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Portrayal of Immigrants and Refugees in Textbooks Worldwide, 1963-2011

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Abstract: Sociologists have long studied the educational incorporation of immigrants and refugees, but most scholarship focuses on questions of access, achievement, attainment, and acculturation. We extend this literature by examining the incorporation of immigrants and refugees in the cultural content of schooling, drawing on a unique dataset spanning 509 textbooks from 80 countries, representing all regions of the world from 1963 to 2011. Our descriptive and multilevel regression analyses reveal a mixed picture. On one hand, textbook discussions of immigrants and refugees have expanded over time and are especially pervasive in textbooks that invoke post-national conceptions of citizenship and in countries that host large foreign-born populations. But we also document stagnating discussions of immigrants and refugees in recent decades, a casting of these groups as part of the historical past more than contemporary civics and society, and a tendency toward their curricular omission in countries with a recent history of war.

Portrayal of Immigrants and Refugees in Textbooks Worldwide, 1963-2011

Introduction

Currently, more than 89.3 million people worldwide are forcibly displaced from their homes and 281 million live in a country other than their country of birth (IOM, 2020; UNHCR, 2021). Education systems have long been tasked with integrating these newcomers into society and providing upward mobility in their new homes. Often, however, the historic nation-building roles of schooling have tilted education systems toward a homogenizing national and civic identity that is at odds with the diverse identities and needs of immigrant and refugee students (Ramirez et al., 2009). Scholars note challenges relating to migrant students' acculturation, belonging, and citizenship identity (e.g., Bellino and Dryden-Peterson, 2018), as well as their achievement and attainment (e.g., Heath et al., 2008).

We expand this scholarship by turning our attention to immigrants' and refugees' incorporation into the cultural content of schooling, that is, into the visions of society that are articulated and transmitted by education (Benavot et al., 1991; Frank et al., 2000). We focus in particular on the representation of these groups in the school curriculum, which serves as a strategic site to examine such "institutionalized understandings – often backed by the authority of national states and other elites – about the nature of society" (Lerch et al., 2017: 40). Compared to the wealth of scholarship on the experiences of immigrant and refugee youths in schools and beyond, their curricular incorporation is remarkably understudied. We draw on a unique dataset of 509 school textbooks published in 80 countries between 1963 and 2011 and use descriptive statistics and multilevel modeling to address the following questions: To what extent do textbooks around the world discuss immigrants and refugees? Which textbook- and country-level characteristics influence the likelihood that immigrants and refugees are included in textbook narratives?

As one of the most common instructional materials in classrooms, textbooks symbolize "official" content that is considered legitimate by dominant societal and cultural norms (Bromley, 2009). Textbooks also represent nation-building narratives supported by the government, forming the historical memories of a nation, and cultivating citizenry through the meaning embodied in "facts" (Sneider, 2011). We ask why some textbooks incorporate discussions of immigrants and refugees as part of this nation-building narrative whereas others omit them entirely and develop a series of hypotheses building on literature from the sociology of education and comparative curriculum studies. We contribute to sociological scholarship by expanding our understanding of the broad social forces that shape the content of school curricula and the extent to which these curricula seek to include (or exclude) immigrants and refugees in their narratives.

Immigrants and refugees in textbooks: A focus on the cultural content of schooling

Textbooks offer a unique lens into the representation of immigrants and refugees in the cultural content of schooling. As an essential component of the intended curriculum, they sit in between abstract curricular standards and on-the-ground teaching practices (Valverde et al., 2002). Rather than necessarily capturing what teachers teach or students learn, textbooks as cultural artifacts allow us to trace cultural models that may otherwise remain intangible: broadly legitimated and often taken-for-granted depictions of society, the state, the citizen, and much more (Benavot et al., 1991). Beyond simple instruments of mass instruction, textbooks reflect knowledge that becomes "official" and socially acceptable through complex political, economic, and cultural processes (Apple and Christian-Smith, 1991; Vera, 2018). More pragmatically, textbooks provide us with a source of data that is available and comparable across time and

countries, given the longstanding use of textbooks as instructional materials in countries worldwide (Torney-Purta et al., 2001).

Several single-country or small-N comparative studies have investigated how textbooks or curriculum standards portray immigrants or immigration (e.g., Foster, 2001; Hilburn et al., 2016; Soysal and Szakács, 2010). These studies often document the exclusion of immigrants or refugees, with older textbooks omitting mentions of such groups entirely (Cramer and Fons, 2020; Weiner, 2018). For instance, terms related to immigration, such as *asylum seekers*, *refugees*, and *immigrants*, did not appear in Norwegian history textbooks until the 1980s and for most of the twentieth century, only words like *foreigners* or *strangers* were used (Normand 2021). In addition, textbooks have often underplayed immigrants' and refugees' social roles and contributions; for example, one study showed that textbooks from North Carolina described immigrant contributions only in relation to the national economy, disregarding the group's sociocultural or political contributions (Hilburn and Fitchett, 2012).

These case studies illuminate the degree to which textbooks in specific local contexts have omitted or misrepresented immigrants and refugees, but they offer limited insight into broader cross-national trends and the social forces that shape them. Large-N comparative analyses of the topic are much rarer. One relevant study examined textbook depictions of Roma – a minority but also migrant group – in 21 European countries, drawing on more than 800 textbooks of which close to 300 mention the group (Council of Europe, 2020). Reminiscent of the case studies mentioned above, its findings point to a rather limited incorporation of Roma, most often represented as a historical topic or as victims. We here expand on such comparative work with a broader analysis of the extent to which countries worldwide have incorporated immigrants and refugees into their curricular discussions of society and how these patterns have changed since the

1960s. We cover a larger number of countries on a longitudinal basis than previous work and, drawing on core sociological perspectives, seek to understand the broad social forces that shape refugees' and immigrants' curricular representations: why do textbooks from different countries or time periods include (or exclude) narratives about immigrants and refugees?

To answer this question, we leverage a unique cross-national dataset of textbooks, empirically testing what factors shape the content of these curricula. While recognizing important differences between "immigrants" and "refugees", we look at both groups in textbook narratives as a broad marker for foreign-born populations that nation-states seek to integrate. Of course, the mere recognition or mention of immigrants and refugees does not mean that textbooks fairly represent their contributions to society, as previous studies have established (An, 2022; Foster, 2001). However, it is still important to closely examine the extent to which immigrants and refugees are visible as legitimate social groups to be discussed in textbooks. Knowing whether these groups are entirely excised from the curriculum – exclusion through silence – represents an important step towards being able to probe the terms of their incorporation (Ramirez, 2006).

Arguments and hypotheses

Our arguments build on theories from the sociology of education and comparative curriculum studies, following Bromley and Smith's (2019) framework of three theoretical perspectives on the curriculum: textbook content as (i) a direct reflection of societal needs (functionalism), (ii) exclusionary tools (social reproduction/power), and (iii) culturally constructed ideas that go beyond national needs and power relations (neo-institutionalism).

Textbooks as reflection of society

A classic theoretical perspective sees the role of education in functionalist terms. Education serves the needs of a given society, for instance in terms of socialization into dominant values (Dreeben, 1968). Here, educational change reflects broader social, economic, or political change as schooling evolves in tandem with the changing character and needs of societies. Vis-a-vis school textbooks, this perspective suggests that curricular content is a relatively direct reflection of a given society and its needs and values (Bromley and Smith, 2019).

This perspective indicates that countries with larger immigrant and refugee populations may be more likely to include these populations in their curricular materials. There is variation in the extent to which countries open their borders to refugees and immigrants (Korzeniewicz and Moran, 2009) and it is reasonable to surmise that these demographic differences translate into curricular ones. Most straightforwardly, societies that count high numbers of immigrants and refugees as members may have a more pressing need to integrate these groups into educational visions of the nation. The integration and assimilation of immigrants and refugees is a longstanding theme in the sociological literature (e.g., Alba and Foner, 2015; Pinson and Arnot, 2007) and education is a major avenue for achieving these goals. Globally, these considerations suggest that the recent increase in migrant populations worldwide (IOM, 2020; UNHCR, 2021) may generate greater textbook discussions about these groups in recent decades.

Building on these considerations, we formulate the first set of hypotheses:

H1a: Overall, the incorporation of refugees and immigrants into textbook narratives is likely to reflect the increasing number of immigrant and refugee populations worldwide.

H1b: Countries with larger immigrant and refugee populations are more likely to incorporate discussions of immigrants and refugees in their school textbooks.

Textbooks as tools of exclusion

Challenging such sanguine views, conflict theorists charge that education systems reflect and reproduce differentials in power and resources, ultimately excluding disadvantaged groups (Collins, 1971; Giroux, 1983). The content of textbooks is not "neutral," but infused with a "hidden curriculum" – ideas and values that are cast as universal but ultimately benefit elites (Apple, 1979). Of particular interest are critiques that the curriculum seeks to promote blind patriotism by depicting societies as homogenous and erasing minoritized groups. These homogenizing goals of education in the making of national citizens are well-documented (Ramirez and Boli, 1987). A study of Pakistani textbooks, for instance, documented tendencies to normalize militarism and war in service of the nation, especially in relation to India (Naseem, 2014). Faas and Ross (2012) also find that despite efforts to incorporate issues of diversity, Irish textbooks and curricula still maintain a strong notion of national identity as tied to Catholicism.

This lens suggests that extensive curricular emphases on immigrants and refugees are unlikely. Acknowledging diversity within society is seen as a threat to national cohesion and stability, entailing a silencing of social difference in the curriculum. Research shows that countries can experience the recognition of difference and diversity as threatening, as it "challenges people's traditional understandings of their cultural and political identity" (Kymlicka, 2007, cited in Bromley, 2014: 33). For example, Bromley (2014) found that textbook emphases on human rights were easier for countries to incorporate than emphases on diversity rights. These broader

tendencies may be amplified in the case of immigrants and refugees, some of whom may not be citizens and thus readily excluded from dominant visions of the nation.

While this perspective suggests an overall tendency towards silence about immigrants and refugees in textbooks, we also theorize variation across school subjects and countries. We surmise that exclusion may be most pronounced in the subject most concerned with making citizens: civic education. Immigration topics may appear more frequently in historical narratives than as civics related issues in textbooks (Foster, 2001; Hilburn et al., 2016). Whereas history textbooks are primarily concerned with the past, civics textbooks are "written with the future in mind […] to construct responsible individuals in their anticipated collectives" (Soysal et al., 2005:14). With these emphases on citizenship identity and values, civics and government textbooks may neglect discussions of non-citizens. For instance, U.S. civics textbooks in the state of Wisconsin assume that all readers (students) are citizens and that it is easy to become a citizen, posing undocumented immigrants as a problem in society (Cramer and Fons, 2020). In contrast, history textbooks may include immigrants and refugees in narratives about war or immigration. Generally, textbook studies have found that minoritized groups are sometimes relegated to the past and excluded from contemporary issues (Council of Europe, 2020; Skinner and Bromley, 2022).

We also expect variation between countries in terms of the extent to which curricular recognition of immigrants and refugees may be seen as undermining dominant national narratives, and thus silenced. Bromley's (2014) study documented significantly lower emphasis on social diversity in textbooks from countries with tenuous national legitimacy. Building on this work, we theorize that countries that have recently experienced a considerable internal or external threat to the nation-state are less likely to recognize nation-internal diversity in the form of immigrants and refugees. We focus on a recent history of war or violent conflict, which represents a particularly

dramatic challenge to the nation. Education systems often tilt toward greater emphasis on patriotism and militant allegiance to the nation in times of war, including in their textbooks (Davies, 2003). These nationalist celebrations can be accompanied by a downplaying of diversity within the nation. For example, Russell (2019) finds that educational materials and reforms in post-genocide Rwanda de-emphasize ethnic and racial diversity to construct a new and united Rwanda. Whether these case-based findings are borne out in cross-national patterns, however, is an open question as other studies suggest that the broader geopolitical context likely conditions the degree to which nation-states' education systems emphasize diversity in the aftermath of political violence. For example, Szakács' work (2017) shows that in Romania's post-socialist transition (after a revolution that included episodes of political violence), the education system was reoriented toward Europe as reference point, bringing *greater* claims of diversity.

Our discussion suggests four further hypotheses:

H2a: Overall, the incorporation of refugees and immigrants into textbook narratives is likely to be rare and remain so throughout our period of study.

H2b: Civics textbooks are less likely to incorporate discussions about refugees and immigrants than textbooks in other fields of study.

H2c: History textbooks are more likely to incorporate discussions about refugees and immigrants than textbooks in other fields of study.

H2d: Countries with a recent history of war are less likely to discuss immigrants and refugees in their school textbooks.

Textbooks as cultural construction

Contrasting with perspectives stressing national needs and power struggles, neo-institutional theory suggests that the curriculum is shaped by global ideas (Bromley and Smith, 2019). Education systems do not evolve autonomously, but are embedded in a global cultural environment, filled with scripts that specify appropriate and desirable features of education systems (Meyer et al., 1997). Scholarship in this tradition documents that curricular changes unfold in a surprisingly standard manner across the world, especially since the end of World War II and growing global interconnectedness (e.g., Benavot et al., 1991; Frank et al., 2000).

Recent neo-institutional studies challenge assumptions about the nationalizing and homogenizing tendencies of citizenship and education. Numerous cross-national textbook studies point to changing depictions of society and citizens in the curriculum, tied to the rise of global cultural scripts that recognize and valorize humanity and diversity (Ramirez, et al., 2009). Textbooks around the world have increasingly incorporated discussions of human rights and global citizenship, invoking a global society and humanity and individual membership therein (Meyer et al., 2010; Buckner and Russell, 2013). Moreover, the experiences of diverse social groups, such as women, children, and other marginalized groups, were increasingly incorporated into school textbooks globally (Jiménez and Lerch, 2019; Nakagawa and Wotipka, 2016; Wotipka et al., 2021). This perspective complicates a straightforward functional or demographic understanding: absent cultural narratives that legitimate the inclusion of diverse social groups, a rising number of

immigrant and refugee populations may not necessarily translate into greater curricular incorporation.

Shifting conceptions of citizenship extend beyond education, with the global human rights regime (Elliott, 2007), a "minority rights revolution" (Skrentny, 2009), and global migration (Bloemraad et al., 2008) restructuring the nature of people's claims to membership and rights in society (Soysal, 1994). As part of this trend, attention to immigrants and refugees and their rights has expanded in world society. Several international treaties recognize the right to education for immigrants and refugees, such as the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, and the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child. International governmental organizations like UNHCR, UNICEF, and UNESCO play an important role in mobilizing resources and support for educating immigrants and refugees around the world. In fact, the education of refugees and other emergency-affected populations has recently gained unprecedented global attention (Lerch, 2023).

Neo-institutional scholarship indicates likely increases in textbook discussions of immigrants and refugees during our period of study, reflecting global shifts towards the educational valorization of humanity and diversity. Building on the idea that these trends have redefined the nature of citizenship, we further theorize that textbooks are especially likely to include depictions of immigrants and refugees if they invoke post-national conceptions of citizenship. Again, we expect variation among countries. A core institutional insight is that not all countries are equally connected to global cultural scripts. Linkages to international organizations represent a proxy for such connections, with memberships in these organizations serving as "receptor site" for global ideas (Boli and Thomas, 1997; Lerch, 2019). Several curriculum studies document greater uptakes of world cultural models in countries that are more embedded in the

global institutional environment (e.g., Bromley et al., 2011; Russell et al., 2018). We expect similar dynamics to lead to national variations in our case.

Our discussions allow us to delineate three final hypotheses:

H3a: Overall, the incorporation of refugees and immigrants into textbook narratives is likely to increase during our period of study.

H3b: Textbooks are more likely to discuss immigrants and refugees if they generally depict post-national conceptions of citizenship.

H3c: Countries are more likely to incorporate discussions of immigrants and refugees in their textbooks if they are strongly embedded in the global cultural environment.

Data

Our data are drawn from 509 social science textbooks from 80 countries, representing all regions and published between 1963 and 2011. These textbooks include history, civics, social studies, geography, moral, and religion textbooks targeting grades 5 through 13 (middle and high school). This unique dataset was constructed by researchers at [anonymized]. More than 75 percent of the textbooks were coded at the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research in Germany. For countries with no books available at the Institute, the research team searched through university libraries and contacted colleagues around the world to locate books. Thus, the research team aimed to systematically select a sample of textbooks by maximizing balance across subjects, decades, and regions.

Although this dataset is not a representative sample of textbooks, it offers one of the rarely available cross-national datasets of textbooks and their content. Tables A1 through A4 in the Appendix show the percentage of books across regions, decades, subjects, and countries. Our sample includes a larger number of textbooks in the latter decades (38 percent published in the 2000s) because older books are harder to find and collect in a systematic way (Table A1). History books are overrepresented (42 percent), in comparison to other subject areas (Table A2). By region, close to one third of our textbooks are from the West, which includes North America, Western and Central Europe (Table A3). Among the 80 countries represented in our sample, two countries stand out as being overrepresented: Belgium and South Africa, with 19 books from each country (Table A4). China and Colombia have the second largest number of textbooks of 15 per country. However, no country makes up more than 5 percent of books.

The textbooks were coded by native or near-native language speakers using a standardized coding protocol developed by the research team (protocol available upon request). Many of the books were coded by the research team; others were coded by research assistants who were supervised and trained by team members. The intercoder reliability ranged from 80 to 90 percent for different items in the coding document. The dataset includes information on basic characteristics of the books, such as the country, region, language, year of publication, grade level, publisher name, and the official subject(s) in which the book is used. Most coding questions capture the content of textbooks, including sections on social and cultural issues, diversity in society, pedagogical emphases on student-centrism, nation-centrism, civics, global polity and internationalization, human rights, conflict, and geography.

Measures and methods

Dependent variable

Our dependent variable is a binary measure coded from the books, based on a question that asked coders to examine whether a given book discusses immigrants or refugees in at least a paragraph ("Yes" coded as "1" and "No" coded as "0"). For instance, in discussing aspects of globalization, a textbook from Tanzania explains: "There has been an increasing of movement of people from one country to another. These people include tourists, immigrants and refugees, business travelers and diplomats, who move from one country to another and from one continent to another. Most migration occurs between developing countries but there is also a flow of migrants to advance economy from poor countries hence making the World interconnected" (Manzi, 2007: 66). We recognize the differences between "immigrants" and "refugees" but focus on the two groups collectively for broad insight into the degree to which textbook narratives integrate foreign-born groups into visions of society. These two keywords have been used to code all relevant mentions in textbooks.

A dichotomous coding has the advantage of increasing intercoder reliability, which tends to be lower when questions demand nuanced interpretations on behalf of coders (e.g., when more fine-grained coding strategies are used that capture how extensively a topic is discussed). As another example, this textbook from India notes the displacement of refugees with the Pakistan-India partition: "Forced to abandon their homes and move across borders, people went through immense sufferings. Minorities on both sides of the border fled their homes and often secured temporary shelter in 'refugee camps.' … For lakhs [hundred thousands] of these 'refugees' the country's freedom meant life in 'refugee camps', for months and sometimes for years" (NCERT, 2007: 10). While we can imagine an alternative narrative to entirely neglect mentions of refugees and solely focus on the partition of the two states, the decision to emphasize the impact of history

on individuals is noteworthy. Given that a little over 50 percent of our books do not discuss immigrants or refugees at all – what we earlier termed exclusion through silence – we argue that even our dichotomous measure captures important variation.

Independent and control variables: textbook-level

Several independent and control variables were also coded from the textbooks.

Page length (logged). To control for textbook length, which may shape how many topics are included, we use the number of pages (logged to account for skewness of the distribution).

High school book. We control for a book's grade level using a dichotomous variable for whether a book is a high school book (coded as "1"), rather than a middle school one (coded as "0").

Textbook subjects. To assess our hypotheses regarding lower emphases on immigrants and refugees in civics textbooks and higher emphases in history textbooks, we include two dichotomous variables. One measure is coded as "1" for purely civics (or government) books (not double-counted with other subject categories) and "0" for all others, and the other measure is coded as "1" for purely history books (not double-counted with other subject categories) and "0" for all others. We include a control variable for geography books as well. All other social studies textbooks serve as the reference.

Global citizenship. In Hypothesis 3b, we test whether textbooks are more likely to discuss immigrants and refugees if they generally embrace post-national conceptions of citizenship. We operationalize post-national conceptions of citizenship through a binary variable coded from the books that measured whether a given book discusses global citizenship or citizenship of the world (coded as "1" for "Yes" and "0" for "No").

Independent and control variables: country-level

Our models also include independent and control variables at the country-level. Our country-level measures are lagged by three years because we assume that a given book may reflect national characteristics and events in the years preceding the year of publication, since textbook design and production usually unfolds over several years (see e.g., Pearce 1983). For example, to predict the likelihood that a book mentions refugees or immigrants in 1970, we use country-level data from 1967.

International migrant stock as % of population (logged). Hypothesis 1b predicts that textbooks will be more likely to incorporate discussions of immigrants and refugees if the country counts many immigrants and refugees amongst its population. Cross-nationally consistent data on these groups are hard to obtain, especially going back in time. Though local, national, and international organizations have been collecting migration data for some time, the use of different measurement procedures and techniques have not always led to comparable data (Gamlen, 2010). Given these difficulties, we construct an approximate measure by using data from the World Bank Development Indicators on countries' international migrant stock (World Bank, 2022). International migrant stock is the number of people born in a country other than that in which they live (including refugees), and the World Bank measure mainly draws from population censuses. The measure is available in five-year intervals starting in 1960; we used interpolation to construct an annual measure. We standardize the measure by dividing it by a country's population and multiplying it by 100, resulting in a variable capturing the international migrant stock as a percent of a country's population. To account for skewness of the distribution, we log this variable.

Conflict within the past ten years. To measure whether a country has a recent history of war in Hypothesis 2d, we use a binary measure that captures whether a given country was a primary party to an international or internal (i.e., civil) war in the year of publication or the ten years prior. We use data on armed conflict from the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset Version 19.1 (Gleditsch et al., 2002; Pettersson et al., 2019). The dataset defines armed conflict as "a contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths in a calendar year" (Pettersson, 2019: 1).[1]

Memberships in international non-governmental organizations and governmental organizations (INGOs and IGOs) (logged for INGOs). To account for countries' embeddedness in the world cultural environment in Hypothesis 3c, we measure country ties to INGOs and IGOs each year. The INGO measure is a count of how many INGOs report members in each country each year and has been coded from the Yearbook of International Organizations (UIA, numerous years). The IGO measure is a count of how many IGOs a given country is a member of in each year, collected from the Correlates of War International Organizations Dataset Version 2.3 (Pevehouse et al., 2004; Wallace and Singer, 1970). INGO and IGO memberships are the standard way that country embeddedness in world culture is operationalized, with the former more measuring country embeddedness in global civil society (world society) and the latter measuring country embeddedness in the world polity (Cole, 2017; Russell, 2015). Building on other studies

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[1] As noted earlier, existing studies suggest that some episodes of political violence, e.g., in the context of post-Socialist revolutions and transitions, have been followed by greater educational emphases on diversity. The conflict measure in the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset does not explicitly code for violent revolutions; however, there can be overlap if a given episode of violence meets their criteria for armed conflict. For example, civil war in Libya related to the 2011 revolution is coded as an armed conflict in the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset and the same is true of Romania's revolution in 1989. We are thus unable to fully distinguish between armed conflict and other forms of political violence, which may affect textbook emphases on diversity in different ways. This is an important caveat to keep in mind.

that make such a distinction, we explicitly operationalize the two dimensions of embeddedness, recognizing that education and immigration are key state domains and perhaps especially susceptible to world polity influences. We log the measure for INGOs due to its skewed distribution.

Gross domestic product (GDP) per capita (logged). Our models include a standard control for real GDP per capita (logged) using data from the Penn World Tables Version 10.0 (Feenstra et al., 2015). Substantively, modernization perspectives suggest that economic development may be linked with greater emphasis on diversity rights, as part of a shift toward post-materialist values.

Liberal democracy. We also include a standard control for a country's regime type, using the liberal democracy index from the Varieties of Democracy dataset Version 6.2 (Coppedge et al., 2016a). The variable is an interval measure ranging (in principle) from 0 to 1 and seeks to capture the extent to which the ideal of liberal democracy has been achieved in a country (see the V-Dem codebook for a detailed description [Coppedge et al., 2016b]). The measure is an important control and, substantively, the ideal of liberal democracy is explicitly built around the protection of individual and minority rights.

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics for our dependent variable and all textbook- and country-level independent and control variables.

[Insert Table 1 here]

Model

We begin with descriptive statistics to examine trends over time, by world region, and by subject category. We then turn to regression analyses to test our hypotheses. To model our outcome at the textbook level, we utilize a three-level multilevel (also called mixed) model. As textbooks

are nested in years, which are nested in countries (thus the three levels), error terms are correlated at the year- and country-levels, violating ordinary least squares assumptions (Raudenbush and Bryk, 2002). Multilevel modeling accounts for this clustering and allows us to model sources of variation at the textbook-, year-, and the country-levels. We opt for a random-intercept model, which estimates a textbook-level equation, a year-level one, and a country-level one, where the textbook-level intercept is modeled as a function of year-level and country-level properties. We use a random-intercept logistic model because our dependent variable takes a 0/1 form, meaning that we model the likelihood of textbooks discussing immigrants or refugees in at least a paragraph using maximum likelihood. We present odds ratios, meaning that coefficient values above "1" signify positive and below "1" negative associations with our outcome.

Results

Descriptive analyses

We begin by graphing decadal averages of the proportion of books that incorporate discussions of immigrants or refugees from 1963 to 2011, shown in Figure 1. There are clear increases over time: in the 1960s, a little over 30 percent of books in our sample discuss these groups; by the latest decade, this climbs to roughly 55 percent. However, there is a dip in the 1990s, showing that the incorporation of immigrants and refugees in textbooks did not lead to a consistent increase over time: coverage in the most recent decade is roughly the same as it was in the 1980s. The empirical patterns are thus more complicated than predicted by our hypotheses. Textbook depictions of immigrants and refugees are neither rare nor stable over time (Hypothesis 2a), but imageries of a straightforward increase (Hypotheses 1a and 3a) appear to be too simplistic as well.

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Despite the increased number of migrants and attention to international migration issues, many textbooks exclude narratives about immigrants and refugees.

Figure 2 examines these trends further by looking at regional trends in the proportion of books that incorporate discussions of immigrants or refugees from 1963 to 2011. The regional patterns broadly mirror the overall trends. In comparison to the 1960s, almost all regions have a greater proportion of textbooks discussing immigrants and refugees in the 2000s. Like the global trend line, however, the regional increases exhibit clear fluctuations, dips, and in some cases recent stagnation. The pattern for the Middle East and North Africa region stands out by showing a decline from the earliest decade to the latest decade, but the sample size for this region is very small in the 1960s (5 books) and 1970s (1 book), meaning that this trendline should be interpreted with great caution.

Figure 3 presents a descriptive look by subject category, showing the proportion of books in each category that discuss immigrants and refugees. As suggested by Hypothesis 2b, civics books incorporate immigrants and refugees at the lowest rate (less than 20 percent). In contrast, 60 percent of history textbooks include such discussions, as Hypothesis 2c argues. This is followed by general social studies textbooks, which include religion and moral education (less than 40 percent), and geography textbooks (a little over 20 percent). We find tentative support for the idea that the curricular exclusion of immigrants and refugees may be starkest in the subject most concerned with making citizens: civic education. While history textbooks may also have nationalistic tendencies, they may be more likely to include discussions of immigrants and refugees by historicizing and depoliticizing them (Skinner and Bromley, 2019).

[Insert Figures 1-3 here]

Multilevel regression analyses

Table 2 presents the results of our random-intercept logistic regression models, predicting the likelihood that a given book depicts immigrants or refugees in at least a paragraph. Model 1 includes all our textbook-level independent variables and controls. Model 2 adds our two country-level controls: GDP per capita (logged) and liberal democracy. Models 3 through 6 then add all other country-level measures separately, beginning with our first country-level key predictor, migrant stock as a percentage of total population, followed by whether a country has had any conflict within the recent ten years, INGO memberships (logged), and IGO memberships. Model 7 presents our full model. As a reminder, coefficients are presented in odds ratios.

[Insert Table 2 here]

Our first model shows that history textbooks are more likely than books in other subjects to incorporate immigrants and refugees (Hypothesis 2c). The relationship is positive and statistically significant, and this remains consistent throughout all models. The coefficient for civics textbooks variable is negative in all models; however, it is not significant when controlling for other subject categories (Hypothesis 2b). The model also shows that books invoking post-national notions of citizenship are more likely to discuss refugees or immigrants (Hypothesis 3b). Our variable capturing whether a book discusses global citizenship shows a large, positive, and statistically significant relationship with our outcome throughout all models.[2] The textbook controls, page length and grade level, are both positive but grade level is not statistically significant in any models and only Model 1 shows a positive and significant relationship with page length.

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[2] In supplementary models, we tested whether a given book explicitly mentions human rights as an alternative measure of a post-national vision of citizenship. When using this indicator in replacement of the "global citizenship" indicator, we find that all findings remain consistent and robust. Textbooks with mentions of human rights are more likely to discuss immigrants and refugees; however, the effect is not as large as when using the "global citizenship" variable.

At the country-level, each of our variables shows the expected statistically significant relationship with our outcome when added separately (i.e., without other country-level variables) except for INGO and IGO memberships. Controlling for GDP per capita and liberal democracy, international migrant stock as a percentage of population (logged) has a positive association with our outcome (Model 3). A recent history of conflict has a negative association with our outcome (Model 4). INGO memberships (logged) (Model 5) and IGO memberships (Model 6) do not show a statistically significant relationship. When all variables are added together in a full model (Model 7), these statistically significant relationships are maintained for the migrant stock and conflict measures, and IGO memberships show a positive and statistically significant relationship at the 0.05-level. We carried out robustness checks using contemporaneous versions of country-level variables and two-level multilevel models with a control for publication year (results available upon request). Findings at the country-level for the migrant stock and conflict variables are also robust. IGO membership variable is positive and significant only in the two-level multilevel model, using three-year lagged versions of the variables (p-value of 0.064). These findings are consistent with Hypothesis 1b, suggesting that countries with more immigrants and refugees are more likely to portray these groups in their school textbooks. Hypothesis 2d is also plausible; countries with a recent history of war appear to be less likely to embrace the curricular inclusion of immigrants and refugees. Hypothesis 3c is only weakly supported. Textbook incorporation of refugees and immigrants does not appear to be affected by countries' INGO ties and while we see some significant results for IGO ties, this finding is less robust.

Discussion and conclusion

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The educational incorporation of immigrants and refugees is a core theme in sociology. We contribute to these conversations by examining cross-national patterns and predictors of the incorporation of immigrants and refugees in textbook narratives. Our findings paint a mixed picture. Textbook discussions of these groups have increased and are especially prominent in books that mention post-national citizenship. However, the increase is not linear and shows evidence of recent stagnation. Moreover, refugees and immigrants are more often mentioned in history books than social studies or civics, locating these groups in the past more than in present and future society. At the country-level, we find that large populations of immigrants and refugees within countries boost textbook portrayals of these groups, but that a recent history of violent conflict undermines them. Despite growing global attention to refugees and immigrants, countries' connections to international institutions do not seem to matter as much as we expected.

We began with the classic "functionalist" perspective, suggesting that textbook content reflects the nature and needs of a given society. This perspective offers useful predictions; we indeed find that countries with large immigrant and refugee populations discuss these groups more in the curriculum. In some ways, this is surprising. In many cross-national textbook studies, the expectation of a corresponding relationship between society and curriculum is not borne out. For example, Bromley (2014) finds that textbooks from countries with extensive ethnic fractionalization discuss diversity rights *less*, not more. A potential underlying mechanism for our divergent finding is that a larger immigrant and refugee population reflects underlying values and structures that are inclusive of these groups, which are then transmitted through the curriculum.

At the same time, the incorporation (or omission) of immigrants and refugees in textbooks is not purely a story of demographics, complicating a straightforward functionalist story. As neo-institutional and conflict perspectives suggest, these patterns are also linked to broader expansions

(and contractions) in how the nation and its members are imagined. In terms of expansions, neo-institutional scholarship shows that cultural conceptions of citizenship and nation-state became more open during the twentieth century, lending momentum to curricular recognitions of diversity (Ramirez et al., 2009). Accordingly, our findings point to greater curricular recognition of immigrants and refugees over time, albeit not straightforward growth. This curricular recognition is especially visible in books that invoke global citizenship. Of course, these trends partially reflect greater numbers of immigrants and refugees globally. But we could imagine a world in which such populations grow, and yet their existence is not acknowledged in the curriculum. Without cultural shifts toward more expansive visions of citizenship and nation-state, demographic patterns may not translate into curricular representation. Contrary to our expectations, countries' ties to international organizations (as a measure for their embeddedness in a wider cultural environment) do not seem to be a prominent mechanism for the inclusion of immigrants and refugees in curricula. Rather than direct country linkages to international organizations leading to curricular changes, more diffuse global processes may be at work, with growing depictions of immigrants and refugees linked to worldwide curricular shifts toward humanity and diversity.

However, the story does not end here. Neo-institutional emphases on expanding imaginations of the nation and its members are only one side of the coin. Contractions in these imaginations also affect the curricular incorporation of immigrants and refugees, as suggested by more critical perspectives. The clearest example is our finding that textbook discussions of immigrants and refugees are undermined in countries with a recent history of war, which echoes longstanding arguments about educational pressures toward patriotism in times of war. Furthermore, our findings indicate that historical tendencies of exclusionary narratives are sticky (e.g., Skinner and Bromley, 2022 on textbook narratives about indigenous populations). Textbook

discussions of immigrants and refugees do not increase at a steady rate but fluctuate and recently seem to stagnate. Not only that, but the "how" of immigrants' and refugees' incorporation raises questions, as we found that history textbooks are the most likely to include portrayals of these groups. While incorporation into historical narratives is important, this pattern treats immigrants and refugees as part of the historical past more than contemporary civics and society.

This relegation to history, of course, is only one dimension of the "how." One limitation is that our dependent variable provides little further information on how textbooks discuss refugees and immigrants. We have argued that mere discussion can serve as a meaningful marker of incorporation, considering the historic erasure of many groups from the curriculum. Furthermore, of the 242 books that discuss refugees and immigrants, 19 percent discuss their rights and 41 percent discuss their discrimination. The numbers provide some sense of the content of discussions, although we opted not to include these in our analyses, because shrinking our sample to 242 books results in a very small sample. Obviously, a more nuanced assessment of how textbooks discuss immigrants and refugees would add a great deal to our analysis.

Finally, an important limitation of our analysis is that it ends in 2011. Rhetoric and action against immigrants and refugees have been at the center of recent cross-national shifts toward nationalism, populism, and autocracy. Numerous countries appear to be backtracking on the curriculum, returning to more exclusionary visions of society, citizenship, and the nation. These recent global changes may undermine the trends toward incorporation documented here.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of variables (n=509)

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Textbook discussions of immigrants and refugees	0.475	-	0	1
Number of pages (logged)	5.292	0.565	0.693	6.745
Grade level	0.758	-	0	1
Civics only textbooks	0.157	-	0	1
History only textbooks	0.397	-	0	1
Geography only textbooks	0.206	-	0	1
Textbook discussions of global citizenship	0.124	-	0	1
GDP per capita (logged and lagged by 3 years)	9.004	1.096	6.455	10.999
Liberal democracy index (lagged by 3 years)	0.449	0.305	0.023	0.903
Percentage of migrant stock out of total population (logged and lagged by 3 years)	5.469	1.493	1.149	8.797
Conflict within the past 10 years (lagged by 3 years)	0.381	-	0	1
Number of INGO memberships (logged and lagged by 3 years)	6.612	1.051	2.398	8.339
Number of IGO memberships (lagged by 3 years)	64.098	22.911	5	126

Table 2: Multilevel logistic regression predicting textbooks' discussion of immigrants and refugees (3-level, 509 textbooks nested in 49 years in 80 countries), all country-level variables lagged by three years

	(1) Textbook controls	(2) Country controls	(3) Migrant stock %	(4) Conflict w/in 10 years	(5) INGO membership	(6) IGO membership	(7) Full model
Textbook-level							
Number of pages	1.643*	1.169	1.245	1.194	1.171	1.128	1.239
	(.381)	(.27)	(.295)	(.271)	(.274)	(.265)	(.297)
Grade level	1.164	1.147	1.057	1.182	1.147	1.117	1.038
	(.343)	(.336)	(.315)	(.34)	(.336)	(.331)	(.311)
Civics only	.675	.527	.53	.521	.526	.511	.484
	(.282)	(.225)	(.228)	(.219)	(.225)	(.221)	(.213)
History only	3.974***	3.911***	3.946***	3.828***	3.903***	4.223***	4.227***
	(1.404)	(1.383)	(1.407)	(1.324)	(1.386)	(1.528)	(1.526)
Geography only	1.166	1.031	1.003	.994	1.03	1.013	.915
	(.418)	(.367)	(.361)	(.349)	(.367)	(.365)	(.333)
Global citizenship	4.24***	4.257***	4.533***	4.041**	4.251**	4.461***	4.542***
	(1.833)	(1.871)	(2.022)	(1.735)	(1.871)	(1.995)	(2.033)
Country-level							
GDP per capita (ln)		1.66**	1.433	1.538*	1.67*	1.509*	1.197
		(.316)	(.287)	(.288)	(.351)	(.301)	(.28)
Liberal democracy		1.525	1.655	1.306	1.553	1.028	.888
		(.982)	(1.076)	(.818)	(1.083)	(.708)	(.634)
Migrant stock % (ln)			1.241*				1.263*
			(.126)				(.134)
Conflict w/in 10 years				.51*			.505*
				(.137)			(.143)
INGO membership (ln)					.985		.846
					(.216)		(.257)
IGO membership						1.015	1.026*
						(.009)	(.012)
_cons	.027**	.002***	.001***	.004**	.002***	.002***	.006**
	(.034)	(.003)	(.002)	(.007)	(.003)	(.004)	(.012)
lns1_1_1:_cons	.989	.975	.973	.974	.976	.971	.959
	(.223)	(.221)	(.22)	(.216)	(.221)	(.222)	(.218)
lns2_1_1:_cons	.913	.782	.803	.662	.783	.831	.788
	(.391)	(.429)	(.432)	(.476)	(.43)	(.409)	(.431)
Chi^2	34.822	38.768	38.68	40.666	38.72	39.23	41.024

Standard errors are in parentheses, coefficients in odds ratios
*** p<.001, ** p<.01, * p<.05

Figure 1: Proportion of textbooks discussing immigrants and refugees over time (n = 509)
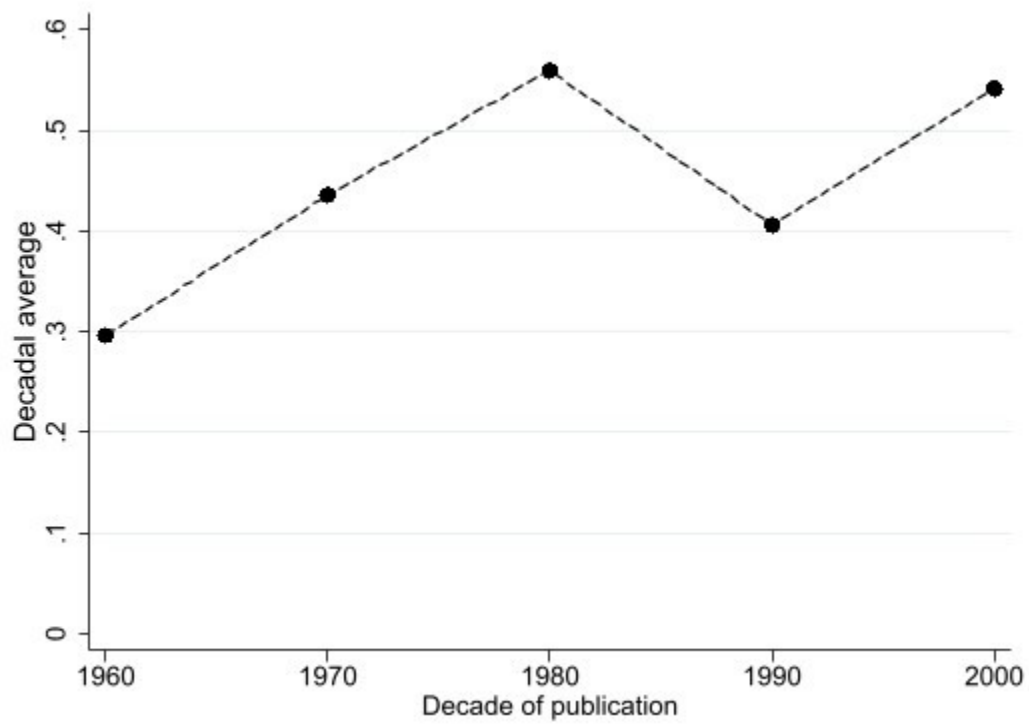
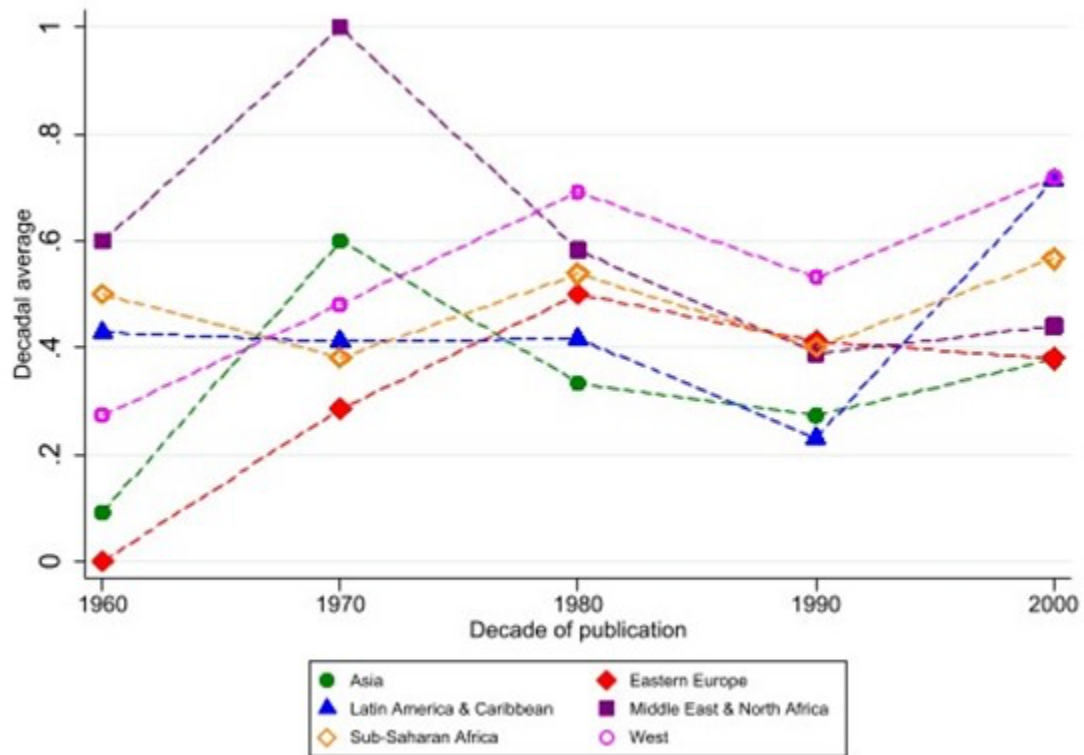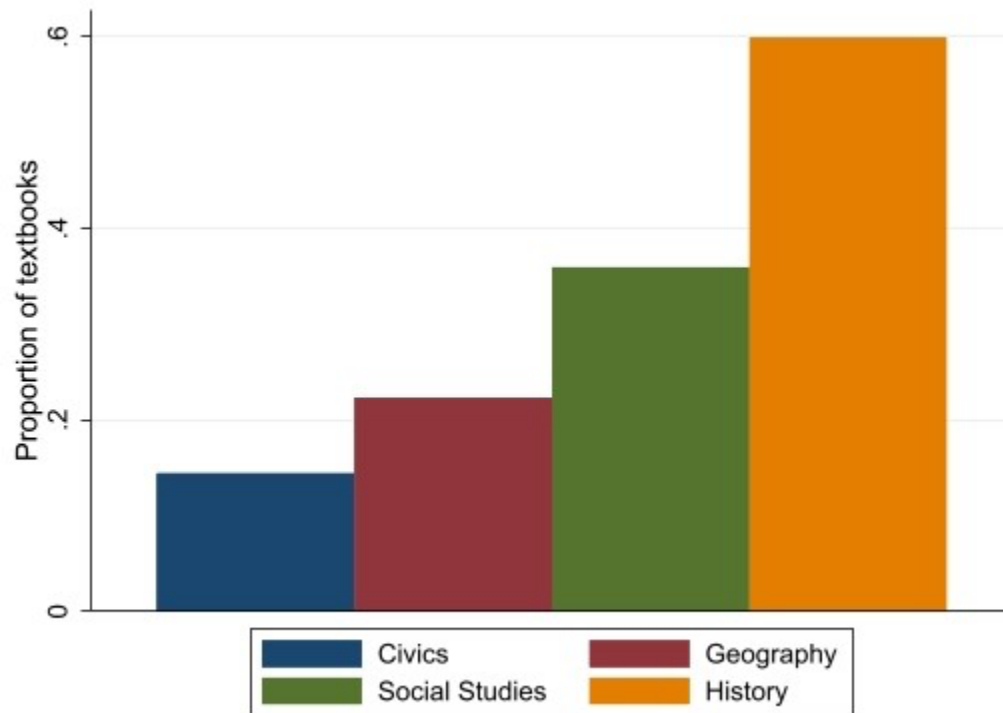**Figure 2:** Proportion of textbooks discussing immigrants and refugees by world regions over time (n=509)

Figure 3: Proportion of civics, geography, social studies, and history textbooks discussing immigrants and refugees (n = 509)

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Appendix

Table A1: Distribution of textbooks by decades (n=509)

Decades by published year	Number of textbooks	Percentage of textbooks
1960s (1963-1969)	54	10.61
1970s (1970-1979)	78	15.23
1980s (1980-1989)	84	16.50
1990s (1990-1999)	101	19.84
2000s (2000-2011)	192	37.72

Table A2: Distribution of textbooks by subjects (n=509)

Subjects	Number of textbooks	Percentage of textbooks
Social studies	59	11.59
Civics (or government)	89	17.49
History	213	41.85
Geography	128	25.15
Other/unknown	20	3.93

Note: Subject categories are not mutually exclusive, meaning a textbook can be coded as multiple subjects.

Table A3: Distribution of textbooks by world regions (n=509)

Regions	Number of textbooks	Percentage of textbooks
Asia	70	13.75
Eastern Europe	58	11.39
Latin America & Caribbean	63	12.38
Middle East & North Africa	61	11.98
Sub-Saharan Africa	93	18.27
West*	164	32.22

*West including countries in North America, Western & Central Europe

Table A4: Distribution of textbooks by countries (n=509)

Countries	Number of textbooks	Percentage of textbooks
Algeria	10	1.96
Argentina	3	0.59
Armenia	3	0.59
Austria	6	1.18
Belgium	19	3.73
Bolivia	6	1.18
Bosnia	10	1.96
Brazil	12	2.36
Bulgaria	10	1.96
Cameroon	5	0.98
Canada	9	1.77
Chile	9	1.77
China	15	2.95
Colombia	15	2.95
Croatia	5	0.98
Czechoslovakia	3	0.59
Denmark	10	1.96
Djibouti	1	0.20
Egypt	3	0.59
Ethiopia	2	0.39
Finland	8	1.57
France	6	1.18
Gabon	3	0.59
Germany	5	0.98
Ghana	6	1.18
Greece	5	0.98
Guatemala	2	0.39
India	12	2.36
Indonesia	5	0.98
Ireland	8	1.57
Israel	8	1.57
Italy	10	1.96
Ivory Coast	3	0.59
Jamaica	2	0.39
Japan	12	2.36
Jordan	2	0.39
Kenya	2	0.39
South Korea	10	1.96
Lebanon	11	2.16
Liberia	1	0.20
Macedonia	2	0.39
Madagascar	4	0.79
Malawi	8	1.57
Mauritania	3	0.59
Mauritius	1	0.20
Mexico	4	0.79
Morocco	8	1.57
Namibia	1	0.20
Nepal	6	1.18
Netherlands	9	1.77
Nigeria	4	0.79
Norway	7	1.38
Panama	1	0.20

Peru	9	1.77
Philippines	6	1.18
Poland	9	1.77
Portugal	10	1.96
Qatar	4	0.79
Romania	8	1.57
Russia	6	1.18
Rwanda	10	1.96
Sierra Leone	6	1.18
Slovak Republic	2	0.39
South Africa	19	3.73
Spain	9	1.77
Sudan	6	1.18
Sweden	8	1.57
Switzerland	8	1.57
Syria	6	1.18
Tanzania	3	0.59
Thailand	4	0.79
Togo	1	0.20
Tunisia	8	1.57
Turkey	6	1.18
Uganda	1	0.20
United Kingdom	10	1.96
United States	10	1.96
Zimbabwe	4	0.79