

# What can migration indices tell us about migration and development in Australia?

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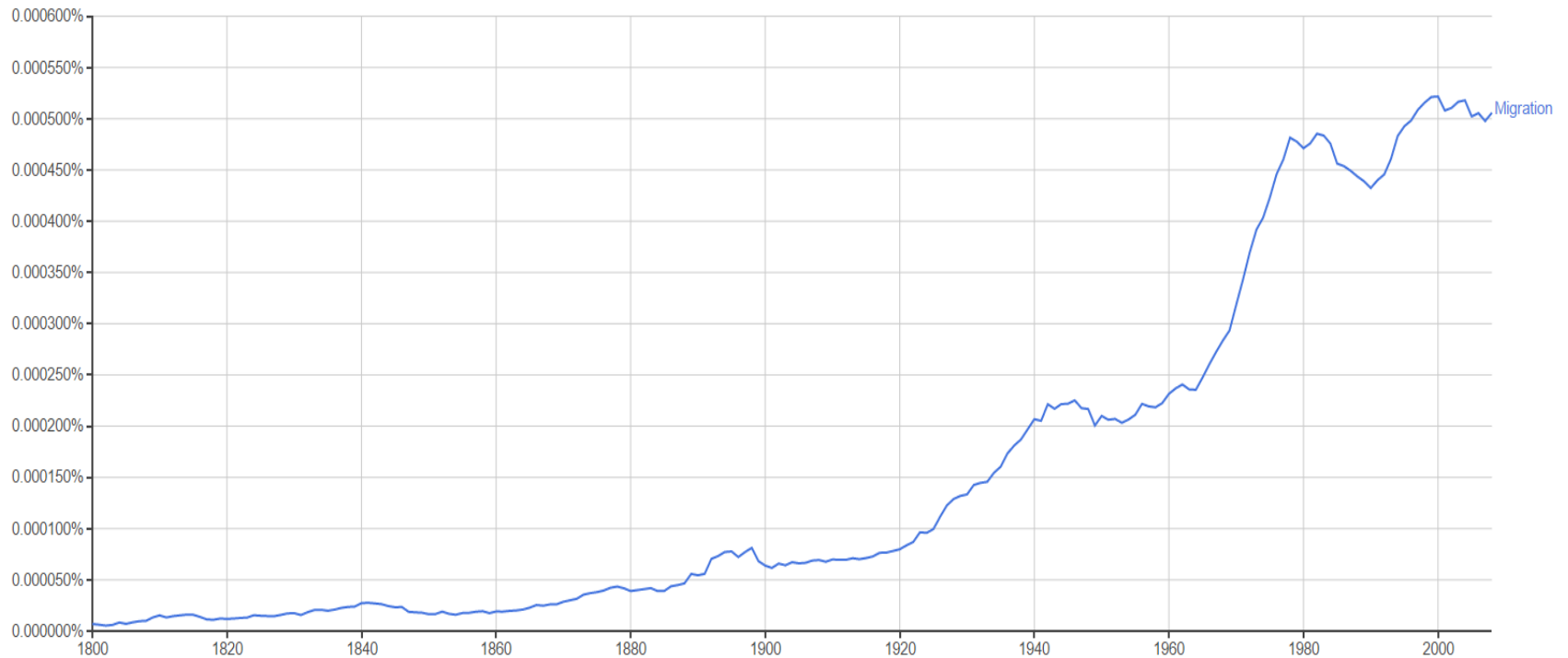
# Overview

- Migration remains an emergent part of the development agenda
- Tools and data to conduct research and analysis are new(ish)
- Existing examples highlight need for more evidence
- Australia is assessed through a ‘Migration and Development’ lens

# Interest in migration over time

Graph these comma-separated phrases:   case-insensitive

between  and  from the corpus  with smoothing of  [Search lots of books](#)



# Migration and Development:

- Post-Cold War: Migration and development emerged from a more robust general migration literature
- Potential showcased by Pritchett 2006 and Clemens 2011
- Interest from World Bank et al since early 1990s

## 25 years ago...

- Philip Martin on a World Bank migration conference in 1992:

“It was generally agreed that migration was not a solution to Third World poverty, but the migration specialists who participated in the symposium agreed on little else.”

## David Roodman, CGDev (2012)

“Though it is widely agreed that migration and migration policy greatly affect many poor people in poor countries, the effects have not been as extensively studied as those of aid and trade policies. **There is no widely accepted analytical framework from the perspective of development, and little empirical evidence.** In addition, there are data problems, including lack of comprehensive information on remittances and illegal immigration, and **a paucity of internationally comparable information on rich countries’ migration policies.**”

# Migration and Development: An institutional perspective

- **SGDs: Very incremental progress**
- **IOM folded into UN**
- **‘Soft institutions’, i.e. Global Forum on Migration and Development**

# Development tension of migration

- Developed countries
- Developing countries
- Individual migrants
  
- Should there be a ‘World Migration Organisation?’ Bhagwati 2003, Hatton 2006



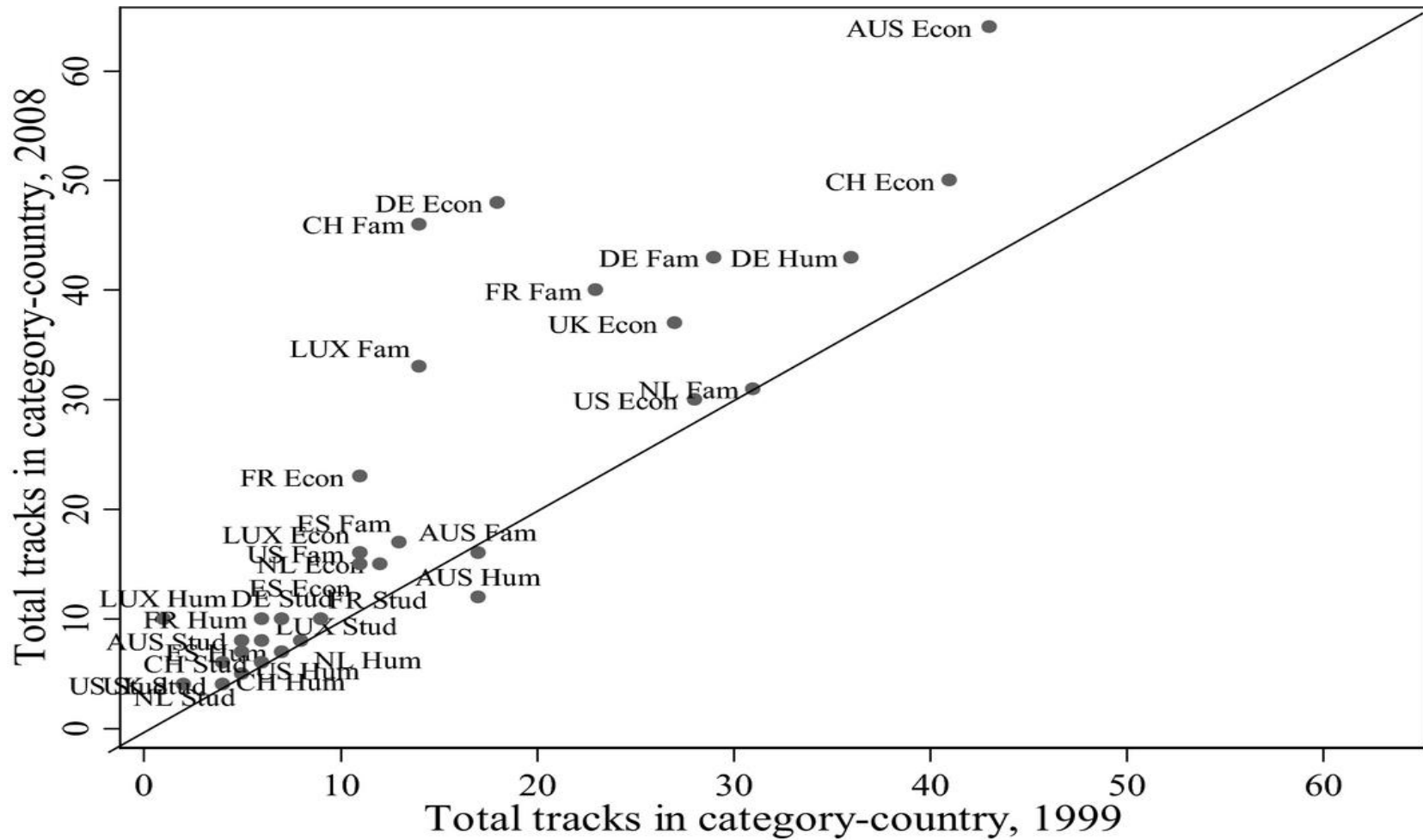
# An index requires information

- OECD migration database
  - Permanent visa grants, and NZ migrants
  - Excludes temporary and “temporary”
- World Bank remittance data
- UNHCR data
  
- Nearly everything else is from scratch

# Measuring migration: an emerging field

- Migration policy indexes
  - Databases: IMPIC; IMPALA
  - MIPEX
- Migration and development index
  - Commitment to Development Index (CGDev)

# Example: IMPALA



# MIPEX

- “the project identifies and measures integration outcomes, integration policies, and other contextual factors that can impact policy effectiveness; describes the real and potential beneficiaries of policies; and collects and analyses high-quality evaluations of integration policy effects.”

# MIPEX

- New benchmark for comparative integration – Australia ranks 8<sup>th</sup> from 38 countries
- European lens on selection and benchmarks
  - Australia: Labour market mobility and Permanent residency bad
  - Australia: Education and health good

# Center for Global Development

- “Migration and Development” indicator
- Component parts:
  - International conventions (10%)
  - MIPEX (20%)\*\*
  - Migration, student, asylum, refugee flows (70%)

# Criticisms

- Any index will attract criticism for selection, weighting and bias.
- Robin Davies on CGDev: “When a yardstick indicates that Australia has the third-best migration policies in the developed world, from an international development perspective, it’s probably time for a new yardstick.”

## CGDev in their own words

- “The migration component of the CDI is a reasonable overall measure of a country’s immigration policies as they affect development, and on this overall measure, Australia deserves its place near the top of the index.”
- Is this true? (“No index is perfect, of course.”)



## Australia as a case study

- Australia ranks 4<sup>th</sup> in 2016 CDI Migration
  - “Australia’s exceptional high acceptance rates of immigrants and its open borders to students from developing countries.”
  - “integration policies are among the best”
  - “Room for improvement in its commitment to the international refugee burden sharing and by ratifying the Convention on the Treatment of Migrant Workers and the Migration for Employment Convention.”

# On the migrants

- Who is counted?
  - Permanent visas
  - Students, humanitarian, asylum
- Who is not counted?
  - Backpackers, seasonal workers, temporary workers

# Seasonal workers?

- Gibson+McKenzie: “among the most effective development policies evaluated to date”
- Estimate ~\$4,000 per capita benefit
- Tonga:
  - 4389 participants in Australia/NZ in 2015-16
  - \$17.5m compared to \$51m in combined ODA.
- Vanuatu:
  - 5130 participants in Australia/NZ in 2015-16
  - \$20.1m compared to \$81m in combined ODA

# Temporary sponsored visas?

- 457 visas
  - Indian citizens: 8300 work in ICT as at June 2016
  - Average total salary: \$89,800
  - 94,000 total primary visa holders
- How should we count these people, if at all? ~\$8 billion in outgoing remittances in 2015 (World Bank).

## Possible contradictions

- Ratifying Convention on Migrant Workers
  - Long standing goal of union movement, ILO
  - No migrant receiving countries have ratified
- Ruhs (2013) argues increasing rights potential to reduce openness to migration.
- Need to grapple with these Migration and Development questions to translate for policy makers

## Where to next?

- Indexes are difficult; detailed comparative work to assist bridge gaps.
- Distribution of migrants?
  - i.e. International students in Australia and cost barriers. Can this be measured?
- Linking migration and income?
  - Gibson and McKenzie find 30% per capita increase in household income from seasonal worker participation (Tonga, 2011-12)

# Australia

- Some of the best migration data in the world
- ABS, DIBP, ATO data to underpin assumptions
- Model different visa categories
- Move towards products/indexes to assist with greater policy engagement

# Thanks for listening

- Please get in touch if you would like to discuss migration.
- Devpolicy Labour Mobility and Migration newsletter
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