The Drivers of Migration Governance

Andrew Geddes

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Andrew Geddes,
Chair in Migration Studies & Director of the Migration Policy Centre, RSCAS, EUI.
Professor of Politics, University of Sheffield (until August 2017)

andrew.geddes@eui.eu
@AndrewPGeddes

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Introduction
The Prospects for International Migration Governance project (MIGPROSP) analyses the drivers of migration governance in four world regions (Asia-Pacific, Europe, North America and South America). The project is interested in how various types of 'actor' in migration governance systems make sense of the issues they face and how the understandings that they develop can then affect or shape governance responses to uncertainties and risks. These 'actors' include political leaders, officials, business leaders, trade unionists, civil society organisations, think tanks and academic researchers. In their roles, they must deal with a variety of risks and uncertainties that are inherent in any decision-making process. Two questions are addressed: how do actors organise their experiences both of migration and of the wider environment within which they operate? And how does the organisation of these experiences then shape action?

To address these questions, the paper develops seven theses about the drivers of migration governance. That it is: (i) a signifier of change in underlying social systems; (ii) grounded in processes of issue-framing that organise experience and guide action; (iii) centred on relations between organisations and their environment; (iv) both an effect and a cause of turbulence in governance systems; (v) inherently ambiguous leading to the potential decoupling of problems and choices; (vi) pluricentric and multilevel thus signifying involvement of more (not fewer) organisations; (vii) enactive of sensible environments that are shaped by the practical activities of real people engaged in concrete situations of social action. Each thesis is developed with reference to data from more than 300 interviews conducted during the first phase of the MIGPROSP project (2014-16) in Asia-Pacific, Europe, North America and South America.

To analyse the drivers of migration governance means understanding how migration governance as a structure, process and set of ideas is constituted. This constitution is necessarily linked to conceptualisations of the causes and effects of change in underlying social and natural systems (economic, political, social, demographic and environmental) and of the effects of interventions on these social and natural systems. These understandings develop in organisational settings that can be defined as: 'a series of interlocking routines, habituated action patterns that bring the same people together around the same activities in the same time and places' (Westley, 1990: 339). These play fundamental roles as they organise experience and shape the context for action. because the development of understandings occurs within organisations.

Migration governance as a signifier of change in underlying social systems
This first section specifies how governance systems themselves play key roles in constituting international migration. International migration is not simply an external shock to these systems. International migration is made visible by the borders of states and by relations between these states. The resultant classifications and categorisations play a key role in defining international migration and delineating between migration types (Zolberg 1989).

The term governance is much used, although often with more attention paid to the adjectives attached to it (multi-level, experimental, regulatory, pluricentric, networked, deliberative to name six) than to the meaning of the term itself. Governance is generally seen as 'a signifier of change', by which could be meant change in the meaning, processes, conditions or methods of governing (Levi-Faur, 2012: 7). Peters (2012: 19) recognises the 'ambiguity' of the concept before noting that 'successful governance' has four functional requirements: goal selection with these integrated across all the levels of the system; goal reconciliation and coordination to establish priorities; implementation; and, feedback and accountability as individuals and institutions must learn from their actions (Peters, 2012: 22).

Drawing from established themes in the wider literature, migration governance can be understood to possess a dual meaning as, first, the conceptualisation of the effects of change in underlying social systems; and, second, attempts to steer, manage or coordinate these effects (Pierre, 2000). This first component – conceptualising the effects of change in underlying social systems – has normative connotations because migration governance is necessarily linked to conceptualisations by actors in various organisational settings of the causes and effects of change in underlying social and natural systems (economic, political, social, demographic and environmental). Once developed, these understandings play key roles in driving migration governance because they form the basis for an answer to the ~ questions: what is going on 'out there'? And, what should we do next?

To understand the drivers of migration governance means knowing more about how the causes and effects of international migration are understood and interpreted in specific organisational contexts. These understandings may or may not connect with the research literature, which shows that relative income and wealth differences will be key drivers of decisions taken at household level about whether to migrate or not (Stark and Bloom, 1985). Research also shows that migration decisions will be influenced by the impact of political factors (such as various types of conflict within or between states), by the demographic structure of a population, by the existence of social ties and networks and by the effects of environmental and climatic change (Black et al, 2011). These factors will then be mediated by the effects of social characteristics (age, gender, ethnicity) and by the effects of policies (including, but not only, migration policies). Five sets of potential drivers with intervening factors can influence the distance, direction and duration of migration as well as who migrates (younger people, older people, men women etc).

The issue this paper addresses is how these effects are understood and articulated by actors within migration governance systems and how these understandings can then help to organise experience and action. To provide an example, this quote from a former Australian government official who moved into a different migration-related role, is a good example of a reflection on the drivers of migration in ways that organise experience and shape action:

> When I left the department, I used to think it was heavily, heavily economic. Not a single determinant, but the most important determinant. The more that I read and the more that I see what is happening, I still think that the economic factors underpin a lot of movement, but if they were just by themselves, it wouldn't do what it does. Part of the reason why I think that immigration is going to be an

increasing area of interest over time is that the way that networks engage with social and cultural ties in an era where there are basically no barriers to communication and there are increases in technology and things like this, the ability for the state to enforce a border is going to become more and more and more difficult. (Former Australian government official, Canberra, October 2015).

This quote contains components of a migration frame that are both diagnostic (what is the issue, how is it changing) and prognostic (what can or cannot be done). Not surprisingly, The MIGPROSP project found across all four regions, very broad agreement that the key drivers of migration are economic and political. The weight placed on either of these two tended then to influence whether the focus was placed on migration management or protection.

There are, of course, differences between countries and regions. An example is provided by an official in the Japanese immigration ministry to illustrate how understandings of migration drivers can run up against engrained national ways of doing things:

> Currently the population in Japan is declining, and there's this issue of low birth-rates, meaning the number of children is declining, but the number of elderly is growing. But I don't agree with the idea of letting the foreign immigrants in to augment or complement this lack of labour force (Japanese government official, October 2016).

Frequent reference was made in interviews to the organisation of migration as being akin to a business with tensions between regular and irregular flows and associated exploitation of migrants. In Thailand, an official from an international organisation identified a core economic dynamic centred on inequalities:

> Well, very broadly and simplistically it's primarily economic drivers of course. Out of four million migrants in Thailand, roughly estimated, you have probably 3.8 who are low skilled migrant workers looking for 300 Baht a day jobs in Thailand (Official, international organisation, Bangkok, October 2016).

The availability of cheap migrant labour then interacts with wider social and economic factors to produce irregularity and vulnerability, as an official from another international organisation put it when referring to experience in South East Asia:

> There the main driver is simply there is a lot of demand for work within Thailand, Malaysia. It's tolerated, all this irregular migration. They contribute a lot I guess to the economies (Official, international organisation, Vienna, October 2016).

These understandings all relate in one form or another to assessment of the effects of and interactions between underlying social systems. These understandings then help to organise experience and shape the context for action within governance systems.

Understandings of risks and uncertainties about the causes and effects (now and in the future) of migration is necessarily central to analysis of the drivers of migration governance.

Risk can be understood as situations where: 'something of human value has been put at stake and where the outcome is uncertain' (Jaeger et al 2001: 17). There can be high political risk, as a representative of a migration think tank put it when reflecting on the situation in Europe.

> That is what's really frightening. You see it in lots of different places. A civil servant will have a different understanding of risk because he has to manage the long-term prospects of an immigration system with a political leadership that's placing pressure to move that line. You have politicians who are terrified that the next move they make is going to see them out of office. Home secretaries have typically been the most fragile, death sentence position (Representative of think tank, Brussels, November 2015).

Highlighting the 'internalisation' of risk by national governments and resultant behaviour, a European Commission official put it this way:

> member states have a different view on this [risk]. They see mainly the risk to their national administrations, so what they bring to the table is very practical. They want to make sure that the system is workable, and then they have some political priorities as well. (Interview, European Commission official, December 2014).

Concern about risk has led, within modern governance systems, to a greater use of expert knowledge and quantification in the process of governing (Fisher, 2010). For Lasswell (1971), expert knowledge could support evidence-based policy making. Boswell (2009) adds to this by assessing the ways in which knowledge can be used to substantiate existing choices and to legitimate institutional roles. Boswell's approach facilitates understanding of the central role played by organisations in migration governance and how they understand/respond to their environments in ways that are not only concerned with managing the issue at hand but also with sustaining their own organisation. This is consistent with a crucial property of sensemaking, which is that 'human situations are progressively clarified, but this clarification often works in reverse … an outcome fulfils some prior definition of the situation' (Weick, 1995: 11).

Sharing information and knowledge exemplifies the social settings within which experience is organised. For example, this quote from an Australian government official refers to the circulation of knowledge and ideas within international organisations and the presence of groups of states that are 'likeminded':

> The OECD work was quite interesting because, clearly, the experience that Australia had was one that we shared in common with New Zealand and Canada. Then, to a significantly lesser extent with the UK, and then even further behind the US. The Anglo countries would caucus a bit at OECD meetings. Then, interesting variations across Europe. The big challenge in the EU countries was that they were dealing with a cohort of migrants that was vastly different to what we were dealing with: primarily humanitarian or refugees (Australian government official, Canberra, October 2015).

To summarise, this understanding of the role played by governance systems in constituting international migration corrects a tendency in migration research to view migration as exogenous to governance systems, i.e., as an external challenge to states that must then be dealt with by governance systems. In contrast, this analysis places more emphasis on endogeneity and the ways in which migration is defined, classified and thus constituted by governance systems rather than only being an external challenge to them. This requires an assessment by these actors of the causes and effects of migration and some attempt to understand the key risks and uncertainties. By found these things, these actors are better placed to then organise their experience and use these to shape action.

Migration governance is grounded in processes of issue-framing that organise experience and guide action
A frame can be understood as a means of organising experience. Frames have been applied to the analysis of migration to explain differing or competing views of the causes and effects of international migration (Lavenex, 1999). A frame has been defined as a 'schemata of interpretation' while framing is an individual level process 'to locate, perceive, identify, and label' (Goffman, 1974: 21) in ways that 'organize experience and guide action' (Benford and Snow, 2000: 614). Framing is: 'an active, processual phenomenon that implies agency and contention at the level of reality construction. It is active in the sense that something is being done and processual in the sense of a dynamic, evolving process' (Benford and Snow, 2000: 614).

How do frames get made? Benford and Snow (2000: 623) identify two linked processes. The first is discursive and centred on talk, conversations and written communications. The second is strategic and is more goal-oriented, such as building support for a view or course of action. The frames that emerge have three components (Snow and Benford, 1988): diagnostic, which involves identifying the problem; prognostic, which centres on the articulation of solutions; motivational and centred on rationales for action. Frames develop in multi-organisational and multi-institutional settings, which means that they are subject to power relations and associated inequalities with the effect that some understandings are far more powerful than others.

To illustrate the discursive, strategic and motivational components of frames we can consider ways in which the idea of 'normality' in migration governance is defined by key actors. An interviewee from an EU agency was asked to reflect on the causes and effects of migration and identified important future challenges, which were described as follows:

> Yesterday at this meeting of the US and the Commission and others … [they] were repeatedly mentioning that this will be the new normal. These 250,000-280,000 irregular migrants a year, that's basically what we have to count on in the foreseeable future. Nothing will change in this regard. I tend to agree, because as long as things are going the way they are going on in North Africa, sub-Saharan African countries, Afghanistan, Iraq, what have you, I don't see an end unfortunately to that. (Interview with official of EU agency, Brussels, December 2014).

Whether accurate or not, this view is based on an understanding of the effects on migration of changes in the underlying drivers of migration; in this case, the effects of conflict. These

changes are seen as likely to lead to persistently high migratory pressure. Interestingly, in terms of the use of language, the European Commission in June 2016 proposed a new framework for working in partnership on migration with non-EU countries and used the phrase 'new normal'. The Commission paper made a clear link between the framing of the issue (as external migratory pressure) and a set of proposed remedies.

> External migratory pressure is the "new normal" both for the EU and for partner countries. This requires a more coordinated, systematic and structured approach to maximise the synergies and leverages of the Union's internal and external policies. To succeed, it needs to reflect both the EU's interests and the interests of our partners, with clear objectives and a clear way forward on how the objectives will be achieved, in terms of positive cooperation where possible but also the use of leverage where necessary. Such approach will be translated into compacts which will be embedded within the existing and future processes and partnership. (CEC, 2016: 5.

The two quotes above develop an understanding that is diagnostic (the problem of external migratory pressures), prognostic (continued, high external migratory pressure) and motivational (the need for strong external governance to counter the problem, as defined). They provide a good example of the factors that drive migration governance, i.e., an attempt to conceptualise the operation and effects of underlying social systems and then to think through their implications of action.

The initial quote from the representative of an EU agency referred to views about external migratory pressure being a common understanding that was shared with US government officials. We also found a reflection of this in the view of a US Congressional staff member:

> I was talking to some folks the other day. They think the new normal, if you will, of illegal migration is somewhere in the 400,000 range. (Interview with staff member of US Congressional representative, June 2015).

These views express understandings of signals and cues from the environments within which these actors operate and that can then shape the context for action within migration governance systems. This is not to argue that there is a simple transmission mechanism linking ideas to action. What it does show, however, is that international migration is not simply some kind of external shock to these governance systems. Instead, these systems themselves play a key role in constituting international migration as a social and political challenge.

Migration governance is relational
Migration governance is about picking-up and responding-to signals and cues from the environment within which organisations operate. This is relational because signals and cues are used by organisations to develop an understanding of the challenges that they face and then trying to figure out what they should do next. Figuring things out and making interventions means that organisations also shape their environment.

The core problem is that these signals emerge from a complex environment and may also be inconsistent, even, at times, contradictory. Choices and solutions do not emerge fully formed from the environment, which is where framing and sense-making acquire their relevance. As Schön (1983: 40) puts it, practitioners:

> are coming to recognise that although problem setting is a necessary condition for technical problem solving, it is not itself a technical problem. When we set the problems, when we select what we will treat as the 'things' of the situation, we set the boundaries of our attention to it, and we impose upon it a coherence which allows us to say what is wrong and in what directions the situation needs to be changed. Problem setting is a process in which, interactively, we name the things to which we will attend and frame the context in which we will attend to them'.

Unsurprisingly, our extensive interview material demonstrates very clearly that there is general agreement that the environment 'out there' is complex with different forms and types of migration, varying types of response both to these different migration types and significant differences between national and regional level responses. The point is that actors in migration governance systems must try to make sense of this complexity and do so in ways that help to sustain their organisation and its mission. Sustaining their organisations requires developing responses that are seen to address the challenges and opportunities at hand. Being seen to fail undermines the credibility of an organisation and, ultimately, its ability to sustain itself. It could even provoke a legitimacy crisis for the wider institutional system.

Research evidence on policy failure identifies three main types: process, programme and political (McConnell, 2010). Dunlop (2017) identifies explanation for these types of failure that focus on: 'policy stages' and implementation; political institutions or leaders; and, as 'a degeneration of policy learning' (Dunlop, 2017: 20). This third understanding is most consistent with this paper's focus on organisational capacity because it is interested in the beliefs of actors in governance systems and how these are updated or not.

This point about system failure is very significant in work on migration governance within which there is a strong tendency to highlight failure. For Castles (2004), decision-makers may not understand the phenomena with which they are dealing, are poor at absorbing research evidence into decision-making and may be subject to the influence of hidden agendas. For Hollifield et al (2014) it arises from a gap between the rhetoric of political leaders who over-state their capacity to attain restrictive policy objectives and the reality of continued immigration. What this focus on failure has in common is a shared perspective on the misreading or ignorance of signals and cues from the environment.

These assessments of failure tend to judge migration governance by the observed outputs or outcomes of governance processes. Some reference is made to the beliefs of these actors, but these are not specified in any detail. The key indicator of failure is the observed divergence between intended objectives and outcomes. This does tend to lead to a black and white view of failure when, as McConnell (2010) notes that there many grey areas in between. These accounts tend to leave unopened the 'black box' of governance and not to explore frames, framing effects and the organisational context within which these develop.

Instead, motives are ascribed to actors based on the observed outcomes of a process. Methodologically, however, it is problematic to work back from the outcome of a process to make assumptions about the nature of the process itself.

It's hardly unusual for an organisation to have to deal with complex issues and competing if not contradictory interests. This means organisations can become 'hypocritical' because they must try to respond - or be seen as trying to respond – to pressures from environments within which there are complex and potentially contradictory pressures (Brunsson, 1989). Rather than resolve problems or issues to which there is not actually one 'solution', organisations must try to appease or manage these competing pressures which can mean saying or doing apparently contradictory things, i.e. being hypocritical (Boswell and Geddes, 2011). This hypocrisy can be absorbed within government, as an official from an international organisation put it when referring to the situation in Myanmar:

> There are some contradictions within their administrations. You have a unit in Myanmar responsible for overseas employment and then you have another unit who is completely against it and doesn't want to be seen in any way to be promoting migration, so you have those kind of internal contradictions to some extent. (Official, international organisation, Bangkok, October 2016)

In many areas of governance it is the case that 'talk', 'decision' and 'action' (Brunsson, 1989) are discrete phases governed by different logics that might not connect. An example of this is that once a decision is made, it then must be implemented at a different place, by different people at a different point in time.

Migration governance is a cause and effect of turbulence
Migration governance is driven by understandings of the effects of change in underlying social and natural systems. This interpretive element means that there are important elements of endogeneity within migration governance systems that centre on how understandings are developed of the causes and effects of migration. Endogeneity has a further implication, which is that migration governance can be a cause as well as an effect of increasingly turbulent tendencies in governance. This corrects a tendency to see international migration only as an external shock to governance systems when it is entirely plausible that these systems themselves can also generate turbulence.

Turbulence can be understood as: 'the collision of politics, administrative scale and complexity, uncertainty, and time constraints' (Ansell et al, 2017: 1). Governance is becoming quicker as 'speed compresses time frames and accelerates activity'; more complex as organisations and institutions become more closely linked to each other 'intricately nested and overlapping'; and, more conflictual as battles for resources intensify with these conflicts producing more uncertainty – becoming a vicious circle (Ansell et al, 2017: 4). Migration governance exemplifies these tendencies and is not only reflective of turbulence but also generative or enactive of turbulence.

For example, maps have been central to the ways in which the current migration/refugee crisis in Europe has been represented, such as the example below (there are many others).
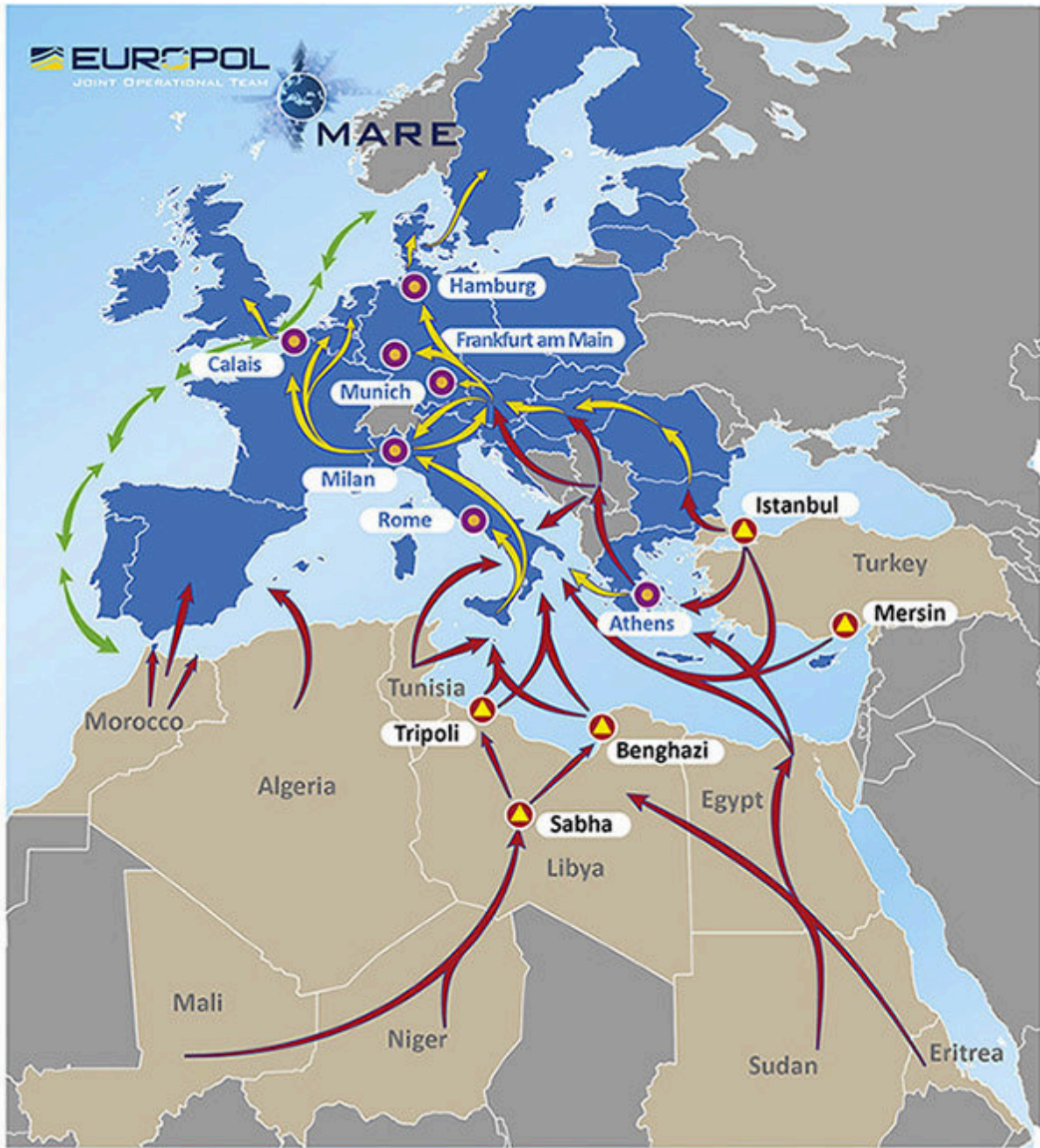
The point about this map is that it shows that there are people moving from Africa to Europe, which is true. It also suggests that there are no movements from Africa (at least from those parts shown on the map) other than towards Europe, which is not true. This map could easily be supplemented by arrows that show the complexity of movement within Africa with shorter distance, cross border movement as well as longer distance migration 'south-south' within the continent. The map also gives the impression that migration to Europe is primarily by boat (and irregular) across the Mediterranean. It's true that this is an important issue, but most migration to Europe is actually regular migration through air and sea ports. Maps of this kind help to create turbulence in governance systems to which the

governance system must then respond, or to return to the quote from Weick (1995: 11) used earlier, 'an outcome fulfils some prior definition of the situation'.

Turbulence is linked to complex systems within which interactions are 'highly variable, inconsistent, unexpected or unpredictable' (Ansell et al, 2017: 2). That this turbulence is both endogenous and exogenous to organizations means that organizations themselves can play an important role in generating turbulence: '[t]his is particularly relevant for public sector organizations led by a political leadership and accountable to legislatures' (Ansell et al, 2017: 8). Organizations can project turbulence onto their environment. This reinforces the importance of analysing how actors within these organisations make sense of their roles and also means looking at the role of both formal and informal social networks, habits and routines, learning and sense-making.

It could be the case that turbulence provokes profound institutional change, but it may also lead to reactive modes whereby: 'Decision-makers may tend to replicate structures or procedures that have been perceived as successes in the past' (Ansell et al, 2017: 11). Our interview research has revealed reactive tendencies in migration governance. This view is reflected in a quote from a European Commission official:

> it's very much, it goes in cycles … we hear the same discussion now that we heard 10 years ago. And we see the same responses now that we saw 10 years ago. It didn't work then so I don't think it will work now. The normal 'strengthen the borders', Schengen, controlling, etc. I just don't think that's the right... it's too simplistic I think. (European Commission, December 2014)

Our interviews also suggest that actors in migration governance systems, particularly at an official level have concerns about the consequences of interventions because they are unsure of the effects and fear unintended and negative consequences. The quotes below from officials in the US government illustrate this point:

> One is it's [immigration policy] so reactive. Two is, "Well it seems to be limping along just fine so why rock the boat? If we rock the boat somebody might see us and want to, like, you know, make even more changes. (Department of Justice, Washington DC, June 2015)

A Department for Homeland Security (DHS) official linked change to turbulence that was seen as a cause of reactive tendencies. Turbulence in this case was associated with fears of the effects of 'opening the floodgates' to new migration flows:

> I think there's a reluctance to do anything that might make the flood start again. So maybe a risk averseness. Well, so we don't know what stopped the floods. So anything - all of the actions we took were hesitant to change, because any one of them could have been the one (DHS Official, Washington DC, June 2015).

The ambiguity of migration governance can lead to decoupling of problems and choices
Ambiguity means that: 'most of what we believe we know about elements within organizational choice situations, as well as the events themselves, reflects an interpretation

of events by organizational actors and observers. Those interpretations are generated within the organization in the face of considerable perceptual ambiguity' (March and Olsen 1976: 19). Ambiguity means that problems and choices can be decoupled (Cohen et al, 1976) because, as Ansell et al (2017: 45) put it: there are: 'enduring tensions within organizations which produce ambiguity about what problems, solutions and consequences to attend to at any time, and what actors are deemed efficient and legitimate'.

Migration governance means dealing with three main forms of ambiguity. First, those arising from competing pressures between, for example, a demand from business for migrant labour and political demands for reduced immigration. A second derives from the inherent complexity of the issues encompassing very different motives for movement, effects of that movement and diverse social, economic and political responses. The third reason is linked more generally to organisations in modern societies and limits on their ability or capacity to respond to their environment. This is not necessarily because they are ignorant of the phenomena (although this is possible) with which they must deal but because there are constraints on time, information and resources, or what has been called bounded rationality (Simon, 1957).

Decoupling can involve the distinction between what is formally supposed to happen in an organisation and what really happens (between 'myth' and 'ceremony' as Meyer and Rowan (1977) put it). Common across all our regions are gaps between decision-making and implementation that are illustrated in this quote from a German government official:

> the problem is that the implementation of the legislation varies a lot in Germany. We have…a number of different public bodies are involved. Take immigration authorities, for example — we have over 500 immigration authorities in Germany and they implement the legislation very differently on the ground, meaning that they can't make hard and fast plans. Either for refugees or the companies recruiting abroad in terms of how individual immigration authorities approach the statutory provisions. And then you obviously have the interfaces with the Central Placement Office of the German Federal Employment Office for priority check and work permit issues.' (German government official, June 2015)

There are also 'political' instances of decoupling linked to the complexity of the institutional environment, numbers and range of actors and diversity of institutional logics. This can lead to 'garbage can' models of organisational choice. In such models an organization is understood as 'a collection of choices looking for problems, issues and feelings looking for decision situations in which they might be aired, solutions looking for issues to which they might be the answer, and decision makers looking for work' (Cohen et al, 1972: 1).

Ambiguity has four implications. First, decision-making preferences are powerfully driven by interpretations of the effects of external environments, which might be an understanding of the drivers of migration, but could also be an understanding of organisational constraints or the effects of anti-immigration sentiment. Second, links between decisions and actions may be loosely coupled or decoupled because of 'gaps' in the system. Third, the links between problems and choices is interactive rather than linear because it is informed by ongoing evaluations of the effects of actions and by the social context within which these

assessments are made. Fourth, political and symbolic considerations can play a key role in decision-making that can lead to an emphasis on being seen to do something rather than actions necessarily achieving their intended effects. Big investments in border security and associated technologies despite evidence that these might have limited effect or even be counter-productive is an example of the importance of political and symbolic considerations.

Migration governance is pluricentric signifying involvement of more organisations.
The centrality of an organisational perspective on migration governance becomes even more evident when considering the effects of observed tendencies to 'pluricentric' or 'multi-level' migration governance. Multi-levelness means involvement of more not fewer organisations. The precise constellations of actors and organisations can differ across regions as too can the balance between state and non-state forms of authority in migration governance systems.

Focusing on multi-levelness does not mean that the state is written out of the analysis. States remain central to migration governance because it is the borders of states that define international migration as a social and political concern. Levi-Faur discusses 'state-centred governance' that, despite changes in the state (limits on capacity, increased role of private actors) also recognises their continued centrality. Similarly, Offe (2009) talks about the 'resilience' of the state. While states are clearly key actors in migration governance, comparison at regional level of institutional settings can show how state and non-state actors potentially operate across multiple levels of governance. This creates the potential for institutionalised modes of coordination to produce decisions at regional level that can be both binding and implemented (Scharpf 1999) or have a more informal character (Börzel 2016).

Analysis at a regional level by the MIGPROSP project allows assessment of variation in perceptions of the understanding of the effects of migration drivers influenced by factors such as: higher and lower levels of economic growth; existing migration flows that become embedded within migration networks; the effects of conflict and governance system breakdown on migration; demographic changes evident in ageing in some countries and young age profiles in others; and, finally, differing levels of exposure to the effects of environmental and climate change.

Regions are political constructs that centre on and/or seek to promote social, political, economic or organizational cohesiveness (Cantori and Spiegel, 1970). They are highly diverse in form, sit between the national and the global, are reflective of the multi-levelling of international politics and of the multi-dimensional complexities of international governance. A regional organisation can be defined as a grouping of states that are geographically proximate leading to perceived common interests derived from location and associated interdependencies. They tend to seek broad-based co-operation on a range of issues, but particularly trade and economic co-operation. There is currently a striking absence of work that explores the implications of regional governance for international migration. With some exceptions, those who study international migration governance tend not to study regionalism while those who study regionalism tend not to study international migration. A Eurocentric bias has also been identified in a new wave of work that sees the assumption that

the EU represents an exemplar of integration is 'one of the major obstacles to the development of analytical and theoretical comparative studies of regional integration' (for example, Breslin and Higgott, 2000).

While there are many regional organizations, Hurrell (2007: 241) observes that 'the underlying distinctions matter greatly and much regionalist analysis is muddled precisely because commentators are seeking to explain very different phenomena or they are insufficiently clear about the relationship amongst the varied processes described under the banner of 'regionalism'. There are no 'natural' regions. Regions and regionalism are political constructs that may centre on and/or seek to promote social, political, economic or organizational cohesiveness (Cantori and Spiegel, 1970). A regional organisation can be understood as a treaty-based grouping of states that are geographically proximate and perceived common interests derived from location and associated interdependencies. They tend to seek broad-based co-operation on a range of issues, but particularly trade and economic co-operation and may also include aspects of migration.

A reinvigoration of the study of regionalism after 1989 led to a focus on 'new regionalism' understood as an 'open' rather than protectionist regionalism and defined as: 'the processes by which actors, public or private, engage in activities across state boundaries and develop conscious policies of integration with other states'(Gamble and Payne, 1996: 4). Regional co-operation and integration could be seen to imply a deterritorialization of politics, a diminution of state power and the end of sovereignty, although the limited migration-related scope of regional organization may be suggestive of the continued resonance of territory, the state and sovereignty. This perspective informed the insight of Ansell (2004) when he wrote that territory has been 'rebundled' (rather than 'unbundled', *pace* Ruggie, 1998) as processes such as regional co-operation and integration are suggestive of the simultaneous removal of some boundaries, redefinition of others and creation of new boundaries.

While multi-levelness is a much-observed characteristic of migration governance the implications of rebundling for the role and presence of organisation are less commonly noted. Multi-level and pluricentric governance means involvement by more not fewer organisations. As Ansell (2017: 28) puts it: 'Governance is not characterised by a move away from organisations, but rather by the entry of new kinds of organizations into an increasingly crowded field'.

To give an example of how the field is crowded, consider this quote from a European Commission official prompted by an initial reflection on relations with Egypt to then describe cooperation between the EU and countries in the Horn of Africa. Within it, we can see cooperation between the EU and African Union, forms of bilateral and multilateral cooperation, the development of a regional consultation mechanism (the Khartoum process) plus, beneath the surface, a layer of official-level cooperation to support higher level political meetings:

> That's why the Egyptians like it, with all the meaning. That's why we said, "Listen, why don't we actually use that same venue and occasion to then also bring in our EU Horn of Africa initiative?" Which is what is was initially called and then we turned it into the Khartoum process. "All the people will be there. It's sponsored by you,

African Union, and we want you to remain an important role in this." We had signals that everybody would come, including Eritrea. That's actually how it happened. The first formal starting point of the Khartoum, was a senior official's meeting that happened back to back with the African Union conference in Khartoum in mid October on trafficking and human beings and smuggling. In that senior official meeting we actually brought the draft declaration. We had a first exchange with all delegates on the text and then the ambitions and what it would actually mean, how it would be implemented and all that. Then there were bilateral, very heavy negotiations from October to the end of November in between Khartoum and Rome. We then arrived in Rome where the declaration was endorsed at the ministerial level. Now we are actually starting to, as I said, prepare the first projects. (European Commission official, December 2015)

The role of informal, non-binding settings is also important because of how these can be venues for 'likeminded' states to interact and to share ideas and information. Particularly notable is the Five Country Conference of Australia, Canada, New Zealand the UK and the USA, which was described thus by an Australian government official:

In terms of broader governance, I guess one of the things- We've got a thing called the Five Countries, which you're probably aware of, and there are several arms to that. So we've got an immigration arm, we've got a borders arm, we've got an intelligence arm, so that's countries with similar thinking around settlement and migration, we have similar programmes, if you like, we share information. Every year we have two or three day get together, we work through what's happening in the world, what are we doing and responding, how can we work better around a whole range of issues, around the movement of people of our countries, the conditions under which they move etc. To the point where there are open discussions around… There is probably a day in the future where a visa to America is a visa to Australia, is a visa to Britain, because we're getting so good at connecting our systems. (Australian government official, Canberra, October 2015)

Organisations can also play an important role in creating multi-level and multi-actor systems by, for example, seeking to include civil society and private sector organisations within consultations and dialogues, as this quote referring to the situation in South East Asia exemplifies:

We work with a huge amount of organisations, obviously the UN agencies on various different levels. Civil society has always been a big partner across the region here. We don't work as much with the private sector as we could and should probably. We're trying to put more emphasis on that, recognising that they can really be in some cases the drivers of change. (International organisation, Bangkok, October 2016)

There are, of course, major differences in the formal and informal constitution of migration governance within regional settings, but development of multi-level governance means more actors, more organisations and demonstrates the centrality of the organisational dimension of migration governance.

Migration governance is enactive of sensible environments shaped by practical activities.
The seventh and final thesis builds on the previous six to focus on sense-making, which can be understood as how people frame experiences as meaningful, particularly in situations that are uncertain or ambiguous. Put another way, migration governance itself (as a structure, a process etc) can be enactive of 'sensible environments' that are shaped by the practical activities of people engaged in concreate situations of social action. To enact a sensible environment requires a combination of cognition (what's going on out there?) and action (what should we do next?). Actors in migration governance systems make sense of and create their environment.

Examples cited throughout this paper show that issue framing has a social dimension that can involve interactions and the sharing of ideas in ways that are both on-going and extracted by signals or cues from the environment within which organisations operate. This can then form a basis for action or, in an unstable environment, inaction or confusion as this quote from an Australian government official demonstrates:

> The policy space is just constantly changing. So, we just get across one policy and start to think about that and come up with solutions. Numbers go up, and then the next government says, "Oh, well, we're actually not going to increase it to 20,000. You're back down here." Then, a year later, "We'll take in an extra 12,000 from Syria," and gearing up, and the policy in how you treat those different cohorts. There are a lot of pilots and individual policy responses that are very appealing to government, because they can make quick gains for just a few clients. It just makes it very hard for government and public servants as a whole to move forward and get better outcomes in the longer term (Australian government official, October 2015)

Sense-making has seven properties (Weick, 1995). First, it is grounded in identity construction as identities [of actors and organisations are constructed through interactions as 'no individual ever acts like a single sensemaker' (p. 18). In practical terms, this means the sharing of information within and between organisations in migration governance systems. There has already been reference to likemindedness, which is also exemplified by this example from an official of an EU member state:

> So we will have a likeminded dinner tonight, with Austria is one of them, Sweden, Germany, the UK, France, Belgium, the Netherlands. That's it. We discuss what we should say and how we should react at the following meeting, trying to get a common approach to the issue. Because on this issue we think more the same than a lot of other countries (EU member state official, December 2015).

The constellations of likemindedness do vary and aren't stable, but do highlight the importance of sharing information.

Second, it is retrospective as people can only know what they have done after they have done it, which means scepticism about planning, projecting and forecasting 'if decoupled from reflective action and history' (p.30). Reflective action and history can also lead, as shown earlier, to a reluctance to act because of the fear of unintended effects. Third, it is

enactive of sensible environments because actions themselves create an environment that previously didn't exist. Actions establish boundaries, draw lines, create categories and label, which is, of course, highly pertinent to migration governance. Fourth, it is social, which means that it is essential to focus on the social processes that shape interpretations and interpreting: '[i]n working organizations decisions are made either in the presence of others or with the knowledge that they will have to be implemented, or understood, or approved by others. Organisations enable sense-making by focusing attention, forcing articulation and reflection, instigating and maintaining interaction and reducing errors, biases and inconsistencies' (Vlaar, 2006). There have been numerous examples in this paper of the influence of social settings, likemindedness and the like, as well as the importance of both formal and informal modes of cooperation. Fifth, it is ongoing because 'people are always in the middle of things' (p. 43). Migration governance doesn't have a beginning and an end. Sixth, as we have seen it is focused on and extracted by cues 'simple, familiar structures that are seeds from which people develop a larger sense of what may be occurring ...control over which cues will serve as a point of reference is an important source of power' (p.50). Seventh, it is driven by plausibility rather than accuracy or, as Weick, 1995: 56) put it: 'accuracy is nice but not necessary' and what counts are 'plausibility, pragmatics, coherence, reasonableness, creation, invention and instrumentality' (p.57). This latter point about plausibility rather than accuracy becomes relevant when thinking about the identification, particularly by governmental actors, of pull-factor focused accounts that see openness or attractiveness as key drivers of international migration which often lead to a focus on deterrence. For example, the Austrian Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz was strongly critical of Germany's more open approach to the refugee crisis and claimed in March 2016 that:

> These people don't come to Europe because they want to live on Lesbos. They come here because they want to enjoy the living standards and benefits they are guaranteed in countries like Austria, Germany or Sweden … Don't get me wrong, I don't blame these people; I can understand them, because many politicians have triggered false hopes (The Observer, March 6 2016).

Framing and sense-making are thus linked and can be considered together to allow assessment of the ways in which actors produce frames of meaning that capture 'the social, psychological and epistemological processes by which actors form an understanding of the situations they find themselves in' (Morgan et al, 1983; Weick, 1995; Wagner and Gooding, 1997). It also facilitates the making of connections between thought and action as sensemaking can be understood as: 'the practical activities of real people engaged in concrete situations of social action' (Boden, 1994: 10). The result is that: 'connecting framing and sensemaking better enables us to examine how structural factors prompt and bound discursive processes, affecting when and where frame contests emerge … If framing focuses on *whose* meanings win out in symbolic contests, sensemaking shifts the focus to understanding *why* such frame contests come into being in the first place, as well as how they are connected to "hard" structural changes, and over which territory they are fought' (Fiss and Hirsch, 2005: 29, 31

Conclusions

This paper addressed two questions that, together, help to specify the drivers of migration governance. The first question was how actors in migration governance systems organise their experiences and the second was how this organisation of experiences then shapes action. The analysis rested on an understanding of the dual meaning of governance as the conceptualisation of the effects of change in underlying social and natural systems and the coordination of the effects of these changes. Migration governance occurs in multi-actor, multi-level and pluricentric settings within which there is a proliferation of actors, organisations and voices.

To govern, actors must try to make sense of what's going on 'out there'. The paper developed seven theses on migration governance to demonstrate how this happens. It was shown that frames and their effects in specific organisational contexts play powerful roles in shaping responses. These frames are grounded in understandings of the causes and effects of migration and to the wider effects of the environment within which organisation operate. Rather than international migration being an external shock to these governance systems, these systems themselves also play a powerful role in constituting international migration. This understanding of migration governance is relational as it depends upon organisations extracting signals and cues from their environment and then shaping their environment through their actions. The complexity of the environment creates scope for the decoupling of problems and choices. This relational understanding also helps to make it clear that migration governance can be a cause as well as an effect of turbulence in governance systems.

Organisations in migration governance systems try to work out what's going on and what to do next. Limits on time, information and resources mean that ambiguity and, potentially, confusion can exert powerful influences on decision-making. In situations of bounded rationality, sense-making can amount to 'collective groping and trial and error, with compromises and hybrid outcomes' (Ansell et al, 2017: 39; Fligstein, 2006). Through actions and assessment of the effects of these actions, actors in migration governance systems shape what it is that they are dealing with and thus, in a sense, answer their own question: by defining through their actions what is going on the supposed outcomes or outputs of governance systems are based on a prior definition of the situation. This is not to say that sense-making necessarily derives from or results in common, shared views. This is highly unlikely for an issue such as migration that is deeply contested. Sense-making can be discrepant and that there need not necessarily be common, shared, agreed views and courses of action. Analysing the drivers of migration governance can also help illustrate significant variation within and between regions and why the issues are deeply contested and very rarely consensual.