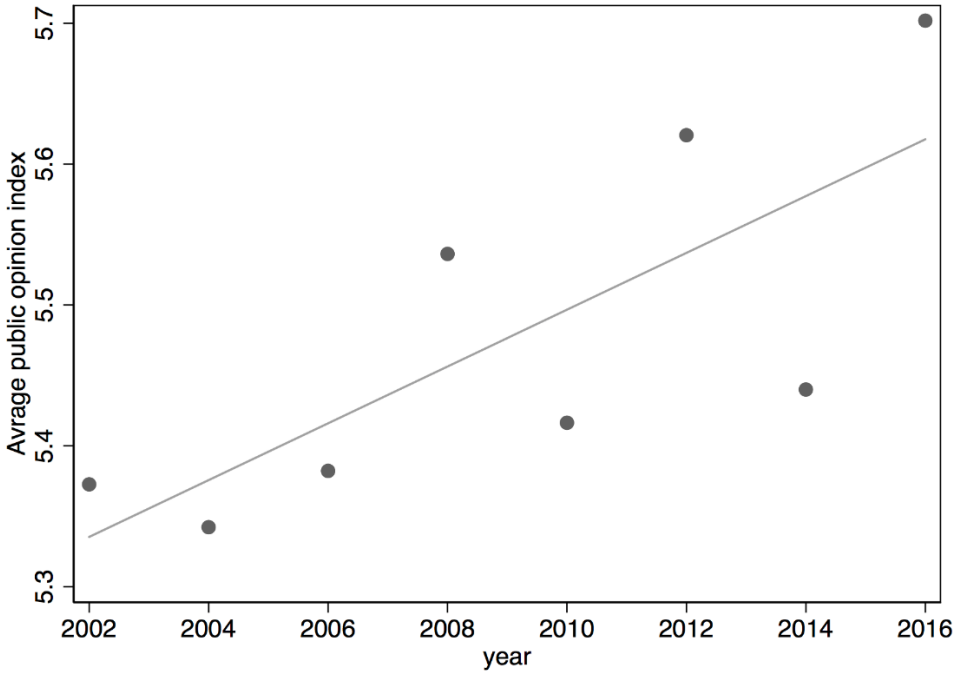
(b) Asylum policy index across countries



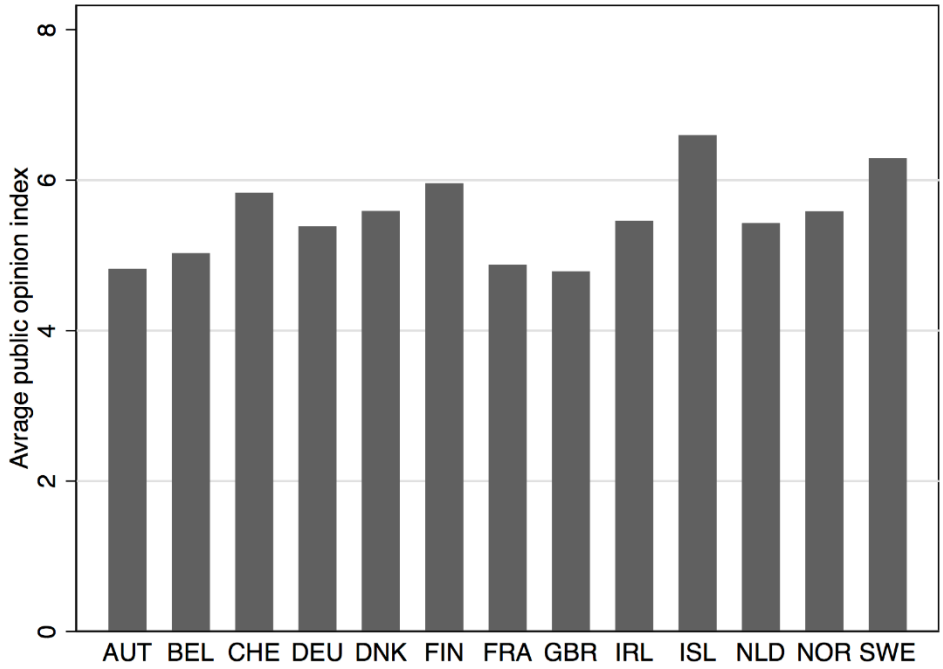
Notes: Asylum policy index is taken from Hatton (2016). Components of asylum policy index are summarized in Table B1 (Appendix B).

Figure B5: Public opinion index

(a) Public opinion index over time



(b) Public opinion index across countries



Notes: Public opinion data is derived from the European Social Survey (2002 – 2016).

Table B1: Components of asylum policy index

Components	Access policies	Processing polices	Welfare policies
1	Visa requirements	Definition of a refugee	Permission to work
2	Border control/security	Humanitarian category	Access to welfare benefits
3	Trafficking regulations	Manifestly unfounded claims	Detention policy
4	Carrier sanctions	Expedited procedures	Deportation policy
5	Application outside country	Scope for appeals	Family reunification

Source: Hatton (2016).

Table B2: Variables, definitions and sources

Variable name	Description and Data source
Recognition rate	Share of applications accepted (over total decisions). *Source: UN/UNHCR (https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/)*
Refugee aid	Share of expenditure on refugees (over total net ODA). *Source: OECD statistics (https://stats.oecd.org/)*
Foreign-born politicians	Share of politicians born outside the country (over total members of congress). *Source: Authors' collection from country's parliament/congress website (see Table B3)*
Other background information	Gender, year of birth, level of education, years of experience, and registered party. *Source: Authors' collection from country's parliament/congress website (see Table B3)*
Number of disasters	Total number of natural disasters. *Source: EM-DAT (https://www.emdat.be/database)*
(log) GDP p.c.	Log of the recipient country's GDP per capita (constant 2010 US$). *Source: World Development Indicators* *(http://datatopics.worldbank.org/world-development-indicators/)*
(log) Population	Log of the recipient country's total population size. *Source: World Development Indicators* *(http://datatopics.worldbank.org/world-development-indicators/)*
Unemployment	Unemployment rate. *Source: World Development Indicators* *(http://datatopics.worldbank.org/world-development-indicators/)*
Share of Young Population	Population aged between 0 and 14 in the country of origin as a share of the recipient country's total population size. *Source: World Development Indicators* *(http://datatopics.worldbank.org/world-development-indicators/)*
Political stability	Political Stability and Absence of Violence. *Source: Worldwide Governance Indicators* *(https://databank.worldbank.org/source/worldwide-governance-indicators)*
Government effectiveness	Perceptions of the quality of public services, civil service and the degree of its independence from political pressures. *Source: Worldwide Governance Indicators* *(https://databank.worldbank.org/source/worldwide-governance-indicators)*
Asylum policy index	Changes in a country's laws, regulations, or practice toward refugees. *Source: Hatton (2016)*
Public opinion index	Public opinion toward refugees. *Source: European Social Survey (2002 – 2016)* *(https://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/)*
(log) Asylum applications	Number of asylum applications.

	Source: UN/UNHCR (https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/)
Plurality	Legislators are elected using a winner-take-all / first past the post rule. *Source: DPI2020 Database of Political Institutions (http://dx.doi.org/10.18235/0003049)*

Table B3: Data sources

Country	Period	Source
Australia	2001 - 2019	https://www.aph.gov.au/
Austria	2017 - 2019	https://www.parlament.gv.at/
Belgium	2003 - 2019	https://www.senate.be/
Canada	1997 - 2019	https://www.ourcommons.ca/
Denmark	2007 - 2019	https://www.thedanishparliament.dk/
Finland	2007 - 2019	https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/
France	2007 - 2019	https://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/
Germany	2002 - 2019	https://www.bundestag.de/en/parliament
Iceland	2009 - 2017	https://www.althingi.is/
Ireland	2002 - 2019	https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/members/
Netherland	2006 - 2019	https://www.tweedekamer.nl/
New Zealand	2005 - 2019	https://www.parliament.nz/en/
Norway	2005 - 2019	https://www.stortinget.no/en/In-English
Sweden	2010 - 2018	https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/
Switzerland	2010 - 2014	https://www.parlament.ch/en
United Kingdom	2001 - 2019	https://members.parliament.uk/
United States	1999 - 2019	https://www.congress.gov/

Table B4: Summary statistics

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Refugee acceptance					
Recognition rate (percent)	228	22.412	13.639	0.000	68.059
Refugee aid (percent)	208	6.609	9.889	0.079	72.111
Foreign-born politicians					
Foreign-born politicians (percent)	228	5.218	3.582	0.592	14.000
Foreign-born politicians in poorer countries (percent)	228	2.356	2.059	0.000	7.500
Foreign-born politicians in richer countries (percent)	228	2.861	2.495	0.000	11.333
Control variables					
Average age (years)	228	50.716	5.196	33.667	60.528
Years of experience (years)	228	13.476	5.458	1.000	29.000
Share of higher education (percent)	228	11.186	10.296	0.000	40.000
Share of female politicians (percent)	228	40.621	20.987	0.000	100.000
Share of left-wing politicians (percent)	228	58.534	19.701	0.000	100.000
GDP per capita (log)	228	10.795	0.212	10.344	11.436
Population size (log)	228	16.633	1.513	12.670	19.609
Share of young population (percent)	228	18.023	2.116	13.217	22.264
Unemployment rate (percent)	228	6.421	2.199	2.493	15.451
Number of disasters	228	3.469	6.159	0.000	32.000
Political stability	228	0.906	0.360	-0.231	1.587
Government effectiveness	228	1.692	0.215	1.032	2.251
Mechanisms					
Asylum policy index	100	4.265	3.423	-4.000	11.000
Public opinion index	123	5.470	0.552	4.542	7.000
Asylum applications	228	9.615	1.776	3.401	13.522
Political institutions					
Plurality	228	0.544	0.499	0.000	1.000

Appendix C: Further robustness checks

We undertake a range of tests to back up the credibility of our findings. In Table C1 (Appendix C), we use alternative measures of refugee acceptance and check whether the impact of foreign-born politicians remains consistent. In Column (1), we employ the number of applications accepted (in log form) without dividing by the number of decisions. In Column (2), we consider applications with complementary protection and calculate the temporary protection rate, which is the share of individuals who are granted some kind of temporary or subsidiary protection out of all decisions taken. In Column (3), we take into account the total number of applications instead of number of decisions when calculating the recognition rate. In all cases, the results show that our findings remain consistent.

In this paper, we are also interested in whether foreign-born politicians have an effect on development aid in general. Indeed, there is substantial literature showing that distribution of aid is driven by political factors such as election cycles and policy alignment between a donor and a recipient country (Annen and Strickland, 2017; Rommel and Schaudt, 2020). The results presented in Table C2 (Appendix C) show a similar impact of foreign-born politicians in a range of sectors, except for civil.

Next, we construct alternative measures of foreign-born politicians to check the robustness of our findings. It should be noted that our main measure is calculated by taking the actual number of foreign-born politicians over total member of congress. However, the raw number of foreign-born policymakers might also be important. For instance, consider the simple case of two countries. The first country has 5 foreign-born members in the congress and a population of 50 congress members, resulting in a measure of 0.1. A second country might have 50 members but a population of 500, resulting in the same measure of 0.1. However, the country with a higher number of foreign-born politicians may have a stronger support for refugees. Therefore, we use the actual number of foreign-born politicians without controlling for total member of congress in Panel A of Table C3 (Appendix C). We do not observe any systematic changes in the impact of foreign-born politicians on refugee acceptance. Also, it is common in our sample that foreign-born politicians have the same home country. For example, approximately 35 percent of politicians in United States were born in Mexico and Cuba. The results in Panel B (Table C3, Appendix C) show that excluding foreign-born politicians from the same country does not affect our main findings.

In Table C4 (Appendix C), we group foreign-born politicians into different categories based on the region of their origin. Our results are robust independent of the region where the policymakers came from, and the impacts are more pronounced when using recognition rate as the outcome. We reach a similar conclusion when categorising politicians based on the income level of their home country. Specifically, we use the 2021 World Bank Atlas method that classifies economies into four income groups: low, lower-middle, upper-middle, and high income.[13] The results presented in Table C5 (Appendix C) confirm our main findings. While we are not able to identify whether the foreign-born politicians were refugees themselves, we use two proxies of whether they were born in a country that suffered from conflict or natural disaster in their year of birth. We employ disaster data from the EM-DAT database and conflict data from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (Pettersson and Öberg, 2020). Approximately 31 percent of politicians in our sample witnessed a disaster in their birthyear, while such proportion for those who suffered from conflict is 12 percent. Again, the results provide strong

[13] Low-income economies are defined as those with a GNI per capita of $1,035 or less in 2019; lower middle-income economies are those with a GNI per capita between $1,036 and $4,045; upper middle-income economies are those with a GNI per capita between $4,046 and $12,535; high-income economies are those with a GNI per capita of $12,536 or more.

evidence of the impact of foreign-born politicians on refugee acceptance (see Table C6, Appendix C).

As discussed earlier, the primary interest of our study is the first-generation immigrants, which refer to those born outside the country of their leadership. An interesting question thus would be whether the impact exists for the second generation or those whose parents were born in foreign countries.[14] Such information is not available for all countries in our sample. Still, we are able to derive a small sample of politicians in five English-speaking countries. Given the small number of observations, we use a simple OLS and treat foreign-born politicians as exogenous. Our results are presented in Table C7 (Appendix C) which show no evidence of refugee favouritism. This is in line with findings from previous studies that favourable attitudes towards immigration are found only for the first-generation immigrants (Becker, 2019). A possible explanation is that the second-generation migrants are well integrated into the society and have not had experiences suffered by the first generation, which in turn determine their attitudes towards refugees.

In terms of model specification, we also conduct several robustness tests using bootstrap standard errors and alternative instrument variables. First, our analysis is based on a sample of 17 countries. We note that the small number of clusters may raise a concern of low statistical power (MacKinnon and Webb, 2017). To address this issue, we use the wild bootstrap method suggested by Cameron *et al.* (2008) and present the 95 percent confidence intervals of the variable of interest in Table C8 (Appendix C). We find that clustering the bootstrap errors provides comparable estimates compared to our main estimation in Table 1. Second, we use plurality (without interacting with the lagged explanatory variable) as alternative instrument. The results shown in Panel A Table C9 (Appendix C) are generally consistent with our main finding. We also use other measure of political institutions when constructing the instrument. Specifically, we use the number of jurisdictional hierarchies in a country (Alesina *et al.*, 2013).[15] The political hierarchies index is taken from the Ethnographic Atlas. We argue that the index is strongly correlated with political openness, which determines the probability of a foreign-born individual being elected as politician, and they also affect refugee acceptance solely via the share of foreign-born politicians. The results are presented in Panel B of Table C9 which show that foreign-born politicians are associated with both higher recognition rate and refugee aid.

References

Alesina, A., Giuliano, P., & Nunn, N. (2013). On the origins of gender roles: Women and the plough. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *128*(2), 469-530.

Annen, K., & Strickland, S. (2017). Global samaritans? Donor election cycles and the allocation of humanitarian aid. *European Economic Review, 96*, 38-47.

Becker, C. C. (2019). The influence of a migration background on attitudes towards immigration. *Social Inclusion*, *7*(4), 279-292.

Cameron, A. C., Gelbach, J. B., & Miller, D. L. (2008). Bootstrap-based improvements for inference with clustered errors. *Review of Economics and Statistics*, *90*(3), 414-427.

MacKinnon, J. G., & Webb, M. D. (2017). Wild bootstrap inference for wildly different cluster sizes. *Journal of Applied Econometrics*, *32*(2), 233-254.

Pettersson, T., & Öberg, M. (2020). Organized violence, 1989–2019. *Journal of Peace Research*, *57*(4), 597-613.

Rommel, T., & Schaudt, P. (2020). First impressions: How leader changes affect bilateral aid. *Journal of Public Economics, 185*, 104107.

[14] In this case, politicians are native-born residents of their country of leadership.

[15] We calculate the average value in the period of time when data is available.

Roodman, D., Nielsen, M. Ø., MacKinnon, J. G., & Webb, M. D. (2019). Fast and wild: Bootstrap inference in Stata using boottest. *Stata Journal*, *19*(1), 4-60.

Table C1: Robustness tests – Alternative measure of refugee recognition

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Dependent variable	Number of people accepted	Complementary protection	Recognized decision over total application
Foreign-born politicians	0.097***	1.481***	2.164***
	(0.029)	(0.405)	(0.673)
First stage of 2SLS (dependent variable is foreign-born politicians)			
Plurality*Lag of foreign-born politicians	0.619***	0.619***	0.619***
	(0.057)	(0.057)	(0.057)
Kleibergen-Paap test	117.677	117.677	117.677
AR 95-CIs	[0.046, 0.151]	[0.667, 2.289]	[0.957, 3.493]
Other controls	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	164	164	164
R-squared	0.891	0.455	0.146

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Results of random effects model with instrument. The instrument is the interaction of plurality and lag of foreign-born politicians. Robust standard errors (clustered at the country level) in parentheses. Control variables are GDP per capita, population size, share of young population, unemployment, number of disasters, political stability and government effectiveness. Foreign-born politicians are adjusted by total members of congress.

Table C2: Impacts of foreign-born politicians on humanitarian aid

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Dependent variable	Education	Health	Agriculture	Infrastructure	Civil
Foreign-born politicians	1.036***	0.734**	0.431*	0.489*	0.334
	(0.368)	(0.284)	(0.254)	(0.271)	(0.252)
First stage of 2SLS (dependent variable is foreign-born politicians)					
Plurality*Year	0.622***	0.622***	0.622***	0.629***	0.627***
	(0.059)	(0.059)	(0.059)	(0.061)	(0.061)
Kleibergen-Paap test	111.323	111.323	110.232	107.102	107.235
AR 95-CIs	[0.251, 1.924]	[0.104, 1.416]	[-0.237, 1.137]	[-0.005, 1.023]	[-0.215, 0.901]
Other controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	151	151	150	144	145
R-squared	0.060	0.053	0.158	0.520	0.237

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Results of random effects model with instrument. The instrument is the interaction of plurality and lag of foreign-born politicians. Robust standard errors (clustered at the country level) in parentheses. Control variables are GDP per capita, population size, share of young population, unemployment, number of disasters, political stability and government effectiveness. Foreign-born politicians are adjusted by total members of congress. Dependent variables are in share of total net ODA.

Table C3: Robustness tests – Alternative measure of foreign-born politicians

	(1)	(2)
Dependent variable	Recognition rate	Refugee aid
Panel A: Number of foreign-born politicians		
Foreign-born politicians	0.647***	0.114*
	(0.118)	(0.060)
First stage of 2SLS (dependent variable is foreign-born politicians)		
Plurality*Year	0.785***	0.779***
	(0.046)	(0.047)
Kleibergen-Paap test	297.298	275.825
AR 95-CIs	[0.441, 0.870]	[-0.042, 0.270]
Panel B: Share of foreign-born politicians from different countries		
Foreign-born politicians	6.819***	1.239**
	(1.387)	(0.563)
First stage of 2SLS (dependent variable is foreign-born politicians)		
Plurality*Year	0.540***	0.538***
	(0.078)	(0.085)
Kleibergen-Paap test	48.136	40.246
AR 95-CIs	[4.946, 9.496]	[-0.219, 2.650]
Other controls	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes
Observations	164	150

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Results of random effects model with instrument. The instrument is the interaction of plurality and lag of foreign-born politicians. Robust standard errors (clustered at the country level) in parentheses. Control variables are GDP per capita, population size, share of young population, unemployment, number of disasters, political stability and government effectiveness. Dependent variables are in percentage.

Table C4: Impacts of foreign-born politicians on refugee acceptance – Politicians by region

	(1)	(2)
Dependent variable	Recognition rate	Refugee aid
Panel A: Foreign-born politicians from Asia		
Foreign-born politicians	13.248***	3.313*
	(2.798)	(1.932)
Panel B: Foreign-born politicians from Europe		
Foreign-born politicians	2.567***	0.241
	(0.577)	(0.294)
Panel C: Foreign-born politicians from Americans		
Foreign-born politicians	15.182***	5.458***
	15.182***	5.458***
Panel D: Foreign-born politicians from Africa		
Foreign-born politicians	4.113**	1.125*
	(1.733)	(0.671)
Panel E: Foreign-born politicians from Oceania		
Foreign-born politicians	6.369**	-0.101
	(2.656)	(1.765)
Other controls	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes
Observations	164	150

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Results of random effects model with instrument. The instrument is the interaction of plurality and lag of foreign-born politicians. Robust standard errors (clustered at the country level) in parentheses. Control variables are GDP per capita, population size, share of young population, unemployment, number of disasters, political stability and government effectiveness. Foreign-born politicians are adjusted by total members of congress. Dependent variables are in percentage.

Table C5: Impacts of foreign-born politicians on refugee acceptance – Politicians by income level of home country

	(1)	(2)
Dependent variable	Recognition rate	Refugee aid
Panel A: Foreign-born politicians from low-income country		
Foreign-born politicians	33.144***	4.769*
	(6.311)	(2.658)
Panel B: Foreign-born politicians from lower-middle-income country		
Foreign-born politicians	4.661***	1.633***
	(1.617)	(0.571)
Panel C: Foreign-born politicians from upper-middle-income country		
Foreign-born politicians	8.708***	0.620
	(1.980)	(0.974)
Panel D: Foreign-born politicians from high-income country		
Foreign-born politicians	2.320***	0.193
	(0.400)	(0.245)
Other controls	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes
Observations	164	150

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Results of random effects model with instrument. The instrument is the interaction of plurality and lag of foreign-born politicians. Robust standard errors (clustered at the country level) in parentheses. Control variables are GDP per capita, population size, share of young population, unemployment, number of disasters, political stability and government effectiveness. Foreign-born politicians are adjusted by total members of congress. Dependent variables are in percentage.

Table C6: Impacts of foreign-born politicians on refugee acceptance – Politicians from conflict/natural disaster country

	(1)	(2)
Dependent variable	Recognition rate	Refugee aid
Panel A: Foreign-born politicians from conflict country		
Foreign-born politicians	11.892***	2.252*
	(2.007)	(1.173)
First stage of 2SLS (dependent variable is foreign-born politicians)		
Plurality*Year	0.955***	0.953***
	(0.082)	(0.090)
Kleibergen-Paap test	134.600	111.694
AR 95-CIs	[8.205, 16.072]	[-0.705, 5.190]
Panel B: Foreign-born politicians from disaster country		
Foreign-born politicians	14.374***	4.050*
	(3.894)	(2.285)
First stage of 2SLS (dependent variable is foreign-born politicians)		
Plurality*Year	0.440***	0.356***
	(0.102)	(0.110)
Kleibergen-Paap test	18.672	10.393
AR 95-CIs	[9.651, 24.597]	[0.447, 9.799]
Other controls	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes
Observations	164	150

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Results of random effects model with instrument. The instrument is the interaction of plurality and lag of foreign-born politicians. Robust standard errors (clustered at the country level) in parentheses. Control variables are GDP per capita, population size, share of young population, unemployment, number of disasters, political stability and government effectiveness. Foreign-born politicians are adjusted by total members of congress. Dependent variables are in percentage.

Table C7: Impacts of foreign-born politicians on refugee acceptance – Second generation

	(1)	(2)
Dependent variable	Recognition rate	Refugee aid
Foreign-born politicians	-1.363	0.637
	(1.275)	(0.442)
Other controls	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes
Observations	78	73
R-squared	0.805	0.669

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Results of OLS. Control variables are GDP per capita, population size, share of young population, unemployment, number of disasters, political stability and government effectiveness. Dependent variables are in percentage. Foreign-born politicians (second generation) are adjusted by total members of congress.

Table C8: Impacts of foreign-born politicians on refugee acceptance – Bootstrap standard errors

	(1)	(2)
Dependent variable	Recognition rate	Refugee aid
Foreign-born politicians	3.145***	0.516
	(1.013)	(0.516)
p-value from wild bootstrap	0.017	0.349
95 percent confidence interval	[0.714, 9.480]	[-0.542, 2.030]
Other controls	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes
Observations	164	150
R-squared	0.358	0.355

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Results of random effects model with instrument. The instrument is the interaction of plurality and lag of foreign-born politicians. Robust standard errors (clustered at the country level) in parentheses. Control variables are GDP per capita, population size, share of young population, unemployment, number of disasters, political stability and government effectiveness. Dependent variables are in percentage. Foreign-born politicians are adjusted by total members of congress. Bootstrap p-values for the null hypothesis that foreign-born politicians effects are equal to zero are calculated using the score bootstrap with 999 replications, and the code by Roodman *et al.* (2019).

Table C9: Impacts of foreign-born politicians on refugee acceptance – Alternative instruments

	(1)	(2)
Dependent variable	Recognition rate	Refugee aid
Panel A: Instrument is plurality		
Foreign-born politicians	2.896**	0.246*
	(1.191)	(0.128)
First stage of 2SLS (dependent variable is foreign-born politicians)		
Plurality	3.960**	4.017**
	(1.634)	(1.653)
Kleibergen-Paap test	74.753	71.148
AR 95-CIs	[2.008, 3.923]	[0.146, 0.346]
Observations	228	212
R-squared	0.522	0.518
Panel B: Instrument is political hierarchies		
Foreign-born politicians	1.925***	0.143
	(0.693)	(0.142)
First stage of 2SLS (dependent variable is foreign-born politicians)		
Political hierarchies	-1.824***	-1.868***
	(0.398)	(0.388)
Kleibergen-Paap test	56.690	56.745
AR 95-CIs	[0.931, 2.918]	[-0.112, 0.398]
Observations	228	212
R-squared	0.394	0.325
Other controls	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Results of random effects model with instrument. Robust standard errors (clustered at the country level) in parentheses. Control variables are GDP per capita, population size, share of young population, unemployment, number of disasters, political stability and government effectiveness. Dependent variables are in percentage. Foreign-born politicians are adjusted by total members of congress.

Appendix D: Overview of asylum policies

In contrast to economic migrants, refugee migrants are forced to leave their origin countries, often due to unforeseen and sudden events that put their lives at risk. Their migration decisions, therefore, are generally neither deliberate nor planned, and less based on economic considerations. Their arrival in a host country is often dictated by contingency, after perilous and unpredictable journeys. While receiving countries typically choose economic migrants based on economic considerations, the case of refugee migration is different as they are fulfilling their obligations as outlined in the 1951 Geneva Convention and its 1967 protocol. As such, the decision to grant asylum seekers official refugee status is primarily based on humanitarian considerations, which in turn is determined by attitudes and perceptions of public opinion and political leaders toward refugees (Basile and Olmastroni, 2020).

While the number of refugees and asylum seekers is increasing, the destinations are typically developing, and the number of those arriving at the doors of the rich world is relatively small. Indeed, only 16 percent of refugees are hosted by countries in the developed regions (Brell *et al.*, 2020). Despite the formal commitment to the protection of refugees, as outlined in the Geneva Convention, some wealthier countries (i.e., richer countries of Europe, North America, and Oceania) at times do not appear to regard refugees with compassion and focus on their protection. Instead, they even sometimes greet refugees with intolerance, distrust and contempt, to some extent based on the perception that there is a trade-off between the well-being of refugees and the well-being of established members of potential host countries (Bansak *et al.*, 2016). The rise of right-wing ideology and resistance to the admittance of refugees is fuelled and sustained by negative representations of refugees in the public arena, and by the popular view that refugees threaten members of the host society.

While asylum policies may differ across countries, in overall, they tend to be tightened over time, particularly in the developed countries. In general, policies that may influence the volume of asylum applications can be divided into three types. First, policies such as border surveillance, visa policies, and carrier sanctions seek to deny admission to asylum procedures by restricting access to the border. In the European migration crisis of 2015−2016, countries in the EU's eastern border adopted strict controls on border crossing and admission to asylum procedures. Second, rules that are applied in processing asylum claims can influence the likelihood that an applicant gains recognition. For example, when Sweden granted all Syrian asylum seekers permanent instead of temporary residence in 2013, the number of applications more than doubled (Andersson and Jutvik, 2019). Third, restrictions on movement that apply during processing and cuts in welfare benefits, such as the 47 percent benefit cut introduced by Denmark in 2015, might also deter asylum applications.

In this context, the role of political leaders is important in shaping public opinion and therefore asylum policy. A case study is the changing attitudes toward refugees in Canada with the election of a new Liberal government in October 2015. As part of his election campaign, Justin Trudeau, leader of the Liberal Party, promised to bring 25,000 Syrian refugees to Canada by the end of 2015. His government also implemented a series of activities to welcome refugees such as (i) publicly greeting the refugees at the airport with the statement "you're safe at home now"; and setting up a website at which Canadians could track the arrival of Syrian refugees in communities across the country, receive information on how they could help welcome the refugees (Austen, 2015). The benefits of these actions are demonstrated by the media adopting this positive frame and public opinion raising support for the government's refugee resettlement plan (Angus Reid Institute, 2016).

Case studies of foreign-born politicians in the richer world are also abundant. For example, Congressman Ted W. Lieu introduced a House Resolution reaffirming the United States

commitment to the protection of refugees and displaced persons in 2020.[16] Similarly, Afzal Khan provides strong support for the Lift the Ban campaign in United Kingdom which allows asylum seekers the rights to work without any restrictions on the type of job.[17] Another example is Maria Vamvakinou who fought against the Australian Prime Minister's proposed lifetime ban on refugees in 2016 (Capone and Leader, 2016). Given these anecdote evidence, our research aims to provide an empirical evidence of the impact of foreign-born politicians on refugee acceptance using a cross-country sample in the OECD.

References

Andersson, H., & Jutvik, K. (2019). Do Asylum-seekers Respond to Policy Changes? Evidence from the Swedish-Syrian Case. Mimeo Uppsala University.

Angus Reid Institute. (2016). Canadians divided on legacy of Syrian refugee resettlement plan. *Angus Reid Institute*. Retrieved from http://angusreid.org/canada-refugee-resettlement-plan/

Austen, I. (2015, December 11). Syrian refugees greeted by Justin Trudeau in Canada. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/12/world/americas/syria-refugees-arrive-in-canada.html?_r=2

Bansak, K., Hainmueller, J., & Hangartner, D. (2016). How economic, humanitarian, and religious concerns shape European attitudes toward asylum seekers. *Science*, *354*(6309), 217-222.

Basile, L., & Olmastroni, F. (2020). Sharing the burden in a free riders' land: The EU migration and asylum policy in the views of public opinion and politicians. *European Journal of Political Research, 59*(3), 669-691.

Brell, C., Dustmann, C., & Preston, I. (2020). The Labor Market Integration of Refugee Migrants in High-Income Countries. *Journal of Economic Perspectives, 34*(1), 94-121.

Capone, A., & Leader, H. (2016, November 23). Calwell MP hits out at plans to ban boat asylum seekers. *Herald Sun*. Retrieved from https://www.heraldsun.com.au/leader/north-west/calwell-mp-hits-out-at-plans-to-ban-boat-asylum-seekers/news-story/466ecda421fa9be7cc6b6cb17ec58a17

[16] See https://lieu.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/reps-lieu-and-ros-lehtinen-introduce-world-refugee-day-resolution

[17] See https://www.afzalkhan.org.uk/team/news-posts/2019/04/23/meeting-with-refugee-action/