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Pedroza, Luicy; Palop-García, Pau

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Diaspora policies in comparison: An application of the Emigrant Policies Index (EMIX) for the Latin American and Caribbean region

Luicy Pedroza*, Pau Palop-García

Institute of Latin American Studies, German Institute of Global and Area Studies, Friedrichstraße 206, 10969 Berlin, Germany

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ABSTRACT

In this paper we present the Emigrant Policies Index (EMIX), an index that summarizes the emigrant policies developed by 22 Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) states. In recent decades sending states have increasingly adopted policies to keep economic, political or social links with their emigrants. These "emigrant 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. The EMIX proposes a useful tool to condense and compare a wide spectrum of policies across countries. Its development involved the collection of official data, as well as a critical review of secondary literature and input from experts as complementary sources. Through a rigorous framework for constructing the index, we show how emigrant policies can be aggregated to measure the overall degree and volume of emigrant policies in LAC states. The results of the EMIX portray a region that has indeed made serious efforts to assist their diaspora in the states of reception and to encourage their involvement in the political, economic and social fabric in the states of origin. The results, however, also reveal great variation in the emigrant policies and the administrative setting adopted by LAC states.

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1. Introduction

Data on the migrant flows in Latin American and Caribbean countries show a complex picture: the region deals with immigration, emigration, transit migration, return migration, and transborder livelihoods. Still, the overwhelming focus is on emigration as the key flow and primary interest of states in the region. Correspondingly, there has been a boom in literature on diaspora policies or diaspora governance in case studies and small-n studies. But to which degree are findings from case studies generalizable to the whole region? How representative is the well-studied relation of the Mexican state to its diaspora (for example Délano, 2014; Fitzgerald, 2006) of other Latin American countries in the degree and manner in which the state has engaged emigrants? To what extent can we speak about Latin American and Caribbean countries sharing orientations in their emigrant policies or, in a more basic sense, developing a dense web of emigrant policies?

The broad literature on diasporas' agency in state-diaspora relations (Ancien, Boyle, & Kitchin, 2009; Bauböck & Faist, 2010; Chen, Racine, & Collins, 2014; Ho, Hickey, & Yeoh, 2015; Margheritis, 2016, 2011), tends to identify state policy making in this field mainly with a few concrete policy areas such as external voting rights, dual citizenship and remittances (Burgess, 2014; Collyer, 2013; Gammage, 2006). Studies on emigrant policies in particular (also known as "diaspora policies" or "diaspora engagement policies") differ in the number and kinds of policies they consider relevant. More importantly, they differ in the range of cases they cover, and, most significantly, the theoretical insights they apply. A dense web of hypotheses on the contemporary interactions between state and emigrants has developed from several in-depth studies (Délano, 2011; Margheritis, 2011, 2014; Ragazzi, 2014a, 2014b), studies with comparative perspectives (Lafleur, 2011; Martiniello & Lafleur, 2008; Délano & Gamlen, 2014; Ragazzi, 2014a, 2014b; Collyer, 2013) and theoretical studies on the new conceptions of statehood and citizenship (Bauböck, 2007, 2009; Itzigsohn, 2000). What this fast-developing literature lacks so far is an understanding of emigrant policies that derives inductively from a systematic collection of policies for a whole region, allowing different profiles to emerge and display variations (i.e. refraining from selecting by outcome) before organizing and

* Corresponding author.
E-mail addresses: luicy.pedroza@giga-hamburg.de (L. Pedroza), pau.palop@giga-hamburg.de (P. Palop-García).

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explaining those variations with theory. In this paper we aim at filling this gap by building an Index of Emigrant Policies (henceforth EMIX) that covers 22 Latin American and Caribbean countries of very different migration profiles, and not only the "usual suspects" (e.g. Mexico). The EMIX measures the degree of adoption of emigrant policies in the following countries: Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, México, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela. The EMIX findings reveal that there is significant variation in the LAC region regarding the degree of adoption of emigrant policies. Countries such as Brazil, Ecuador or Mexico have developed almost all the emigrant policies canvassed by the EMIX, but some countries have minimal focus on emigrant policies (e.g. Belize or Panama). More interestingly, the index reveals that countries follow diverse strategies to keep or create links with their non-resident citizens, adopting certain concrete policies while disregarding others (for instance, developing social protection programs for emigrants instead of policies to incentivize remittances). In addition, the EMIX makes evident how LAC states have developed very different administrative settings to manage emigrant policies. While some countries have created specific administrative units at the highest levels of their executive hierarchy (e.g. Ecuador), others do not have a dedicated office for emigrant policies. Finally, the EMIX makes a crucial contribution to the very conceptualization of the concept of *emigrant policies* and to its measurement, serving both the academic and the policy communities by providing transparent information on the emigrant policies of this region. The systematization required for such an effort of index building addresses shortcomings of previous studies on emigrant policies by delimiting and defining exhaustively their dimensions. We also contribute to the literature on indices for migration policies by completing the often neglected side of emigrant integration policies as it contrasts with immigrant inclusion and integration.

The paper is structured as follows. In the next section we explain the rationale for constructing this index. Then, we discuss the concepts (e.g. "emigrant policies", "state of origin", "state of reception") that delineate and inform the ordering of the constitutive policy items. Then, we elaborate in detail on the framework of the EMIX and its components, subcomponents and attributes. The fourth section presents the data that we used, providing details of its collection and codification process, as well as the variables that compose the index, including their measurement levels and descriptive statistics. We then broadly summarize the findings. Later, we present an analysis of the statistical coherence of the framework, the overall statistical reliability of the index, and test the effect of the assumptions used to construct it, namely the weights and aggregation rules. Finally, we conclude the paper with some reflections on the limitations of the EMIX and its potential applications beyond this paper.

2. Theoretical framework

Scholars and international organizations have recently highlighted how states develop policies to engage their emigrants in the state of origin, piloting new migrant membership practices and facilitating the transnational political involvement of migrants (Agunias, Rannveig, & Kathleen Newland International Organization for Migration and Migration Policy Institute, 2012; Bauböck & Faist, 2010; Délano & Gamlen, 2014; Gamlen, 2014; Iskander, 2010; Lum, Nikolko, Samy, & Carment, 2013; OECD., 2015; Ostergaard-Nielsen, 2003; Rhodes & Harutyunyan, 2010).

Case studies, small-n comparative studies that look into an ever-growing catalog of policies and theories on new state-emigrant relations have dominated the literature on emigrant policies (cfr. Margheritis, 2011; Délano, 2014; Escobar, 2007; Hoffmann, 2010; Ragazzi, 2014a, 2014b; Mahieu, 2014; Shain, 1999; Bauböck, 2008; Bravo, 2014; Bermúdez, 2014; Padilla, 2011; Margheritis, 2014; Crosa, 2014; Hinojosa Gordonova & Alfonso, n.d.). However, this is not to say that rigorous cross-case empirical research is lacking. As we will discuss below, there is already excellent comparative research available, some of which has been published in this very journal. What is lacking, we find, is a descriptive and broad-based survey of the existing policy landscape that precedes theoretical interpretation.

In this paper we want to take a step back from the theory: we want to firstly reflect on the emigrant policies that already exist and their variation, to only later proceed with expectations about the variation across countries based on different migration profiles. To spark this reflection we include cases with different migration profiles in a large region of the world. Rather than letting theory pre-determine which policies we look at, we focus on conceptualizing the full array of what we found can be defined as emigrant policies. We think that a strong comparative angle on the wide range of policies found will inform a more rigorous theoretical development in the literature. An index helps us achieve this.

In the last two decades various scholars have made inroads into constructing datasets and indices to systematize migration policies. This has happened mostly in the field of study of immigration, integration and access-to-citizenship policies (see Boucher et al., 2012; Cerna, 2009; Helbling, Bjerre, Römer, & Zobel, 2014; Ruhs, 2011; Thielemann, 2012; Vink & Bauböck, 2013). Most of these efforts have a geographic and thematic focus that reveals a receiving-country bias in the subjects/objects of research: they primarily include Western European, OECD and a few other —typically Anglo-Saxon— countries, and deal primarily with a particular subset of immigration policies (asylum, labor migration, high-skilled migration, etc.). Some notable exceptions are the EUDO project hosted at EUI, which recently expanded to the Americas, and the DEMIG project at the IMI, University of Oxford, which focused on two aspects related to emigration policy: regulation of outflows and conditions of citizenship loss (see Haas & Vezzoli, 2014).

Parallel to this, comparative research focusing on a wide range of policies developed by states of origin to engage with citizens living abroad (i.e. what we understand in this paper as "emigrant policies") has developed greatly, ordering the well-studied cases into typologies around theoretical models of citizenship (Bauböck, 2003) or as types of sending-state - diaspora relationships (Collyer & Vathi, 2007; Smith, 2003). Attempting a more inductive approach, some pioneer systematic cross-case comparative studies have made a contribution by in clustering states according to their emigrant policies: Ragazzi (2014a, 2014b), Gamlen (2006) and Gamlen, Cummings, Vaaler, & Rossouw (2013) have taken into account an ample set of emigrant policies across countries and the institutions that direct them. We want to continue on the trajectory set by these studies and, in some senses, correct them, addressing the problems noted by Chen et al. (2014) regarding the "black hole of unspecified concepts with regard to how such kind of relationship can be theorized" (p. 6). Without such conceptual groundwork, we find that the theoretical lenses used by Ragazzi and Gamlen, as illuminating as they are about the relations between state and diaspora, narrow the field of vision before we know how far-reaching the horizon of emigrant policies can be.

In his article published in *Political Geography*, Gamlen (2008) first outlines two main "diaspora mechanisms", namely: "diaspora building", which included policies to cultivate and recognize the diaspora, and "diaspora integration", which condensed the extension of rights and the extraction of obligations. He classified

policies of 70 countries ("emigration states") based on whether they fell under the mentioned mechanisms. Yet, Gamlen's criteria for indexing the significance of various state mechanisms are unclear, making it difficult for others to trace or replicate the coding framework. More importantly, the categories applied by Gamlen in two levels of abstraction are still too ambiguous to convey face validity for the included items. For instance, in Gamlen's assessment, programs to facilitate remittances are a policy to extract obligations from emigrants towards their state of origin. Instead, we see it more neutrally as an economic policy (see Framework section). This can be later interpreted in the light of different theories of political economy, only one option of which would be to consider them extractive.

The second comprehensive attempt to classify and compare emigrant policies across states is the one conducted by Ragazzi 2014a, 2014b, also in *Political Geography*. Ragazzi, too, makes a remarkable effort to organize a wide range of emigrant policies to build a typology of diaspora policies based on a multiple correspondence analysis (MCA). His systematization of emigrant policies helped us to build the framework of EMIX, which also takes an inductive approach. However, in our view, Ragazzi includes some policies that are not strictly emigrant policies, such as border control or controls of outflows, which are rather emigration policies (see Conceptualization section). Also, in the very analytical exercise of naming the clusters he finds, Ragazzi forces some policies into clusters that are not fully coherent,[1] such as counting "highest administrative unit" as an indicator for symbolic policies. Yet, we think that when a country establishes new administrative unit to deal with emigrant issues that signifies substantial investment in capacities to institutionalize emigrant policies, and therefore goes beyond a symbolic gesture. Thus, we think that the rank of the administrative unit in charge of emigrant policies should instead be understood as a proxy of the state prioritization of emigrant policies more directly in the dimension of administration, rather than along a dimension of symbolic policies (see our Framework section).

2.1. An index as a methodological and conceptual contribution

The purpose of an index is to "explain a phenomenon by looking at the different items that capture its multiple facets" (Janoski, 2014, p. 1). While typologies order and cluster data according to an underlying theory, indices are devices to condense data in a manner that allows us to capture scores for aggregate measures (in this case, one that adds up emigrant policies). In a more basic sense, an index also allows us to compare the constitutive components that make up that measurement. Hence, an index allows us to reflect bottom-up about the elements that would allow us to compare emigrant policies across cases. In the particular context of the literature on emigrant policies, an index allows us to contribute a rigorous systematization of emigrant policies with specificity and transparency in the measurement and aggregation of policies. As well, an index allows us to do something more fundamental than measuring policies in another way: it allows us to define the concept of emigrant policies rigorously. We must reflect on the items belonging in it, as items are constitutive of and should stay, also for their measurement, close to their categories, before they are further aggregated into more abstract and theoretically complex categories.

Case selection is closely related to the process of constructing an index. Thanks to our consideration of an entire region with very diverse cases, we have reassessed which items to include or delete from existing comparative work when constructing the EMIX. For instance, items previously considered in studies using a Foucaldian perspective, such as surveillance mechanisms (Gamlen, 2006) could have been included, yet their relevance was not obvious for any of the cases we cover. In turn, we added transit policies which are relevant for some cases in our scope and seem likely to exist for others in the world. These had hitherto been ignored due to selection of mostly emigration-relevant cases. Also, religious policies that are developed by states did not strike us as relevant for LAC.

Of course, indices incorporate theories in their rationales for aggregation and weighting of components for the final score. The very condensation of information towards a single measure reflects an assumption that all information added up could give a picture of a coherent phenomenon. Serious attempts at building indices must therefore address and discuss these rationales for aggregation (Helbling, Bjerre, Römer, & Zobel, 2016). In the Data section we present theoretical and empirical arguments to substantiate our aggregation methodology. Yet, to restate our goal, our interest in building EMIX is to let the data guide theory development as far as possible, starting from a reflection on the attributes of emigrant policies as a concept. This is why, in contrast to the other efforts in the cross-case comparative literature reviewed above, we refrain from building a typology in order to imprint as few theoretical assumptions as possible into our study. We also refrain from applying normative or evaluative criteria to EMIX (i.e. it does not tell us which country, or what mix of policy, is better or more desirable than other). Even though there are good normative indices that have inspired us in the construction of this index (Munck & Verkuilen, 2002; Blatter, Bläter, & Schmid, 2014; Koopmans, Michalowski, & Waibel, 2012; MIPEX, 2015), ours is rather a stock-taking and reconceptualization exercise. The possibilities that this exercise offers are, however, meaningful for further theoretical development. The aggregated policies allow researchers to hypothesize on the reasons, intentions and channels for emigrant inclusion (or exclusion) in the polity which may be overlapping and complementary (Hoffmann, 2010) and can be used as either dependent or independent variables.

To summarize, our proposal differs from Gamlen's and Ragazzi's in one main manner: with an index, we aim to comprehend more rigorously what emigrant policies are by taking smaller steps in the abstraction ladder. The initial task in the construction of an index is to identify the components that constitute the concept under analysis (see Munck & Verkuilen, 2002: 7), to which we turn now. We develop a concept of emigrant policies with clear intension and extension (i.e. coverage of the concept and number of attributes; see Goertz, 2012, p. 72), and a survey of basic dimensions and components coherent with and close to that concept. In defining the logical structure of the concept of emigrant policies, we have followed the two basic rules of conceptual logic proposed by Munck and Verkuilen (2002), namely: to avoid conflation by vertically organizing components, subcomponents and attributes, and to avoid redundancy assuring that attributes in the same level of abstraction are mutually exclusive.

2.2. Concepts and components

In general, by **policy** we understand a course of action, usually the result of an authoritative decision-making process, which has concrete formal consequences for how particular issues are guided and governed. In traditional public policy studies, policies may be

[1] He names states that focus on cultural and educational policies "expatriate"; states that focus on regulating or restricting the mobility of the population "closed"; states that implement a broad range of diaspora policies and provide their diaspora with a wider set of rights "global-nation" state; states which focus on the investment provisions for returnees "managed labor"; and states that lack interest on their population abroad "indifferent".

studied in their design, enactment, content and their implementation. We are interested in the first three aspects. Very importantly, we try not to conflate policy outcomes and policy outputs (see Boucher et al., 2012) by focusing on binding policies and laws that are in force —i.e. not on their implementation, consequences or evaluation.

Our main concept is **emigrant policies.** Under this concept we mean to cover any kind of policy that states develop to establish a new relation towards, or keep the links with, their emigrants. This concept seems expansive, yet it has discrete boundaries: it is a subset of migration policies, but clearly distinct from immigration and emigration policies. This means that we neither follow regulations on inflows (immigration policies of receiving states) nor the regulations on the outflow from the countries of origin (emigration policies of states of origin). The concept of emigrant policies, therefore, includes but is not limited to dual nationality, remittance facilitation or external voting policies (see Framework section below), which are policies that have been used before as indicators of states' interest and engagement with diasporas. In using the adjective *emigrant* we highlight the intension, or positive connotation (Gerring, 1999; Sartori, 1970) of the concept by marking the demographic target of the policies as necessary: policies must be designed and developed towards people who have left the country of origin, be it because they reside abroad or because they are in a transit journey, with or without travel documents, and also those who, by virtue of their belonging to an emigrant community —for example, because of close personal connections— could make citizenship/nationality claims, even if they don't have it presently (i.e. second and third generations). We disregard whether emigrants have a distinct identity abroad or not, and whether they are concentrated in one country or not. With such an extensive definition we resist relying exclusively on either on legal status or subjective intentions (will to stay abroad/to return) as determinants of who are emigrants, even if an element of both remains in some cases. We are conscious about leaving out some categories of persons in situation of mobility out, such as tourists, yet we try to avoid carrying problems of conceptualization into the index construction.

We use the term **state of origin (SO)** because it is more accurate than alternatives from the literature or common usage (i.e. “sending state” or “homeland”). It is more appropriate for discussing the source of policies that target people abroad by virtue of their belonging (formally or informally) regardless of the alleged intentionality of the state in expelling them or their subjective identity. Likewise, we stick to the term **state of reception (SR)** rather than “host” or “destination” country to avoid controversies about the subjective adscriptions of migrants to the territories that they transit through or reside in for whatever duration, and the intentionality on the side of the receiving state. We are more interested in identifying the jurisdiction where emigrant policies apply than on ascertaining the final mobility aspirations of the migrants. Although “state of residence” would have been a good candidate, we know that emigrants may stay on the move and that emigrant policies do not only target permanent residents abroad. Instead, eligibility is most often granted by virtue of 1) continued membership —usually but not necessarily linked to the status of citizenship-in the SO, and 2) absence from the territorial jurisdiction of that SO. Moreover, we avoid the labels “country of emigration” or “country of immigration” since we observe that they are not mutually exclusive: a state could be considered a country of emigration and immigration depending on the point in time and the criteria for classification.

With regard to the components, we argue that the concept “emigrant policies” is composed of two main components: (1) policies (POLICIES) and (2) the administration setting developed to cope with their design and implementation (ADMINISTRATION). The first component summarizes the content of the policies. It is composed of ten subcomponents: citizenship policies, electoral rights, institutional consultation, external obligations, economic policies, social policies, political competition abroad, symbolic policies, cultural policies and exit and transit policies. The second component, administration, accounts for the capabilities of the state to design and implement emigrant policies and is integrated by two subcomponents: the home administration setting and the administration deployed by the given country abroad. Table 1 presents an overview of the components and subcomponents of the EMIX.

2.2.1. Policy subcomponents

Citizenship policies could be said to be the central vein of emigrant policies, because these are the policies by which states offer emigrants formal membership in the national community and regulate the conditions of such membership. That membership is, in turn, a condition to be target of emigrant policies. Under citizenship policies we observe policies designed to allow, encourage or forbid the formal acquisition of dual or multiple nationality by emigrants, as well as regulations regarding the bundle of rights and duties of citizenship by virtue of their absence from the national territory.

The next subcomponent is *suffrage rights*. Under this subcomponent we observe passive and active voting rights that emigrants may exercise, including the type of elections in which they may vote, the conditions for voting, the registration methods (especially regarding how they differ relative to resident nationals) and the specific mode of representation (how are the votes counted in the electoral results and how are they turned into seats). The suffrage subcomponent is thus composed of two further subcomponents: active electoral rights (in presidential and legislative elections) and passive electoral rights (in presidential and legislative elections).

Going beyond suffrage, we created another subcomponent to understand the policies by which the rules of political competition are adapted to work beyond borders. Where emigrants are concerned, electoral regulations for their voting do not tell the whole story of how the SO regulates transnational political competition in terms of its presence and funding. We thus observe how the rules for party competition reach emigrants beyond borders: the regulation of political campaigns abroad and party offices in SR, and the regulations according to which parties themselves manage emigrants' participation in their ranks.

Many SO have created bodies meant to represent emigrants or to carry their voice into policymaking. We order these under the component policies under a subcomponent called institutional participation and not under the component of administration, because they are not fully part of state structures, but rather take the form of consultative bodies. This subcomponent has two attributes that reveal the location of these existing bodies: at the national-central level and/or linked to consulates.

A clear subcomponent of emigrant policies is *economic policies*, which have often been ascribed as overarching strategies or logics (in the manner of “extracting” or “tapping”) of SO to explain why they get involved with their diasporas at all. Thus, this subcomponent illustrates precisely the gains of the grounded approach and reconceptualization proposed by the EMIX. We assign four kinds of policies under this subcomponent: facilitation of remittances, investment/co-investment schemes, brain circulation networks that are supposed to ease the skill transfer of emigrants, and also return policies. We find that all of these policies present emigrants as potential sources of benefit to the SO (e.g. knowledge/foreign currency/business/know-how), but whether states have one or all lends itself to different hypotheses about their overriding aims.

Table 1
EMIX framework.

Comp.	Subcomp.	Atributes	Items	Modality	Measurement level	Notes
Policy				0 to 1	Interval	
	Citizenship			0 to 1	Interval	The indicators of citizenship follow the EUDO Citizenship Law indicators.
		Citizenship for nationals by birth		0 to 1	Interval	
			Loss of nationality	0 to 1	Interval	
			Citizen Rights	0 to 1	Interval	
		Citizenship for nationals by naturalization		0 to 1	Interval	
			Loss of nationality	0 to 1	Interval	
			Citizen Rights	0 to 1	Interval	
	Suffrage			0 to 1	Interval	Scores are calculated as a percentage of the rights that can be extended.
		Active electoral rights		0 to 1	Interval	
			Presidential elections	0 to 1	Interval	
			Legislative (Lower House)	0 to 1	Interval	
			Legislative (Upper House)	0 to 1	Interval	
		Passive electoral rights		0 to 1	Interval	
			Presidential elections	0 to 1	Interval	
			Legislative (Lower House)	0 to 1	Interval	
			Legislative (Upper House)	0 to 1	Interval	
		Registration for the franchise		Easier than for residents, same procedure, more complex than for residents	Ordinal	
	Political Competition			0 to 1	Interval	
		Political offices abroad		Yes/No	Ordinal	
		Political campaigns abroad		Yes/No	Ordinal	
		Emigrant membership to SO parties		Yes/No	Ordinal	
	Institutional Participation			0 to 1	Interval	The indicators of institutional participation follow the ones proposed by MIPEX for migrant advisory boards in the states of reception.
		At the national level		0 to 1	Interval	
			Structural consultation	Yes/No	Ordinal	
			Composition of advisory body	Yes/No	Ordinal	
			Chair of consultative body	Yes/No	Ordinal	
			Right to get a response	Yes/No	Ordinal	
			Right of initiative	Yes/No	Ordinal	
		At the consular level		0 to 1	Interval	
			Structural consultation	Yes/No	Ordinal	
			Composition of advisory body	Yes/No	Ordinal	
			Chair of consultative body	Yes/No	Ordinal	
			Right to get a response	Yes/No	Ordinal	
			Right of initiative	Yes/No	Ordinal	
	Economic policies			0 to 1	Interval	
		Remittances		0 to 1	Interval	
			Program to foster remittances	Yes/No	Ordinal	
			Improvement of banking channels	Yes/No	Ordinal	
			Fee controls for remittances	Yes/No	Ordinal	
			Remitances for co-development	Yes/No	Ordinal	
		Investment programs		Yes/No	Ordinal	
		Return programs		0 to 1	Interval	
			Recognition of academic qualifications obtained abroad	Yes/No	Ordinal	
			Communication campaigns to foster return	Yes/No	Ordinal	
			Tax exemption to bring in household goods	Yes/No	Ordinal	
			Integration programs for returnees	Yes/No	Ordinal	
			Brain-gain programs	Yes/No	Ordinal	
		Brain circulation networks		Yes/No	Ordinal	
	Obligations			0 to 1	Interval	
		Military service		Yes/No	Ordinal	For the military and social service, we will register if they exist for the resident population; next, we analyze whether the obligations apply for residents and non-residents equally or whether there are differences based on the place of residence.
		Social service		Yes/No	Ordinal	
		Declare taxes in SO		Yes/No	Ordinal	
		Special tax for emigrants		Yes/No	Ordinal	
	Cultural			0 to 1	Interval	
		Cultural institutes abroad		Yes/No	Ordinal	
		Promotion offices in consulates		Yes/No	Ordinal	

(*continued on next page*)

Table 1 (*continued*)

Comp.	Subcomp.	Atributes	Items	Modality	Measurement level	Notes
		Cultural programs		Yes/No	Ordinal	
	Exit and transit policies			0 to 1	Interval	
		Information campaigns about right and duties		Yes/No	Ordinal	
		Information campaign to foster safe transit		Yes/No	Ordinal	
	Social policies			0 to 1	Interval	
		Retirement benefits after emigration		Yes/No	Ordinal	
		Healhcare		0 to 1	Interval	
			Targeted services for emigrants	Yes/No	Ordinal	
			Bilateral agreements with other countries	Yes/No	Ordinal	
		Education programs for emigrants		Yes/No	Ordinal	
	Symbolic policies			0 to 1	Interval	
		Awards		Yes/No	Ordinal	
		Communication campaigns		Yes/No	Ordinal	
		Emigrant conferences		Yes/No	Ordinal	
		National day devoted to the emigrants		Yes/No	Ordinal	
		Explicit reference in the constitution		Yes/No	Ordinal	
		Creation of a new symbolic territorial entity		Yes/No	Ordinal	
ADM				0 to 1	Interval	
	Home administration			No, Directorate,	Ordinal	
	External Administration			Viceministry, Ministry	0 to 1	Interval
		Consular network			0 to 1	Interval
			Size		0 to 1	Interval
			Dispersion		0 to 1	Interval
		Consular services			0 to 1	Interval
			Online services		Yes/No	Ordinal
			Weekends		Yes/No	Ordinal
			Mobile consulates		Yes/No	Ordinal
		Consular functions			0 to 1	Interval
			Legal services		Yes/No	Ordinal
			Financial services		Yes/No	Ordinal
			Psychological consultancy		Yes/No	Ordinal

Source: own creation.

Thus, it is better to survey which of these exists before we apply a theoretical lens that filters for policies that would conform to hypotheses (e.g. facilitation of remittances or investment to an extracting logic).

As a counterpart to emigrant policies that extend rights, we also check policies that extend *obligations*. SO have few resources to enforce obligations outside their territorial boundaries, but we wanted to see if the obligations that hold for citizens in general have special ways of reaching non-resident citizens, particularly regarding three attributes: the obligation to pay taxes and requirements to comply with a military or social service.

SO also have *cultural policies* targeting emigrants to teach and promote their cultural heritage (language, traditions etc.). Following our conceptualizations, in this subcomponent we do not include general cultural promotion policies by consulates, but only those that explicitly target emigrants as beneficiaries. The subcomponent records the existence of "cultural institutes" abroad (e.g. similar to Spain's Instituto Cervantes, Portugal's Instituto Luis de Camões), as well as of cultural promotion offices within the SO consulates and the existence of cultural programs abroad orchestrated by the state. Diaspora heritage tours (Mahieu, 2014) could fit here, but we found no evidence of their existence in LAC at the time of data collection.

As we highlighted in the conceptualization section, the EMIX deals with emigr*ant* policies, not with emigr*ation* policies. For reasons of practicability, but also for the correct interpretation of what we are trying to find out —new dynamics emerging in the relation between state and its citizens beyond borders—, it is imperative that we draw that line. However, there are some policies at the borderline between emigration and emigrant policies, such as those *transit and exit* policies targeting emigrants to make their journey safer. This might be because they are already out of the borders of the SO or were emigrants in the past and may leave again. Thus subcomponent includes two attributes: the existence of information campaigns to inform citizens thinking of leaving the SO about their rights and duties as well as information campaigns to promote a safe transit to the SR.

There are some policies which target emigrants in the realm of health, education and employment benefits (mainly pensions). We group them under a subcomponent termed *social policies* that includes two attributes: policies that apply to emigrants in the same terms as to residents (even if administered by consulates) or special policies in these areas that apply to emigrants only in a supplementary/residual logic.

A final subcomponent that we include under policies captures the formal steps that states take towards the recognition of emigrants' contributions to the SO: *symbolic policies*.[2] The attributes under this subcomponent are as follows: the designation of specific days to commemorate emigrants; the regular organization of conferences at national levels to discuss their contributions; whether there is a specific reference emigrants in the constitution; whether there are awards for emigrants given by SO authorities (here we register in which level and how regularly) and whether there are new symbolic special entities created that include them beyond the districts, provinces, and other jurisdictions that formally belong to the state.

2.2.2. Administration subcomponents

The component Administration has only two subcomponents that allow us to distinguish the main structures of emigrant policymaking and administration: at home or abroad. Thus, under the

[2] This might easily be confused with a general rhetoric that extols the virtues of emigrants, but we make a point that these efforts have to be institutionalized somehow - traced to policy texts or routinely practiced.

subcomponent *home administration* we survey new ministries, vice-ministries and coordinating agencies that have been created in the SO with large diasporas and establish their rank within the SO administration. The subcomponent *external administration* gives us an idea of the capacity in the traditional structure to administer state services to the citizenry beyond a state's borders: the consular network. In particular, we condense information regarding two attributes: the size and dispersion of the consulate network (i.e. number of consulates in total and number of countries with consular presence), and especially the improvements in the consular service administration (e.g. online or mobile consulates) in order to expand and enhance services to emigrants.

3. Data

3.1. Selection of items

To arrive at the components of our index we extrapolated eligible examples from the comparative literature on immigration policy, citizenship policy, consular and diplomatic policy using our definitional criteria of emigrant policies. Then we conducted pilot exercises of data collection in an inductive approach. As Table 1 shows, every subcomponent of our framework (with the exception of 'home administration') is composed of several attributes. For some of the components, this is the lowest level of abstraction, but others have attributes which in turn are composed by several items. This difference in the level of abstraction reflects the complexity of every subcomponent. With some subcomponents such as suffrage, citizenship or institutional participation, we reached a fine-tuned conceptualization that adds valuable information to the existing literature.

3.2. Sources, collection of information, and codification process

Our research team developed and deployed a data-collection tool for the systematic data gathering for 22 countries guided by strict training on how to find the information through web-based search of reliable, authoritative sources of information on emigrant policies. Our data consisted mostly of primary and secondary legal regulations. Experts and secondary literature were only consulted for clarification purposes. In contrast to other indices that rely on experts and their interpretations of policies (e.g. CITLAW 2012), this tiered procedure helped us to collect exhaustive information while making sure that the code team had the same understanding of what we were supposed to count as empirical observations. This translates into a high coherence in the data collection process and a high reliability of the coding results.

For the construction of the index, we have coded the data into 102 indicators. Data for each country was coded by two different researchers (neither of whom had collected data on that particular country). Then, the codes provided by the two coders were compared in order to calculate overall inter-rater agreement.[3] Discrepancies between coders were treated in the following manner: the research team gathered to discuss them and find the best codification for every given discrepancy. Most of the discrepancies were due to simple human errors in the coding process, but some were due to different interpretations in the application of the collection tool. In these cases, the team clarified the correct interpretation and reviewed all codes assigned for the given indicator in order to ensure consistency across countries.[4]

[3] The percentage of agreement between coders (two raters per country) was 81.6.

[4] All changes implemented in this phase of the coding process were tracked for future consultation.

3.3. Measurement levels and justification of measurement levels

All items, attributes, subcomponents and components that integrate the index score between 0 and 1. For most of the indicators, we use ordinal scales (in the form of dummy 0/1 scale or ordinal with more than three options). The ordinal indicators are combined following different procedures in order to create interval scales for the subcomponents and components of the index. As discussed by Helbling et al. (2016), the combination of different measurement levels can raise some problems (pp. 10–11). To avoid them, we follow the example for the IMPIX index, and identify for each indicator the theoretical minimum and the theoretical maximum and then assign a 0 for the minimum and a 1 for the maximum. Of course, the interpretation of the theoretical ranges differs across indicators. For the majority of indicators that we include, the existence of a given policy program is coded as 1 and the non-existence as 0. For other indicators, the theoretical range is elucidated by comparing the legal framework applied to non-resident nationals and the one applied to resident nationals. Interval indicators were also scaled to range between 0 and 1, in order to assure comparability with the rest of the indicators (see Table 1).

3.4. Data validation

We were able to find all the data needed for the 22 countries included in our sample. Therefore, data imputation was not needed. Taking a look at the descriptive statistics (see Table 2) we observe that subcomponents are not affected by outliers.[5]

3.5. Weight and aggregation

Not all the subcomponents of the EMIX contribute to the same extent to the final components and index scores. As is common practice in index building, the weights are assigned based on two grounds. First, drawing upon the previous literature (in our case, the studies on transnationalism and migration), we give more weight to citizenship policies, as this subcomponent is probably the most complex (includes more information) and the one that determines more clearly the relationship that emigrants can have with their state of origin. Second, following the advice of Nardo et al. (2005), we adjust the weights based on the analysis of correlations of every subcomponent with its component. With the objective of balancing the correlations of all subcomponents with their component, we decided to increase the weight of the subcomponent obligations, and decrease the weights of the following subcomponents: social policy, symbolic policy, cultural policy and external administration (see Table 3).

The EMIX is composed by two aggregation steps. First, subcomponents are aggregated to calculate the POLICY and ADMINISTRATION scores. Second, the two components are aggregated to calculate the final EMIX score. Since we understand that policies are additive and that there is no such thing as a categorically mandatory policy, we use arithmetic means for all aggregation steps. Using this aggregate formula, policies compensate each other so that the absence of one (e.g. economic policy) could be compensated by the presence of another (e.g. cultural policy). In the final aggregation between components (POLICY and ADMINISTRATION)

[5] Following the example of Nardo et al. (2005) we identify outliers in our sample based on the absolute values of skewness and kurtosis. The only subcomponent with a kurtosis greater than 3.5 is POL (kurtosis = 3.65). We have decided not to treat, however, this subcomponent. Moreover, although we find that, at the attribute and item level, there are some variables with absolute skewness greater than 2 and kurtosis greater than 3.5, we decide not to treat them, since they are dummy variables and therefore highly affected by extreme values.

Table 2
Descriptive statistics.

Subcomponents	n	mean	sd	median	mad	min	max	range	skew	kurtosis	se
CIT	22	0,79	0,17	0,83	0,16	0,31	1,00	0,69	−0,99	0,71	0,04
SUF	22	0,22	0,22	0,18	0,23	0,00	0,72	0,72	0,91	−0,15	0,05
INS	22	0,10	0,20	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,75	0,75	2,09	3,43	0,04
OBL	22	0,30	0,18	0,33	0,19	0,00	0,50	0,50	−0,57	−1,03	0,04
SOC	22	0,48	0,26	0,50	0,25	0,00	0,83	0,83	−0,49	−0,86	0,06
ECO	22	0,40	0,28	0,44	0,42	0,05	0,85	0,80	−0,01	−1,64	0,06
POL	22	0,37	0,16	0,33	0,12	0,17	0,92	0,75	1,75	3,64	0,03
SYM	22	0,29	0,25	0,33	0,25	0,00	0,83	0,83	0,29	−1,11	0,05
CUL	22	0,20	0,27	0,00	0,00	0,00	1,00	1,00	1,33	1,44	0,06
EXI	22	0,30	0,33	0,25	0,37	0,00	1,00	1,00	0,61	−0,81	0,07
AEX	22	0,28	0,24	0,25	0,24	0,00	0,92	0,92	1,01	0,42	0,05
AHO	22	0,35	0,23	0,38	0,19	0,00	0,75	0,75	−0,11	−1,01	0,05

Source: own creation.

Table 3
Weights.

Subcomponent	Initial Correlations			Correlation after weights		
	Weight	Policy	ADM	Weight	Policy	ADM
CIT	1	0,23		2	0,41	
SUF	1	0,58		1	0,53	
INS	1	0,56		1	0,49	
OBL	1	0,34		1,5	0,43	
SOC	1	0,73		0,5	0,65	
ECO	1	0,66		1	0,63	
POL	1	0,32		1	0,36	
SYM	1	0,77		0,5	0,7	
CUL	1	0,73		0,5	0,68	
EXI	1	0,6		1	0,58	
AEX	3		0,68	6		0,91
AHO	7		0,94	4		0,75

Source: own creation.

we also use an arithmetic mean and give more weight to the POLICY component than to the ADMINISTRATION component.

4. EMIX findings

4.1. EMIX country scores

As Fig. 1(a) shows, there is plenty of variation across countries in our sample with regard to their EMIX score (sample mean = 0.36, sd = 0.13). Brazil (0.62), Mexico (0.60), El Salvador (0.54) and Ecuador (0.52) have the higher values. Placed well above the average EMIX value are also Dominican Republic (0.49), Colombia (0.43), Guatemala (0.41) and Peru (0.40). Close to the average EMIX score are Chile (0.39), Argentina (0.36), Bolivia (0.36), Uruguay (0.34), Nicaragua (0.34), Costa Rica (0.32) and Honduras (0.32). Finally, those with EMIX scores significantly lower than the sample average are Paraguay (0.29), Jamaica (0.27), Venezuela (0.26) Belize (0.20), Panama (0.19), Trinidad and Tobago (0.17) and Cuba (0.16).

Similar distributions are observed in the two main components of the EMIX (POLICIES and ADMINISTRATION). The POLICIES ranking (mean = 0.39, sd = 0.12) is headed again by Brazil (0.61). However, Ecuador (0.57) is the country that follows in the second position instead of Mexico (0.54) which placed third. Again, the country with the lowest score is Cuba (0.15), and also at the bottom of the list are Panama (0.20), Trinidad and Tobago (0.23), Belize (0.29) and Venezuela (0.30).

Fig. 1(c) shows the countries' POLICIES scores disaggregated by policy subcomponents. The different bars represent the weighted values as they are used to calculate the components' scores. As it can be observed, there is again a great variation across countries regarding (1) the number of policy dimensions adopted and (2) the degree of elaboration of policies within those policy dimensions (index components) under analysis. There are countries such as Brazil and Mexico that have adopted all the policy dimensions included in the EMIX framework and as well, there are countries such as Cuba or Trinidad and Tobago that have adopted only a few emigrant policies, mostly those related to citizenship, social protection or symbolic issues.

As argued in the previous sections, one of the main contributions of the EMIX in comparison with other similar studies on emigrant policies is that it allows us to both register the presence of a policy and furthermore measure the degree of elaboration within a given policy dimension. Such assessment is highly relevant in order to gain a more accurate and nuanced picture of the emigrant policies landscape in the region. The utility of our index becomes more evident when we attend to some of the subcomponents included in the EMIX. For instance, 72.7 percent of the countries in the sample have extended electoral rights to their non-resident citizens (SUF). However, once we analyze the type of electoral rights recognized (active or passive) and the elections in which emigrants can participate (presidential or legislative) we discover a great deal of disparity. Among the LAC states, there is a wide range between those that confer upon non-resident citizens the right to both vote and run in all national elections (e.g. Ecuador) and those that restrict the right to vote to only one type of election, usually, presidential elections (e.g. Chile or Bolivia).

Another subcomponent that highlights the relevance of factoring in the degree of elaboration of emigrant policies is the institutional consultation via advisory boards (INS). Previous research only recorded the existence of a consultative body on emigrant issues. The EMIX approach goes further to outline key characteristics of the advisory boards, such as their composition or competences. EMIX illustrates great variation in the ways that LAC countries consult emigrants through institutional bodies. For instance, some countries (e.g. Dominican Republic) have developed a multilevel consultation scheme that cross-cuts both consular and national channels, whereas other countries have a consultation scheme that only includes the national level (e.g. Mexico) or the consular (e.g. Peru).

As explained before, EMIX measures not only policies, but also the administrative apparatus in charge of adopting or coordinating the policy programs that target emigrants. The ADMINISTRATION component (mean = 0.31, sd = 0.2) summarizes precisely this aspect of emigrant policies (Fig. 1(b)). We observe noteworthy results. Mexico (0.75) and Brazil (0.64) lead again in the ranking, meaning that they not only have substantive emigrant policies, but are also the countries that are best-equipped to implement them in their administration setting at home and abroad. Dominican Republic (0.46), El Salvador (0.53), Guatemala (0.38), Ecuador (0.57)

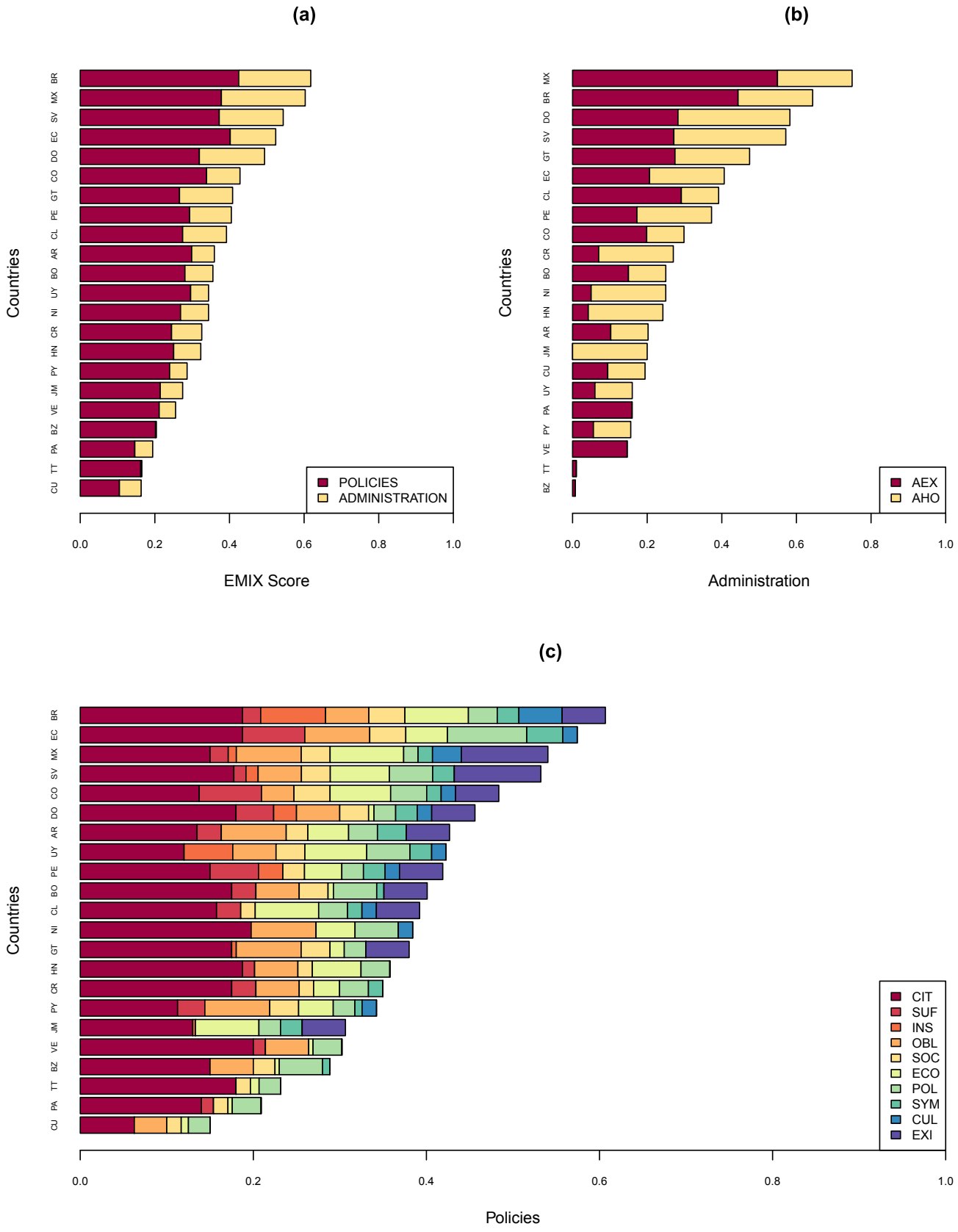

Fig. 1. EMIX country scores.
Source: Own creation based on EMIX. Bars represent weighted scores of components (Fig. 1(a)) and subcomponents (Fig. 1(b-c)).

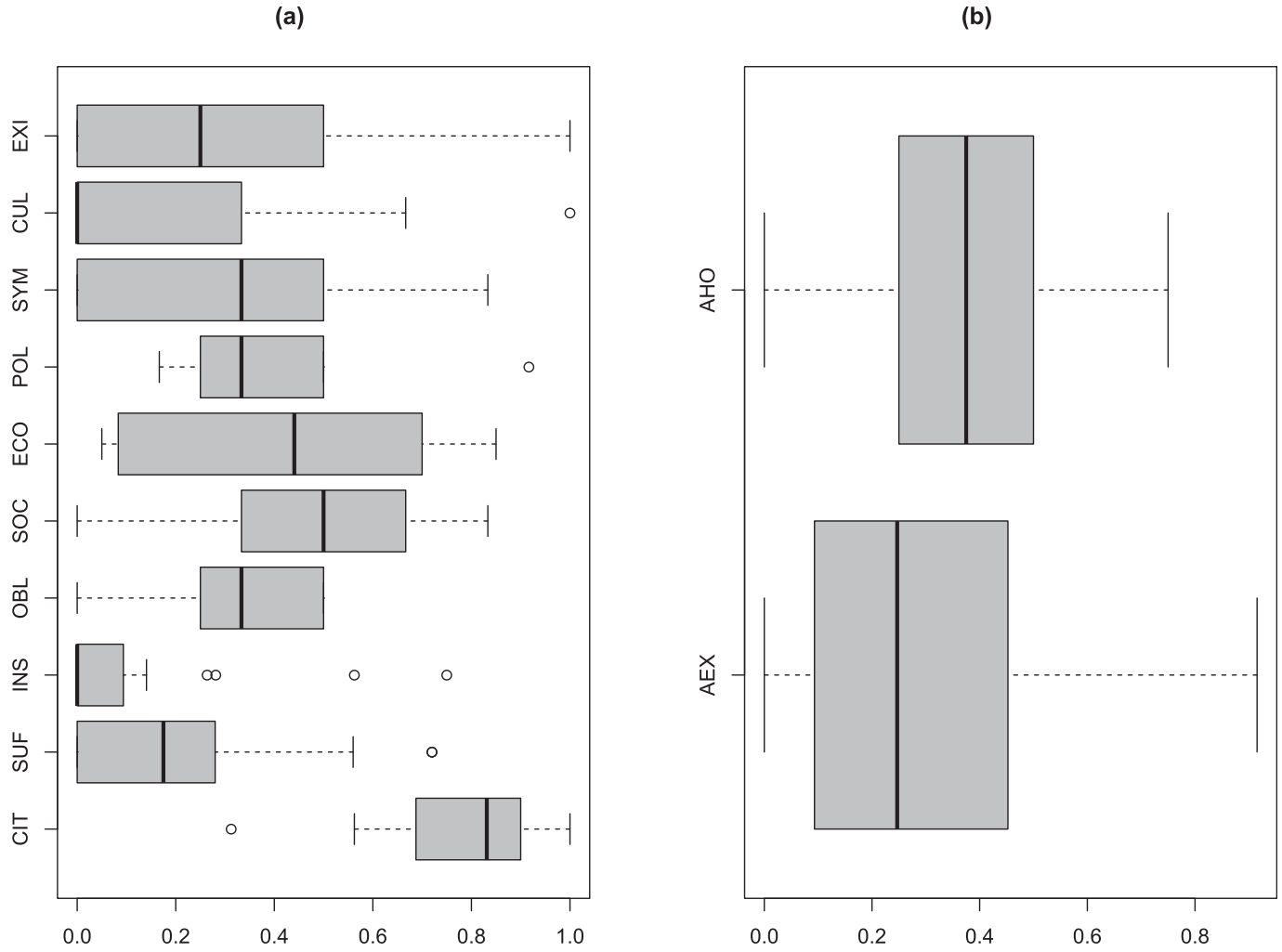

Fig. 2. EMIX regional scores.
Source: Own creation based on EMIX.

and Chile (0.39) are also placed in the upper echelon of the distribution. Belize and Trinidad and Tobago are positioned on the lower part of the distribution with scores close to zero. Countries with very low scores have neither an administration unit in charge of emigrant policies nor a strong consular network geared to serve emigrants. Curiously, Cuba (0.20) ranks above other countries, even while belonging in the lower end of the ranking.

4.2. EMIX regional scores

EMIX data also allow us to draw comparisons across policy subcomponents. Fig. 2(a) shows the average regional scores before applying weights of the policy subcomponents that integrate the EMIX. As expected, the predominant subcomponent in the region is citizenship (CIT, mean = 0.79). Almost all countries in our sample recognize dual citizenship for non-resident nationals and/or do not consider residence abroad as grounds for revoking nationality. Surprisingly, the second most developed subcomponent in the LAC region is social policies (SOC, mean = 0.48). In fact, only Jamaica, Nicaragua and Venezuela do not have policies from this subcomponent. Next we have the subcomponents economic policies (ECO, mean = 0.48), political competition (POL, mean = 0.36), obligations (OBL, mean = 0.3), exit and transit policies (EXI, mean = 0.29) and symbolic policies (SYM, mean = 0.28). Finally, the least developed policy subcomponents are institutional consultation (INS, mean = 0.1), cultural policies (CUL, mean = 0.2) and electoral rights (SUF, mean = 0.22). The fact that suffrage is placed so low can be surprising for some scholars. However, as Palop-García and Pedroza (2017) argue, the assumption that the recognition of external electoral rights has become the regional norm needs to be challenged in light of the variation that emerges in the data.

Fig. 2(b) shows the regional scores for the administrative setting at home and consular networks, the two subcomponents of ADMINISTRATION. Both have low average scores (0.35 and 0.28 respectively), but a closer look at the data reveals interesting details. On the one hand, all 22 countries except for Belize have an administrative setting at home in charge of managing emigrant policies. The administrative units created by states of origin are not, however, usually located at the highest administrative rank (i.e. Ministry). This explains the low average score of the distribution. As for the other subcomponent, all countries in the sample have consular missions abroad. However, as shown in Fig. 1(b), there is plenty of variation within the region: some countries have an extensive consular network (e.g. Brazil), while others maintain few consular missions (e.g. Jamaica).

5. Statistical coherence

In this section we analyze the statistical coherence of EMIX. The objective of this effort is to make transparent the statistical strengths and limitations of the index. We approach this issue as Nardo et al. (2005) suggest, by analyzing (1) the reliability of our composed measures (through PCA), (2) the added value of EMIX scores and (3) the impact of our modelling assumptions.

5.1. Principal component analysis and reliability analysis

We use Principal Component Analysis (PCA) to analyze to what extent the conceptual framework is backed by the statistical analysis. The PCA results do not confirm the presence of any latent component in the POLICY component. There are 3 components with an eigenvalue greater than 1.0 and the first component only captures 34.02 percent of the total variance. However, for the second component, ADMINISTRATION, the PCA reveals a latent component that is able to capture 70.3 percent of the total variance and only one component counts with an eigenvalue greater than 1.0. The expectation that the items placed at the lower level of abstraction correlate positively and strongly with their own component is also met. Furthermore, the statistical reliability of the POLICY component is fairly high (c-alpha = 0.75). The reliability of ADMINISTRATION, however, is moderate (c-alpha = 0.58). The data thus partially confirm our conceptual framework. For the component POLICY which accounts for higher reliability, it does not display any latent variable. For the ADMINISTRATION component, the PCA indeed reveals a latent component, but the reliability is moderate.

Finally, in regard to the upper level of abstraction, the statistical reliability is very high (c-alpha = 0.87) and the PCA based on the two components (POLICY and ADMINISTRATION) reveals that a single latent factor is able to capture up to the 88.1 percent of the variance, suggesting that aggregating up to the highest level of abstraction is supported by the data (see Table 4).

5.2. Added value of the EMIX

The main components, POLICY and ADMINISTRATION, have a high correlation with each other (r = 0.76) and correlate also strongly with the overall EMIX (r = 0.96, and r = 92). This fact, together with the moderate statistical reliability, could be interpreted as a sign of redundancy (Saisana & Domínguez-Torreiro, 2015, p. 55). Table 5 shows that this is the case. Only 13.6 and 31.8 percent of the countries in the POLICY and ADMINISTRATION ranks respectively show a significant discrepancy in the EMIX rank. This suggests that, despite the high statistical reliability of the final EMIX aggregation, it has scarce added value. This is meaningful: a low correlation between components and index would have allowed us to identify states with a wide range of policies, but insufficient administration settings that would have hampered policy implementation. But this is not what we found. To the contrary, our finding prompts leads us to think that emigrant policies are not just political rhetoric, but tools and programs that are indeed designed to be implemented.

5.3. The impact of modelling assumptions on the EMIX results

Now we assess the impact of the assumptions we made to construct the EMIX and test how different the results might be when applying other assumptions (i.e. a different set of weights or aggregation rules).

To test the robustness of the index, we have run 2000 simulations. The simulations include 1000 different sets of weights and two different aggregation methods (geometric mean and arithmetic mean). Following the example of Saisana and Domínguez-Torreiro (2015), the simulated weights were calculated based on uniform continuous distributions centered in the reference weights (see Table 6). Fig. 3a–c shows the results of the robustness analysis for the EMIX scores, as well as for the two main components, POLICY and ADMINISTRATION. The figures show the rank for every country using our assumptions and the 90% confidence intervals computed with the simulations. Overall, we can appreciate that ranks do not change significantly when changes in weights and the aggregation formula are made. In the case of the EMIX rank, only three countries move by more than three positions (Cuba, Nicaragua and Bolivia). For the component POLICY, only Paraguay shifts by more than three positions and for the component ADMINISTRATION, only Bolivia, Nicaragua and Paraguay change.

6. Conclusion

This paper has presented a descriptive view of existing emigrant

Table 4
Statistical reliability.

EMIX dimensions	Variance explained	C-alpha	C-alpha when excluding one component									
			#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10
EMIX Index	88,11	0,87	0,76	0,76								
POLICY	34,2	0,75	0,7	0,63	0,64	0,62	0,67	0,62	0,62	0,65	0,62	0,66
ADM	70,3	0,58	0,41	0,41								

Source: own creation. *VARIANCE EXPLAINED = Variance explained by the first component. C-Alpha = Standard C-Alpha.

Table 5
Added value.

Rank difference (positions)	Policies										Administration		EMIX	
	CIT	SUF	OBL	SOC	ECO	POL	SYM	CUL	EXI	INS	AEX	AHO	Policies	ADM
More than 10	31,8	9,1	22,7	0,0	9,1	18,2	4,5	4,5	9,1	4,5	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
3 to 9	31,8	63,6	45,5	68,2	54,5	40,9	50,0	50,0	59,1	54,5	31,8	36,4	13,6	31,8
3 or more	63,6	72,7	68,2	68,2	63,6	59,1	54,5	54,5	68,2	59,1	31,8	36,4	13,6	31,8
Less than 3	36,4	27,3	31,8	31,8	36,4	40,9	45,5	45,5	31,8	40,9	68,2	63,6	86,4	68,2
Same rank	9,1	4,5	4,5	9,1	4,5	4,5	4,5	9,1	4,5	4,5	18,2	9,1	27,3	13,6
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Source: Own creation.

Table 6
Uncertainty sources.

		Reference	Alternative
I. Uncertainty in the aggregation formula at the component level		Arithmetic average	Geometric average
II. Uncertainty intervals for the weights			
Pillars	Components	Reference for weight	Distribution assigned for robust analysis
Policies		7	U[3, 11]
	CIT	2	U[1, 3]
	SUF	1	U[0, 2]
	OBL	1,5	U[0.5, 2.5]
	SOC	0,5	U[0, 1]
	ECO	1	U[0, 2]
	POL	1	U[0, 2]
	SYM	0,5	U[0, 1]
	CUL	0,5	U[0, 1]
	EXI	1	U[0, 2]
	INS	1	U[0, 2]
Administration		3	U[1.5, 4.5]
	AEX	6	U[2, 10]
	AHO	4	U[2,6]

Source: own creation.

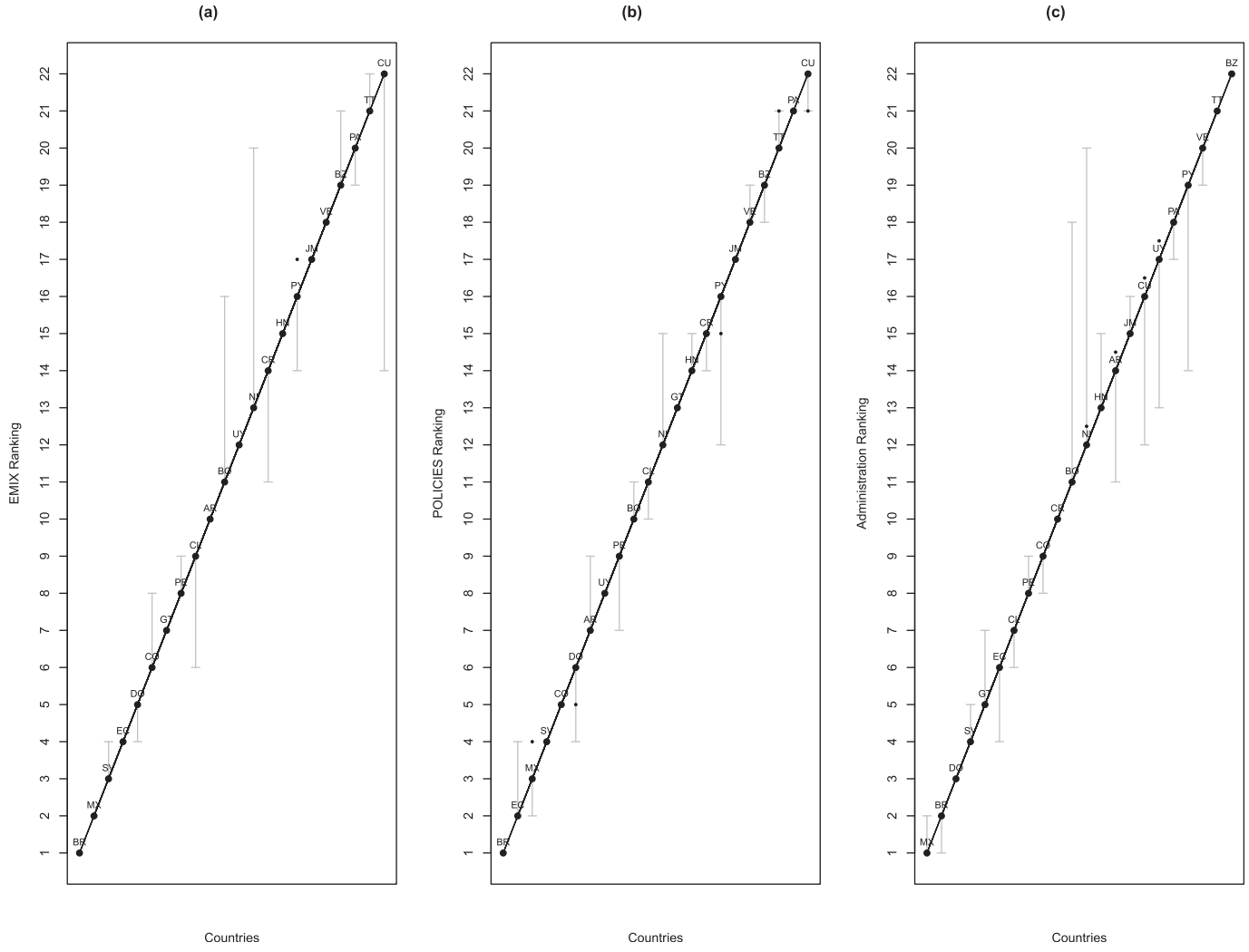

Fig. 3. Uncertainty test.
Source: Own creation based on EMIX.

policies across Latin America and the Caribbean states through the construction of an index that allows us to observe in one glance how countries perform individually and relative to each other. We gathered data on a wide range of emigrant policies: EMIX includes information on state programs that aim at create or maintain links between the state and the diaspora (e.g. citizenship policies, economic policies or social policies), but also summarizes the state structures developed to expand its actions beyond borders. By building this index we have been able to develop a new conceptualization of emigrant policies. In contrast with other terms (e.g. diaspora strategies, state-led transnationalism, diaspora-engagement policies), the concept has a clear intension and extension, and can be operationalized for a more rigorous measurement of the policies usually meant to compose these terms. We hope that the EMIX will be used by scholars for theory development, as well as for policy practitioners working in the realm of emigrant policies. The EMIX is more than just a conceptual and methodological effort: the dataset it draws upon is a key contribution to the scholarly community working on state-diaspora relations in general.[6] The summary measures can be used as a dependent variable to raise questions regarding which actor configurations and structural variables lead to what type of state strategies towards diasporas. As well, the various components can be disaggregated to test hypotheses: for example, to test what kind of institutional configurations correlate with what kind of suffrage policies, and to test hypotheses on the supposed motivations of the state (e.g. "extractive" or other) by disaggregating economic policies and correlating them with extractive policies. Moreover, the EMIX may serve evaluation procedures by establishing linkages between an array of policies and the administrative capacities required to implement them.

Now, the particular findings of the analysis undertaken in this paper make evident that emigrant policies are present throughout the LAC region: all countries in our sample have developed programs that target their community of non-resident nationals. However, this finding ought to be nuanced in observing the great deal of variation across countries. While some states have developed comprehensive emigrant policy schemes to engage their diaspora (e.g. Brazil, Mexico and Ecuador), others have limited their engagement to few policies -usually those related to dual nationality or economic issues. The EMIX also shows that, as could be expected, the most developed policy at the regional level is nationality/citizenship.[7] A surprising finding is the extensive development of social policies, as well as the great variation across emigrant policy components and subcomponents.

Our effort has some limitations to note, and could be improved through further research and with the input and feedback of colleagues. We are eager to share details of our methodological process upon request, including our collection tools, coding rules for all indicators, coding schemes with measurement levels for each, sources used in the coding process. While we were able to increase the reliability of collection and coding in our research design in comparison to previous efforts in the literature, we were still subject to some common challenges, such as measurement levels that impose restrictions on variation. Nevertheless, we consider our effort to be a valuable contribution to the literature of transnationalism, migration studies and index building. Our analyses confirm that, with the cautions we described, it is possible to build a single global measure that captures the concept of "emigrant policies". Moreover, we want to encourage other colleagues to replicate our framework, detect potential improvements, and work with the dataset by applying different aggregation schemes or different sets of weights. We are confident that our robust conceptualization can be applied to study other cases. For this reason we want to encourage other colleagues to expand and multiply our effort to other regions. This could be done by adapting the questionnaire to the specificities of the region of study and including or discarding new items that could be of importance. Finally, we look forward to sparking the interest of other scholars who can collaborate with us to embark on further theoretical analyses using the conceptualization and measurement effort presented in this paper.

[6] In our project website https://www.giga-hamburg.de/de/projekt/emigrant-policies you will be able to find: 1) a link to the book containing the qualitative information that was used for coding (and all sources), 2) interactive visualizations of the 12 emigrant policies in LAC, and 3) a link to the repository (gesis datorium) with the dataset.

[7] Evidence presented by Vink et al.'s (2015) outstanding research on the acceptance of expatriate dual citizenship in nearly all states of the world since 1960 complements our finding. That research team found that Latin America is the region with the highest overall adoption of this policy today, and the highest rate of adoption in the last twenty years.

Conflict of interest

The Author(s) declare(s) that there is no conflict of interest in relation to the submitted article.

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