Global social inequality, nationality, and territorial access. The case of the global visa regime

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Abstract

Tourism, international migration, and refugee movements are the most visible indications that we live in a world in which it matters were you are and to which places you have access. Furthermore, economists and sociologists argue that, at a global scale, the unequal distribution of wealth and life chances is greater between the richest and the poorest nations than between the richest and poorest citizens within the countries with the highest level of social inequality (Milanovic 2015; Lessenich 2016). Central to this connection between global social inequality, nationality and territorial access is the question of who may legally cross international borders.

Border and migration studies offer an helpful concept of todays' borders which does not assume the border to be a territorially fixed location but rather as a phenomenon that comes into being wherever a mobile individual encounters an actor that aims at enforcing the rule that defines who has legal access to a certain territory and who has not. This perspective avoids the misconception that the lifting of border controls at the territorial borderline implies a more liberal border regime (Laube 2013). Instead, we can conceptualize places like airports, embassies and consulates as significant border spaces. While passing or crossing these border spaces, it is again the nationality of a person and the power of his or her passport, namely the amount of visa-free travel opportunities it involves, that determine his or her mobility rights.

Still, it is nation states or supranational institutions, like the EU, that legitimately decide over legal access to their territory (instead of let's say firms or private persons) and who negotiate with other states over a (mutual) lifting of short-term visa obligations for their citizens. A new data collection, the 'Visa network data' (1969/2010/2014), allows us to analyze how chances to visa-free mobility (for the purpose of tourism, business and family visits) are globally distributed. The data set contains information on every visa waiver agreement that existed in 1969 compared to 2010 and 2014.Thus, we can aim at mapping the world in terms of visa-free access to certain territories and how this distribution results in a "global mobility divide"(Mau/ Gülzau/ Laube / Zaun 2015).

1. Introduction: Global social inequality and mobility

After a long history of researching social inequality and poverty within a given nation state (Marx, Weber, Bourdieu, Hradil), social scientists lately took up the challenge of comparing national societies with one another aiming at least at a regional perspective on the phenomenon (e.g. Mau/Verwiebe 2010: 203-223; Azevedo/Inchaust/Sanfelice 2013). One major insight of this strand of literature is that poverty as well as inequality of income is always relative and heavily depends on the context in which a person is poor or at least worse off compared to others. However, the ongoing process of globalization confronts sociologists, political scientists as well as economists with new and even more far-reaching questions. How does globalization affect the class structure(s) of world society? How can we conceptualize and measure the differences in the level of prosperity and wealth or in life chances between countries and persons at a global scale?

Looking more closely at the second question, initial studies show that the unequal distribution of income (global earnings or wealth) is greater between countries than within the most unequal countries, which currently would be countries like South Africa, Paraguay and Brazil. The between-country Gini coefficient, as the most prominent measure for inequality within a given group (here: all nation states), has constantly been at a value of around 60 (1988-2008) for income (GDP per capita) (Milanovic 2015: 456) and even more, between 58-70 (1970-2015), when we look at global earnings (Hammar/Waldenström 2017: 2). However, both measures show a clear falling trend, especially during the early years of the 21st century.[1] At the same time, the World Bank locates the most unequal countries with a within-country Gini (all residence of a country) between 47 and 52 (2014), which means that world society, in an imagined world state, would be the most unequal society compared to all national ones. A slightly different view on this phenomenon offers Branko Milanovic in asking how much of our income is determined by where we live. His analysis of the distribution of wealth worldwide shows that two circumstances, that is the mean income of the country we live in and that country's Gini coefficient, explain two-thirds of the variability of individual income across the world. Since a person alone cannot change these two circumstances, her effort to improve her situation, seen from a global perspective, does not pay off. Thus, Milanovic argues that "the only avenue that remains is migration"

[1] The aforementioned authors agree that the most significant drivers behind this trend in global income/earnings inequality is the growth in income/earnings in Asia (namely China and India). Their impact even counterbalance the influence of the change in the income structure in the USA and North America, which has itself increases global inequality (Hammar/Waldenström 2017).

(Milanovic 2015: 453) and he continues “that migration is probably the most powerful tool for reducing global poverty and inequality” (Milanovic 2012: 125).

This conclusion does not only shift the focus of the debate on global inequality towards the dimension of mobility as a way of realizing one’s life chances. Milanovic even argues that class differences are replaced by differences produced by location (residence, significantly connected to nationality). His indication is the explanatory power of the national mean income for household incomes of global citizens. In his seminal work “**Global inequality: From class to location, from proletarians to migrants**”, Milanovic states that: “not only is the overall inequality between world citizens greater in the early 21st century than it was more than a century and a half ago, but its composition has entirely changed; from being an inequality determined in equal measures by class and location, it has become preponderantly an inequality determined by location only” (2012: 127).

If it is not the class structure and the individual position as a capitalist or a person that has to work for others, that determines the income of a person’s household, but the geographical location, two interesting questions come up:

- First, what are the chances of a person to improve his/her situation by cross-border mobility? This leads us to the state institutions to facilitate or restrict mobility and migration (border control, visas for short-term stays, labor recruitment), to the infrastructure for mobility (roads, flights, embassies) and to the costs of travel. That way, the question of the accessibility of different locations and their attractiveness becomes most central (from the perspective of the individual person).

  We will find that just like the distribution of income, the distribution of chances to have access to foreign territories, which we call global “mobility rights” (Mau et al. 2012: 23), is very uneven distributed between citizens of different countries. Some national passport are more powerful regarding the opportunities to cross international borders at any time and without hindrance than other.
- Second, is the economic income of a household still the most important factor for the measurement of how well off a person is in a global perspective? You might be able to pay for a visa and travel expenses, but, if a state denies a person entry and residence to/on its territory, where life chances would in general be better, money does not help.

Without going into detail, the "capabilities approach" developed by Amartya Sen (1979) highlights that real life chances do not only depend on the right to do something (given by authorities). Equally important are the opportunities or barriers to make use of those rights. Nevertheless, the same holds true for a person that could afford bearing the costs of improving his life chances but is not allowed to do so. If the overall material living standard in formerly less developed world regions increases, it is the mobility rights of a passport that become increasingly important as a condition/limitation to individual cross-border mobility. However, we must keep in mind that the relevance of opportunities consist in having them instead of necessarily using them.

In her new book "Sociology of global inequality" (2017), Anja Weiß concentrates on a related idea in arguing that geographical mobility can increase the life chances of a person, but does not necessarily do so. Weiß introduces the concept of a **"socio-spatial autonomy"** (Weiß 2017: 125) to the scholarly discussion on global social inequality which focusses on the chances to change the context one lives, works and resides in, but, only if desired. Following that approach, persons have more socio-spatial autonomy if for them territorial borders (and their social implications) are no obstacle to their mobility. Mobility for Weiß always implies the search of locations where one's resources fit best to the given context. This new concept is not limited to the possibilities of mobility but also aims at grasping the relation between certain individual skills and abilities (education, willingness to do specific jobs) and the demand for these skills in certain locations. Though this approach is very helpful for the analysis of individual life chances and their interrelation with mobility and immobility, if we analyze a person's situation, Weiß does not go into detail with the general political and legal implications territorial borders have. Still, she mentions that next to economic resources and transferrable skills (education), nationality and one's passport play an important role in measuring the socio-spatial autonomy of a person (Weiß 2017: 133).

Having in mind this discussion on global inequality and migration as a way to improve one' life chances, this paper will, in a first step, examine the **global distribution of the freedom to travel, namely mobility rights in the form of visa-free travel opportunities to other countries.** In a second step, the paper discusses the various ways of making sense of these findings pointing to the fact that visa policies do not only display a state's attempt to regulate individual mobility but that they have an important bilateral dimension to them, too.

2. Changing border regimes and the increased importance of visa policies

Travel visas, once obtained, enable persons, who are not citizens or legal residents to a given country, to stay for a defined period (the international standard is by now 90 days) on the territory of the issuing state. While there are huge differences in the number of visa-free travel opportunities a member of world society has, ranging from 1-82[2], there are almost no inequalities within countries. People with the same nationality basically have the same amount of travel opportunities, except from some security rules, privileges for diplomats[3] and for seamen crossing international waters.[4] Thus, comparing income inequality to the inequality of possessing mobility rights, we find that the between-country inequality is huge while there is no significant inequality in this regard concerning citizens of one nation.

This means that visa restrictions or their lifting constitute a way of (legally) discriminating against the members of certain national communities by either facilitating or impeding on their cross-border mobility (Laube 2013: 166). But are travel visas really that important? Until lately, travel or tourist visas were basically neglected by scholars studying the regulation and management of migration as well as national/supranational border regimes. They were associated with tourists and business people and a generally privileged way of travelling the world for pleasure, adventure or making money.

But over the last decades several developments have contributed to making short-term visas issued by the state authorities of an envisaged destination country possibly *the* most important instrument of international border control, since it allows states to differentiate easily and at a very early stage between legal and "wanted" versus illegal and "unwanted" mobility (Laube 2013). As a reaction to globalization processes and an increasing number of people "on the move", the rich industrialized countries of the Global North have developed border regimes that are not exclusively relying on closure, deterrence and control, but instead step up a comprehensive system of selectivity (Mau et al 2012). The

[2] This paper draws on the data collection „Visa Network Data (1969/2010/2014)" which was collected by the author herself with the help of several student assistants at University of Bremen and University of Bonn. The database entails information on all (bi/unilateral) visa waiver agreements worldwide (including all countries with at least 400.000 residents and a settled international status). For more information on the data set please see Mau/Gülzau/Laube/Zaun 2015.

[3] As an international standard, diplomatic passports are issued to public officials that allow for visa-free mobility to most all other countries worldwide. However, the state only provides diplomatic passports for small group of persons that is for example federal and state government officials (presidents, ministers and state secretaries etc.), the personnel of embassies and consulates, citizens that have a leading position in international organization (e.g. UN organizations).

[4] Although there are exemptions that are in the interest of the destination country, visa policies do not show consideration for special personal circumstances, such as political persecution or illness, on the side of the applicant.

overall aim is to identify potentially mobile persons as early and as far away as possible to immediately decide whether the mobility of this member of world society is to be encouraged or prevented. Therefore, the countries in North America, Oceania as well as the members to the European Union have introduced a number of policy instruments that **relocate border controls to places beyond their territory** (Guiraudon 2006; Walters 2006). The new and mobile measures that regulate access to the territory have themselves changed their relationship to the territoriality of the state. Since the emergence of the modern territorial nation state, the sovereign regulation of mobility as a core state institution (Torpey 2000) was geographically bound to the border line where border guards watched border-crossers to comply with the state rules on territorial access. Every person wishing to enter the country had either to ask for admission or give proof of her right to enter (as a citizen or a person enjoying legal residence or the right to asylum) (Brubaker 2000). By now, due to the strategic "exterritorialization of border controls" this process of examination is usually done somewhere else already whereby cross-border traffic was highly accelerated (for an overview on all kinds of exterritorial control instruments see Laube 2013).

The need to apply for a visa in an embassy or consulate of a persons' destination country in his/her home country (or country of legal residence), thus, presents the first encounter between a mobile person and the state authorities. Therefore, passports and visa controls have been labeled as "the first line of defense" (Torpey 1998: 252) and it is, actually, the place at which the mobility of a person is categorized as legal or illegal for everything else that follows. This first point of exterritorial border control puts great limits to the socio-spatial autonomy of persons whose application for a short-term visa is denied. For those who are granted a tourist visa, it has nevertheless meant going through an often time-consuming and costly administrative process, presenting all kinds of personal information on the intention to travel and to return (!). While those who enjoy visa-free travel opportunities, since their country of origin was found to be reliable, rich and welcome enough, cross-border mobility can be a spontaneous and carefree social practice to profit from one's life chances.

1.184 Million international tourist arrivals (UNWTO 2015), 244 Million people living in a country were they not born (UN 2015), and 22,5 Million Refugees (UNHCR 2016) present an impressive picture of a more and more mobile world, in which it matters greatly were you are and to which places you have access to. Next to major driving factors for forced migration such as civil wars, famines and natural disasters, it is a general increase in material resources and infrastructure that facilitates cross-border mobility today, compared to the situation more than 50 years ago. Back then, the global structure of

inequality was less dramatic (Milanovic 2015), but above all, it was much more expensive and burdensome to communicate with, meet and visit other people and places around the globe.

As migration scholars have just begun to shown, travel visas allow for short-term stays in other countries but, they are most often the first step to more durable migration, too (Jordan/Düvell 2002; Czaika/de Haas 2014). Since most migrants do not plan to immigrate to another country right away, for the most part, they have visited the place for reasons like tourism, family visits or business before or extent their stay repeatedly (legally or illegally).

Moreover, we cannot fully understand the role of visa policies without looking at the process of relocating or "pushing borders out" with regard to illegal migrants and refugees. As mentioned earlier, the first group of illegal migrants are those who were denied a visa (or who haven't tried to apply at all due to excessive costs or the deterring and frustrating experience of others), and who are, thus, turned down on legal and safe travel opportunities to their destination countries. Moreover, for asylum seekers the territorial access needed to claim their right to protections is blocked (Laube 2013: 164). If a person starts her journey anyway, she will have problems to embark on a flight or ship without giving prove of her nationality and the entry permission of the destination country. Thus, visa sanctions (in combination with readmission agreements and carrier sanctions) decide whether a trip is safe or possibly life threatening.

After discussing the significance of visa sanction to mobile individuals and national border regimes, we now turn to the empirical question of who may (freely) move where. Moreover, we look at how these chances to visa-free mobility are distributed globally.

3. How are chances to free mobility globally distributed? Studying visa-free travel und the 'global mobility divide'

It is still nation states or supranational institutions, like the EU, that legitimately decide over legal access to their territory (instead of let us say firms or private persons) and who negotiate with other states over a (mutual) lifting of short-term visa requirements for their citizens. The lifting of requirements guarantees all citizens of a specific country access to territory with the permission to stay for three

months at average.[5] Since visa-waivers are mostly agreed upon in general terms between the home and the destination country of a travelers, we enter - by studying the visa-free travel possibilities of persons – also the empirical field of International relations (IR). We will call this the "dual nature of visa policies", since they determine the freedom of movement of a person vis-á-vis a state as well as they present a certain relationship between two states (for more on the relational dimension of global visa policies and ways of analyzing them by means of Social Network Analysis, see Laube/ Heidler 2016).

Since a couple of years, economists and some political scientists, both working with quantitative data on migration and mobility, have noticed tourist visa policy to provide data that is manageable for them in analyzing the changing character of mobility and its regulation by states. With a special focus on Asia, some scholars examine the impact of visa restrictions or facilitations on tourism (see Lee/Song/Bendle 2010; Cheng 2012). Neumayer's remarkable study on international visa restrictions and bilateral travel (Neumayer 2010) even extends on the aforementioned question, by analyzing how visa restrictions are related to changes in bilateral trade and migration flows. Others focus on the capacity of the EU mobility regime in implementing their common Schengen visa system (Hobolth 2012; Finotelli/Sciortino 2013; Czaika/Hobolth 2014) or, just recently, examine initial indications of a global mobility regime in the making (Czaika/de Haas 2014; Gracheva et al. 2015; Mau et al. 2015; Laube/Heidler 2016).

To study changes in the global visa regime, we compiled data on all visa-waiver agreements almost worldwide.[6] The sample consists of 167 country cases, and for each point in time that we collected so far, 1969, 2010, and 2014, it is 27.722 data points (portrayed as a socio-matrix). For each country in the data set, from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe, we have the information to which destination countries a citizen was able to travel visa-free and to which he had to apply for a visa ahead of departure. Or, in other words, we identify positive relations between two countries (1), if country A lifts visa restrictions for the citizens of country B and vice versa. Thus, we can also study whether a visa waiver is given mutually or one-sided. Data source was the TIM Manual, a (monthly published) handbook compiled by

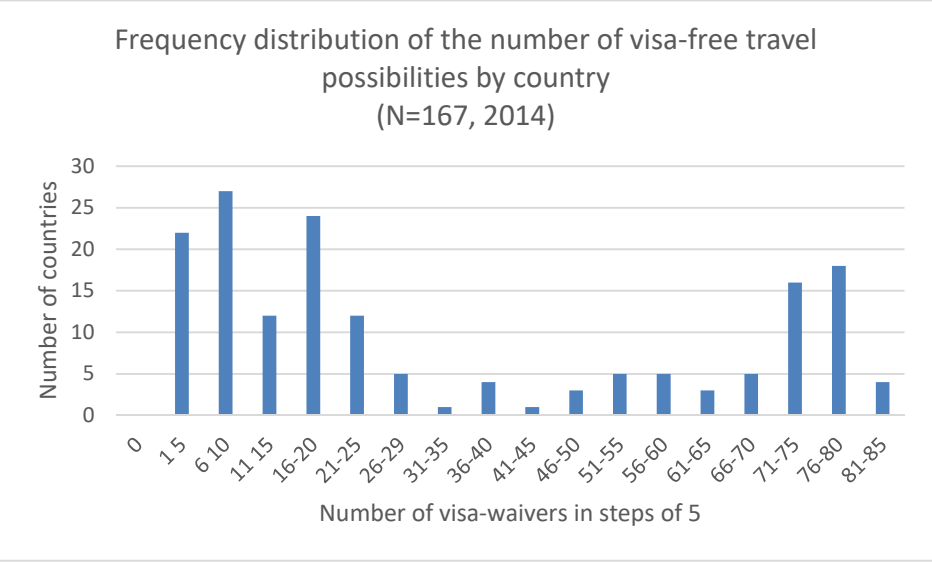
[5] There are some destination countries like the US in which the travel visa officially only allows to approach the territorial borders of the country, while the decision over entry still lies with the border official that persons encounter at the point of entry. The IATA seeks to promote international diffusion of standards for regulations on access (regarding the duration, costs and groups of persons addressed) for practical reasons. The UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has even the aim to abolish more and more visa requirements since they impede on tourism, business and cultural exchange (see Visa Facilitation Report 2016, UNWTO).

[6] The funding of the research project 'From Containers to Open States? Border Regime Change and the Mobility of Persons' (2007–2014) by the German Science Foundation (DFG) as part of the Collaborative Research Centre 597 'Transformations of the State' at the University of Bremen, Germany, enabled the first collection of data for 1969 and 2010.

the International Air Transport Association (IATA), which provides detailed information on all kinds of regulations on access to the territory, including visa exemptions for persons' mobility, health requirements, and customs regulation, needed by airlines to comply to the rules of the countries they head for. Drawing on that source, we interpret the existence of visa restrictions as the normal case (0) and lifting of visa requirements as the exemption to the rule. This view is being supported by data of the UNWTO that states: "In 2015, destinations around the world still require on average approximately two thirds of the world's population to obtain a traditional visa prior to departure." (UNWTO, 2016: 4).

We will briefly present some crucial results of the analysis of the over-all structure of the international field of visa policies. First of all, the distribution of visa-free travel opportunities is characterized by great inequality which we came to call the "Global mobility divide" (Mau/Gülzau/Laube/Zaun 2015). In order to illustrate the difference between those that are blessed with a lot of attractive visa-free travel options (especially in Europe) and those who lack possibilities to travel to other countries at their will (especially in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East), Graph 1 shows the frequency distribution of the number of visa-free travel possibilities by country for 2014. We grouped the number of visa-free travel options (from 1-82) in steps of five and display how many countries possess that amount of mobility rights.

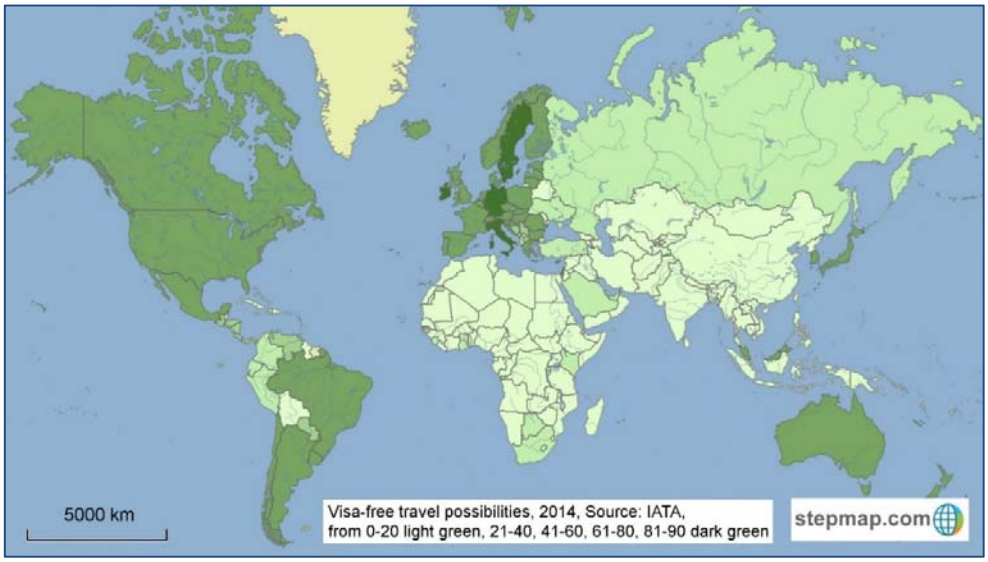
Graph 1: The global mobility gap. Number of visa-free travel possibilities



For example, there are 27 countries (amongst them India, Mozambique, Haiti and China) whose citizens can only travel to 6 to 10 countries without applying for a visa, first. On the other hand, there are 18 countries that possess mobility rights to 76-80 other countries (e.g. South Korea, the US and most of the former EU-15 countries). The distribution shows a U-shaped pattern, since the least number of countries is found to have a medium amount of visa-free travel possibilities.

It is reasonable to call this a "global mobility divide" since there are only very few countries in a middle position, e.g. only Bosnia occupies the range of 41-45 visa waivers with/to other countries (42) and it is Albania (40), Turkey (40), Trinidad Tobago (38) and South Africa (37) in the group having 36-40 options. Since the displayed individual mobility rights can be turned into real life chances, we get the impression that there is a club of privileged countries, monopolizing the resource of visa-free global mobility (Lessenich 2016: 125pp) with leaving others with little or nothing behind.

Figure 1: How powerful is your passport? Countries and their visa-free travel possibilities (2014)

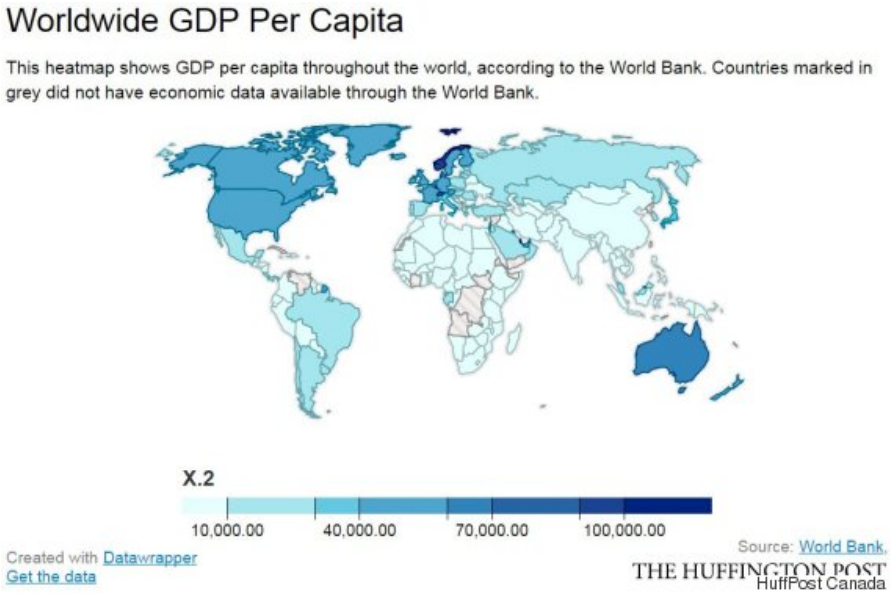


Own Research, Data Source: IATA / Visa Network Data 2014, Illustration created via **stepmap.com**

But, the situation is even worse, because this unequal distribution is based on asymmetric global power structures in which countries from the Global South send positive relations to the rich industrialized countries while the latter can afford not sending back these options back. Therefore, today, the global field of international relations regarding visa waivers has a center-periphery structure (Laube/Heidler 2016). As we can easily see in Figure 1, especially the OECD countries benefit from a high number of visa-free travel options, although there are some nuances to that. At the top of our "visa-freedom index" we find Ireland (82), Germany, Italy, and Sweden (all 81).

Next to the other members of the EU, North America and Oceania there are some wealthier countries in Latin America and Asia in that group possessing over 60 visa-free travel options, too. These countries, such as Argentina, Brazil, Japan and South Korea, obviously belong to the privileged side of the "global mobility divide". Comparing the map of more or less powerful passports to the map showing the global distribution of wealth in Figure 2 (GDP per Capita, Data source: World Bank 2015) reveals a striking structural similarity between the global inequality of wealth and mobility rights.[7] This connection was further studied and confirmed by Neumayer (2006) and Mau et al. (2015).

Figure 2:



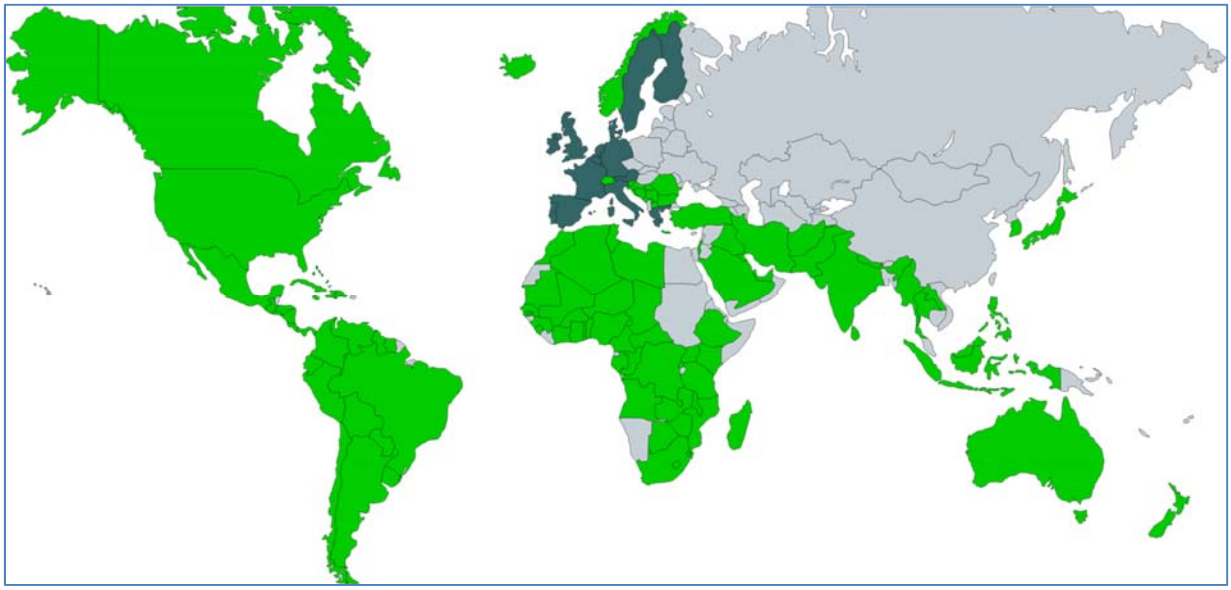
To gain as many mobility rights for their own members is of great value to Western societies. In general, democracies tend to appreciate freedom of movement, while it is characteristic to autocratic regimes to rather limit the outbound mobility of their citizens (Alemán/Woods 2014). Therefore, the governments of the many democratic countries have developed an interest in negotiating or maintaining the privilege to freedom of movement. However, this requires the goodwill of the counterpart.

[7] Although social inequality at a global level stipulates migratory movements, it is not the most unequal countries in the world that get the least mobility opportunities by the international community of states. It is rather the poorest countries regarding GDP per capita. Moreover, studies provide indications that conflict within the countries of origin seems to impede on the chance of its citizens to gain new visa-free travel possibilities, as does an authoritarian regime type. While former colonial ties to Western European states make it more likely that a countries has a high number of visa-free travel options compared to other countries in the same region (Neumayer 2006; Lawson/Lemke 2011; Laube/Heidler 2016). Still, future research has to analysis these complex relationships more comprehensively.

The concurrence of openness and closure of borders is reflected at this global level, too. While the Global North is able to gain more and more mobility rights, many African and Asian countries have lost visa-free travel options especially during the last 20 years. A major factor in this development has been the harmonization of the EU Schengen regime, as will be demonstrated with the two maps of territorial access to the former group of EU-15 member states (Figure 3 and 4), constituting a common "macro-territory" which is a destination of enormous attraction to tourists and migrants from other world regions alike. The EU-15 countries are indicated by a dark green color.[8] In light green, we marked all countries whose nationality provided its bearer to travel to at least one EU-15 country in 1969. However, at that time the Schengen agreement wasn't in place yet, which means that it was not the permission to travel to the whole region without limitations, but, to have at least one option to enter this "comfort zone". Although the situation in Western Europe in 1969 was still quite contradictory, since for example Germany and Austria made some democratic progress, were economically discovering greatly from destructions due to World War two, and at the height of their program to recruit foreign workers. While Southern European country were still less developed and some even under autocratic dictatorships, such as Spain, Portugal and Greece.

[8] The group of the EU-15 was chosen for both points in time for methodological reasons, that is to have a fixed point of comparison, and to trace the standardization of European visa policies, knowing that the group as a political entity wasn't yet existent or already enlarged in 1969 and 2010 respectively.

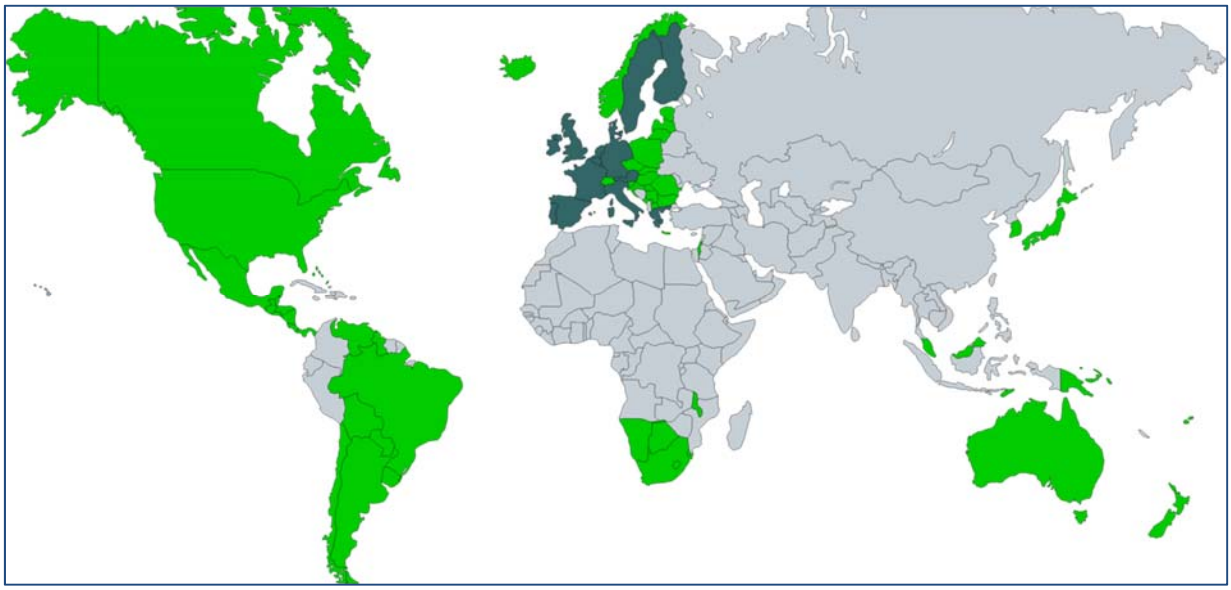
Figure 3: Mapping the world in terms of territorial access: Visa-free travel to at least one Western European country in 1969



Own Research, Data Source: IATA / Visa Network Data 1969

That the comparison of the EU-15 members in 1969 and 2010 still makes sense, is demonstrated by Figure 4 that illustrates in light green all countries that had, again, at least one visa waiver in place with an EU-15 member in 2010.

Figure 3: Mapping the world in terms of territorial access: Visa-free travel to at least one Western European country in 2010



Own Research, Data Source: IATA / Visa Network Data 2010

As we can see, the vast majority of visa waiver agreements with African and Asian countries were withdrawn by the former EU-15 countries. The diversity of positive relations that characterized the map of 1969 (with the exemption of excluding the Eastern Bloc countries) got lost. In the first place, it was former colonial ties that were cancelled in regard to visa-free travel opportunities. The establishment of the common Schengen area within the European Union required the complete harmonization of visa regulations for all third-country nationals. In 2001, the member to the European Union agreed on a list of 44 nationalities for which visa waivers should be kept (Regulation (EU) 2001/539, by now the list was changed several times and was enlarged to 61 countries lately, Regulation (EU) 2017/850). All other countries of origin, who had at least one visa waiver with a European country, lost their opportunities to travel spontaneously and without a time-consuming application process to Western Europe.

This **standardization enhanced the trend towards a global mobility divide**. Today, a countries like New Zealand or Chile that are on the list of countries whose nationals do not need a visa when entering the EU-Schengen area, has automatically at least 24 visa-free travel options (from all Schengen states). But in fact, it is even more[9], since the associated Schengen countries as well as potential new EU members have to orient their visa policies at the Schengen standard, too, even if this often opposes their interest to maintain historical relationships to their respective (Eastern) neighbors (Aygül 2013). Thus, the inequality in the distribution of visa-free travel opportunities that equips some nationals with powerful passports and others with a situation of relative immobility is due to the process of external closure and internal openness promoted by the governments of the EU member states for over thirty years now.

4. Two perspectives on visa policies: Individual mobility rights and bilateral mobility control policies

As we have seen, the nationality of a person and his or her location on the globe heavily determine chance to participate in the successful accumulation of wealth and mobility rights, defined as free access to foreign territories. Though the mechanisms of distribution are completely different, the structure of global inequality looks almost the same when displayed on a world map.

Mobility rights are assigned to individuals by nation states as an act of inclusion into one exclusive membership within the segmented political system of world society. By granting a person a nationality,

[9] Countries like Peru and Tuvalu that got a visa waiver for the Schengen area in 2016, accumulated over 30 new visa-free travel options at once.

he or she is made a citizen to that respective state, which mostly happens at birth. This means that citizenship is a transfer of entitlements from generation to generation (especially with the political practice of ius sanguinis). The fact of this random selection has been discussed and rightly problematized by Ayelet Shachar, Mark B. Salter and others (Salter 2003; Shachar 2009; Shachar/Bauböck 2014) and prominently referred to as the "birthright lottery" (Shachar 2009). A central claim that follows from these insights is in favor of an extended freedom of movement.

However, this paper has shown a **huge and even growing global inequality of mobility rights**. The tied connection between citizenship, the right to (also) access foreign territories and actual life chances makes the question which citizenship a person has (or can get) even more pressing. Looking at programs to acquire a new nationality[10], Shachar and Bauböck even stated that, today, "the primary value of citizenship lies in the mobility rights attached to passports"(Shachar/Bauböck 2014: 1). Some EU member states like Malta, Portugal and Austria experiment with programs that offer citizenship for sale, these "golden passport programs" emphasize the international travel possibilities an EU membership implies. Another telling example for the new focus on nationally provided mobility rights is the website "Passportindex.org", on which you can check the power of your passport and compare its "global rank" to others.

The central proof of nationality is the passports, which also takes the role of informing border guards and embassy personnel all over the world whether a person belongs to the legally defined group of persons that are welcome and have a right to enter the territory without hindrance (see for example EU list with visa-free countries). Otherwise, a person finds himself on the list with nationalities whose members need to be controlled and monitored closely regarding their intentions to travel.

But, although the opportunities to freedom of movement we looked at stem from ones membership in a certain political community, it is foreign countries that actually concede these rights. *They* have to give access. It might seem natural that Turkey lifted visa requirements for German and Austrian citizens, or that US citizens may enter Mexico at any time. But the other way round there are no mobility rights in place. Looking at visa policies from this angle, it becomes clear that next to the perspective of individual mobility rights there is a second, very important perspective on these findings. From this perspective, we deal with **international relations that highly depend on global power structures** (see also Lessenich

[10] https://www.passportindex.org/, last accessed on 5.9.2017. The Website focusses on "Where can your passport take you?" and offers an "online interactive tool, which collects, displays and ranks the passports of the world". The number of visa-free travel options is higher than in our database, since the Website provider is more liberal in defining access as "visa-free" and has included 199 countries.

2016). Then, it is the center-periphery-structure that produces the "global mobility divide". To study how bilateral agreements and negotiations over visa-free travel proceed is very telling to examine a country's status within the community of states or vis-à-vis more powerful counties. For some countries, gaining more mobility rights for their own citizens is high on the agenda. In this respect the EU-Turkey-Deal is worth studying: The EU commission reacted to the far-reaching requirement of Turkey to gain visa-free travel for Turkish citizens to the Schengen area with 72 criteria that the Turkish government would have to meet on their way to a visa liberalization by the EU. The bargaining positions of such two governments or representatives may be completely different and, again, unequal. But, there are by now many reasons to believe that those countries in the periphery realize the very important role they have been assigned to. Since they have some (limited) control over large numbers of 'unwanted' migrants heading towards Europe and North America, positive relations with them are of utmost interest. As long as Europe and North America want to pursue their strategy of relocating and externalizing border controls, they will need potent and well-tempered 'gate keepers' to face unwanted migration flows. And visa-free travel or, as a first step, visa facilitations just advance to the most important good to be offered in exchange to taking over these mobility control tasks. Here, a new research perspective is needed which I suggest to call "the study of bilateral mobility control policies".

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