
The salience of the migration issue

Interview with Andrew Geddes

Inês Vidigal

Iscte, Instituto Universitário de Lisboa

Centro de Investigação e Estudos de Sociologia (CIES-Iscte), Lisboa, Portugal

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Andrew Geddes is a Professor of Migration Studies and the Director of the Migration Policy Centre. During his career, he has led and participated in a number of major projects on aspects of international migration working with a wide range of academic and non-academic partners. For the period 2014-19 he was awarded an Advanced Investigator Grant by the European Research Council for a project on the drivers of global migration governance. He has published extensively on global migration, with a particular focus on policy-making and the politics of migration and on regional cooperation and integration. Recent publications include *The Politics of Migration and Immigration in Europe*, *The Dynamics of Regional Migration Governance*, and *A Rising Tide? The Salience of Immigration and the Rise of Anti-Immigration Political Parties in Western Europe*.

Keywords Global migration, public attitudes towards migration, EU policies, migration policies.

Título A relevância do tópico migração

Andrew Geddes é professor de Estudos Migratórios e o diretor do Migration Policy Centre. Durante a sua carreira, liderou e participou numa série de grandes projetos sobre aspetos da migração internacional colaborando com parceiros académicos e não académicos. Durante o período de 2014-19, foi-lhe concedida uma Bolsa de Investigador Avançado pelo Conselho Europeu de Investigação para um projeto sobre os fatores impulsionadores da governação das migrações globais. Publicou vários textos sobre migração global, sobretudo sobre elaboração de políticas e políticas de migração e sobre cooperação e integração regionais. Publicações recentes incluem *The Politics of Migration and Immigration in Europe*, *The Dynamics of Regional Migration Governance* e *A Rising Tide? The Salience of Immigration and the Rise of Anti-Immigration Political Parties in Western Europe*.

Palavras-chave Migrações globais, atitudes públicas em relação à migração, políticas europeias, políticas migratórias.

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Observatório da Emigração

Av. das Forças Armadas, ISCTE-IUL, 1649-026 Lisboa, Portugal

Tel. (CIES-IUL): + 351 210464018

E-mail: observatorioemigracao@iscte-iul.pt

www.observatoriodaemigracao.pt

Observatório da Emigração (ahead OEM) – Before exploring your work, we would like to know how you gain interest in the subject of migration. Did it start while you were studying? Did it come later during your research work? Could you tell us a little more about it?

Andrew Geddes (ahead AG) – Well, I didn't study migration. I wrote my PhD on a completely different topic, but I was lucky to work for people who kind of stimulate my interest in migration, particularly on issues around political representation; so, I suppose I was inspired by people I work for. I also think that kind of research interest finds you as well, and I think it was that; I decided that these were the issues on which I would try and build a career. There were things, back in the 1990s, that I found very interesting, and that at the time, very few people were working on. My background is political science, and certainly on political science not many people were interested in migration. So, it was... I don't know, I'd would say it was an unusual decision, but it was something which just really interested me. And then I was lucky enough to get a Jean Monet fellowship at the European University Institute back in 1997 – long time ago – where I met a bunch of people who were really inspiring, many of which I kind of carried on working with. So, it wasn't, you know, not a conscious decision, it kind of happened: a mix of the kind of people I knew and admired, and also, just the things that interested me.

OEM – Given the exceptional situation that the pandemic caused, much has been speculated about the impact it would have not only on migratory movements, but also on attitudes towards immigrants. I know that you have conducted a study on public attitudes towards immigration, what conclusions have you reached?

AG – This is a really interesting question, because I think people will assume that attitudes to migration in Europe will become more negative. We have something called the Observatory of Public Attitudes to Migration here in the Migration Policy Centre, and we've looked, over time, attitudes towards migration in Europe, and generally, in Europe, they become more favourable. So, if you look at high quality longitudinal data, like the European Social Survey, you can see that over time, attitudes have become more favourable. That's not to say that there's a kind of a wave of pro migration sentiment sweeping across Europe. But it's not that there isn't this kind of tide of negativity. So, there's been increased favourability, which is an important finding. A second thing is attitudes are actually relatively stable, attitudes aren't varying, and people are relatively consistent in their attitudes. So there tends to be stability over time in attitudes. But what does vary quite a lot is the issue salience. So, that's the level of attention and peak that is devoted to immigration that reflects the way in which people might prioritize immigration as an issue. And so, issue salience was varied. So, attitudes themselves are relatively stable, and in most European countries have become more favourable over the last 20 years, even during the so-called crisis after 2015. What varied was salience; the way in which some people prioritize immigration has a concern, and it affected their political behaviour and the

way that they voted. So those are the three things that I would highlight. There's variation between states, so the patterns aren't uniform, but generally, I think attitudes towards migration are not, as commonly assumed, the idea that there's some kind of wave of negativity; evidence doesn't support that, but there are some specific factors into salience.

OEm – Recently you argued that the pandemic is probably bad news for the European radical right. Why do you think that is?

AG – We argued that because radical right enjoyed a lot of its success, precisely because of the salience of the immigration issue. It profited from the concern among some sections of the electorate about immigration, about numbers of people arriving, and so the populist radical right, and various kinds of political parties across Europe, I think, benefited from that. What the pandemic has meant is that people are absolutely focused on other concerns, obviously, around health, economic reconstruction, and all the things that we've become very familiar within the pandemic, and we can see across Europe the importance given to immigration has declined. So, if the radical right grew in support because of the salience of immigration – and I would argue that they did – then declining salience is likely to affect them. That doesn't mean they'll go away, of course, and there's still a latent potential, which we can see in some European countries now. There's still a latent potential immigration issue, and potential for radical right parties to exploit that, but I think the pandemic has raised a series of concerns where radical right populist parties haven't traditionally been seen as offering strong or valid proposals.

OEm – So after the pandemic, maybe they grew again.

AG – Yeah, I think if immigration becomes a salient concern, then it does create more potential for radical right parties. You can see that radical right parties, even during the pandemic, would, in looking at what caused the pandemic, focused on migrants as a potential cause, or as vectors to the transmission of the virus, which was untrue. But I don't think that the state scapegoating migrants was particularly effective. But there's still, in some European countries, concerns about voter rival, and I think that there's a latent potential for these issues to perhaps stimulate some support for radical right parties; they have certainly not gone away. But I think that this issue of salience has been really important for them, the level of public attention on migration issues has declined, because obviously, we've all been really concerned about other things. So migration has not been as salient.

OEm – The restrictions on mobility imposed by Covid-19 made 2020 and 2021 atypical years in terms of international migration, in particular and mobility in general. Do you think that after Covid we will see a change in international migration or will we go back to where we were?

AG – Yeah, so really interesting question. It's obviously hard to predict the future. I suspect we'll see some legacies in terms of some restriction around testing and masks, which made travel a different experience, and maybe some people will be more averse to travel because of the risks. Some people's attitudes to risk may affect their willingness to travel. But what I'd say in relation to that is that I think that this effect on mobility and migration will probably just intensify transit, in some ways already existing. If you think about international mobility – we've done some work on this here at the Migration Policy Centre – and if you look at patterns of mobility, one of the things that were happening before the pandemic was mobility inequalities. So, while the world has become more mobile, the possibility to move isn't evenly distributed across the world. So, we look at Europe, look at Africa, and see increasing mobility, but the opportunity to be mobile is much greater for people in high income countries, and can be much lower for people in low-income countries. And I think that the risk of the pandemic is to exacerbate mobility inequalities, and particularly if it becomes linked to people's vaccine status. Vaccine inequalities then intensify mobility inequalities. I think that that could be an effect, and obviously that's a real challenge for the world now: the vaccine inequalities, where people in Europe may have two or three doses, and only a tiny number of people in African countries have access to any vaccination program. And I think that could have potential effects on international mobility in the future and exacerbate existing inequalities.

OEm – I think you're right. I know that you led a project called "Prospects for International Migration Governance" (MIGPROSP) which aimed to understand how “actors” within migration governance systems understand international migration – its causes and effects, and key risks and uncertainties – and how these understandings then shape or affect institutional responses. Within your research, what were your main findings?

AG – Well, first, the research was mainly focused on the regional level, so it was comparing Europe with North America, South America and Southeast Asia, and so, what you see is that regions are really important. We might talk about global governance, but that can be quite hard to establish. There are forms of global cooperation on migration, which are very difficult to achieve, but there is already quite a substantial and existing regional governance, but in very different forms. I was looking at the European Union, but also, into South America organizations like the MERCOSUR – what used to be called the North American Free Trade Area, NAFTA – and also the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Look into these regional groupings and you see a significant variation. One of the things that I would emphasize in the book is the importance of not beginning from, say, being Eurocentric stance from the European Union, and

imagining that's a kind of template for region integration. The European Union is a very unique system, it's unlikely to be replicated, but what you can see are interesting forms of regional cooperation on other parts of the world. It was an interesting contrast with South America where responses to migration and mobility have been very different. It's a very interesting contrast between responses to large scale displacement of Syrians in Europe and Venezuelans in South America, where South American countries have been more open to displace Venezuelans. Not that there haven't been problems, but a different approach has been evident. It's interesting to compare regions and see the kind of responses that develop and the different forms of cooperation that can emerge. And also, one of the things I emphasized in the book was the importance of looking into the decision-making process, what I refer to in the book that I wrote based on the project – a book called “Governing Migration Beyond the State”, is to look inside the black box of governance to understand more about how elite actors – those who are responsible for making decisions – and understand the challenges that they faced. I then developed this idea of what are called repertoires of migration governance. So, what these actors have to do is deal with significant uncertainty about migration in the future, and also significant risks associated with migration, and to do that, I argue that they develop these repertoires of migration governance, which have a narrative component, which is a kind of factual beliefs or beliefs about facts. But it's also quite social in the form that they emerge through interaction with other actors involved in migration governance. They're also effective in the sense of an emotional component; they can at time be symbolic and be seen to do something. And also, their ongoing; they don't have a beginning and an end, actors in migration curves are always in the middle of things; it's not the kind of simple linear process. So yes, I'm empirically looking at variations between regions and conceptual thinking about how actors in migration governance systems, those people that are responsible for making decisions, understand the challenges that they face and how they behave. So those were two of the things that emerged from the project.

OEm – So in your book "Governing migration beyond the state: Europe, North America, South America, and Southeast Asia in a global context", that you've just talked about, you argue that migration should not be described as a crisis. You challenge this notion of migration crisis by calling it the "normality of migration". Do you want to elaborate on this idea?

AG – Yeah, well, what I argue in the book is that we tend to focus on crises as points in time in which decisions might be made, which might change the path and things like that. What I argue in the book is that responses to crisis are based on understandings of the underlying normality of migration. To explain that a little bit more, when I did the research, what I would ask people in the interviews we did – we did more than 400 interviews – one of the first questions we'd ask people was: “What do you think are the main causes of migration?”, “Do you think

that those causes will change?”. We'd also look at the main effects of migration, and if those effects will change in future, and what we were trying to get towards an understanding is, what do people see as the underlying normality of migration, what do they think are the main causes and effects, and did they think these were going to change; and by looking at what we see in Europe, for example, is that the understanding of the causes and effects of migration has been quite powerfully based around understandings of the potential for large scale migration to Europe. This could be based on reality or not, you know, and you could dispute that or have a discussion about whether these concerns on the potential for large scale migration to Europe are true or not, are real or not, they've had important effects. So, in Europe, and I'd also argue in the United States, concerns about the potential for large scale migration, understanding of the causes of migration itself, have become part of the understanding the normality of migration, and that then frames responses. So, in Europe, responses to the Syrian refugee crisis were based upon a long-standing concern in Europe about large scale displacement and the need to kind of deter and prevent large scale movement towards Europe, which dates back to the end of the Cold War. And you can trace it across a series of events sometimes labelled as crises which have affected the European Union. You can see it in North America too. And in South America, I think there's maybe some different understandings of the normality of migration, the cause and effects of migration, which have informed a different kind of response in that region. So that's what I mean by that, the normality is based on some understanding of the causes and effects of migration itself, which then frames responses to events that can be labelled as crises. So rather than focus on the crisis events, what I tried to look at was how these are informed by understandings of what causes migration in the first place.

OEm – And moving to Brexit. In your opinion, how did immigration lead do Brexit?

Both in terms of policy and public opinion.

AG – I think using the word immigration would be difficult in this context, because, obviously, an important part of the Brexit debate in the UK was free movement by EU citizens who weren't immigrants. They were EU citizens exercising the right to free movement. But what the radical right, in some sections of the Conservative Party were quite effective, is that they were able to connect free movement by EU citizens to the immigration issue. And I think that they... Well, that was a kind of very successful component; immigration became a highly salient, very important concern in the UK and had a major effect on the decision to leave the EU. And I think there are two important policy decisions, one of which was taken back in 2003/2004, which was the decision to allow citizens of the 10 member states to join the European Union in 2004, the right to access a UK labour market. Only Sweden and the UK did that. And the UK experienced relatively high numbers of people moving, particularly from Central European countries. The economic effects of that... there's quite a lot of research which argues that

there could have been economic benefits of that, but politically it became a quite highly charged issue. But I would add to that another thing in the UK, which was highly significant, which was the introduction by the coalition government, led by the Conservatives and the Prime Minister, David Cameron, what they called a net migration target. They had this idea of setting a net migration target. They wanted to reduce migration from hundreds of thousands to tens of thousands. Now, that was going to be very difficult when you had EU citizens exercise their free movement rights to move to the UK. So, what the net migration target effectively was was a target that was unreachable, and also demonstrated through facts and data, every few months that government was failing. So, they set themselves a target they couldn't reach, and the public was regularly reminded that they were failing often quite dramatically to get anywhere near that target. And I think that had quite an important effect. It was a public policy disaster to establish a target that couldn't be attained, on which the public could be regularly reminded of your failure to achieve your target in an issue, or for an issue that become more salient in the public mind because of the activities of UK Independence Party, UKIP and Eurosceptics within the Conservative Party. So, there was a kind of combination of political mobilization and really a quite significant public policy failure, establishing a target that was unreachable in an area where there was a higher level of public concern and about which the public would be reminded every few months when more data would be shown to demonstrate that the government was missing this target.

OEm – You recently wrote an article entitled “Centre-right parties and immigration in an era of politicisation” (2021). My first question relates to why it was necessary to focus the analysis on the centre-right parties and not on the far right and the so-called populists? Why did you feel this analysis was important?

AG – Well, it's a really good question that because actually, it's a question that we kind of try and address at the start. Why focus on the centre-right? I don't know how many people are writing PhDs about the radical right at the moment, I suspect large numbers of people. And yet, when we look at who governs in Europe, centre-right parties are politically dominant across Europe, have been for decades, have had a remarkable capacity to maintain a very significant political role across the European Union. We wanted to focus on how these important parties which have gotten across Europe consistently for decades and have responded to a series of challenges, have dealt with the issue of migration, and that necessarily means looking at how they deal with the challenge of parties, obviously challenging party to the left, but increasingly also challenging parties to the right. So that was really our focus and not just to look at the radical right and track their emergence, but to look at how centre-right parties have dealt with issues around migration, integration... And what we show – if people want to have a look it's in the Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, it's a special issue, we've got papers

that look across Europe, evidence of the relationship between centre-right parties and other political parties – is, we find evidence for the kind of mainstreaming of radical right ideas into the programs of centre-right parties. So, we were interested in the relationship between what you might call the mainstream and radical parties and the extent to which mainstream parties have responded. So, the patterns aren't uniform, there are some differences. But I think generally across the EU, there is evidence that the radical right may not always have been successful in getting into government, but they've been relatively successful in getting their ideas into the programs of mainstream centre-right parties.

OEm – My other question is, from your analysis, is there a real evolution of these parties on migration issues and policies? If yes, in what way?

AG – In terms of really an evolution at their policies? I think there are, what we can see is, I think the ways in which ideas that the radical right became components of mainstream parties and their patterns are not uniform. So, there are some differences. If you compare, for instance, Denmark and Sweden, you can see different approaches to radical right challenges. The Danish People's Party, I think has had, in terms of its effect on mainstream parties, it became, it has kind of accommodated in a way... the Sweden Democrats weren't within a kind of coalition government. So, there are some differences between countries. But I think if you're looking at the evolution of the policy positions of centre-right parties, you see more of a kind of rhetoric of radical right parties entering into their discourse and political programs. And it creates some challenges, I suppose, for the centre-right parties. One of the challenges for them is, of course, that they have traditionally been quite close to business. And so, you've got a tension in the kind of coalition of support that might sustain centre-right parties, between maybe this kind of populist radical right fringe, which is seeking to maybe, in discursive or real terms, stronger actions on migration, but also support from business, which is likely to see the need for migration to support economic growth and particularly some areas of economy. Those kinds of tensions have been very evident in the centre-right parties, and I think those will continue to be. So, in terms of evolution, I think we can see some mainstreaming radical ideas, creating tensions for centre-right parties, and I think these will become more pronounced because, I suppose, the pandemic is going to generate a need for economic reconstruction, migrant labour will play a part in that. But also, we know there are demographic changes in Europe that are likely to mean that the immigration becomes part of the response that European countries need to adopt for their welfare and labour market needs in the future. And so centre-right parties are going to have to find some kind of response to that. And they won't find a response, they're just driven by radical right parties and kind of rhetorical, often rhetorical or symbolic commitments, to control which actually have an adverse effect on a kind of sensible managed migration policy.

OEm – How do you think the Arab Spring and the consequent migratory crisis in the Mediterranean have affected, on one hand, the relations between countries in this area but, on the other hand, the attitudes and perceptions of Europeans towards the arrival of immigrants to their countries?

AG – I think this has been a real Mediterranean tragedy for the European Union for last 30 years. If you were to contrast the kind of rhetoric and ideas that inform relations between the European Union and countries in North Africa and the Middle East in the 1990s, there was an idea of creating a kind of Mediterranean space based on cooperation and trade and really, I suppose, it's maybe a bit Eurocentric, but the EU imagining itself as a kind of force for good in that region. We look at it now and the Mediterranean is a graveyard. What has happened in the Mediterranean is kind of unbelievably shocking in terms of the loss of life that continues, and the damaging effects on relations between the EU and countries in the south Mediterranean, North Africa and Middle East. I think that the effects have been extremely negative and damaging for the European Union, damaging for the countries in North African and Middle East, and above all, damaging for migrants because of the systematic abuse of their rights that have occurred, and also because of the tyrannical death toll in the Mediterranean. So, it's really striking the way that the rhetoric of the Europe, about the Mediterranean has changed over the last 30 years. And I think the Mediterranean, the fact that has become a graveyard, is a basically a really powerful indictment of the kind of failure of the EU and member states to really pursue a vision which was the one they had of themselves in the 1990s, based upon a much more productive relationship.

OEm – You started to talk a little bit about this... The refugee crisis that has affected Europe in recent years in general, but more specifically countries such as Greece and Italy, has been one of the topics of great debate at political, media and academic level. How do you see the measures taken by the EU in general and by the most affected countries in particular?

AG – Yeah, so it's a really important question, because obviously, some countries have been very directly affected by events in Europe in recent years, you know, been labelled as a migration crisis. So, Greece and Italy are often representatives, frontline states, and see themselves very much in those terms and they've called for much greater European solidarity. But what we have seen since 2015 is a kind of fragmentation of the EU. So, in terms of the EU itself, developing a collective response has been very difficult. So, after the crisis, there were plans, where they actually agreed in the Council, a relocation mechanism to share responsibility for some seekers, which was then, not implemented, and some member states just literally refuse to accept relocated asylum applicants; sometimes they did step up and did do what they were supposed to do, others just refused. So, Hungary was a very good example of that kind of basic refusal to agree to do what had been agreed in the Council. I think there's been a fragmenta-

tion of EU and tensions between EU member states, which meant that what's called the European agenda on migration in 2015, has effectively failed. And so obviously, what we then had was the pact on migration and asylum, which was trying to rethink a common European approach to establish some kind of agreement between member states. Now what we don't know is whether or not the pact will lead to measures which establish some kind of cooperative European base and on what that will be based at, what they will agree to. So, there will be proposals, but it's a very highly sensitive issue and member states have been fragmented on this, and there's a lot of tension between them. And also, obviously, within the European Union, there are always elections. So, we just had the German elections, we will have the French presidential elections; there are always elections, there's always political tension, which can mean that decisions on migration are difficult to read because of national political concerns. I think there's a kind of an internal struggle to the European Union, but what we then can see is that there's been much more agreement amongst the member states and what some people refer to as externalization. So that's trying to co-opt neighbouring countries into the European Union's framework for control. I think there's been much more agreement amongst EU member states on the kind of need to reinforce controls in neighbouring states outside the EU to stop people moving towards EU and so that's led to efforts to engage with countries like Egypt, obviously with the authorities in Libya, with deeply problematic local governments, and also governments in Sub Saharan Africa as well. So, it's become an important part of the relationship between European countries and African countries and between the EU and African Union. And there's been more agreement amongst member states on this kind of externalization dimension and much more difficult to reach an agreement between themselves on what some people refer to as solidarity. But we'll have to, and what the Commission is now trying to propose, is the mechanisms which would allow member states to cooperate, and then the issue is whether that's just the kind of lowest common denominator or whether you know, it might be also protective of the rights of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants.

OEm – In your book “The Politics of Migration & Immigration in Europe” you analyse and compare responses by European countries to international migration in its various forms, did you find much common ground in the countries under study? In your opinion, of the countries under study, do any stand out as having better or more developed policies?

AG – In terms of common ground? Well, I think there are. I mean, European countries have some objective similarities: in terms of structure, and on some basic institutional characteristics, but obviously, there are some important differences. When you look across Europe, if you look at the way labour markets and welfare states are particularly organized, which are obviously very important for migration politics, you can see important differences. So maybe see clusters of countries between which there are some similarities. So, you might argue, say, if

you were looking across Europe, you would say there's some broad similarities, but also some important kind of clusters of states which share similar characteristics in terms of their institutions, labour markets, welfare states and political systems. And that can often mean that they share similar perspectives on migration. So, you might imagine some differences between say, the north and the south, the east and the west, not uniform, but maybe Scandinavian countries, because the welfare state traditions have had different approaches. So, you can see kind of maybe clusters or groups of states within Europe that have similar kind of what you might call background institutional conditions, which play an important part in structuring their responses to migration. But then I'd add to that the European Union itself, processes of Europeanisation have also induced some increased cooperation. So, there's maybe a shared sense of challenge, which is a European challenge, and maybe habits of working together. So overall, I think particularly around areas where the EU has competence, such as asylum and irregular migration, there's maybe some more convergence induced by the EU on those issues. Of course, the EU doesn't have any responsibility for admissions, that remains a matter for the member states in the treaty, that admissions, number of people to be admitted as a matter for the state. So, there's much less convergence around admissions policy. So yeah, the EU plays a role as well. They're inducing some limited convergence, particularly, I would say, around asylum and irregular migration. Where the country is, you know, who does it well? I mean, it's very subjective, because I suppose it depends on how you assess that. Because if you looked at in terms of what the government say about themselves, and they may say they want to restrict migration, if they do, does that mean it is a better approach? I suppose if you're going to assess whether that approach is good, it would depend on what you've got to have some kind of normative criteria against which you'd assess better or good. But I suppose if we take member states on their own terms about what they might say they want to do, then I think the key challenge is how to have policies which are effectively I suppose; the language which is used in managing migration. We have to accept that Europe countries, obviously, want to manage access to their territory. Now, what they've tended to focus on is to stop migration policies, and I think one of the challenges for governments across the European Union is developing a genuine approach to managed migration, because that will be an important challenge for the future, which they will have to address because their societies, their welfare states, their labour markets, are likely to require some migration. And you can see interesting approaches developed in some countries, particularly around what's called migration to high skilled employment. And so, you've seen schemes in some EU member states, much more difficult schemes in relation to low skilled employment, even though there's clearly a need for migrants in lower skilled employment too. And then obviously the issues around irregularity and abuses and exploitation that can occur in lower skilled employment. I suppose who does well, who does better, is quite subjective. You've got to have some criteria to assess it. One thing I would say,

when we were doing our research, we will always ask people, which country they think gets it right. You know we'd be asking decision makers, people involved in migration policy across the world, and it wasn't a European country... the most common answer, it's Canada. And so for decision makers, I think Canada is in a very different position to a lot of European countries, you know, sort of geographically, politically and historically. But that was a country that was seen as getting it right. But that's a country which has a kind of an immigration targets every year, a number of people wants to meet every year, whereas European countries just really very focused on stopping immigration.

OEm – I was not expecting Canada to be the answer.

AG – It wasn't universal, but it was fairly consistent. If you just ask, you know, is there a country that you think gets it right, and Canada was very often referred to.

OEm – In your work we often come across the expression/concept of "saliency", why do you think this concept is so important?

AG – Saliency is basically the level of attention people give to particular issues. So, in most opinion surveys, people are asked "What do you think are the main challenges facing you, your country, the European Union?", and in political terms are highly significant. Now, I suppose there are, obviously, a number of factors that affect people's dispositions, why they might have concerns about particular issues. But in practical political terms, saliency can have very important effects. If we look at attitudes to migration in Europe, I think there is evidence that attitudes are stable, and if anything, have become more favourable over time, but saliency has increased to very high levels. So, what that means is that among some sections of the electorate, not the whole electorate, they're concern about immigration has had important effects on our political behaviour. And if you imagine a coalitional system, a government where perhaps a party has between, say 10 and 15%, on the radical right, or sees its growth and its support, say 5% to 15%, that can have a very significant effect. So, for radical right parties, whose growth in support is driven by concerns about immigration, can then have an effect on a coalition government and have quite important effects on policy. I think the saliency, the attention that people give to immigration, the way it motivates our political behaviour has been extremely important. And while people may imagine as it being a wave of anti-immigration sentiment in Europe, that is not true. But what has been very significant is increased saliency, which has had effects on sections of the electorate, and that can have quite powerful political effects, particularly in coalitional systems where growth in support for what were fringe parties to become bigger parties, can have important effects on governments and politics across the European Union.

OEm – So, last question. Is there a topic or question I haven't asked you that you would like to talk about?

AG – I don't think I know anything else. I think you've covered, yeah, that's very comprehensive. Yeah, nothing else. Thanks.

OEm – Thank you very much for the interview and availability.

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Observatório da Emigração

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