Does administrative capacity matter? The absorption of the European Fund for the integration of migrants

Pierre Georges Van Wolleghem

View supplementary material 🗗

Published online: 27 May 2020.

Submit your article to this journal 🗗

Article views: 743

View related articles 🗗

View Crossmark data 🗗

Does administrative capacity matter? The absorption of the European Fund for the integration of migrants

Pierre Georges Van Wolleghem 🄳

Department of Comparative Politics, University of Bergen, Bergen, Norway

ABSTRACT

Empirical evidence of the relationship between administrative capacity and the use of EU funds is plentiful. According to this strand in literature, the complexity of spending rules is key in explaining the implementation gap. What would happen should administrative requirements be relaxed? This paper looks into the implementation of the European Fund for the Integration of third country nationals (EIF), a fund with simpler spending rules and yet a higher rate of unused money. Adapting the hypotheses put forth in absorption literature to the specifics of the EIF, I confront capacity-based explanations to (under-explored) preference-based ones in a comparative fashion. Even when spending EU money is easier, strong support is found for capacity *explanans* and little for preferences. Even so, administrative capacity appears to be only one factor amongst many, with financial capacity and decentralization playing strong roles too. Empirical evidence is drawn from the application of time-series cross-section methods to an original dataset.

Introduction

The European Union (EU) counts a number of funds enforcing solidarity and cohesion amongst its member states. At the end of each implementation period, a significant share of these is not spent, thus undermining the goals they are intended to tackle. Recently a strand in literature has developed to explain why EU member states do not spend their allocations. Most of these studies have converged towards the importance of administrative capacity as a main *explanans* of the implementation gap (Hapenciuc, Moroşan, and Gaube 2013; Bachtler, Mendez, and Oraže 2014; Tosun 2014; Terracciano and Graziano 2016). Indeed, spending EU funds can prove testing since it requires a sound administrative and organizational structure. What would then happen if the administrative requirements for the spending of EU funds were relaxed? The implementation of the European Fund for the Integration of third country nationals (EIF), a fund with looser spending rules and yet a higher percentage of unused money, offers a puzzling answer. Whilst, following Tosun (2014), the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

was absorbed up to 92.4% by the end of 2008, the use of EIF money stalled at 82.3% at the end of its implementation period in 2014.

This article takes the EIF as a case-study and aims to investigate the reasons why member states do not use the money they have available, even when spending rules are relaxed. Building upon the findings relating to the implementation of the structural funds, I test the role of capacity in explaining the share of unused money. I also propose alternative explanations that I draw from compliance literature; namely, I test hypotheses relating to the role of politics in the use of EU funds. Preferences also feature in late absorption research (Dotti 2016; Hagemann 2017, 2019) but results have so far been very limited in scope[1] and have proposed partial conceptualizations of politics. This article therefore refines both sets of hypotheses and adjusts them to the specifics of the EIF, which, I argue, is a good case to confront capacity-based explanations to preference-based ones. Firstly, the fact that, on the one hand, the EIF features simpler spending rules and, on the other hand, it has to do with immigration – an ever-more sensitive issue for Europe's public opinions and governments – likely deflates the role of administrative capacity and inflates that of preferences, thus shedding some more light onto under-explored explanations. Secondly, as spending EIF money is assumed to be easier than spending structural funds money, it offers a good opportunity to test whether cutting red tape is the way to go if the EU is willing to increase absorption rates. Thirdly, the EIF presents characteristics that are similar to EU structural funds, thus suggesting that some of the results presented here may be relevant for their implementation, too.

Methodologically, I test my hypotheses by applying time-series cross-section methods to an original dataset, a significant improvement on prior studies, in that: (i) I compare all the member states involved in the programme, thus increasing the coverage of most previous studies (*inter alia* Milio 2008; Hagemann 2019); and (ii) I control for country-to-country but also year-to-year variation where previous quantitative analyses have reasoned on values averaged over several years, thus ignoring variation of implementation over time (*inter alia* Tosun 2014), with the consequence of overestimating the role of structural factors to the detriment of more situational explanations.

In sum, the contribution this article intends to bring about is threefold. Firstly, it modestly contributes to the absorption literature by testing its hypotheses on a fund with looser rules and by refining preference-based explanations. Secondly, it contributes to the small – but growing – body of studies on the EU's integration policy, a policy set to last if one considers the sequels of the EIF in the 2014–2020 but also 2021–2027 financial frameworks[2] currently being negotiated. Thirdly, it proposes a time-sensitive model of analysis to better take account of external shocks on implementation.

The first section of this article describes the EIF and the extent to which it is similar to (and different from) the structural funds. In so doing, I demonstrate that the EIF is a good case to test my hypotheses. The second section reviews the literature on absorption and compliance; I state my hypotheses while doing so. The third section briefly describes the research design, data and model (further technical details are provided in the online appendix). The fourth section presents and discusses the empirical findings. Strong support is found for capacity *explanans* and little for preferences. Even so, administrative capacity appears to be one factor amongst many, with financial capacity and decentralization playing a strong role too. Finally, I conclude in a fifth section.

Why study the EIF?

The EIF: a brief description

The European Integration Fund (EIF) is a rather small fund of €825 million aimed at supporting member states' integration efforts over the years 2007–2013. It was created in 2007, following an earlier call for a "more vigorous integration policy" on the part of the member states gathered at the European Council of Tampere in 1999 (European Council 1999). Immigration to the EU has drastically increased over the years (OECD 2016). If it has undeniable positive economic effects in an ageing society (European Commission 2011), migration also poses considerable socio-economic challenges to the member states (Castles, de Haas, and Miller 2013). In order to ease integration and reap the benefits migration holds, the EU has gradually developed an integration policy. Despite about 20 years of existence, this policy has attracted little scholarly attention (Mulcahy 2011 and Van Wolleghem 2019a, 2019b are exceptions). Likewise, the EIF has gone almost unnoticed, despite being cited in passing in most articles touching upon integration at the EU level (see *inter alia* Geddes and Achtnich 2015; Pratt 2015; Scholten and Penninx 2016). There do exist though some reports[3] and papers that looked into its implementation. Carrera and Atger (2011) investigated the substantive aspects of the fund and the projects it financed over the first three years of implementation whilst Van Wolleghem (2017) sought to explain member states' response to orientations given by the EU as to the fund's spending. Both studies however, concentrated on the programming phase, leaving aside the actual use of the money available. Van Wolleghem (2019a) has provided a first attempt to explain the use of the EIF by pitting capacity against preference and found a prevalent role of capacity. This paper builds upon the latter and refines both sets of hypotheses to discuss the findings and provide sounder empirical results.

The EIF: a good case-study

The EIF is an interesting case to study the factors that determine absorption of EU funds; this for at least two reasons: (i) it presents features that are, to some extent, similar to that of the structural funds, thus suggesting that some of the findings relating to the former may be valid for the latter; and (ii) it follows simpler implementation rules which, in theory at least, should relax the assumption whereby administrative capacity determines absorption. The rest of this section shall aim to point out the similarities and dissimilarities between the EIF and the structural funds.

First and foremost, the EIF is much smaller than the structural funds; smaller but much more flexible in its spending rules.[4] Despite the fact that it was "copied" from the structural fund's design[5], the EIF's decision-making process led to the elimination of the most constraining provisions. As no formal competence existed on integration matters back in the day[6], the adoption of policy instruments went through unanimity voting with the consequence of shrinking member states' obligations.[7] Resultantly, the principle of additionality, which prevents member states from substituting their national funding with EU funding, was removed. Likewise, the principle of partnership, which provides for the association of a range of actors (chiefly regional and local authorities) to the decision-making, was made optional.[8] Carrera and Atger (2011) show that the principle was applied mostly in

the initial programming phase, and in a consultative fashion. Unlike the structural funds, which provide for a considerable involvement of sub-national bodies for the design of Regional Operational Programmes, nothing of the like was in place for the EIF. Without the additionality principle and with a weak partnership principle, the use of EU money was left to the discretion of national governments, thus facilitating its absorption.

Secondly, like the structural funds, the EIF relies on the co-financing principle whereby EU money finances a share of a project. As a rule, EU co-financing amounts to 50% of integration projects; a share that may be increased to 75% where the state addresses specific indications. By way of derogation, the member states falling under the cohesion fund receive 75% of EU co-financing unconditionally. Member states are therefore required to co-finance 25–50% of the projects financed under the fund.[9]

Thirdly, unlike structural funds, the principle underlying the EIF does not consider financial imbalances among member states. Whereas the distribution of structural funds is aimed at reducing economic disparities, the EIF is distributed as a function of the stocks and fluxes of third country nationals granted legal residence, irrespective of the differences in wealth between member states. Member states thus receive an allocation that is proportional to the number of new-comers they grant residence to. In theory, and because they have committed to the objectives of the fund, member states should have little trouble implementing it.

Figure 1 shows a starker reality. It reports the means and standard deviations of the fund's implementation rates by country; i.e. the proportion of the money they actually
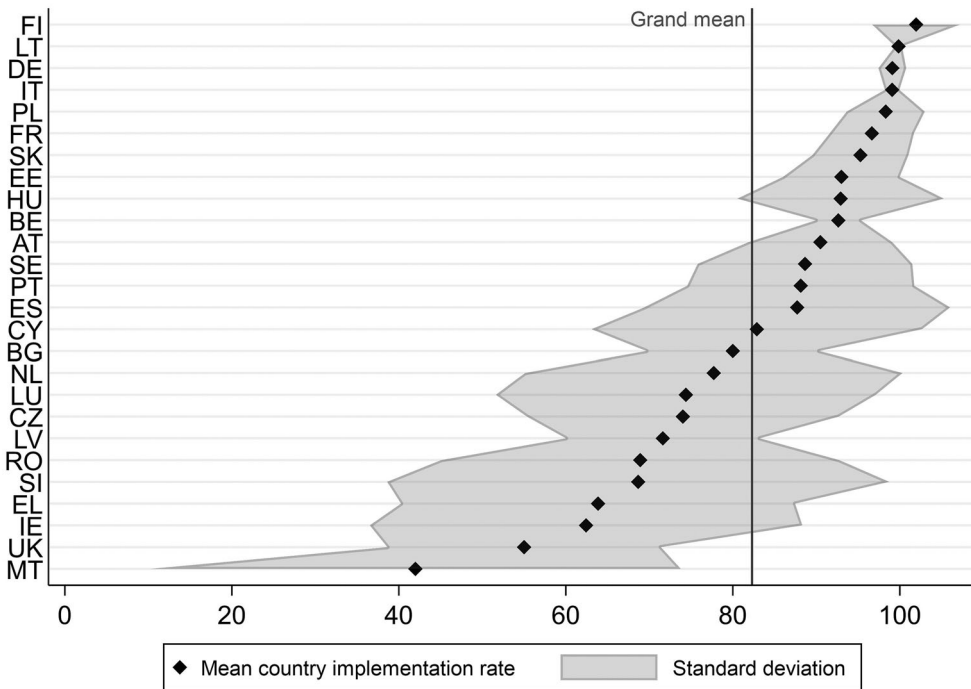

Figure 1. Implementation rate means and standard deviations over the period 2007-2013, for 26 member states.

Table 1. Difference in implementation rates between and within units.

Implementation rate	Mean	Std.Dev.	Min.	Max.
Variation	83.343	20.444	0	113.91
Within		14	38.702	127.777
Between		15.01	47.227	101.14

Note: Total number of observations = 152; number of groups = 26; number of observations per group = 5.85.

engaged compared to the amount they were allocated. Only 82.3% of the money available was spent over the seven years of the programme, less than what is usually engaged for the structural funds (with a grand mean at 92.4%; see Tosun 2014). This dry figure, however, covers a more hectic reality: some member states have had a very low implementation rate with high variation from one year to another (such as Malta, Ireland or Slovenia) whereas others display a high and steady implementation rate (Poland, Italy or Germany for instance). Some countries display surprising figures. The United Kingdom's implementation means stalls at 55% for a policy it opted in for.[10] At the other end, Lithuania displays a steady 99.8% implementation rate. Interestingly, there is almost as much variation between countries as there is within: the average implementation rate may vary upward or downward by about 15 points between one country and another and by about 14 points for the same country from one year to another (see Table 1); thus confirming the need to account for the variation of implementation rates over time.

Explaining the implementation gap of the EIF

Whereas few studies have looked into migration-related funds, the structural funds have attracted a significant amount of scholarly attention since their inception. However, most studies have concentrated on how to explain the *allocation* of the funds (Kemmerling and Bodenstein 2006; Bouvet and Dall'Erba 2010; Dellmuth 2011; Barca, McCann, and Rodríguez-Pose 2012; Mendez 2013; Schraff 2014), and only recently has the focus shifted to the actual implementation with attempts to answer the question why member states engage or not their respective allocations (Horvat 2005; Milio 2007, 2008; Hapenciuc, Moroșan, and Gaube 2013; Bachtler, Mendez, and Oraže 2014; Tosun 2014; Dotti 2016; Terracciano and Graziano 2016; Hagemann 2017, 2019). These studies have mostly considered the capacity member states show in absorbing structural funds. True, spending EU funds can be demanding since it requires a sound administrative and organizational structure on the one hand and national budgetary capacity on the other. Capacity therefore endorses different meanings that are dependent on the characteristics of the fund itself (NEI 2002). One is administrative capacity; the ability of the administration to evaluate, contract, implement and monitor the projects covered by the fund (Milio 2007). In order to use the amounts it is allocated, the state must ensure it follows management and financial rules and foresees monitoring and control mechanisms; notably through the designation of a responsible authority (usually ministries of the interior for the EIF), a certifying authority (for the expenditure) and an audit authority. Accordingly, administrative capacity likely eases implementation; and the higher the administrative capacity, the swifter the adaptation to EU requirements (and hence the higher the implementation rate).

H1a: The higher the administrative capacity, the higher the implementation rate.

H1b: The higher the administrative capacity, the swifter a high implementation rate is reached.

Besides administrative capacity, budgetary capacity likely eases the absorption of the fund, particularly because of the co-financing principle (Horvat 2005; Tosun 2014). Different aspects of budgetary capacity matter though. Firstly, member states have different migration histories and they may therefore relate differently to integration policies. A member state that already had a sizable budget for integration in the past is more likely to be able to absorb the EIF than a member state that has to create a budget for integration *ex-nihilo*. The absence of the additionality principle (see above) reinforces the role of a previous integration budget in absorbing the funding.[11] Secondly, global financial capacity is likely to matter (NEI 2002; Horvat 2005; Tosun 2014), notably over a timespan characterized by the economic downturn of the late 2000s (Carrera and Atger 2011; Collett 2011). Therefore, a higher GDP per capita likely eases absorption; likewise, negative change in GDP is likely to go with a lower implementation rate.

H2a: The higher previous funding for integration policy, the higher the implementation rate.

H2b: The higher the GDP per capita, the higher the implementation rate.

H2c: The more GDP decreases, the lower the implementation rate

Another understanding of capacity ought to consider the administrative organization of the state. Namely, the level of decentralization is likely to play a significant role in that matter. Findings in compliance literature have shown that implementation varies according to the level of decentralization: compliance with EU law may be lower where competences are shared amongst different levels of decision-making (Mbaye 2001; König and Luetgert 2009). The object of these studies, however, revolves around timely and correct transposition of EU Directives. Implementation therefore regards a *constraint* to comply with rules adopted above rather than taking advantage of financial *opportunities* to tackle local issues. In response, the literature on structural funds has posited the positive role of decentralization in easing EU funds' absorption (Milio 2007; Tosun 2014; Dotti 2016). In decentralized states, subnational authorities may possess the institutional structures and resources to better absorb the funds. They may also be more dependent on the generation of their own revenue in which case they would be incentivized to use the funds available. Whilst immigration is mostly a national competence, integration is often devolved to lower levels of government (Hepburn 2010; Thränhardt 2014), save in cases of strong centralist tradition (Scholten and Penninx 2016). In a decentralized state, the number of co-implementers consistently rises which increases the probability of a higher implementation rate.

H3: The more decentralized the state, the higher the implementation rate.

A last acceptation of capacity ought to be considered given the specificities of the EIF: the capacity of co-implementers; namely civil society organizations (CSOs). Out-sourcing government activities is a common way to cut public expenses (Majone 1999) and CSOs are primary targets for the implementation of the EIF. As evaluation reports show, NGOs feature amongst the most numerous[12] beneficiaries of the fund (Ramboll 2013).

Considered as direct co-implementers, they are likely to boost the implementation rate, provided they display the capacity to meet the accountability requirements set by EU rules in order to comply with the sound financial management principle.

H4: The higher CSO capacity, the higher the implementation rate.

The literature on the absorption of structural funds has seldom looked into more political explanations; even though studies on the funds' *allocation* found that politics mattered (Kemmerling and Bodenstein 2006; Dellmuth and Stoffel 2012; Schraff 2014). Notable exceptions are worth mentioning though. Milio (2008) compares three Italian regions and finds that political changes affect administrative capacity, which in turn effects absorption. Hagemann (2017, 2019) investigates Central and Eastern European states' absorption of the funds prior to their accession to the EU and finds that poor capacity along with frequent changes of political control leads to absorption problems. Dotti (2016) compares five western EU member states and finds that political alignment between regions and central state leads to greater implementation. All in all, these studies present limitations. Beyond the restricted coverage in terms of cases compared, they propose a specific understanding of politics that proves problematic. The first two authors conceptualize politics in a way that is not independent of capacity. Resultantly, they find that political change affects capacity more than it affects absorption. Then, all three authors somehow leave aside issues more directly connected to politics, i.e. substantive positions, salience of issues or conflict within coalitions in office at the national level; yet three constitutive aspects of the impact of politics onto policy. This paper heeds these shortcomings and takes advantage of the specifics of the EIF to refine the conceptualization of the role of politics (or preferences for that matter) and apply it to a larger group of member states.

To do so, I draw on the compliance literature. This strand, too, has posited the role of capacity-based factors in facilitating or hampering implementation (Pridham 1994; Lampinen and Uusikylä 1998; Mbaye 2001; Falkner, Hartlapp, and Treib 2007). But it has above all taken a close look at the role of preferences in explaining compliance (Giuliani 2003; Steunenberg 2007; Thomson, Torenvlied, and Arregui 2007; König and Luetgert 2009). In the case at issue, and considering the characteristics of the EIF, central governments' preferences are most capable of explaining outcomes, as opposed to regional preferences, more suitable for the study of the structural funds (Dotti 2016). That is, member states' central administrations are given the possibility to maintain a firm grip on the use of the EIF to pursue their preferences with little involvement of subnational authorities in the policy-making process.[13] Their preferences therefore matter, provided they are compatible with the goals established for the EIF (*position* on the issue), relatively shared amongst the government coalition's members (*conflict* within coalition on the issue), and important for the government in office (*saliency* of the issue). These three elements are inter-related but presented in turn for better legibility.

As provided for by the EIF Decision in its article 2, the overall objective of the fund is to support the member states in their effort to enable third country nationals to fulfil the conditions of residence and to facilitate their integration into European societies, as well as to observe the principle that integration is a two-way process of mutual accommodation by natives and migrants.[14] Consequently, a government that has a position on integration that is balanced between assimilation and multiculturalism[15] is more likely to be able to

use the whole of the fund. To put it differently, a government that presents strong assimilationist preferences may fail to implement the "two-way process of mutual accommodation" between natives and newcomers whilst a government that strongly supports multiculturalism may fail to implement measures linked to the basic knowledge of the host society.[16]

> H5: The more balanced the preferences of government between assimilation and multiculturalism, the higher the implementation rate.

That said, governments are seldom monolithic entities. Oftentimes they consist in coalitions of parties with potentially diverging preferences on the issue. The distance between the preferences of the parties that constitute the coalition (Tsebelis 2002) may therefore hamper agreement as to how to spend the fund and, eventually, prevent its actual spending.

> H6: The higher the distance between the preferences of the parties in a coalition, the lower the implementation rate.

Furthermore, integration may not be a priority of the government in office, and spending national resources may backfire in coming elections (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen 2013). Taking advantage of the fund may thus have consequences on national politics. All the more so since immigration-related issues tend to be salient for the public. Several EU barometers over the 2000s and 2010s show that immigration ranks amongst Europeans' most important concerns.[17] In spring 2015, it revealed that immigration was the foremost concern for EU citizens, before economics and unemployment (Les Echos 2015). Also, Van Wolleghem (2017) showed that salience of the issue was determinant in the EIF's programming phase. Since policy-makers have limited attention available (Howlett and Giest 2013) salience in public opinion may contrast government's ability to take advantage of the money available (salience for public opinion will therefore be controlled for; see below, see also Spendzharova and Versluis 2013).

> H7: The more salient integration is for government, the higher the implementation rate.

Research design

Studies on the implementation of structural funds vary significantly in the methods they use. Milio (2007, 2008) and Hagemann (2017, 2019) use qualitative methods, thus limiting their case coverage; Milio resorts to case-studies methods whilst Hagemann uses fuzzy-sets qualitative comparative analysis (FsQCA). Other studies employ quantitative methods to investigate the absorption of structural funds in a comparative manner with increased coverage (Hapenciuc, Moroșan, and Gaube 2013; Tosun 2014). However, they have tested their hypotheses on dependent variables with values averaged over the implementation period. As a consequence, these studies have emphasized the role of structural factors; those that do not change much over the years. Yet, Figure 1 and Table 1 show that, at least in the case of the EIF, the implementation rate may vary a great deal from one year to another, thus hinting at the importance of more situational explanations. Accordingly, an adequate comparative method shall account for year-to-year variation. This section briefly describes the data, operationalization of the variables, and the method used. Descriptive statistics and robustness tests are available in the online appendix.

Data and operationalization

The data covers the entire period of implementation of the EIF; i.e. 2007–2013, and considers the 26 member states that took part in the fund.[18] I use as a dependent variable the implementation rate of EU funding; i.e. the share of EIF money actually spent compared to the amount available, per year and per country. This percentage is drawn from member states' final evaluation reports.[19] Due to missing values and to the fund's inception specificities, the dataset counts 152 entries instead of the 182 expected (see detail in appendix). In order to test my hypotheses, values for the independent variables correspond to the longer period of eligibility of expenses as per Commission Decision; that is, the year following the programming period.

Administrative capacity is measured with the Worldwide Governance Indicator on government effectiveness (Kaufman and Kraay 2015). Established by the World Bank, this indicator summarizes the quality of the administration as to policy formulation and implementation and quality of public services. It covers all EU member states over the entire period of the spending of the fund.

Financial capacity is threefold and covers specific and global capacity. Specific funding capacity for integration policy is measured through the budget member states allocated to integration prior to the inception of the fund (in 2006 if available, in 2007 otherwise). Information is drawn from member states' multiannual programmes.[20] As for global financial capacity, I consider member states' GDP per capita and the annual percentage change of the latter.[21] This allows a more dynamic concept of financial capacity that accounts for the economic downturn of the late 2000s. This data is taken from the World Bank's world development indicators.

I then use the Regional Authority Index (RAI; Hooghe, Marks, and Schakel 2016) as a measure of decentralization within member states. Covering a wide range of dimensions (notably fiscal and political), it is deemed to be the most comprehensive indicator of decentralization (Ezcurra and Rodríguez-Pose 2013). Since the data available covers the period 1950–2010, four years are missing (2011–2014). I therefore average the values over the period 2006–2010 in order to fill the gap. This can be done for at least three reasons. Firstly, the literature on regionalism dates the decentralization process across Europe with the reform of the Cohesion policy in the late 1980s. For new member states, the same phenomenon can be observed as an effect of conditionality on their accession to the EU (Bachtler and McMaster 2008). Resultantly, little change in decentralization is expected for the period 2006–2014. Secondly, a look at the RAI trend over the 1950–2010 period confirms the devolution process occurred mostly from the 1980s to the early 2000s. Thirdly, no significant change is observable from 2006 to 2010, confirming the possibility to average the values and apply them over the period considered.

CSO capacity is hard to capture. I use as a proxy the percentage of the working population working for NGOs/the non-profit sector (EuroFound 2010). The advantage of this proxy is that: (i) it covers all member states; (ii) it is one of the main components of many civil society indicators (Global Civil Society Index, CIVICUS, CSO Sustainability Index, Third Sector Impact Project); and (iii) it summarizes CSOs' financial and administrative capacity and so captures the idea of CSOs which may act as co-implementer (it does not count volunteering but professionals within organizations competing for funding). The downside of it is that data is only available for 2010 so that I cannot capture potential change over the period considered. In a different manner, this indicator does not

account for CSOs' sector of activity so that the variable does not specifically consider CSOs concerned with migration. Note that, integration being a multifaceted phenomenon (Penninx 2013), the CSOs likely interested in integration programmes need not be directly concerned with integration.

The role of politics (positions, their distance and salience) is tested using the Chapel Hill expert survey 2010 (CHES; Bakker, de Vries, and Edwards 2012). CHES proposes a measurement of preferences and salience for political parties, not for government. Since governments consist of a coalition of parties in many instances, I traced back the parties in office for each implementation year and I aggregated their measured preferences and salience following Gamson's law (Browne and Franklin 1973). Preferences are placed on a scale ranging from multiculturalism to assimilation. To obtain a scale in terms of strongly leaning preferences or balanced preferences, I have centred the values around the neutral point, squared them (to get rid of negative values) and then taken their square root. As for the distance between parties' preferences in coalition, I have taken the variance of their respective positions.

To test my hypotheses, some controls are in order. First of all, as mentioned in H7, public opinion may shrink the impact of government preferences insofar as an attentive public may blame government for the action it takes and therefore weigh on government's will to implement. Salience of immigration in public opinion is measured thanks to Euro-barometers 67.2–78.1 (TNS Opinion and Social 2007) with the question "what do you think are the most important issues facing your country at the moment?" (two answers possible). Since Eurobarometer is conducted twice a year, I averaged the two to obtain a yearly value. Secondly, the passage of time is controlled for. Since the policy instrument is new, its inception may have strained the administration which may in turn delay effective implementation at the outset. With the passage of time, the administration is likely to learn and adapt to the fund's requirements. Since learning cannot be appropriately measured, time is controlled for.

Method of analysis

In order to test the validity of my hypotheses over time and space, I use time-series cross-section methods[22] and implement a mixed effects multilevel model that accounts for auto-correlation (Beck 2006; Kohler and Kreuter 2012). Because fixed effects models compute a coefficient for each cluster (here member states), they absorb the variation between them thus biasing the estimates of time-invariant variables (or variables with little change over time). Random effects for countries and years of implementation are therefore preferred to fixed effects. The tests run confirm that such a model can be used to fit the data at hand.[23] Given the nature of my dataset (finite and small population), I use a residual maximum likelihood (REML) estimation technique (Patterson and Thomson 1971; Kreft and de Leeuw 1998; Oehlert 2012). The ideal model would be a beta or fractional regression model (Ospina and Ferrari 2012) but such models are yet to be developed as a routine technique for multilevel models. I therefore provide the results of robustness tests (in appendix) to allow the reader to assess the soundness of my conclusions.

Model (1) is a two-level model (space and time) testing the hypotheses linked to member states' capacity to implement. Model (2) reprocesses the same variables but

adds to them the variables linked to preferences. Model (3) repeats model (2) and includes an interaction between administrative capacity and time. The table's fourth column produces beta (or standardized) coefficients for model (2).

Empirical analysis

The empirical results reported in the table below show a prevalent effect of capacity over preferences.[24] Even so, not all aspects of capacity matter. The effect of administrative capacity (H1a) is substantively strong and statistically significant. Its effect is best captured in model 2, according to which the ability of the administration to formulate and implement policies does matter when it comes to using the EIF. The computation of standardized coefficients also reveals that administrative capacity is the variable that affects the outcome the most. This result confirms the findings put forth in absorption literature (Milio 2007; Tosun 2014) and nuances those relating to the EU's integration policy.[25] Model (1) proposes contrasting results, with administrative capacity's coefficient being affected, both in magnitude and statistical significance, by the absence of preference-based variables.[26] Financial capacity also proves to matter somehow. Despite the absence of effect of GDP per capita (H2b), its variation from one year to the next does have a significant and sizeable effect on the ability of governments to implement the fund (H2c; model 1–3), thereby contrasting with Tosun (2014). A 1% increase in GDP is associated with a change of 0.9 percentage point in the implementation rate. The economic crisis that hit Europe in the late 2000s has forced governments to cut public budgets across the board with dire consequences on integration policies (Carrera and Atger 2011; Collett 2011). Figure 2 describes for instance the relationship between overall yearly implementation rate and overall yearly change in
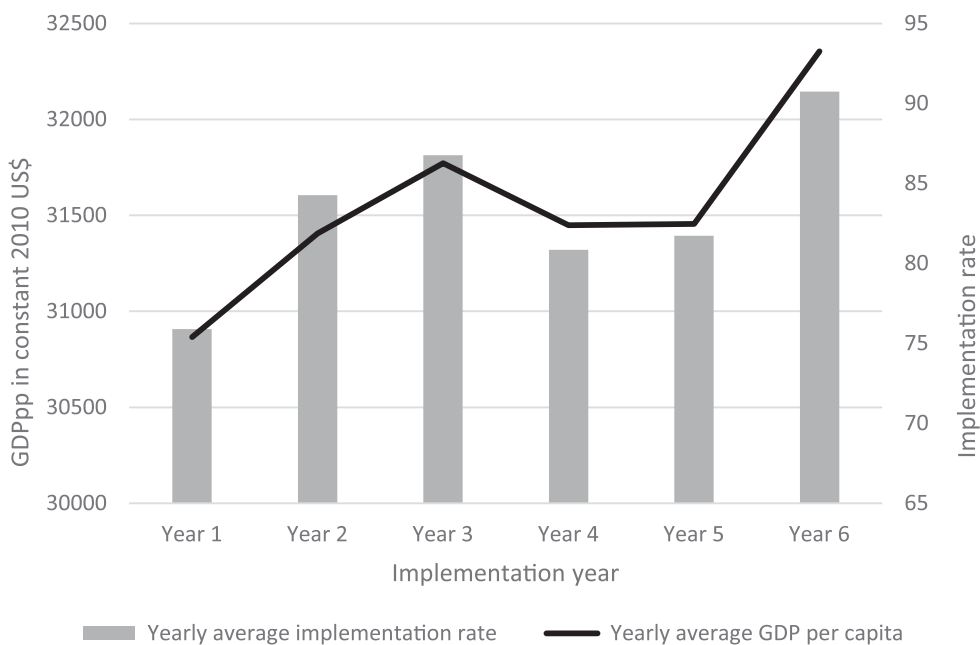
Figure 2. Annual overall implementation rate (%) and annual overall change in GDP per capita (%), for Annual Programmes 2007–2013, 26 member states.

GDP per capita. The fall in GDP is highly associated with the fall of implementation rates. Unexpectedly, the availability of previous funding at national level negatively affects the use of the fund (H2a; model 1–3), despite the absence of the principle of additionality (see above). The most likely explanation lies with the fact that, given the lengthy implementation rules compared to the size of the envelope, the amounts allocated represent little incentive to use them for countries with significant integration budgets.[27] Differently, decentralization (H3) appears to be a strong (as the beta coefficient confirms) and statistically significant determinant of the actual use of the funding available so that the more decentralized the administration, the higher the implementation rate (model 1–3). This is an interesting result as it contradicts empirical evidence brought forward in both research on compliance (Mbaye 2001; König and Luetgert 2009) and research on absorption (Tosun 2014; Tosun hypothesized the positive role of decentralization but did not find supporting evidence). As hypothesized, the fund seems to represent an opportunity to finance local integration policies and tackle local integration challenges (Table 2; Figure 2).

Table 2. Implementation of the European Integration Fund across member states, 2008-2013.

	Model (1)		Model (2)		Model (3)		Model (2); β coefficient
Administrative capacity	6.167		16.442	***	14.058	**	9.701
	(6.675)		(6.055)		(7.128)		
Previous funding	−0.038	*	−0.036	**	−0.035	**	−6.743
	(0.021)		(0.017)		(0.017)		
GDP per capita	−0.000		−0.000		−0.000		−5.153
	(0.000)		(0.000)		(0.000)		
Δ GDP per capita	0.904	**	0.852	**	0.883	**	3.305
	(0.360)		(0.370)		(0.374)		
Decentralization	0.912	***	0.836	***	0.835	***	9.238
	(0.324)		(0.286)		(0.280)		
CSO capacity	1.118		−0.113		−0.162		−0.152
	(2.744)		(2.291)		(2.288)		
Government preference			0.088		0.075		0.086
			(1.982)		(1.987)		
Conflict within coalition			−3.045	***	−2.955	**	−4.089
			(1.137)		(1.147)		
Salience for government			−0.055		−0.060		−0.094
			(1.853)		(1.852)		
Public opinion			−0.455		−0.463		−3.590
			(0.368)		(0.369)		
Time effect	0.476		0.044		−0.882		0.075
	(0.782)		(0.774)		(1.665)		
Adm. Cap. * Time					0.785		
					(1.251)		
Constant	69.548	***	75.935	***	78.915	***	84.580
	(7.088)		(7.971)		(9.246)		
Random effects Country							
Std.D Year	1.45e-07		2.03e-09		9.56e-08		
	(0.000)		(8.13e-09)		(4.32e-07)		
Std.D Constant	13.188		10.403		10.362		
	(2.547)		(2.353)		(2.253)		
Std.D Residual	14.370		13.607		13.648		
	(0.919)		(0.906)		(0.913)		
Model fit							
Prob. > Wald chi2	0.008		0.001		0.002		
Multilevel vs. linear model; Prob.>chi2	0.000		0.000		0.000		

Number of obs: 143; Number of groups: 25; Avg obs per group: 5.7.
*** $p < 0.01$ ** $p < 0.05$ * $p < 0.1$ Std.error in parenthesis.

CSO capacity displays coefficients that are both limited in magnitude and statistically insignificant, despite its presumed role hypothesized from evaluation reports (Ramboll 2013). The likely explanation is, the difficulty to rely on CSOs to spend EU money may be an obstacle to complete implementation but the discretion the central state enjoys in the way it spends the EIF may help compensate.[28] Alternatively, the role sub-national authorities play in the implementation likely offsets potentially weak CSO capacity. From a different standpoint, the passage of time has no effect whatsoever, even when considered together with administrative capacity (H1b; model 3).

Turning now to preferences, the hypotheses tested are not significant (neither substantively nor statistically), save for conflicting preferences within a coalition, which is significant: conflict in coalition on the issue decreases implementation rates. Note though that its effect is sensitive to influential observations[29] and comparatively weaker than most capacity-based coefficients (see fourth column). Eventually, it is more member states' capacity to spend than their will to engage the funding that matters. A plausible reason for this lies in the fact that the purposes pursued by the fund are not highly ideologically marked (as are the debates on citizenship or voting rights for foreigners; see Poppelaars and Scholten 2008; Keating 2009) so that preferences of central governments are less likely to affect implementation outcomes.

Conclusion

The ability of EU funds to meet their goals is jeopardized by a consistent implementation gap: at the end of each implementation period, a good deal of the money allocated ends up unspent. In response, a strand in literature has developed which aims to shed light on the phenomenon. A number of studies have shown that administrative capacity is key in explaining why member states do not spend the money they have available: given the many and complex rules governing the spending of EU money, more effective administrations should perform better at spending EU money. If it were so though, looser spending rules should translate into greater implementation rates. The implementation of the European Integration Fund (EIF) suggests that it is not necessarily so. At the end of the EIF's implementation period, the percentage of used money stalled at 82.3%; a figure on average lower than that for the structural funds. This summary figure, however, covers wide disparities in terms of use between member states and over the years, ranging on average (but with wide dispersion around the mean in some instances) from 42% for Malta to a little more than a 100% for Finland. Therefore, this article sought to explain variation across country and over time. Namely, why is it that some countries in some years use the totality of the funding available whilst some others do not? Drawing from different strands in literature, I have put two main series of explanations to the test. On the one hand, I have tested the role of member states' capacity to engage EU funding, as suggested by absorption scholarship. On the other hand, I have posited the effect of preferences on implementation, inspiring my hypotheses from the literature on compliance with EU outputs. The results show that capacity, more than preferences, matters in the implementation of the EIF. Confirming the findings put forth in absorption scholarship, the role of administrative capacity appears to explain implementation rates to a significant extent, even with looser implementation

rules. Contrasting the same findings, I show that decentralization and financial capacity play a positive role in the use of the fund. The actual use of EU money seems to be in part determined by macro-economic changes over time and the existence of a network of subnational bodies that act as co-implementers. Upstream, it appears that economic ups and downs had dire consequences on the ability to absorb the funding available; the economic crisis and ensuing public debt crisis of the late 2000s-early 2010s strained public finances and forced budget cuts across the board. Downstream, decentralization has eased the spending of the EIF. In decentralized states, the competence of integrating migrants likely falls to sub-national authorities which take advantage of the fund to tackle local integration challenges.

The evidence presented in this paper suggests that even though administrative capacity matters to a significant extent, simplifying spending rules may not translate into increased use of EU money. Loosening co-financing requirements may allow a higher implementation rate but such a solution implies a trade-off between effectiveness at EU level and accountability at national level. Decreasing the co-financing share may translate into increased implementation but it may also shrink the incentive for efficient spending on the part of the public administration. Regarding more specifically the EIF, the results presented suggest the amounts of the EIF do not constitute a good enough incentive for their spending, a finding that may affect the EIF's sequels. Bigger amounts or less demanding administrative and financial requirements could translate into higher implementation but would necessarily come at a cost, either monetary or in terms of accountability. Given the foregoing, and albeit preferences proved unable to influence the outcome in the case of the EIF, higher implementation rates may be attained by increasing member states' commitment to the purposes of the policy in the prospect of integration funds to come.

Notes

1. Dotti studies two southern Italian regions whilst Hagemann considers Central and Eastern European states prior to their accession to the EU. See below for more.
2. The latter should also considerably expand the resources available for the integration of migrants. See European Commission (2018); Van Wolleghem (2019b).
3. Several EU reports have looked into the implementation of the EIF (Ramboll 2011, 2013; European Court of Auditors 2012). They highlight the issues that arose in the process in a descriptive fashion without undertaking systematic or complete (most were written before the end of the programme) analysis of implementation. Some hypotheses stated below directly draw from such reports.
4. As a smaller fund, the incentive for the spending it represents is lesser (this is controlled for in the empirical analysis); this is, however, counterbalanced by simpler implementation rules.
5. See European Commission (2006). The Commission declared to have 'copied' the provisions relating to spending rules from the structural funds.
6. No reference to integration existed in EU primary law until the adoption of the treaty of Lisbon. The only reference to it was to legal migration, which did not encompass integration (Handoll 2012).
7. See Franchino (2007) for an interesting account in this respect.
8. For more on these two principles, see Bachtler and Mendez (2007).
9. Note that, since there is no additionality principle, co-financing is made easier in cases where the member state presents a significant integration budget. This is reflected in the hypotheses stated below.

10. The United Kingdom does not systematically take part in policies relating to the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice. It may, however, opt in for some policies; as it did for the EIF.

11. In this respect, Slovenia advocated the removal of the principle of additionality, motivating it with the greater absorption it would allow for countries with a recent migration history. See Council of the European Union 2006.

12. Note that most numerous does not mean that most of the resources went to NGOs. In some cases, one project (for instance state-sponsored) used up almost all the resources available. See Carrera and Atger (2011).

13. A particularly demonstrative example is that of France that used at least 90% of the first two years of allocations to finance its national integration strategy (see Carrera and Atger 2011, 40)

14. See Decision 2007/435/EC, art. 2.1 and 2.2.

15. The concepts of assimilation and multiculturalism have been extensively discussed in the specialised literature. They are here considered as a policy preferences. Assimilation refers to a policy preference viewing integration as a one-sided process of adaptation whereby migrants are to be incorporated into the host society (Brubaker 2001) whereas multiculturalism refers to the acceptance and (sometimes) promotion of long-term cultural differences (Kymlicka 1995).

16. For reasons of space, I do not go further on this. Mulcahy (2011) proposes a good description of the extent to which the EU integration policy swings back and forth between assimilation and multiculturalism.

17. See notably Eurobarometer 60 in 2004 and Eurobarometer 83 in 2015.

18. Croatia was not a member at the time and Denmark does not partake in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice.

19. Note that such reports are not available to the public but may be requested to the European Commission.

20. Note that what is considered is the funding allocated precisely to integration and not to asylum as refugees fall out of the scope of the EIF (see European Refugee Fund).

21. Based on constant local currency.

22. Time-series cross-section models are nowadays well known in the academic community so that there is no need to go into too much depth here. Only the specifics are detailed. See Beck (2006) for more on the model.

23. See online appendix for a more detailed discussion.

24. Coefficients are discussed regardless of their statistical significance for at least three reasons: (i) this article is based on a finite population rather than on a representative sample; (ii) the population is rather small; (iii) statistical and substantive significance are two different concepts. See appendix for more on this.

25. Van Wolleghem (2019a) found an effect of similar magnitude but dismissed it due to a statistical significance resulting from influential observations. The model specification presented here proposes a more robust estimate.

26. Model (2) though seems to better summarize the data. From the robustness tests run, it appears that model (1) is misspecified and may, therefore, yield biased estimated. See Appendix for more information on the matter.

27. One may argue that the financial incentive may interact with administrative capacity in that a strong financial incentive could counterbalance low administrative capacity. Note that: (i) an interaction of the two terms proves statistically insignificant; and (ii) administrative capacity's beta coefficient is much greater than that for previous funding, thus dismissing the hypothesis of one term counterbalancing the other.

28. Member states could, for example, issue new calls for proposals, revise their programmes or reallocate funds between actions and priorities, so that difficulties in spending the money could be overcome. Differently, member states had the possibility to spend the money themselves, following the executing body procedure. See Ramboll 2011, 45.

29. Dropping two level-1 influential observations dismisses the statistical significance and significantly decreases the coefficient's magnitude. See appendix for more detail.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Notes on contributor

Pierre Georges Van Wolleghem, Post-doctoral researcher at the Department of Comparative Politics, University of Bergen, Norway, and Honorary Research Fellow at the Centre for European Governance, University of Exeter, the United Kingdom. Dr. Van Wolleghem received his Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Milan, Italy.

ORCID

Pierre Georges Van Wolleghem 🄳 http://orcid.org/0000-0003-4286-8484

References

Bachtler, J., and I. McMaster. 2008. "EU Cohesion Policy and the Role of the Regions: Investigating the Influence of Structural Funds in the New Member States." *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy* 26 (2): 398–427.

Bachtler, J., and C. Mendez. 2007. "Who Governs EU Cohesion Policy? Deconstructing the Reforms of the Structural Funds." *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 45 (3): 535–564.

Bachtler, J., C. Mendez, and H. Oraže. 2014. "From Conditionality to Europeanization in Central and Eastern Europe: Administrative Performance and Capacity in Cohesion Policy." *European Planning Studies* 22 (4): 735–757.

Bakker, R., C. de Vries, and E. Edwards. 2012. "Measuring Party Positions in Europe: The Chapel Hill Expert Survey Trend File, 1999-2010." *Party Politics* 21 (1): 143–152.

Barca, F., P. McCann, and A. Rodríguez-Pose. 2012. "The Case for Regional Development Intervention: Place-Based Versus Place Neutral Approaches." *Journal of Regional Science* 52 (1): 134–152.

Beck, N. 2006. "Time-Series–Cross-Section Methods." (draft as of June 5th 2006). Accessed 3 February 2016. http://www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/politics/faculty/beck/beck.pdf.

Bouvet, F., and S. Dall'Erba. 2010. "European Regional Structural Funds: How Large Is the Influence of Politics on the Allocation Process?" *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 48 (3): 501–528.

Browne, E., and M. Franklin. 1973. "Aspects of Coalition Payoffs in European Parliamentary Democracies." *The American Political Science Review* 67 (2): 453–469.

Brubaker, R. 2001. "The Return of Assimilation? Changing Perspectives on Immigration and Its Sequels in France, Germany, and the United States." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 24 (4): 531–548.

Carrera, S., and F. Atger. 2011. *Integration as a Two-way Process in the EU? Assessing the Relationship Between the European Integration Fund and the Common Basic Principles.* Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies.

Castles, S., H. de Haas, and M. J. Miller. 2013. *The Age of Migration. International Population Movements in the Modern World.* 5th ed. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Collett, E. 2011. *Immigrant Integration in Europe in a Time of Austerity.* Washington: Migration Policy Institute.

Council of the European Union. 2006. *Note*, Document 6735/06.

Dellmuth, L. 2011. "The Cash Divide: The Allocation of European Union Regional Grants." *Journal of European Public Policy* 18 (7): 1016–1033.

Dellmuth, L. M., and M. F. Stoffel. 2012. "Distributive Politics and Intergovernmental Transfers: The Local Allocation of European Union Structural Funds." *European Union Politics* 13 (3): 413–433.

Dotti, N. F. 2016. "Unwritten Factors Affecting Structural Funds: The Influence of Regional Political Behaviours on the Implementation of EU Cohesion Policy." *European Planning Studies* 24 (3): 530–550.

EuroFound. 2010. *European Survey on Working Condition* 2010. http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/surveys/2010/fifth-european-working-conditions-survey-2010.

European Commission. 2006. *Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament Establishing a Framework Programme on Solidarity and the Management of Migration Flows for the Period 2007-2013*, 5578/06.

European Commission. 2011. *The 2012 Ageing Report: Underlying Assumptions and Projection Methodologies*. Vol. 4. Brussels: European Economy.

European Commission. 2018. *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. A Modern Budget for a Union that Protects, Empowers and Defends The Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021-2027*, COM(2018)321 final.

European Council. 1999. *Tampere European Council 15-16.10.1999: Conclusions of the Presidency*.

European Court of Auditors. 2012. *Do the European Integration Fund and European Refugee Fund Contribute Effectively to the Integration of Third-country Nationals?* Luxembourg.

Ezcurra, R., and A. Rodríguez-Pose. 2013. "Political Decentralization, Economic Growth and Regional Disparities in the OECD." *Regional Studies* 47 (3): 388–401.

Falkner, G., M. Hartlapp, and O. Treib. 2007. "Worlds of Compliance: Why Leading Approaches to European Union Implementation are Only 'Sometimes-True Theories'." *European Journal of Political Research* 46 (3): 395–416.

Franchino, F. 2007. *The Powers of the Union: Delegation in the EU*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Geddes, A., and M. Achtnich. 2015. "Research-Policy Dialogues in the European Union." In *Integrating Immigrants in Europe. Research-Policy Dialogues*, edited by P. Scholten, H. Entzinger, R. Penninx, and S. Verbeek, 293–314. IMISCOE Research Series: Amsterdam.

Giuliani, M. 2003. "Europeanisation in Comparative Perspective: Institutional Fit and National Adaptation." In *The Politics of Europeanization*, edited by K. Featherstone and C. M. Radaelli, 134–158. New York: Oxford University Press.

Green-Pedersen, C., and P. B. Mortensen. 2013. "Policy Agenda-Setting Studies: Attention, Politics and the Public." In *Routledge Handbook of Public Policy*, edited by E. Araral, S. Fritzen, M. Howlett, M. Ramesh, and X. Wu, 167–174. New York: Taylor & Francis.

Hagemann, C. 2017. "How Politics Matters for EU Funds' Absorption Problems – A Fuzzy-set Analysis." *Journal of European Public Policy* 26 (2): 188–206.

Hagemann, C. 2019. *EU Funds in the New Member States Party Politicization, Administrative Capacities, and Absorption Problems After Accession*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Handoll, J. 2012. ""Integration Policy in the European Union: The Question of Competence"." In *Which Integration Policies for Migrants? Interaction Between the EU and Its Member States*, edited by Y. Pascouau and T. Strik, 15–50. Nijmegen: Wolf Legal Publishers.

Hapenciuc, C. V., A. A. Moroşan, and G. A. Gaube. 2013. "Absorption of Structural Funds – International Comparisons and Correlations." *Procedia Economics and Finance* 6: 259–272.

Hepburn, E. 2010. "'Citizens of the Region': Party Conceptions of Regional Citizenship and Immigrant Integration." *European Journal of Political Research* 50 (4): 504–529.

Hooghe, L., G. Marks, and A. Schakel. 2016. *A Postfunctionalist Theory of Governance. Volume I: Measuring Regional Authority*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Horvat, A. 2005. "Why does Nobody Care about the Absorption? Some Aspects Regarding Administrative Absorption Capacity for the EU Structural Funds in the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia before Accession." WIFO Working Papers 258. http://www.wifo.ac.at/jart/prj3/wifo/resources/person_dokument/person_dokument.jart?publikationsid=25750&mime_type=application/pdf.

Howlett, M., and S. Giest. 2013. "The Policy-Making Process." In *Routledge Handbook of Public Policy*, edited by E. Araral, S. Fritzen, M. Howlett, M. Ramesh, and X. Wu, 17–28. New York: Taylor & Francis.

Kaufman, D., and A. Kraay. 2015. *Worldwide Governance Indicators*. Washington: The World Bank.

Keating, M. 2009. "Social Citizenship, Devolution and Policy Divergence." In *Devolution and Social Citizenship in the UK*, edited by S. L. Greer, 97–116. Bristol: Policy Press.

Kemmerling, A., and T. Bodenstein. 2006. "Partisan Politics in Regional Redistribution: Do Parties Affect the Distribution of EU Structural Funds Across Regions?" *European Union Politics* 7 (3): 373–392.

Kohler, U., and F. Kreuter. 2012. *Data Analysis Using Stata, Third Edition*. College Station, TX: Stata Press.

König, T., and B. Luetgert. 2009. "Troubles with Transposition? Explaining Trends in Member-State Notification and the Delayed Transposition of EU Directives." *British Journal of Political Science* 39 (1): 163–194.

Kreft, I., and J. de Leeuw. 1998. *Introducing Multilevel Modeling*. London: SAGE.

Kymlicka, W. 1995. *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Lampinen, R., and P. Uusikylä. 1998. "Implementation Deficit? Why Member States Do Not Comply with EU Directives?" *Scandinavian Political Studies* 21 (3): 231–251.

Les Echos. 2015. "L'immigration, principale préoccupation des Européens." *Les Echos*. Accessed 15 February 2016. http://www.lesechos.fr/monde/europe/021240810082-limmigration-principale-preoccupation-des-europeens-1141456.php.

Majone, G. 1999. "The Regulatory State and Its Legitimacy Problems." *West European Politics* 22 (1): 1–24.

Mbaye, H. 2001. "Why National States Comply with Supranational Law: Explaining Implementation Infringements in the European Union, 1972-1993." *European Union Politics* 2 (3): 259–281.

Mendez, C. 2013. "The Post-2013 Reform of EU Cohesion Policy and the Place-Based Narrative." *Journal of European Public Policy* 20 (5): 639–659.

Milio, S. 2007. "Can Administrative Capacity Explain Differences in Regional Performances? Evidence From Structural Funds Implementation in Southern Italy." *Regional Studies* 41 (4): 429–442.

Milio, S. 2008. "How Political Stability Shapes Administrative Performance: The Italian Case." *West European Politics* 31 (5): 915–936.

Mulcahy, S. 2011. *Europe's Migrant Policies: Illusions of Integration*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

NEI Regional and Urban Development. 2002. *Key indicators for Candidate Countries to Effectively Manage the Structural Funds*. Rotterdam. Accessed 13 September 2016. http://www.strukturalni-fondy.cz/getmedia/447bacc9-f989-4440-aabb-232fcf0267b0/Souhrnna-studie-a-hodnoceni_447bacc9-f989-4440-aabb-232fcf0267b0.pdf.

OECD. 2016. *Recruiting Immigrant Workers: Europe*. Paris: OECD.

Oehlert, G. 2012. A Few Words about REML." *Stat 5303, University of Minesota*.

Ospina, R., and S. Ferrari. 2012. "A General Class of Zero-or-one Inflated Beta Regression Models." *Computational Statistics & Data Analysis* 56 (6): 1609–1623.

Patterson, H., and R. Thomson. 1971. "Recovery of Inter-Block Information When Block Sizes Are Unequal." *Biometrika* 58 (3): 545–554.

Penninx, R. 2013. *Research on Migration and Integration in Europe: Achievements and Lessons*. Netherlands: Vossiuspers UvA.

Poppelaars, C., and P. Scholten. 2008. "Two Worlds Apart: The Divergence of National and Local Immigrant Integration Policies in the Netherlands." *Administration & Society* 40 (4): 335–357.

Pratt, S. 2015. "EU Policymaking and Research: Case Studies of the Communication on a Community Immigration Policy and the Common Basic Principles for Integration." In *Integrating Immigrants in Europe: Research-Policy Dialogues*, edited by P. Scholten, H. Entzinger, R. Penninx, and S. Verbeek, 117–131. IMISCOE Research Series: Amsterdam.

Pridham, G. 1994. "National Environmental Policy-Making in the European Framework: Spain, Greece and Italy in Comparison." *Regional Politics and Policy* 4 (1): 80–101.

Ramboll. 2011. *Synthesis of the National Evaluation Reports on Implementation of Actions Co-Financed by the European Fund for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals from 2007 to 2009 and Report at European Union level Final Report*. Brussels: Ramboll.

Ramboll. 2013. *Synthesis of the National Evaluation Reports on the Results and Impacts of Actions Co-financed by the European Fund for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals from 2007 to 2010*. Brussels: Ramboll.

Scholten, P., and R. Penninx. 2016. "The Multilevel Governance of Migration and Integration." In *Integration Processes and Policies in Europe. Contexts, Levels and Actors*, edited by B. Garcés-Mascarenas, and R. Penninx, 91–108. IMISCOE Research Series: Amsterdam.

Schraff, D. 2014. "Buying Turnout or Rewarding Loyalists? Electoral Mobilization and EU Structural Funding in the German Länder." *European Union Politics* 15 (2): 277–288.

Spendzharova, A., and E. Versluis. 2013. "Issue Salience in the European Policy Process: What Impact on Transposition?" *Journal of European Public Policy* 20 (10): 1499–1516.

Steunenberg, B. 2007. "A Policy Solution to the European Union's Transposition Puzzle: Interaction of Interests in Different Domestic Arenas." *West European Politics* 30 (1): 23–49.

Terracciano, B., and P. R. Graziano. 2016. "EU Cohesion Policy Implementation and Administrative Capacities: Insights from Italian Regions." *Regional & Federal Studies* 26 (3): 293–320.

Thomson, R., R. Torenvlied, and J. Arregui. 2007. "The Paradox of Compliance: Infringements and Delays in Transposing European Union Directives." *British Journal of Political Science* 37 (04): 685–709.

Thränhardt, D. 2014. "The State of European Integration Governance: A Comparative Evaluation." *Fondazione ISMU, KING Project*. http://king.ismu.org/.

TNS Opinion & Social. 2007. *Eurobarometer 67.2 to 78.1*. http://www.gesis.org/eurobarometer-data-service/data-access/.

Tosun, J. 2014. "Absorption of Regional Funds: A Comparative Analysis." *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 52 (2): 371–387.

Tsebelis, G. 2002. *Veto Players: How Political Institutions Work*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Van Wolleghem, P. G. 2017. "Why Implement Without a Tangible Threat? The Effect of a Soft Instrument on National Migrant Integration Policies." *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 55 (5): 1127–1143.

Van Wolleghem, P. G. 2019a. *The EU's Policy on the Integration of Migrants. A Case of Soft-Europeanization?* Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Van Wolleghem, P. G. 2019b. "Where is the EU's Migrant Integration Policy Heading? A Neofunctionalist Take on Three Multiannual Financial Frameworks." *International Review of Public Policy* 1 (2): 219–236.