

Immigration as a Deliberate Foreign Policy Instrument.

Very little attention has been paid to immigration policy as foreign policy. Domestic policy usually prevails in the literature, most notably about the effects of immigration on destination societies. Foreign policy aspects of immigration policy, as is all foreign policy is virtually always an expression of national self-interest.

Two approaches to immigration: The first focuses on the “pull” or demand factors that incentivize and regulate migration to a receiving country. The second focuses on “push” factors that drive people from their homelands. This latter approach concentrates on displaced populations, human rights norms, and institutions and cooperation among states.

In *Weapons of Mass Migration: Forced Displacement, Coercion, and Foreign Policy*, Kelly Greenhill identifies at least 56 cases of what she calls “coercive engineered migrations” a widely deployed but largely unrecognized instrument of state influence:

the exercise of a unique kind of coercion, one predicated on the intentional creation, manipulation, and exploitation of real or threatened mass population movements, a widely deployed but largely unrecognized instrument of state influence.

since 1951 (plus another eight borderline episodes).

Unfortunately, this unorthodox brand of coercion seems to work most of the time it is used: the coercing state achieved at least some of its objectives in 73 percent of these cases and virtually all of its goals in over half (57 percent). Coercers aim to affect target states' behavior by exploiting the existence of competing political interests and groups, and by manipulating the costs or risks imposed on target state populations. This "coercion by punishment" strategy can be effected in two ways: the first relies on straightforward threats to overwhelm a target's capacity to accommodate a refugee or migrant influx; the second, on a kind of norms-enhanced political blackmail that exploits the existence of legal and normative commitments to those fleeing violence, persecution, or privation.

- **Cuba** - 1980 Mariel plus 2 other incidents

Three events after the 1959 revolution allowed Cubans to exit the island for the United States. The 1980 Mariel boatlift brought nearly 125,000 Cubans to Florida. Continued migration by sea to the United States led to the 1995 establishment of the wet-foot, dry-foot policy, which allowed any Cuban arriving by land or sea to remain in the United States legally. Despite recently resumed sanctions against Cuba and increased deportations of Cuban nationals, the Cuban Adjustment Act remains in effect today.

The Mariel boatlift was a mass emigration of Cubans, who traveled from Cuba's Mariel Harbor to the United States between 15 April and 31 October 1980. After 10,000 Cubans tried to gain [asylum](#) by taking refuge on the grounds of the [Peruvian](#) embassy, the [Cuban government](#) announced that anyone who wanted to leave could do so. The ensuing mass migration was organized by [Cuban Americans](#), with the agreement of Cuban President [Fidel Castro](#). The arrival of the refugees in the United States created political problems for US President [Jimmy Carter](#). The [Carter administration](#) struggled to develop a consistent response to the immigrants, and many of the [refugees](#) had been released from [jails](#) and [mental health facilities](#) in Cuba.

- **Turkey/EU** – Syrian refugees; membership in EU

In 2015, almost 1 million refugees and irregular migrants arrived in Europe. Headlines were dominated by tragic mass drownings in the Aegean, or footage of crowds moving through different countries – often in the hope of reaching Northern Europe, and particularly Germany.

By early 2016, borders were closing across Europe. Far-right parties were on the rise in Hungary, Poland, Austria, France and more. Newcomers were increasingly framed as a threat to Europe, both cultural and in terms of resources. People continued to lose their lives on the treacherous stretch of water that separated Turkey from Europe, and the Greek government – and its resources – were placed under mounting strain.

As the number of refugee and migrant arrivals continued to rise, and the political climate further deteriorated, European states began to put greater pressure on Turkey to control departures from its coastal cities. A number of European states – spearheaded by Germany, previously seen as the most welcoming country for refugees – began to [negotiate a migration control deal with Turkey](#), which culminated with the EU-Turkey Deal.

Turkey was, at the time of the deal, hosting some 3 million refugees. The vast majority were from Syria ([2.7 million](#)), though there were also large numbers of Iraqis and Afghans in the country. The state's resources were strained, and the government [was unable to provide effective protection for refugees](#).

The EU-Turkey deal has shaped and symbolized Europe's response to the refugee crisis, both in practical terms and in principle. First, it has resulted in a smaller number of arrivals to mainland Europe, but has placed a disproportionate burden on Greece – a country that was already under significant economic strain. vb

The EU-Turkey deal pledged €3 billion of European funds, from both institutions and individual states, to improve the humanitarian situation for Syrian refugees in Turkey – with more to follow, [an additional €3 billion was approved by the European Commission](#).

In addition, a number of political gestures were made towards the Turkish government. These included the revival of E.U. accession talks, visa-free travel for Turkish nationals to the EU, customs union reform and a Voluntary Humanitarian Admission Scheme that would provide for the resettlement of greater numbers of Syrians.

For European states, the deal had clear benefits: it externalized their borders and reduced the number of refugees who would arrive to their countries. However, in practice, violated international law and norms of refugee protection.

● **Belarus/Poland – 2020**

At the beginning of November, the situation at Belarus's border with NATO and the European Union was dire. Belarusian authorities kept bringing migrants to the border, where some of the migrants—enticed by Belarusian forces—began [attacking](#) the Polish soldiers guarding it. Indeed, Belarusians themselves harassed Polish soldiers and tried to tear open Poland's border fence.

But it was a sheepish Lukashenko who addressed a group of migrants in Belarus at the end of November: “If Germans and Poles won't listen to me today, it's not my fault,” he [told](#) them. “I will do whatever you want, even if it harms Poles and others. But you need to realize we can't start a war to force a corridor through Poland to Germany.”

Gone was the swagger in May, when the Belarusian leader promised to flood the EU with drugs and migrants, and even from last month, when Lukashenko told the [BBC](#) that if migrants “keep coming from now on, I still won't stop them because they're not coming to my country. They're going to yours.” The

migrants, of course, were desperate to get to the EU and were deviously exploited by a ruler in need of a weapon. A month later, migrants are flying home, and Belarusian President Aleksandr Lukashenko's subversive campaign is starting to flop. What Lukashenko has been doing is not new; he played a similar game back in 2002 and 2004—threatening to send a flood of refugees into Europe if it didn't meet his demands.

Videos

[Kelly Greenhill: Weapons of Mass Migration - Bing video](#) (Libya)

[Migrant #invasion at Polish EU border with #Belarus: "Weapon of Mass #Migration" or typical wave? - Bing video](#)

** [Kelly Greenhill: the weaponization of migration, implications for the EU and beyond | EMD 2016 - Bing video](#)
conceptual idea of coercive migration