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Introduction

In the past decade, the migration crisis has been at the center of every major political debate in Europe. In countries where more women participate in the legislature, are the resulting immigration policies fundamentally different than in countries with fewer female legislators? Many scholars have shown that when women participate in the policymaking process, the resulting policies are different (Hunt 2007; Matthews 2017). The implication is that in countries where more women participate in the legislature the resulting immigration policies may be fundamentally different than in countries with fewer female legislators. Accordingly, my research addresses the following question: What is the relationship between the percentage of women in legislatures and the restrictiveness of immigration policy?

To answer this question and to address the gap in the literature, I use panel data for the original EU-15 from 2000 to 2010 to evaluate the relationship between female representation and the restrictiveness of immigration policy. I find that though female representation has no impact at the aggregated level when I disaggregate immigration policy into five individual sub-dimensions, female representation matters. Specifically, female representation matters for family reunification, asylum and refugee policies, and enforcement (how strictly immigration policy is enforced) but not labor migration and co-ethnics (policies targeted toward immigrants with ancestry from the host country). In my analysis, I investigate why female representation affects some areas of immigration policy but not others.

Theoretical Framework

Much of the current literature on gender asserts that feminine values, such as sympathy and nurturing behaviors, have long been undervalued and underrepresented in society (Matthews 2017). Because most legislators and policymakers are male, most legislation and policies adhere to traditional male values, such as authority and autonomy (Gilligan 1993; Noddings 1984). This male perspective is certainly valid and beneficial. However, the equally valid female perspective has been consistently underrepresented in governments throughout the world. This is why many scholars believe achieving higher female representation in legislatures is so crucial. Women comprise half of the world's population, yet few countries even come close to achieving gender parity in their legislatures.

Greater female representation strongly correlates with numerous measures of good governance, including lower corruption, increased economic competitiveness, and greater political stability (Esarey and Schwindt-Bayer 2019; Hudson et al. 2012; Hunt 2007). Joni Lovenduski (2001) asserts that, due to their distinct characteristics and experiences, women provide a unique standpoint and have different policy priorities from the traditional male focus. For example, women often have more experience working in nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), which makes them more familiar with social problems and marginalized populations (Chattopadhyay and Duflo 2004; Hunt 2007; Matthews 2017). Additionally, even when women work in prominent government positions, they are more likely to be appointed to departments and given responsibilities that deal with sociocultural matters (Crage et al. 2013).

Because of these unique experiences, women are often more likely to focus on care issues, to have a broader definition of security, and to be more ethical and trustworthy (Hunt 2007; Lovenduski 2001). Combining this distinct female perspective with the traditional male approach provides a more comprehensive approach in any policy area, particularly in areas that are traditionally neglected by men (Matthews 2017). Because women define security more broadly than men, they often pay more attention to "low politics" issues like healthcare, education, and the environment (Krook and O'Brien 2012; Paxton and Hughes 2010; Reynolds 1999; Studlar and Moncrief 1999).

Immigration policy is certainly not considered a low politics issue; most often, it is included with security issues, which are typically shaped by more masculine values (Crage et al. 2013; Faist 2004). However, it is better classified as both a security and a care issue. A care issue is one that "contributes to the well-being or development of other people" (Dwyer 2013; England 1992; England 2005). Thus, Crage and her colleagues classify a policy dealing with border control as a security issue, because it involves state safety, but a policy about immigrant integration as a care issue, because it involves individual well-being (Crage et al. 2013; Heckmann and Schnapper 2003).

Because of this duality, male and female opinions about immigration policy often differ (Sides and Citrin 2007). For example, women are more likely to control prejudice, which influences their attitudes and voting patterns on immigration issues (Harteveld and Ivarsflaten 2018). One recent study found that asylum policies are significantly more women-friendly in countries with higher female representation (Emmenegger and Stigwall 2019). This research provides some initial evidence that women in legislatures do have a discernible impact on immigration policy. However, asylum is only one small aspect of immigration policy, which is itself complex and multifaceted. The female influence is also likely to affect other characteristics of immigration policy beyond women-friendliness, such as overall restrictiveness.

This combined scholarship indicates that the gender of policymakers plays a significant role in shaping immigration policy. Women's broader definition of security, their focus on marginalized populations, their distinct policy priorities, and their experience in care issues give them a valuable perspective that shapes their views about immigration policy. Based on this evidence, I present my hypothesis: As female representation in legislatures increases, the restrictiveness of immigration policies will decrease.

Based on the reviewed literature, I expect that this will occur because as more women participate in legislatures, there will be an increased focus on care issues, including the care aspects of immigration. This increased attention and additional perspective will alter how legislatures approached immigration policy. With a greater focus on marginalized populations, immigration policy will be less restrictive in order to accommodate more immigrants and refugees.

Methodology

Representation and Restrictiveness Defined

Based on this theoretical framework, I investigate female representation as my key independent variable of interest. For the purpose of this research, this term refers to the percentage of female legislators in a country's national parliament. The female perspective could reasonably affect immigration policy through other forms of representation, including interest groups, elections, or referendums, but I reserved their analysis for future studies. Female representation in legislatures provides the most consistent, quantifiable, and accessible measurement available and has been shown in the literature to be an important indicator of women's participation in policymaking (Davidson-Schmich 2016; Emmenegger and Stigwal 2019).

Using World Bank data, I measured female representation by the percentage of female legislators elected to the lower or single house of a country's national legislature (The World Bank 2019c). I used only the lower or single house in order to standardize the measurement across countries, since some countries do not have upper houses, and amongst those that do, there is significant variation. Using only the lower or single house is a common practice many datasets use when calculating female representation (Inter-parliamentary Union 2019; The World Bank 2019c).

To measure immigration policy restrictiveness, I used data from the Immigration Policies in Comparison (IMPIC) index. This dataset represents the results of a comprehensive study designed to objectively evaluate the restrictiveness of immigration policies across thirty-three OECD countries from 1980 to 2010 (Helbling et al. 2016). The authors defined restrictiveness as the degree to which "a regulation limits or liberalises the rights and

freedoms of immigrants" (Helbling et al. 2017). In evaluating restrictiveness, the authors designed the study to avoid normative evaluations and instead to create a neutral tool that systematically compares different aspects of immigration policy.

The index evaluates each country on five key dimensions that experts agreed were most relevant to immigration policy: family reunification, labor migration, asylum and refugees, co-ethnics, and control. Family reunification policy refers to laws that make it easier for separated family members to obtain legal authorization to cross national borders to join their families. Labor migration involves laws about work visas, employment eligibility, etc. Asylum and refugee policies encompass recognized refugees, asylum seekers, and people with humanitarian protection. Co-ethnic policies involve regulations about migrants who are "entitled to easier access to immigration and settlement in a country because of a cultural or historical affinity with the native population" (Bjerre et al. 2016). Control policy incorporates laws that dictate the enforcement of immigration laws, both internally and externally. Though control policies include border control, they also involve other laws that dictate implementation of other policies within a country. For the sake of clarity and precision, I refer to control policies as enforcement policies.

The authors of the IMPIC study selected several specific measures to assess each of these five dimensions and then interviewed experts on each country and policy area. They closely followed

Control Variables

Besides female representation and policy restrictiveness, existing studies have identified the two main influences on immigration policy as economic and ideological issues (Givens and Luedtke 2005; Milner and Tingley 2011). To control for the economic factors, I used World Bank data on each country's yearly GDP per capita, unemployment rate, and growth rate (The World Bank 2018; The World Bank 2019a; The World Bank 2019b). These factors are important, because if a country is struggling economically, its citizens are more likely to oppose immigration out of fear that immigrants will threaten their jobs or consume their resources.

In addition to economic factors, I also added several variables to account for other variables that could affect immigration policy. For example, countries that receive more immigrants could oppose immigration more than others, because they have to bear heavier costs. To control for this, I included each country's yearly immigrant flows using data from the OECD's International Migration Database (OECD 2019). I also expected that countries that experience more terrorist activity would be more inclined to limit immigration out of fear, so I included data from the Global Terrorism Database about each country's yearly terrorist attacks as well (Global Terrorism Database 2018). Finally, partisanship can also play a major role in influencing immigration policy (Givens and Luedtke 2005; Money 1999). In order to control for this, I included a variable that captures the political strength of the left by calculating the percentage of parliamentary seats held by parties on the left compared to the right. I obtained this data from the Parliaments and Governments Database using their elections dataset

(ParlGov 2018). These economic and ideological control variables allowed me to mitigate the effect of omitted variable bias in my analysis.

Though I carefully controlled most confounding variables, I acknowledge that all research has constraints. Due to the limited scope and resources of this study, I cannot thoroughly investigate every possible variable that could affect immigration policy. For example, I would have liked to include a variable about public opinion on immigration, but during the years my study covers, no consistent measures exist. The Eurobarometer, European Social Survey, and other common sources of public opinion data began to include immigration questions only recently. Before they did, public opinion data on immigration was sparse and inconsistent. Trying to measure it would involve creating an index based on multiple sources and inconsistent questions that would exceed the scope of this paper. However, by using established statistical measures and carefully planning my research design, I did address the most common factors discussed in the literature, as well as those with major theoretical importance.

Empirical Analysis

I analyzed the EU-15: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom, which provided a diverse sampling of female representation, with Sweden being the highest in the EU and Ireland being the lowest. The range of female representation ratios across these countries is depicted in figure 1. For the sake of manageability, I only analyze the last decade of data from the index.

Figure 1. Female Representation Ratios in the EU-15
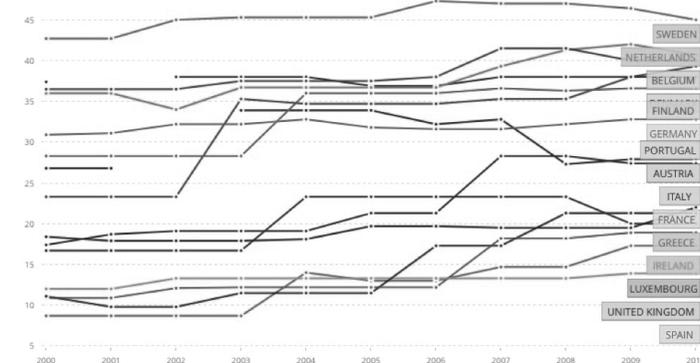
I estimated a panel fixed-effects regression, clustered by country. I used fixed-effects regression in order to mitigate autocorrelation error in my analysis. Because my data involves multiple countries over multiple years, a simple OLS regression would overestimate the relationships between restrictiveness and representation because each country's values would be highly correlated with their same values from the previous

year. This would bias the relationship upward by making it appear stronger than it really is. Instead, using a fixed-effects regression allowed me to automatically correct for correlation between each country's values.

Results
Aggregated Immigration Policy Model

Table 1 Dependent Variable: Immigration Policy Restrictiveness		
	Model 1	Model 2
Female Representation (% Of Female Legislators)	-0.001 (0.001)	-0.001 (0.002)
GDP Per Capita	0.028 (0.037)	0.012 (0.088)
Unemployment Rate	-0.006 (0.004)	-0.058 (0.111)
Growth Rate	0.001 (0.003)	0.122** (0.046)
GDP Per Capita X Unemployment Rate	-	0.005 (0.011)
GDP Per Capita X Growth Rate	-	-0.010** (0.003)
Unemployment Rate X Growth Rate	-	-0.002* (0.001)
Political Strength of The Left	-0.002 (0.002)	-0.002\ (0.002)
Terrorist Attacks	0.001 (0.001)	0.0004 (0.001)
Immigrant Flows	-4.35e-08 (5.68e-08)	-3.59e-08 (5.37e-08)
Constant	0.294 (0.409)	0.417 (0.936)
Observation	157	157
R-Squared	0.284	0.344
Adjusted R-Squared	0.251	0.299

Notes: Standard errors appear in parentheses beneath coefficients and are heteroskedasticity-robust and clustered at the country level to allow for serial correlation in the error within a state. Coefficients are individually statistically significant at the *10%, **5%, and ***1% significance level. Dependent variables are measured on a scale of 0–1, with higher numbers being more restrictive. GDP per capita is calculated as the natural logarithm of GDP per capita to account for distortion from large values.

The results of my initial regression appear as model 1 in table 1. Though I included the most theoretically compelling variables in the literature, none has a significant impact on immigration policy restrictiveness in my analysis. Based on this surprising result, I investigated in model 2 whether there are any interactions or nonlinear relationships among my variables that have conceptual significance. For example, having a high GDP with a slowing growth rate would likely affect a country's attitudes about immigration policy differently than having a low GDP with an accelerating growth rate. I accounted for these effects by including interactions between the three economic variables in addition to the other control variables. I tested each interaction before adding it to the regression and found that all three improved the model's adjusted R-squared both individually and jointly.

Surprisingly, both models indicate that female representation in legislatures has no impact on immigration policy restrictiveness. This contradicts my hypothesis that female representation would significantly reduce policy restrictiveness. This unexpected result likely occurs because the regression only evaluates the relationship between female representation and the restrictiveness of immigration policy as a whole. However, due to the dual nature of immigration policy as both a security and a care issue, it is possible that women's greater focus on care issues has a greater impact on the care aspects of immigration. Lumping all five aspects into a single measure of policy restrictiveness likely obscures women's actual effect.

Disaggregated Immigration Policy Model

Based on this expectation, I analyzed each of the five policy dimensions individually. In table 2, I included five more fixed-effects regressions, replacing overall immigration policy restrictiveness as the dependent variable with the restrictiveness of the individual policy dimensions: family reunification, labor migration, asylum and refugees, co-ethnics, and enforcement. Though many of the control variables were insignificant in my initial regression, I still included them in the subsequent regressions in order to evaluate whether they affect individual policy dimensions differently. The results of these regressions, which appear in table 2, indicate that female representation does influence certain aspects of immigration policy, although it clearly does not influence other aspects.

As the table demonstrates, most of the disaggregated models had higher adjusted R-squared values than the initial model, which indicates that breaking immigration policy into its individual dimensions offers a better fit for the data. In interpreting this data, I mostly focused my analysis on the direction and significance of each variable. Because restrictiveness is measured from zero to one as less restrictive to more restrictive, a quantitative interpretation of the relationship has little real-world significance. For example, it is not very meaningful or helpful to say that as GDP per capita increases by one U.S. dollar enforcement policy restrictiveness increases by 0.124 points. In contrast, the direction and significance of the relationships are extremely instructive, because they indicate whether female representation makes policies significantly more or less restrictive. Therefore, I focused my analysis on those aspects rather than the numerical values.

Table 2 Disaggregated Immigration Policy Restrictiveness					
	Family Reunification	Labor Migration	Asylum/ Refugees	Co-Ethnics	Enforcement
Female Representation (% Of Female Legislators)	-0.010* (0.005)	0.003 (0.002)	-0.003** (0.001)	0.007 (0.005)	0.002* (0.001)
GDP Per Capita	0.092 (0.225)	0.009 (0.116)	0.064 (0.045)	0.069 (0.157)	-0.124 (0.077)
Unemployment Rate	-0.085 (0.296)	0.066 (0.191)	-0.005 (0.071)	0.005 (0.223)	-0.267** (0.098)
Growth Rate	0.010 (0.029)	-0.007 (0.018)	0.0006 (0.007)	-0.003 (0.023)	0.026** (0.009)
GDP Per Capita X Unemployment Rate	0.466** (0.204)	0.222** (0.078)	-0.007 (0.050)	0.091 (0.089)	-0.101 (0.065)
GDP Per Capita X Growth Rate	-0.038** (0.017)	-0.017** (0.006)	0.001 (0.004)	-0.008 (0.009)	0.008 (0.006)
Unemployment Rate X Growth Rate	-0.008* (0.004)	-0.006* (0.003)	-0.0005 (0.0006)	-0.001 (0.002)	0.002*** (0.0006)
Political Strength off The Left	-0.003 (0.007)	-0.005* (0.002)	-0.001 (0.001)	0.005* (0.002)	-0.004*** (0.0008)
Terrorist Attacks	0.002 (0.002)	-0.001 (0.001)	-0.0001 (0.0007)	-4.93e-05 (0.000766)	0.001** (0.0004)
Immigrant Flows	-8.92e-08 (2.22e-07)	-9.38e-10 5.98e-08)	$\approx$	-1.59e-07 (1.46e07)	-7.11e-08* 3.60e-08)
Constant	-0.447 (2.504)	0.591 (1.210)	-0.273 (0.511)	-0.470 1.580)	2.064** (0.802)
Observation	157	157	157	114	157
R-Squared	0.360	0.422	0.338	0.404	0.539
Adjusted R-Squared	0.316	0.382	0.292	0.346	0.508

Notes: Standard errors appear in parentheses beneath coefficients and are heteroskedasticity-robust and clustered at the country level to allow for serial correlation in the error within a state. Coefficients are individually statistically significant at the *10%, **5%, and ***1% significance level. Dependent variables are measured on a scale of 0–1, with higher numbers being more restrictive. GDP per capita is calculated as the natural logarithm of GDP per capita to account for distortion from large values.

The disaggregated regression indicates that female representation has a significant negative relationship with the restrictiveness of family reunification policies in Europe. As female representation in legislatures increases, family reunification policies become significantly less restrictive. The aforementioned research about care issues in immigration policy reveals why this would be the case. Family reunification is more concerned with individual and family well-being than with state well-being, so it exhibits more characteristics of a care issue than a security issue. It is unsurprising that the female effect would emerge in this area.

In contrast to family reunification policy, female representation has no statistically significant impact on the restrictiveness of labor migration policies. This result appears consistent with the literature about women's focus on the care issues mentioned above. Though labor migration does offer some benefits to individuals, politicians generally advocate for it, because it brings economic benefits to the state, not to the individuals. Thus, labor migration is not typically considered a care issue, so the insignificant effect of female representation is unsurprising.

Of all the dimensions of immigration policy, female representation has the most significant effect on asylum and refugee policy. As female representation increases, the restrictiveness of asylum and refugee policies decreases significantly. This result is rather unsurprising. Asylum and refugee policies explicitly aim to improve the well-being of individuals, so they strongly exhibit the characteristics of a care issue. Interestingly, this result supports the results of recent research from Emmenegger and Stigwall, who found that countries with higher female representation have more women-friendly asylum policies (Emmenegger and Stigwall 2019). Even using a separate dataset and significantly different methods, I too found statistically significant evidence that female representation in legislatures affects asylum and refugee policy.

It is also interesting that female representation is the only variable in the regression that had any significant effect on asylum and refugee policy. None of the other variables that the current literature typically highlights had any impact, including economic concerns, partisanship, terrorist attacks, or immigrant flows. Since no other factors matter, this evidence indicates a serious need to evaluate how female representation shapes asylum and refugee policy. Is women's effect on asylum and refugee policies positive or negative for the individual countries? Is it positive or negative for the refugees? These questions highlight the need for further research on this subject.

In contrast with asylum and refugee policy, female representation has no significant impact on the restrictiveness of co-ethnic policies. It is unsurprising that female representation had no significant impact in this area, because it does not appear to be a care issue that specifically or directly promotes individual well-being.

The final dimension of immigration policy—namely, enforcement—is more perplexing than the other dimensions. Female representation has a significant positive relationship with the restrictiveness of enforcement policy. This is puzzling for two reasons. First, my theoretical framework indicates that the influence of female representation is strongest for care issues. However, enforcement policy arguably contributes more to state well-being than to individual well-being. It does not, therefore, appear to be a care issue, yet its relationship with female representation is statistically significant. Second, in contrast to family reunification policies and asylum and refugee policies, the relationship between female representation and enforcement policy is positive, not negative. This means that as female representation increases, enforcement policy restrictiveness increases. Future qualitative research could investigate why this occurs, but one possible explanation is that women are willing to help immigrants that already reside

within their country, but they fear letting in more immigrants because of the problems associated with immigration.

Conclusions and Future Research

By disaggregating immigration policy into its separate dimensions, I uncovered relationships that were obscured at the aggregated level. I concluded that female representation has a significant impact on the restrictiveness of only certain dimensions of immigration policy, particularly those that are generally considered care issues, such as family reunification and asylum and refugee policy. Though policy restrictiveness does not necessarily correlate with effectiveness, my analysis indicates that women's perspective makes a difference. This study does not make any normative claims about whether that difference is positive or negative, or whether more restrictive policy is better or worse than less restrictive policy. Future research will need to evaluate whether female policies are more or less effective, compassionate, and beneficial. However, if female representation does make a perceptible difference in shaping immigration policy, policymakers concerned with the effectiveness of their policies need to consider how the female influence is affecting those policies.

Though the results of this research were interesting and instructive, I have only begun to examine the relationship between female representation and immigration policy restrictiveness. My research involved primarily large-n, quantitative analysis. However, to further establish the causal mechanisms at work and to evaluate the relative merit of the female perspective on immigration policy, future research will need to examine additional qualitative evidence that offers insight into the exact causal mechanisms that make female representation matter. Such evidence could include parliamentary records, news sources, political speeches, and other primary sources.

One limitation I faced in this study was that the IMPIC database only includes records through the year 2010. Though the causal mechanisms likely remain consistent across time, recent events, most notably the 2015 immigration crisis, might alter the precise relationship between female representation and immigration policy restrictiveness. In one scenario, the rapid increase of refugees could cause the female perspective to become even more relevant, potentially having a greater effect in some of the other policy dimensions that are not typically care issues. Alternatively, it is also possible that the female perspective would become less relevant, because increased immigrant flows would cause more security-related problems at home. Future research with an extended dataset could better examine how this relationship between immigration policy restrictiveness and female representation was affected after the 2015 immigration crisis.

Another constraint I experienced was that I had to maintain feasibility by limiting the number of countries I analyzed. Because I was adding six additional variables for each country per year, I only had the resources to evaluate fifteen countries. In the future, I would like to look at other countries in the EU, as well as countries outside the EU, to confirm how my theoretical framework applies in other immigration settings. I am especially interested in how female representation would affect the restrictiveness of immigration policies in the United States.

A final limitation I faced was that I only had access to observational data. Because randomly assigning female representation ratios or immigration policies to the countries in Europe is not possible, I could not manipulate reality in order to establish causality. I acknowledge that the same social movements and forces that produce increased female representation in legislatures could also prompt changes in immigration policy. I controlled for partisanship in order to limit one major source of this distortion but others likely exist. However, the related literature in the field supports my causal argument that having women in the legislature affects immigration policy (Crage et al. 2013; Emmenegger and Stigwall 2019). Beyond the correlation versus causation problem, any observational research design must also address the possibility of reverse causality. In the case of this research, it seems extremely unlikely that the restrictiveness of immigration policy changes female representation, unless perhaps women grow frustrated with male immigration policies. However, there is little real-world evidence that this kind of causality actually occurs, so I maintain my original causal sequence.

The disappointing gap in the literature on gender and immigration indicates that much research still remains. However, my analysis has added to the current literature on gender and immigration and has provided insight into what areas need more investigation. The results of this study will be immensely valuable for policymakers as they seek to combat the fractionalization and hostility that threaten the liberal consensus of Europe. I have demonstrated that female representation is negatively correlated with the restrictiveness of certain dimensions of immigration policy. In light of this evidence, scholars and politicians need to do more to understand women's effect on immigration policy and the implications for their respective countries. Female participation is certainly not the only factor affecting immigration policies, but my analysis indicates that its influence is more significant than the current literature suggests. The task that remains is determining whether that influence is helping or hurting the countries of Western Europe. Women's distinct perspective could be the key to easing the immigration crisis and restoring stability and harmony to Europe.

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