

# Chapter 24

## Migration Policy Indicators



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Over the last 20 years, researchers have undertaken systematic comparisons of migration policies—mainly at the national level—by creating [indicators and indexes](#). These indicators and indexes have been used to analyse differences and trends in migration policy (de Haas et al., [2015](#); Helbling & Kalkum, [2018](#)) and to assess the determinants and effects of policy (Czaika & de Haas, [2013](#); Helbling & Michalowski, [2017](#); Helbling & Leblang, [2019](#)).

The proliferation of projects in the last 10 years has resulted in dozens of indicator datasets that measure components such as the degree of restrictiveness of these policies, the extent of equal treatment between migrants and non-migrants, and other dimensions of policy regimes and models (see Helbling & Michalowski, [2017](#); Helbling & Solano, [2021](#); Scipioni & Urso, [2018](#)). From these datasets, researchers have often created aggregations and indexes in order to provide a summary score—a snapshot of the migration policy framework in a given country at a specific period of time.

Analysing the character of migration policies over time and space is important to understand policy trends and differences between countries and to explore the causes and effects of international migration (Gest et al., [2014](#)). However, this chapter does not address the effect of migration policies on migration and integration outcomes (Czaika & de Haas, [2013](#); Helbling & Michalowski, [2017](#); Helbling & Leblang, [2019](#); Solano, [2021](#)). Although an increasing number of papers has analysed this link, a consensus about the influence of migration policies is far from being reached (Czaika & de Haas, [2013](#)). On the one hand, many scholars have argued that efforts by states to regulate and restrict immigration have often failed (e.g., Bhagwati, [2003](#); Castles, [2004](#); Cornelius et al., [2004](#); Düvell, [2006](#)). The argument is that international migration is mainly [driven](#) by structural factors such as labour market

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imbalances, inequalities in wealth, and political conflicts in origin countries, factors on which migration policies have little or no influence. On the other hand, this sceptical view is contrasted by other researchers that have demonstrated that migration policies have been increasingly effective in influencing the magnitude and composition of migration flows (Hatton, 2005; Mayda, 2010; Ortega & Peri, 2013).

This chapter provides an overview of the existing indexes and indicators, and compares the methodology employed as well as their temporal, geographical, and thematic coverage. This analysis is based on a [review](#) of previous projects and literature on this topic that have been carried out in the frame of the Horizon 2020 project [CrossMigration](#), which aimed at mapping research in the different areas of migration studies and produced the Migration Research Hub ([www.migrationresearch.com](http://www.migrationresearch.com)), which indexes more than 100,000 items of research including journal articles, books, chapters, working papers, projects, and datasets.

This chapter proceeds as follows: we first introduce the analysis of migration policy frameworks through indicators by illustrating the main concepts and approaches in the field. We then provide an overview of what has been done in the field of migration policy indicators so far; we illustrate the different areas of migration policies and their coverage by existing indexes. We also address the characteristics of these indexes in terms of geographical and temporal scope. We conclude with some reflections on the remaining gaps in the field and possible future developments.

## **24.1 An Introduction to the Field of Migration Policy Indicators**

### ***24.1.1 Indicators, Indexes, and Aggregation Methods***

An indicator is an observable entity that captures a specific concept and provides a measure of that concept. Indicators can be aggregated into an index. An index is a set of indicators that are aggregated to provide a concise measure of the nature of a given phenomenon. Typically, an index is a single score that combines several other scores. The index should measure complex multidimensional concepts which cannot be captured by a single indicator, e.g. migrant integration, competitiveness, sustainability (JRC & OECD, 2008). Although indexes aim at summarising multidimensional concepts, it is important that the indicators that compose the index can be reduced to the same empirical dimension. In other words, an index should capture unidimensional trends; it should be composed by indicators that go in the same direction (e.g., increased restrictiveness). Several statistical techniques can be used to test this unidimensionality, such as Cronbach's alpha and Principal Component Analysis (see, Helbling, 2013; Ruedin, 2011, 2015; Schmid & Helbling, 2016).

In reference to measurement of migration policies, Gest et al. (2014, p. 274) underline that indexes “are understood as highly aggregated, composite measures of immigration policy, while indicators are understood as more specific, disaggregated elements that are individually coded”. For example, an index of admission policy for labour migrants can be composed by indicators that capture different elements of this policy, such as quota limits, language requirements, financial requirements, and age limits.

Sets of indicators are, therefore, aggregated into indexes. Typically, researchers have used the arithmetic mean. For example, **MIPEX**—the Migrant Integration Policy Index (Huddleston et al., 2015; Solano & Huddleston, 2020)—is composed of indicators that are sorted in eight policy areas. The indicators in each sub-area are aggregated by means of an arithmetic mean. The final overall score for each country is the arithmetic mean of the sub-areas scores (Solano & Huddleston, 2020). However, other different aggregation methods in index construction are available. The application of different aggregation methods often affects the resulting rank order of the countries. Therefore, researchers need to pay special attention to the aggregation method (Bjerre et al., 2019).

When they calculate the average of the indicators, researchers can opt for weighting. Weighting “is a way of attributing higher or lower relative importance to indicators within the index” (Scipioni & Urso, 2018, p. 12). This means that indicators on topics that are considered more important (e.g. by experts) are weighed more than indicators on topics that are considered less important. Weighting can also be based on the data; in this case, weights are based on the results of statistical analysis (JRC & OECD, 2008). It is worth noting that equal weighting does not guarantee equal importance and equal contribution of the indicators to the index, as this is based on the data (ibid.).

The decision on which method to employ and whether apply weights should be based on the kind and distribution of data that composes the index. For example, geometric mean requires data to be measured on a ration scale as the minimum values must be >0 and it not very sensitive to large value outliers but very sensitive to low value (Bjerre et al., 2019).

As underlined by the Joint Research Centre and the OECD (2008), aggregating several indicators is beneficial as an index provides an easy-to-interpret summary of a phenomenon. An index summarises complex and multidimensional phenomena and it is easier to interpret than separate indicators. However, indexes can also send misleading policy messages as they can disguise serious failings in some dimensions. For example, a country which perform very well on one indicator and very poor on another is likely to have the same score of another one that have average performances on both indicators.

### ***24.1.2 Outputs and Outcomes***

Key in the analysis of migration policy is the distinction between outputs and outcomes (Gest et al., 2014). Policy outputs refer to the formulation of **laws and**

policies, while outcomes are—at least in part—the result of the implementation of those laws and policies (Solano, 2021). Both are different from the implementation, which stands in-between and refers to the concrete application of the on-paper policy outputs. ‘Implementation’ indicators measure whether these laws and policies are properly interpreted and delivered as practices. Immigration and citizenship studies have only recently started to move beyond outcome and policy indicators to measure implementation. Currently, most implementation studies in the field of immigration and integration are descriptive, single-country studies that fall into the category of ‘grey’ literature. Therefore, the effect of similar outputs (policies and laws) on outcomes may vary according to the implementation of those outputs. While many researchers and policy actors contest the effectiveness of immigration and integration policies (Goodman, 2010; Koopmans et al., 2012; Czaika & de Haas, 2013), few have attempted to measure the different dimensions of implementation and their importance for migration and integration outcomes.

Policy outputs are policy measures, such as the adoption of a law/policy by government entities on topics related to migration. Policy outcomes refer to the impact that such policy might have (e.g., immigration stock and flows). For example, on integration of refugees in the labour market, a possible policy output is a law granting refugees immediate access to self-employment, and the number of self-employed refugees represents the policy outcome.

In this chapter, we consider indicators/indexes that consider policy outputs only, for two main reasons (Bilgili et al., 2015; Niessen & Huddleston, 2009; Gest et al., 2014). First, policy outcomes are influenced by other factors as well, such as individual agency and other contextual conditions. Second, although policies (outputs) may influence outcomes, the opposite is also true. Therefore, it would be confusing to address both outputs and outcomes at the same time when the aim is to understand the nature of migration policy. Nevertheless, we need to keep in mind that indicators on policy outputs do only catch the *de jure* country situation, whereas the *de facto* reality can be different.

### **24.1.3 Approach: Policy Change vs. Overall Assessment**

Previous projects have analysed the nature of migration policies by using two main methodological approaches. The majority of previous projects carried out an overall assessment of migration policies in one or more areas (e.g., integration policies; admission policies). For example, IMPIC (Immigration Policies in Comparison: Helbling et al., 2017) focuses on admission policies of a given country and a given year, by analysing the state of admission policies for different kinds of admission (labour migration, family reunification and refugees and asylum). Similarly, MIPEX (Huddleston et al., 2015; Solano & Huddleston, 2020) benchmarks current laws and policies against the highest standards on one topic (e.g., access to compulsory education).

In this case, the unit of analysis is the set of policies on a given topic in a defined space (e.g., a country) and timeframe (typically a year) and the produced scores allow for cross-country, across time comparisons. This approach allows for answering to the questions whether Germany or Italy had a *de jure* more “open” admission policy framework for asylum seekers in 2017, or whether integration policies in Austria have become more inclusive between 2015 and 2018.

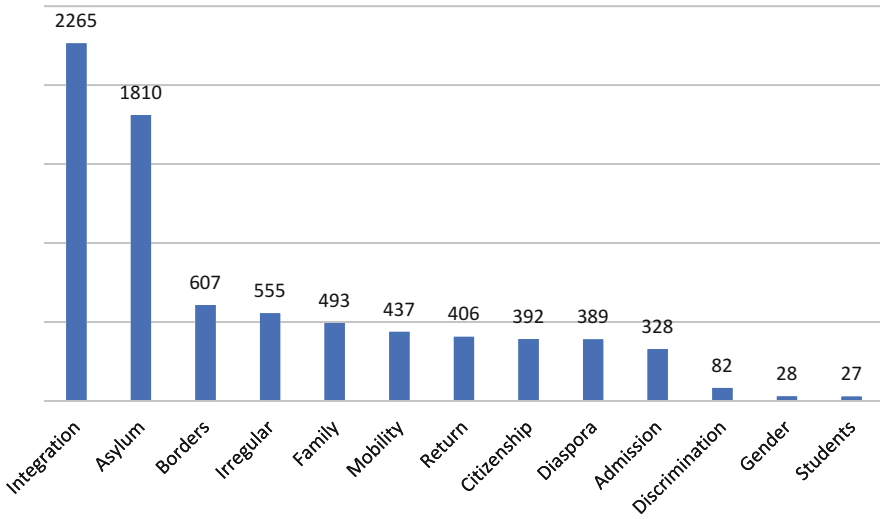
Other projects focused on tracking policy changes in a specific country. They addressed the changes occurred in the policy framework over time and they assessed the nature of each change (e.g., introduction of a new law). In this case, the unit of analysis is the single law/policy and the nature of the introduction of this law/policy. For example, DEMIG (Determinants of International Migration) focuses on the change in restrictiveness introduced by a policy measure on migration (de Haas et al., 2015). Similarly, Ortega and Peri’s index of tightness of immigration reforms over time measures policy change, by classifying laws based on whether they tighten the requirements of entry or stay in the country (Ortega & Peri, 2013). This approach makes it possible to understand the change in migration policies over time, but it does not allow for cross-country analysis (Scipioni & Urso, 2018). Indeed, the score produced for a country each year does not reflect the state of the policy in the year but the change between the current year and the starting year. For example, this approach allows for comparing the policy frameworks of Spain in 2005 and 2015, and whether Spain and Italy have followed the same “path” (e.g., making admission policy more restrictive) from 2008 to 2014. However, it does not allow researchers to understand whether Spanish policies in 2008 were more restrictive than Italian policies in the same year.

## 24.2 Migration Policy Areas and Existing Indexes

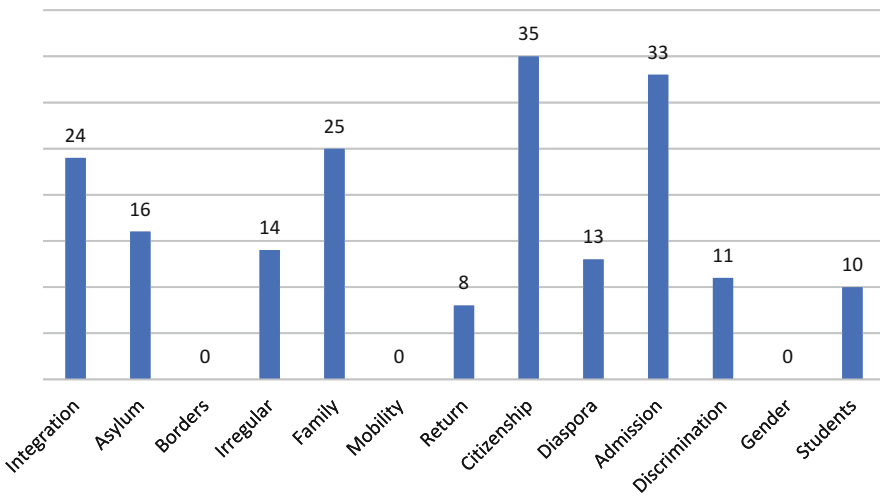
### 24.2.1 Overview

Migration policy indicators and indexes have addressed many topics under the umbrella of migration policy field. The development of migration policy indicators is only weakly linked to the expansion of migration policy research (Fig. 24.1), as most of these indexes and indicators have been driven by decades-long academic debates about integration and admission policies (Fig. 24.2). Since the mid-2010s, global debates about migration policy have sparked new efforts at policy indicators related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the UN Global Compacts on Migration (CDM) and Refugees (CDR).

These drivers of migration policy explain why the diverse areas covered by research on migration policy are only partially covered by existing migration policy indicators and indexes. The main areas of migration policy research— asylum and integration policies—are well-covered by policy indicators, although integration has been less frequently analysed by projects on policy indicators in comparison to the overall existing literature on the topic.



**Fig. 24.1** Areas covered by existing literature on migration policy. (Source: Migration Research Hub ([www.migrationresearch.com](http://www.migrationresearch.com)))



**Fig. 24.2** Areas covered by existing indicator datasets on migration policy. (Source: Migration Research Hub ([www.migrationresearch.com](http://www.migrationresearch.com)))

Furthermore, policy indicators and indexes are disproportionately concentrated in a few areas of migration policy research (Solano & Huddleston, 2021). The majority of policy indicators relate to admission and citizenship policies, which are a minor part of migration policy research. Family reunification, student admission and discrimination policies are also over-represented among migration policy indicators. Other significant areas of research—irregular migration, return and diaspora policies—are covered by a small number of policy indicators, while areas such as gender, borders and mobility policies are largely absent from systematic efforts to measure and compare policies (ibid.).

A few migration policy indexes aim to provide a comprehensive of migration policies, while most cover only specific areas and/or sub-areas. For example, IMPALA (International Migration Policy and Law Analysis: Beine et al., 2016) focuses on both admission policies for different kinds of migrants and acquisition of citizenship, which relates more to integration than admission. NIEM (National Integration Evaluation Mechanism) covers many areas related to integration and settlement of refugees and beneficiaries of international protection (Wolffhardt et al., 2019; Pasetti & Conte, 2021).

Other indexes have chosen to in-depth focus on one specific sub-areas. For example, Leblang's dual citizenship database (Leblang, 2017) and the MACIMIDE Global Expatriate Dual Citizenship Database (Vink et al., 2015) exclusively address the loss or renunciation of citizenship after the voluntary acquisition of the citizenship of one state by a citizen of another state. Vikhrov's visa index (Vikhrov, 2017) focuses on visa restrictions for country pairs. The index is based on three types of entry visa restrictions: visa required, visa not required for short stays and visa not required. The author identifies country pairs which changed their visa regime during 1998–2010.

Other indexes take into consideration only particular categories of migrants. For example, Lowell (2005) created an index to analyse policies for high-skilled immigrant workers. Similarly, Czaika and Parsons (2017) assessed policies aimed to attract and select high-skilled workers. IMMEX (Immigration for employment index) compared admission programmes for immigrant workers in general and high-skilled migrant workers (Migration Policy Group, 2012).

Overall, researchers have most often focused on immigration policies, which refers to policies for people that enter in a country of which they are not citizens (immigrants), rather than emigration policies, which address people of a country of which they are citizens that move to another countries (Palop Garcia & Pedroza, 2019).

Although mixing immigration and emigration policies would not be correct, as they refer to two different policy frameworks, it would be interesting to have a comprehensive overview of both for one country or for pairs of countries that are linked by migration flows—e.g., for Chinese migrants in the US, China and US. This comprehensive information would allow researchers to understand the policies that migrants are subject to and the—possibly, different—attitudes that a country has towards immigrants and emigrants. For example, in some countries, it is more difficult to acquire the citizenship for a person born in the country from foreign

parents than for people born in a foreign country from national parents. Only a few indexes focus on emigration and diaspora policies (e.g., EMIX, IMISEM, Diaspora Engagement Policies; Diaspora policies—see section below).

In conclusion, [admission policies](#), and policy on residence and [citizenship acquisition](#) have been widely addressed, while migration governance and policies on [illegal migration, return, and expulsion](#) have been less frequently analysed (Bjerre et al., 2015; Scipioni & Urso, 2018; Palop Garcia & Pedroza, 2019; Solano & Huddleston, 2021), it emerges that. We are going to focus more in detail on the topics and areas covered by existing indexes in the following section.

## 24.3 Migration Policy Areas

### 24.3.1 *Citizenship*

[Citizenship policies](#) are the most frequently indexed areas of migration policy. The most comprehensive and longitudinal dataset on the citizenship policies of countries of origin is the MACIMIDE Global Expatriate Dual Citizenship database (Vink et al., 2015), which currently covers policies in 200 countries since 1960. The most frequently indexed policies are the citizenship policies of countries of residence. Of these, the most comprehensive, in-depth, reliable and up-to-date indicators are the CITLAW indicators from the Global Citizenship Observatory (GlobalCit: Vink & Bauböck, 2013). These indicators cover the modes of acquisition (i.e. *ius sanguinis*, *ius soli*, ordinary naturalisation and special naturalisation) and loss (renunciation and involuntary loss) based on 45 basic indicators measuring the degrees of inclusion and freedom of choice for the target group of a legal provision. These policy indicators were developed in the European regional context and then adapted and expanded globally by national citizenship legal experts. These indicators allow for the design of citizenship regimes based on the respective purposes of these modes of citizenship acquisition and loss (Vink & Bauböck, 2013).

Several other indexes use a small number of core indicators to capture the ordinary naturalisation policies in approximately 40–50 countries of residence, mostly in the developed world. The most comprehensive and reliable set of indicators after GlobalCit's CITLAW are the MIPEX indicators on access to nationality (Solano & Huddleston, 2020). Among the smaller-scale indexes, the most common indicators are tolerance of dual nationality, the presence of birthright citizenship (*ius soli*) as well as the minimum residence duration and language/civic integration requirements for ordinary naturalisation. Recurring indicators are the level of entitlement vs. discretion for ordinary naturalisation, the costs/economic resource requirements, the existence of other civic integration measures and the provisions for specific groups, such as spouses of nationals and beneficiaries of international protection. In this area, CITIMP (Citizenship Implementation indicators) provides a contribution by moving from law to practice and capturing the opportunities and obstacles within the ordinary naturalisation procedure (Bauböck et al., 2013). Few of



these indexes offer longitudinal datasets, with policies dating back to the post-war era and, in the case of Peters' and Shin's, back to the late eighteenth century (Peters, 2015; Shin, 2017).

### 24.3.2 Admission

Like citizenship policies, **admission policies** are significantly over-represented among migration policy indicators and indexes. These indexes reflect more recent academic debates over the supposed trade-off between the number vs. rights of immigrants and the determinants and effects of legal channels on migration flows and integration outcomes. Admission policies indexes are relatively new and fragmented. The most covered channels are labour migration and family reunification as opposed to asylum/refugees and international students. All four channels are included in the most comprehensive admission policies indexes, such as DEMIG (Determinants of International Migration: de Haas et al., 2015), IMPALA (International Migration Policy and Law Analysis: Beine et al., 2016), IMPIC (Immigration Policies in Comparison: Helbling et al., 2017) and MGI (Migration Governance Index). Among these, IMPIC offers the greatest thematic, geographical, and temporal scope as well as reliable data collection through national experts. The United Nations' Inquiry among Governments on Population and Development gathers information from governments of 206 countries on the existence of policies concerning the annual level of regular channels, highly-skilled workers and **family reunification**. In addition to these comprehensive indexes, specific channels are also well-covered by more sectoral indexes: family reunification and permanent residence by MIPEX and **low- and high-skilled labour migration** by CERNA (Cerna, 2014), IMMEX (Migration Policy Group, 2012), Klugman and Pereira's (2009) index, and Ruhs (2018). Few of these indexes (e.g. IMPIC, Klugman and Pereira, Ruhs) expand their geographical scope to cover both developed and developing countries of destination.

In terms of the design of the indicators, channels are rarely measured in the same way. Small-scale indexes tend to only capture the presence or absence of a specific admission channel. Among the more in-depth indexes, the most common indicators are eligibility criteria (i.e. definition of labour shortage, family, protection), quotas/limits, costs/economic resource requirements, language/civic requirements, and provisions on rights and equal treatment with nationals. Labour migration channels and family reunification channels are measured with similar indicators in IMPIC, IMMEX and MIPEX. Asylum admission channels are consistently measured based on policies specific to the international protection regime. Asylum indicators attempt to measure key aspects of the asylum procedure and the scope of different protection statuses.

### 24.3.3 *Integration*

The number of [integration policy](#) indexes and indicators reflects the long-standing academic debate about the supposed centrality of integration and citizenship ‘models’ and their determinants and effects on integration outcomes. Several of these indexes attempt to conceptualise different models and dimensions of integration: multiculturalism by the Multicultural Policy Index (Banting & Kymlicka, [2013](#)), individual vs. cultural rights by the Index of Citizenship Rights for Immigrants (ICRI: Koopmans et al., [2012](#)), civic integration by CIVIX (Goodman, [2010](#)), social protection by MiTSoPro (Lafleur & Vintila, [2021](#)) or emigrant vs. immigrant integration policies by IMISEM. These indexes are some of the most in-depth sets of indicators. While these indexes use different indicators and research teams, their results seem to be relatively robust and reliable as high correlations emerge between them. Differences nevertheless emerge in terms of their thematic, geographic, and temporal scope.

The Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX: Huddleston et al., [2015](#); Solano & Huddleston, [2020](#)) lays claim to being “the most comprehensive, reliable and used tool to compare what governments are doing to promote the integration of migrants”. MIPEX includes one of the largest number of areas of integration policy, indicators and a large network of national experts and peer reviewers. The current scope of MIPEX are policies in eight key areas of integration: labour market mobility, family reunification, education, health, permanent residence, political participation, access to nationality and anti-discrimination. MIPEX’s recent companion tool on the specific situation for beneficiaries of international protection is the National Integration Evaluation Mechanism (NIEM). Developed with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) based on their normative standards, NIEM uses a similar number of indicators, areas, and experts to compare the laws, policies, and implementation for refugees and for beneficiaries of subsidiary protection.

These integration policy indexes tend to use several dozen indicators to capture the main areas of integration in approximately 40–50 countries of residence, mostly in the Global North. A few comprehensive indexes, such as the UN Inquiry and MGI, superficially touch on key integration areas with one-or-two indicators. Among the specific integration policy indexes, the most common areas covered are employment rights, family reunification, voting and political rights, citizenship, and anti-discrimination. A few indexes also explicitly cover civic integration and cultural/religious rights (e.g., ICRI, Koopmans et al., [2012](#)). Rarer are policy indicators on social protection, housing, health, education, training, language learning or social cohesion. The benchmark for comparison is often equal treatment with nationals or a broader framework of opportunities/obstacles or liberal/restrictive.

### 24.3.4 *Governance*

The topic of migration governance has received scant attention in the field of migration policy indicators. The majority of existing indexes has focused on the

laws and policies produced rather than on the decision-making process. Although the concept of governance is rather blurred (see Chap. 19 of this volume; Pierre & Peters, 2000), governance encompasses both the “manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social resources” (World Bank, 1992, p. 66), and “the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented)” (United Nations, 2009, p. 1). Migration governance refers to these spheres concerning migration and migrant integration.

Two sets of indicators have addressed governance regulating international migration in depth: the Migration Governance Index (MGI) from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the Inquiry among Governments on Population and Development from the United Nations (UN). The MGI represents one of the most important references when it comes to migration governance. Since 2015, it has assessed the policy framework of 50 countries. It is composed of 90+ indicators sorted in six dimensions of the Migration Governance Framework (i.e., migrant rights, whole of government approach, well-being of migrants, partnerships, mobility dimension of crises, and safe, orderly and regular migration). Each indicator refers to absence, partial or complete presence of a policy or framework. On governance, MGI focus on the presence of an institutional framework and structure, a migration strategy, a certain degree of Institutional transparency and coherence, and a process of gathering of data and information.

The Inquiry among Governments on Population and Development gathers information on migration governance, migrant integration, migration, and development and forced migration in 206 countries. On migration governance, the Inquiry addresses government strategies and a dedicated ministry/department/unit on migration and integration as well as monitoring mechanisms on these topics. Furthermore, the Inquiry has a set of indicators on the direction of the implemented policies, e.g., whether they aim at raising or reducing the number of migrants.

### ***24.3.5 Irregular Migration, Expulsion and Return Policies***

Policies on [irregular migration](#), [expulsion](#), and [return](#) concern both expulsion of and voluntary return of migrants. These policies have been addressed less frequently than others by researchers. To our knowledge, no previous project has exclusively focused on these kinds of policy.

On *irregular migration and expulsion of migrants*, indexes have normally focused on the following three aspects: sanctions for irregular migrants (imprisonment and/or expulsion); grounds for expulsion (e.g., criminal conviction); and formal mechanisms for regularisation of irregular migrants.

The Index of Citizenship Rights for Immigrants (ICRI: Koopmans et al., 2012), which analyses the factors shaping the granting of rights and the recognition of cultural differences to migrants in EU and non-EU countries, has one of the most complete sets of indicators on the topic. The index has a strand on expulsion, which

combines grounds for expulsion (years of criminal conviction and welfare dependence) and the different categories of migrants (short-term residents, long-term residents, second-generation migrants). The Nationalist Immigration and Integration Policy (NIIP: Akkerman, 2012) measures legislative changes regarding immigration and integration policies in 9 European countries. The author addresses several aspects linked to irregular migrants and expulsion, including grounds for expulsion, detention measures, regularisation procedures, and access to basic goods for irregular migrants and rights for their children. Finally, Peters' (2015) set of indicators provide a contribution to the study of expulsion policies by addressing the administrative/judicial process, including safeguard criteria and checks.

On *voluntary return* of legal migrants, existing indexes address policies to promote and facilitate the return of migrants in the countries of origin. For example, the Dashboard of indicators for measuring policy and institutional coherence for migration and development (PICMD: Hong & Knoll, 2016), which measures the extent to which policies and institutional arrangements are coherent with international best practices in the field of migration and development, addresses policies to promote reintegration of emigrants (programmes, funding, benefits). The above-mentioned Emigrant Policies Index (Pedroza & Palop-García, 2017) analyses the presence of return programmes—including benefits for returnees (e.g., recognition of academic qualifications, tax exemption)—and integration programmes for them. The Inquiry among Governments on Population and Development interestingly adopts the perspective of both the country of origin and of destination, as it includes indicators on return policies for citizens living abroad and for migrants in the country of destination that want to come back to their countries of origin.

### 24.3.6 *Emigration/Diaspora Policies*

Another understudied migration policy area is the one on emigration and *diaspora engagement policies*, which relate to the country of origin rather than the country of destination. Countries of origin have developed policies to regulate economic, political, or social links with their emigrants. These policies “vary in scope and nature between different countries and include measures as diverse as dual citizenship policies, programs to stimulate remittances, the right to vote in the home country from abroad, and the creation of government agencies to administer emigrant issues” (Pedroza & Palop-García, 2017, p. 165).

One of the most comprehensive sets of indicators in terms of topics covered and indicators is the Emigrant Policies Index (EMIX: Pedroza & Palop-García, 2017; Palop Garcia & Pedroza, 2021). EMIX focuses on emigration policies in developing countries and it analyses the policies of 22 Latin American and Caribbean countries. It is composed of ten policy areas related to emigrants: citizenship policies, electoral rights, institutional consultation, external obligations, economic policies, social policies, political competition abroad, symbolic policies, cultural policies and exit

and transit policies. Beside these areas, EMIX considers the administrative structures created to design and implement policies abroad (consular services and structures).

Two other projects stand out, the Diaspora Engagement Policies and the Diaspora policies sets of indicators (Gamlen, 2008; Ragazzi, 2014). The Diaspora Engagement Policies dataset (Gamlen, 2008) reviews how a large number of both developing and developed countries relate to their diasporas. It includes three types of diaspora engagement policy: policies to cultivate diasporic identities and community structures (e.g., diaspora programs or offices); rights for emigrants (e.g., recognition of dual citizenship; voting rights; bilateral agreements); obligations from emigrants (taxation rules; facilitating remittances). The Diaspora policies dataset (Ragazzi, 2014) includes 35 developed and developing countries from all around the world. The author employs indicators that cover the following areas: symbolic, religious, and cultural policies (e.g., cultural centres abroad); social and economic policies (e.g., welfare provision and investment schemes); citizenship policies (e.g., citizenship acquisition and loss); government and bureaucratic control (e.g., mobility restrictions for citizens who want to go abroad).

## 24.4 Characteristics of Existing Indexes

Indicators and indexes have the purpose of understanding the nature of migration policy and of allowing for cross-country comparison over time and monitoring of the evolution of policy frameworks. Therefore, the indexes' geographical and temporal coverage is particularly relevant.

A recent review of migration indexes shows that most of them do not cover more than 25 countries, most frequently less than 20 (Solano & Huddleston, 2021). However, existing indexes widely vary in the number of countries covered—from one to 200+ countries covered. The UN Inquiry among Governments on Population and Development has the widest geographical coverage, as it covers 206 countries, both developed and developing countries. Focusing on a more limited topic, the MACIMIDE Global Expatriate Dual Citizenship Database (Vink et al., 2015) covers dual citizenship for migrants in 200 countries.

Many indexes analyse European countries—often EU Member States—or, at best, OECD/developed countries. Countries such as Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the United Kingdom are among the ones that are almost always included in the analyses. Some exceptions to this tendency are represented by sets of indicators that address emigration and diaspora policies, such as EMIX (Emigrant Policies Index: Pedroza & Palop-García, 2017; Palop Garcia & Pedroza, 2021) and IMISEM (Every Immigrant Is an Emigrant) from the German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA), Klugman and Pereira's index (Klugman & Pereira, 2009), the Diaspora Policies (Ragazzi, 2014) and the Diaspora Engagement Policies (Gamlen, 2008), which focus on both developing and developed countries.

The temporal coverage of existing indexes is limited, as most of them focus on a limited number of years. Most frequently, indexes cover one or 2 years. However,

there are indexes that encompass more years such as CITRIX (Citizenship Regime Inclusiveness Index, Schmid, 2021), Commitment to Development Index (Centre for Global Development, 2018), ECN index (Index of fees and economic requirements for naturalisation: Stadlmair, 2018), IMPIC (Helbling et al., 2017), Inquiry among Governments on Population and Development, Multiculturalism Policy Index (Banting & Kymlicka, 2013), and MIPEX (Huddleston et al., 2015; Solano & Huddleston, 2020). This is sometimes done by assessing policies for either a number of continuous years or every  $n$  years. IMPIC, which covers four decades (1980–2018), and MIPEX, which spans 12 years (2007–2019), are examples of the former, while the Multiculturalism Policy Index (Banting & Kymlicka, 2013) is an example of the latter, as it covers 1980, 2000 and 2010.

Furthermore, as indexes have been developed by sociologists and political scientists. The majority of indexes focuses on contemporary age, while a historic perspective is missing. One of the noteworthy exceptions to this trend is the set of indicators developed by Timmer and Williams (1998), who analysed the development of migration policies for the period 1860–1930 in five countries that were relevant immigration countries at that time (Australia, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, and the United States). Other exceptions are Peters' set of indicators (2015) and the Authoritarian Immigration Policy index (Shin, 2017), which cover immigration policies from the late eighteenth century through the early twenty-first century.

## 24.5 Conclusions

This chapter summarises the existing literature on migration policy indicators and indexes, which have been used over the last decades to measure the nature of migration policy frameworks and to compare them across different countries and periods of time.

Although high in number, previous projects have mainly focused on OECD/developed countries and immigration policies. Developing countries and emigration policies have been largely neglected. Underlined by Palop Garcia and Pedroza (2019), this is linked to three main factors: first, scholars and researchers working on this topic are mainly from organisations and institutions from the developed world, and the debate in these countries mainly focuses on immigration policies; second, availability of funding is higher in developed countries and this leads researchers to focus on those countries; and third, conducting research in countries with relatively harmonised legal and policy systems, as EU Member States are, is easier and more feasible.

As indexes are often the product of one-off projects (Scipioni & Urso, 2018), they normally cover the years of the project and, sometimes, some years back (through back-scoring). Researchers have difficulties in updating the indexes after the end of the projects and therefore fail to regularly update them. This poses some limits to the monitoring purpose of these indexes and to the analysis of the evolution of the nature of migration policy frameworks (Helbling & Solano, 2021). Furthermore, previous

projects have addressed some topics and policy areas, while others remain rather unexplored. Admission, residence and citizenship acquisition policies have been the focus of many indexes. By contrast, emigration policies, migration governance, and irregular migration, expulsion and return policies have been addressed less frequently (Solano & Huddleston, 2021).

The field also lacks a gender perspective. While indicators account for the different kinds of migrants by status or skills (see Scipioni & Urso, 2018),—e.g., distinguishing between labour migrants and refugees or between high-skilled and low-skilled migrants—a gender perspective has rarely been introduced. Some indices on integration indeed include questions on gender, but such focus is always very marginal and there is no index that systematically compares differences in policies for migrant men and women (Solano, 2021).

To tackle these gaps, future research should focus on widening the geographical scope of the analysis—including, for example, developing countries—and adding a gender perspective to the study of migration policy. Furthermore, future projects need to address understudied migration policy areas such as emigration policies and migration governance.

In conclusion, the chapter provides an overview of the field of migration policy indicators as a tool to undertake systematic comparisons of migration policies at the national level (Fig. 24.3).

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**Fig. 24.3** Recommended readings

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