



Growing restrictiveness or changing selection? The nature and evolution of migration policies

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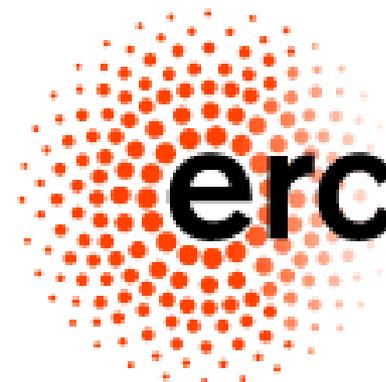
Starting Grant

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Support for Frontier Research

www.migrationdeterminants.eu



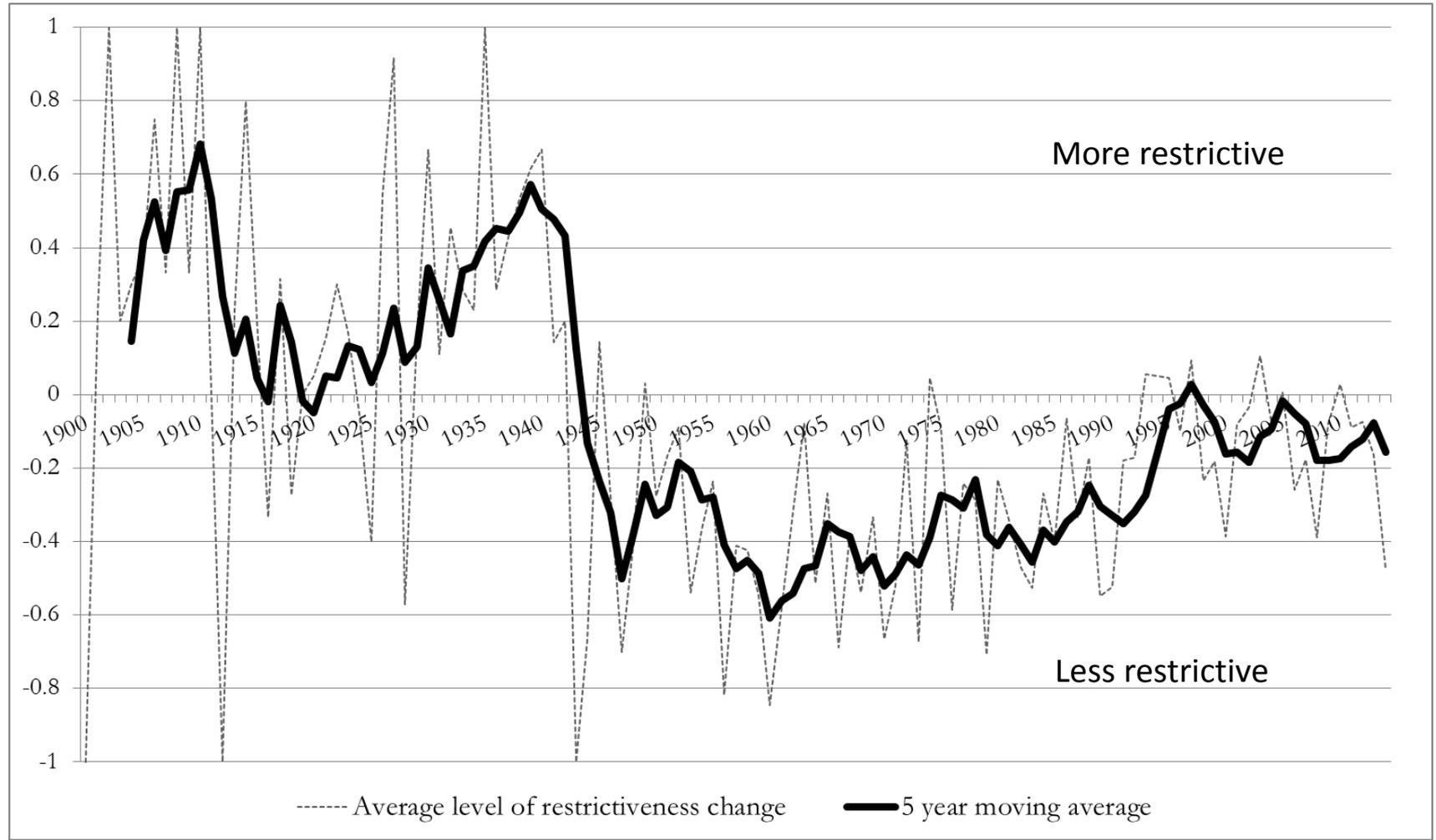
- Academic debate on the effectiveness of migration policies:
 - Assumption: migration policies have become more restrictive
- Research questions:
 - Have migration policies become more restrictive?
 - How have selection mechanisms shifted?

- Migration policies
 - = rules (i.e., laws, regulations and measures) that national states enact with the objective of affecting the volume, origin, direction, and internal composition of migration flows.
- Policy restrictiveness
 - = increase/decrease of the rights granted to a certain migrant group compared to the status quo
 - Policy measure introducing restrictive change coded +1
 - Policy measure introducing less restrictive change coded -1

- 6,500 policy changes recorded
- 45 countries, 1945-2012
 - Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Czech Republic, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, German Democratic Republic, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America and Yugoslavia.
- Emigration policies included
- Disaggregation of policy reforms into sub-measures
- Specification of the targeted migrant group

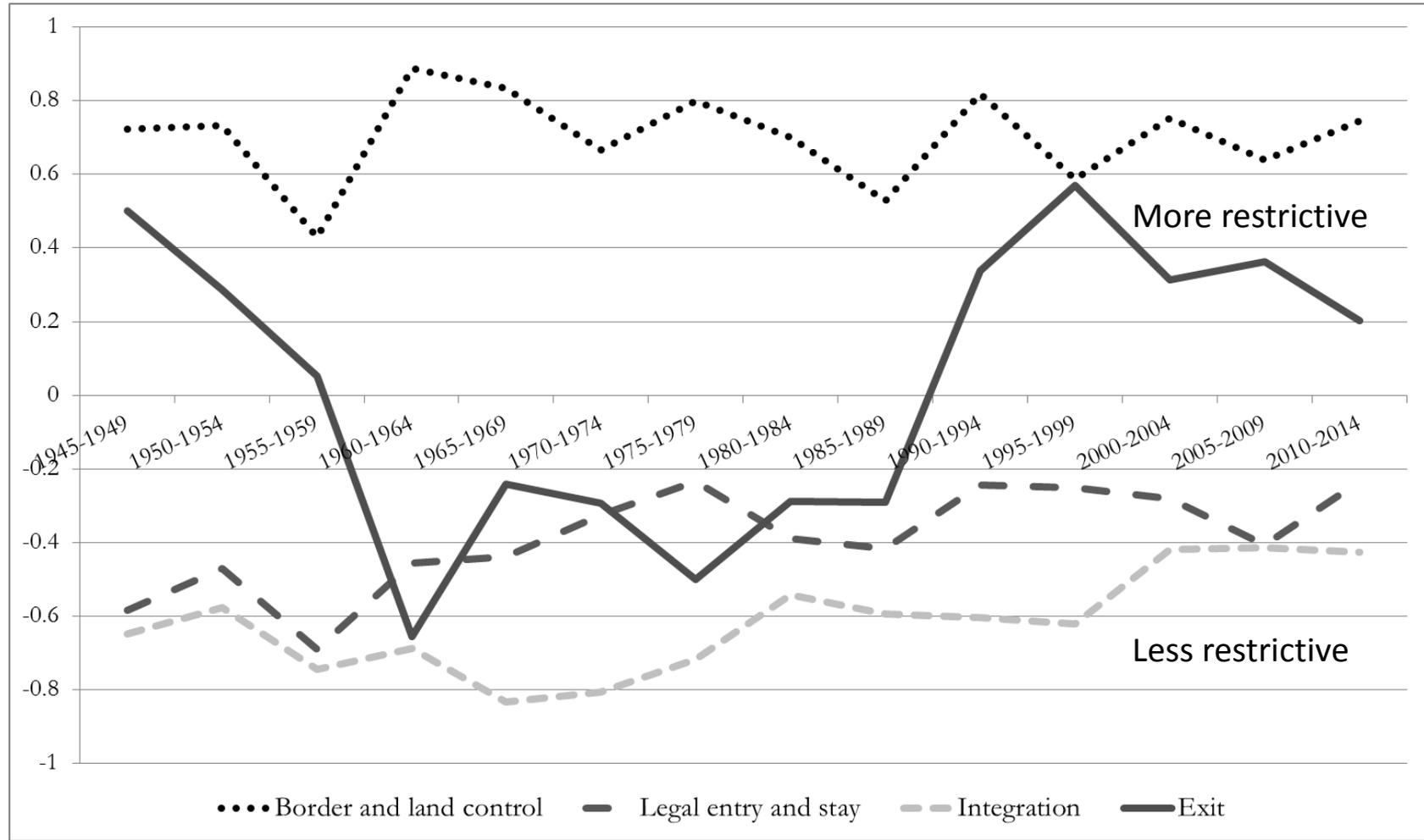
I. Growing restrictiveness?

Average yearly change in migration policy restrictiveness, 1900-2014



I. Growing restrictiveness?

Average change in migration policy restrictiveness by policy area, 1945-2014

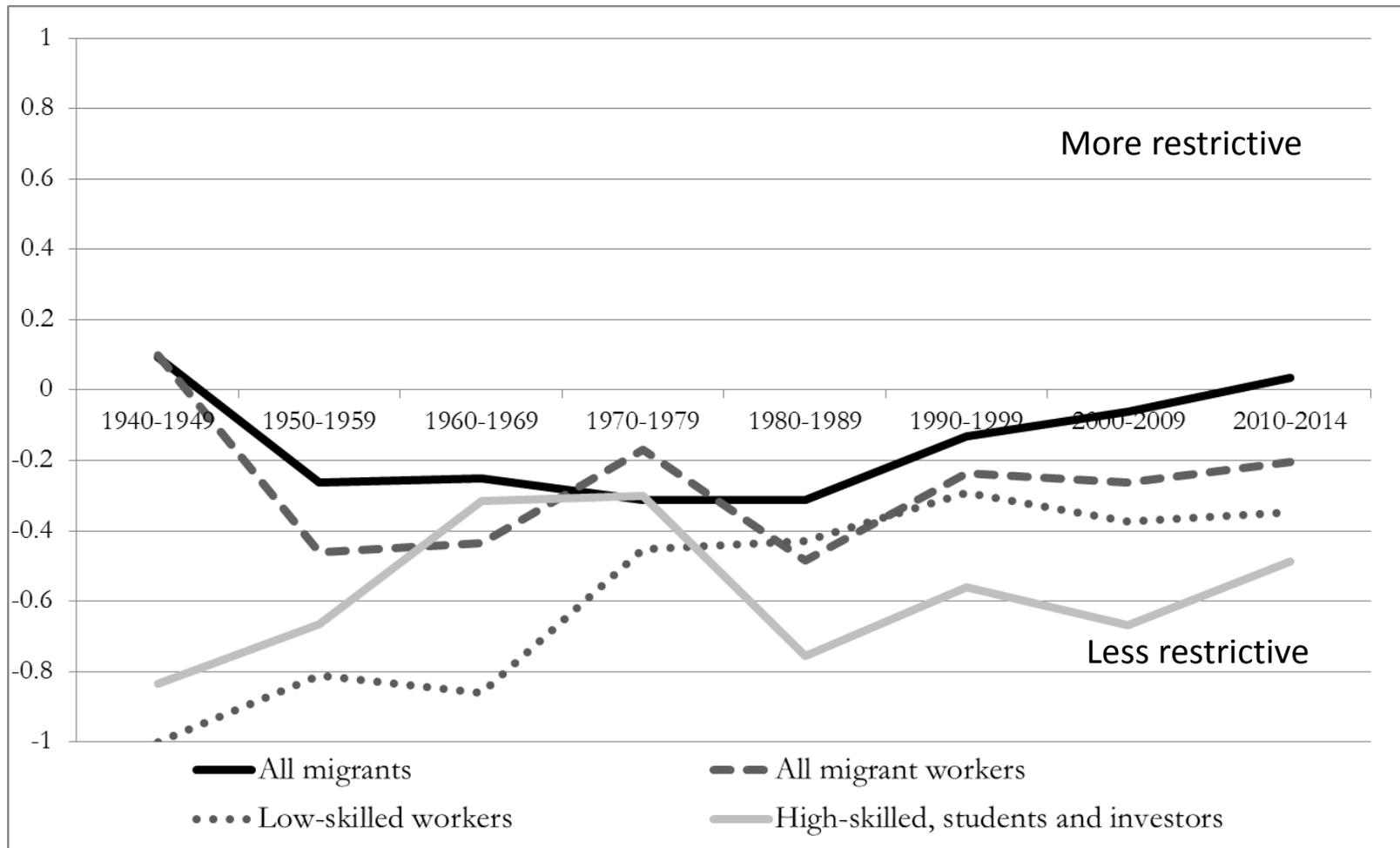


II. Changing selection?

- Sophistication of policies
 - Decreasing number of generic migration policies targeting all migrants
 - Creation of new migrant categories by policy makers

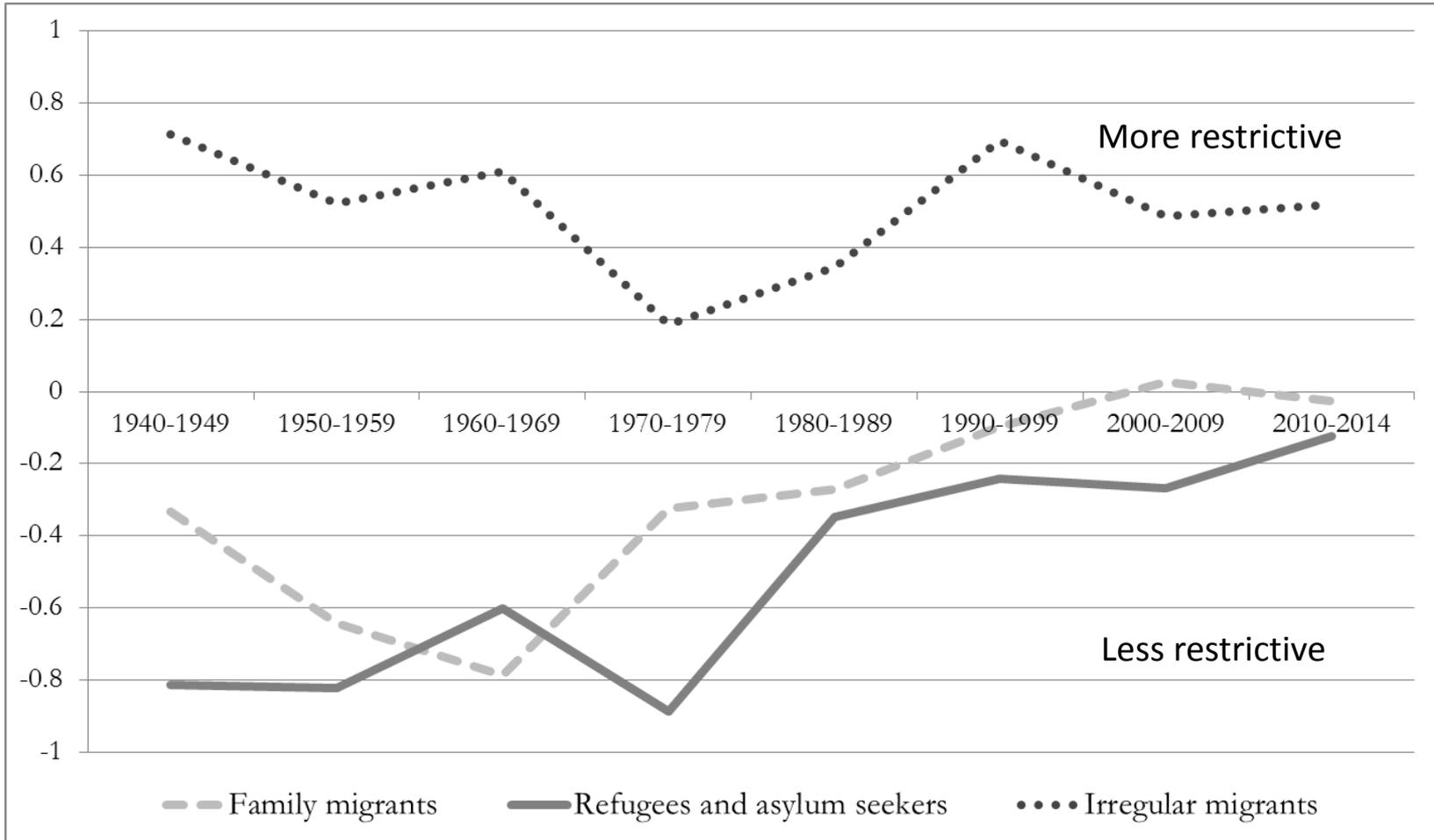
II. Changing selection?

Average change in migration policy restrictiveness according to migration categories (1), 1940-2014



II. Changing selection?

Average change in migration policy restrictiveness according to migration categories (2), 1940-2014



- Limited methodological value of ‘overall restrictiveness’
 - Migration policies are about selection of migrants, not volumes
 - Discursive gap: the ‘symbolic’ dimension of migration policies
 - Limitation of results: Implementation gap
- Migration policies have been dominated by less restrictive changes since 1945

Thank you for your attention!