PART I

GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

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Introduction

What explains immigrant conflict? Why do we observe clashes between immigrants and natives in some locations, but not in others? When do cities experience confrontations between immigrants and state actors? Why are some immigrant groups likely to become targets of native opposition, while others are more often engaged in conflicts with the state? What accounts for change in immigrant conflict within locales over time?

This book explains why, where, and when immigration leads to conflict in the areas of immigrant settlement. Immigration has been changing the faces of neighborhoods, cities, and countries across Europe, North America, and beyond. The large-scale inflow and permanent settlement of migrants is no longer confined to traditional immigration countries. In 2005, the share of foreign-born residents reached 12.5 percent in Austria and 12.1 percent in Germany, compared with 12.3 percent in the United States. In many other European countries approximately one in ten residents is born abroad (see Figure 1.1). Moreover, countries that have long been exporters of labor, such as Spain and Italy, have begun importing foreign workers and their families in large numbers. The magnitude of immigration manifests itself even more strikingly at the local level: Amsterdam, Brussels, Frankfurt, London, and New York are just some of the cities whose foreign-born residents constitute more than one-fourth of the population (Migration Policy Institute 2008).

Immigration is unlikely to abate in the near future. Confronting declining fertility rates, ailing pension systems, and pressing labor market needs, advanced industrialized economies provide the "pull" factors that drive international migration, while economic hardship and political unrest in less developed countries furnish the necessary "push" factors. Moreover, amid ongoing, sizeable migrant movements across borders, millions of previously settled immigrants are becoming permanent members of their adopted home countries; the number of foreign residents acquiring citizenship has followed an upward trend in

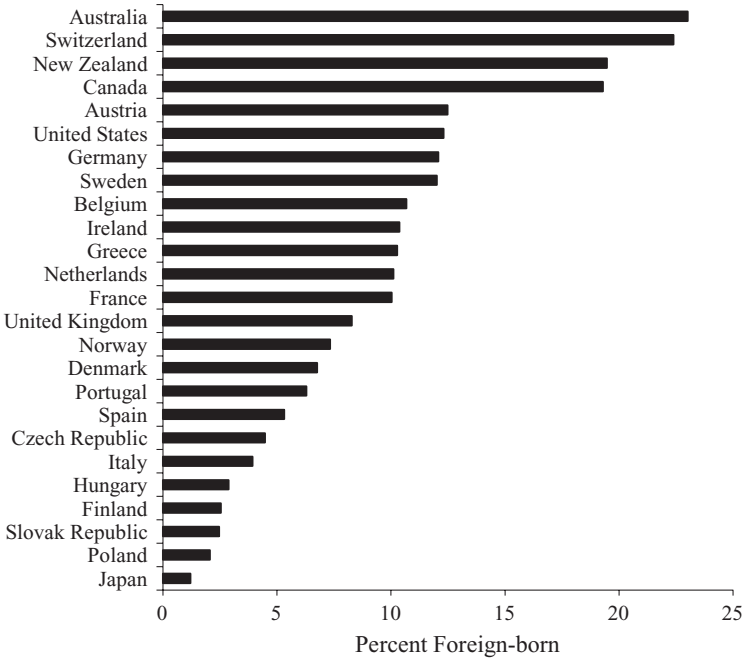

FIGURE 1.1. Percentage of foreign-born residents in selected countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (*Source:* OECD 2008).

many Western democracies.[1] Immigration is thus bound to have an enduring impact on the political systems and social fabrics of receiving societies.

As immigration and migrant settlement continue to be important, so will the need to recognize the conditions and mechanisms that link migration to conflict. While contemporary debates can give rise to the impression that the presence of immigrants and the ethnic communities they build necessarily spells strife, the incidence of immigrant conflict has in fact varied widely across settings and over time.[2] To help us understand why immigrant conflict occurs, this book begins with the observation that not all confrontations involving immigrants are the same. As I elaborate more fully in Chapter 2, I group immigrant conflict into two phenomena: immigrant–native conflict and immigrant–state conflict. *Immigrant–native conflict* involves the sustained confrontation between members of the immigrant and the native populations in a given locality. It consists of violent and nonviolent native opposition against immigrants, such as the local electoral success of xenophobic parties or physical attacks directed against

[1] Chapter 8 discusses these trends at greater length.

[2] I use the terms "immigrant" and "ethnic minority" interchangeably. I use the term "native" to refer to the white indigenous population who has lived in a given country for many generations. For a discussion of these labels, see Chapter 2.

migrant settlers. *Immigrant–state conflict* involves the sustained confrontation between members of the immigrant population and state actors in a given locality. Low-level flare-ups as well as major disturbances between immigrant-origin minorities and state actors, most often the police, are common indicators of this type of conflict.

Both faces of immigrant conflict display considerable variation across groups, cities, and countries. Concerning immigrant–native conflict in Great Britain, which is the main focus area of this book, the arrival of postcolonial migrants prompted the rise of the xenophobic National Front in London's East End. Nevertheless, many ethnically diverse western London boroughs as well as immigrant destinations farther north, such as Manchester or Liverpool, did not witness an electoral backlash against the newcomers. In the summer of 2001, major disturbances between Pakistani-origin youths and white residents hit the streets of Bradford; when Pakistanis first arrived, however, the city had been lauded as "the standing refutation of the argument that multi-racial communities are inevitably beset by racial troubles" (Spiers 1965, 154). Concerning immigrant–state conflict, large-scale confrontations between immigrants and the police shook British inner cities in the 1970s and 1980s. As I show in later chapters, however, not all ethnically diverse urban areas were affected, and not all immigrant groups participated equally in these clashes: Migrants of West Indian descent have tended to be involved in confrontations with the state, while their South Asian counterparts have been more likely to be targeted by native white Britons.

Compared to developments in Britain, the arrival and settlement of guest workers in Germany – another case discussed later in this book – has been associated with relatively lower levels of organized resistance on the part of the indigenous population. Large-scale riots between these migrants and their German neighbors or local electoral victories of the far right have been less pronounced. The same cannot be said, however, of the brief but vicious local campaigns that coincided with the migration of ethnic Germans[3] and political refugees in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The other face of immigrant conflict, confrontations between immigrants and state actors, has generally not been extensive in Germany, especially when they are placed in comparative perspective. Nevertheless, in the early 2000s, relations between the police and minority residents became strained in Berlin and elsewhere.[4]

Such variation in immigrant conflict outcomes is not unique to Britain and Germany. In France, for example, both types of conflict reveal checkered patterns. The far-right *Front National* has served as a model to many anti-immigrant movements in Europe. Its success, however, has fluctuated over the years and across towns. Furthermore, clashes between immigrants and the forces of law and order have not spread evenly throughout the country. Such

[3] Ethnic German migrants (*Aussiedler*) hail from Eastern Europe and countries in the former Soviet Union, but they are of German descent. See Chapter 7 for a more detailed definition.

[4] *Die Tageszeitung*, "Jugendliche fallen über Polizisten her," November 16, 2006.

violence first surfaced in the 1970s, appeared on a larger scale in the early 1980s, and erupted most forcefully in the fall of 2005 – yet some towns have largely escaped these confrontations. Marseille has generally not produced violent antistate disturbances, and much media attention indeed focused on the port city's record of relative calm during the 2005 riots. Just over a decade earlier, however, anti-immigrant activities had turned the city into the "racist capital of Europe."[5]

In neighboring Belgium, violent disturbances between the police and immigrant youths have taken place in some Brussels municipalities, while local anti-immigrant mobilization has been particularly striking in Antwerp, where the racist *Vlaams Blok* represented the largest party on the city's council between 1994 and 2006 and racist murders provoked riots and public outcries.[6] But while the xenophobic vote has enjoyed spectacular results in Flanders, in the Walloon region the racist *Front National* never achieved such success, despite similar shares of non-EU immigrants across regions.[7]

Beyond Europe's borders, local anti-immigrant mobilization and hate crime gained momentum in the United States in the 2000s. Public agitation led some towns to enact ordinances aimed at stopping the arrival of Hispanic migrants. At the same time, so-called sanctuary cities welcomed these newcomers with immigrant-friendly policies.[8] South Africa became the site of anti-immigrant killings in 2008, when a "spasm of xenophobia" hit its cities. A series of gruesome attacks against Zimbabweans, many of whom had settled in the area years ago, swept Johannesburg neighborhoods.[9] In sum, immigrant conflict has varied widely within and across receiving countries. Although clashes between immigrants and natives, as well as between immigrants and the state, continue to claim lives, cause property damage, and impede the integration of immigrants more generally, we still know very little about what causes these confrontations to emerge.

The rest of this chapter is organized as follows. In the first section, I present a brief overview of the book's theory of immigrant conflict. I then situate the argument in the existing theoretical and empirical debates in the second section (Chapter 2 contains a more extensive treatment of the theoretical framework and the state of the literature). In the third section I identify some of the main problems that scholars face when they attempt to explain the causes of

[5] See Singer (1991, 376). Chapter 8 follows immigrant conflict in France more closely.

[6] In 2002, the murder of a teacher of Moroccan origin by a white neighbor sparked off riots on Antwerp's streets; four years later, renewed racist killings led over 15,000 local residents to stage a protest march through the city. See *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, "Belgier demonstrieren gegen Rassismus," May 26, 2006.

[7] In 2000, 2.2 percent of Flanders' population and 2.1 percent of Wallonia's population were non-EU citizens; the total share of noncitizens is higher in Wallonia (10.1 percent) than it is in Flanders (4.9 percent); see Martiniello and Rea (2003).

[8] On the political debate about sanctuary cities, see *The New York Times*, "A Closer Look at the 'Sanctuary City' Argument," November 29, 2007.

[9] See, e.g., *The New York Times*, "South Africans Take out Rage on Immigrants," May 20, 2008.

immigrant conflict. The final section indicates how this study seeks to overcome these limitations by presenting an overview of the remaining chapters.

The Argument in Brief

This book develops a theory to explain why, where, and when immigrant–native and immigrant–state conflict occur. I argue that the interaction of two variables – economic scarcity and immigrant electoral power – accounts for the incidence of immigrant–native and immigrant–state conflict. Both kinds of conflict only occur in the context of local economic scarcity, when immigrants and natives compete for goods whose supply is relatively fixed in the short term. Differences in immigrants' electoral clout in turn lead to variation in the *type* of conflict we observe. When immigrants can back up their claims for scarce economic goods with pivotal votes, local politicians will allocate these resources to this new constituency. Natives are in turn likely to protest such distribution by turning against immigrants, producing immigrant–native conflict.

Conversely, in the absence of political leverage, immigrants are left with few resources during times of economic shortage. This state of affairs may leave natives content, forestalling immigrant–native conflict, but it is more likely to cause immigrants to engage in conflictual relations with state actors, producing immigrant–state conflict. Immigrants who do not possess the local political power to commit local politicians to disbursing scarce goods to them hope to effect a more favorable distribution of resources by inflicting costs on the state in the form of property damage and injury. Finally, I maintain that both types of conflict are more likely to occur when the state (rather than the market) is in charge of disbursing scarce goods; state actors are more sensitive than market actors to the costs that anti-immigrant (and obviously antistate) activities impose. The next chapter develops these propositions more fully.

Focusing on economic scarcity and immigrant electoral power in the local areas of migrant settlement yields a parsimonious model of immigrant conflict. A set of institutional and behavioral variables, however, shapes the ways in which these two key economic and political variables unfold locally. As I spell out more extensively in Chapter 2, immigration regimes may affect the degree of *economic scarcity* through their impact on the supply of, and demand for, economic goods in local immigrant destinations. While migrants generally tend to navigate toward areas where employment is plentiful, states may vary, for example, in the extent to which they match the recruitment of foreign labor with the supply of local physical infrastructures, such as housing or schools, leading to variation in local economic scarcity across countries. When governments encourage (or tolerate) immigration but do not take steps to help localities absorb the inflow of migrants, differences in economic conditions across cities and towns within countries will prove crucial. This situation characterizes post-war migration from Britain's former colonies to the mother country as well as much of the undocumented migration into the United States in the 1990s and 2000s.

Immigration regimes can also affect the level of migrant demands for economic goods. All else being equal, the same number of immigrants will put greater strains on local resources when the immigrants are parents and children as opposed to individual labor migrants. Political refugees arriving as families, for instance, are likely to place more demands on social and educational services than are young, single guest workers. Over time, however, primary economic migrants often reunite with their families in the host country, leading to increased demands on economic resources well after initial settlement.

National political institutions may also produce different levels of *immigrant political power*. Laws governing the acquisition of citizenship and access to local voting rights open up the potential for immigrant electoral influence. The ease with which immigrants can turn into citizens varies considerably across countries and, within countries, over time (Brubaker 1992; Howard 2006). Furthermore, some countries allow foreign nationals to cast votes in local elections, while others restrict this right to specific national-origin groups or citizens only (Bauer 2007). When immigrants and their descendents are entitled to participate in local elections, local electoral rules as well as immigrants' ability to mobilize co-ethnics may additionally impede or help their quest for local political power. Institutional and behavioral variables are therefore at work in molding patterns of immigrant political power. As I demonstrate in later chapters, South Asian migrants in Britain have often been able to draw on networks of kin and clan to facilitate impressive get-out-the-vote efforts, which – given this group's geographic concentration and Britain's ward-level elections – has made this group politically powerful in many British local authorities.

Synthesizing this information, I state that the variation in political institutions interacts with behavioral features of immigrant groups to generate systematic predictions about the likelihood of local immigrant political power. Furthermore, differences in economic institutions (i.e., the ways in which immigration regimes affect the supply of and demand for local economic resources) influence levels of economic scarcity in immigrant destinations. Together, immigrant political power and economic scarcity explain the incidence of local immigrant–native and immigrant–state conflict.

The book's main interest lies in explaining why some cities witness sustained confrontations between immigrants and longer-settled native residents or continued clashes between immigrants and the state, while relations between immigrants, natives, and state actors remain peaceful elsewhere. As a result, it must be attuned to the *local* dynamics that shape these conflict patterns. At the same time, I maintain that *national* immigration and citizenship regimes bear on these outcomes by influencing the potential for local economic shortages and immigrant electoral behavior. As these national institutions change, so should the incidence of local immigrant conflict. Within-country variation in immigrant conflict therefore exists alongside aggregate national differences, or country effects. As later chapters will show, British cities have varied considerably in their experience with the two types of immigrant conflict, and we

can only make sense of these differences by isolating the economic and political dynamics that cause local conflict or peace. Nevertheless, we also observe country effects: Overall levels of local conflict involving postcolonial migrants in Britain exceeded overall levels of local conflict involving guest workers in Germany. I argue that policies that guided guest-worker migration (e.g., the provision of local resources, or the conditionality of migration and settlement on employment and housing) reduced the likelihood of competition over economic goods and hence lowered the incidence of immigrant conflict in the areas of settlement. Such regulations were largely absent in directing postwar migration into Britain. Differences in national institutions thus produce differences in local conflict outcomes across countries.

Existing Arguments

The purpose of this book is to identify the variables that cause local-level immigrant–native and immigrant–state conflict. It aims to show how differences in national immigration regimes and political institutions shape and interact with differences in local economic conditions and immigrant political behavior to yield systematic variation in the occurrence of immigrant conflict across groups, cities, and countries. In this way, this book contributes to our understanding of immigrant conflict specifically and to ethnic conflict more generally. In examining why immigrants come to be involved in two types of conflicts, the book also generates insights about the social and political implications of large-scale immigration in advanced industrialized democracies.

The scholarship linking immigration to domestic conflict has thus far mostly focused on clashes between immigrants and natives; comparative research explaining confrontations between immigrants and state actors in the contemporary period is still in its early stages. In both cases, however, there have been surprisingly few attempts to systematically and comparatively study conflicts involving immigrants as these conflicts take shape on the ground. While there is a vast literature covering the incidence of ethnic conflict across the globe, only a small number of comparative works actually study the occurrence of such conflict in localities of immigrant arrival.[10] Numerous single-case histories provide rich accounts of the local immigrant experience, and this book draws on many of these. But these narratives generally do not aim for generalizable explanations. Even in the context of ethnic minority relations in the United States, a widely studied topic, "there have been remarkably few comparative studies that bring . . . locally specific work together" (Jones-Correa, 2001a, 2).

Although comparative research on the local manifestations of immigrant conflict remains scarce, scholars have addressed the topic at different levels of aggregation. Much of the research explaining domestic opposition against immigration thus speaks to variation at the national or at the individual level. Cross-national studies show how macrolevel variables such as unemployment

[10] For exceptions, see Weiner (1978), Olzak (1992), Karapin (2002), and Hopkins (2010).

rates, immigration levels, economic restructuring, and electoral institutions can account for the success and failures of national far-right, xenophobic parties.[11] Moreover, survey research has employed political economy models to examine individual responses to the distributional consequences of immigration.[12] I follow these studies in focusing on the economic winners and losers of immigration, but I also identify the conditions under which native residents find it necessary to protect their economic welfare by mobilizing against immigrants in their neighborhoods. In doing so, I show that the extent to which immigration has an impact on natives' (as well as immigrants') material well-being hinges on systematic features of immigration regimes that may lead to local resource shortages and on electoral variables that may enable immigrants to make economic claims at the expense of native residents.

Examining individual attitudes, scholars have also argued that identity-based fears can outweigh economic anxieties and point to the cultural threats that cause individuals to reject the inflow of ethnically distinct newcomers.[13] The public debate about immigrant integration has also often focused on the alleged incompatibility between the behavioral norms and cultural values (as well as the skin colors) of migrant newcomers and those of the host country's majority population. In the United States, for example, Benjamin Franklin expressed serious concerns that "Palatine Boors . . . herding together . . . will Germanize us instead of our Anglifying them, and will never adopt our Language or Customs, any more than they can acquire our Complexion" (cited in Fraga and Segura 2006, 280). Several hundred years later, Hispanic immigrants have taken the place of German settlers in the United States. Across the Atlantic, public discussion has singled out Islam as the main impediment to native acceptance and immigrant assimilation, prompting the question, "can one be Muslim and European?" (cf. Zolberg and Woon 1999, 6; Sniderman and Hagendoorn 2005).

This book's emphasis on the economic dimensions of immigrant conflict challenges arguments that locate the main source of conflict in immigrants' racial, cultural, or religious backgrounds. Ethnicity, broadly understood, clearly matters in shaping social relations, such as friendship, marriage, or business transactions, both between immigrants and natives and among immigrants

[11] Cross-country studies of far-right parties include, e.g., Kitschelt (1996), Golder (2003), Carter (2005), Givens (2005), and Norris (2005). Scholars have begun to extend this line of work to within-country variation in the electoral performance of the extreme right; see, e.g., Kestilä and Söderlund (2004).

[12] See, e.g., Scheve and Slaughter (2001) and Hanson, Scheve, and Slaughter (2007) for the U.S. case and Mayda (2006) for a cross-national analysis. See Freeman and Kessler (2008) for a review of the political economy of migration and migration policy.

[13] Sniderman, Hagendoorn, and Prior (2004) demonstrate that both economic and cultural threats drive hostility toward immigrants among Dutch citizens. Hainmueller and Hiscox (2007) and Sides and Citrin (2007) find that economic factors matter less in shaping European attitudes toward immigrants than cultural values and beliefs, which in turn are mediated by respondents' educational attainment. Fetzer (2000) also addresses both cultural and economic bases of opposition.

themselves. Indeed, although my central argument centers squarely on the primacy of economic interests in the production of immigrant conflict, I do not claim that ethnic identities are irrelevant. In my account, however, group identities are not the drivers of sustained conflict. They matter in so far as they help immigrants mobilize politically to bolster economic demands; failure to organize politically may cause economically deprived immigrants to protest against the state, while successful mobilization in economically hard times may invite a native backlash. By themselves, though, ethnic difference or the strength of ethnic ties do not produce sustained conflict. I thus do not argue that identity-based differences between immigrants and natives are inconsequential in the social realm or even in the political arena.[14] Rather, as I elaborate in the following chapters, on their own, immigrants' ethnic or religious backgrounds cannot explain the wide variation in both faces of immigrant conflict we observe within and across countries.

Studying Immigrant Conflict

Demonstrating that the economic needs and political strategies of ethnically distinct migrants bring about immigrant conflict requires an empirical approach that can pull apart ethnic identities, economic shortages, and electoral mobilization. Moreover, any convincing explanation of local immigrant conflict must be firmly rooted in an understanding of local processes. For theoretical and practical reasons, much of this book therefore seeks to explain differences in the occurrence of both types of conflict in local immigrant destinations within one country, Great Britain. But it does so without losing sight of the importance of national frameworks in structuring the inflow and settlement of migrants: The book also contrasts immigrant conflict in Britain with an analysis of developments in Germany, and it briefly examines broad patterns of subnational conflict and calm in France.

Studying Immigrant Conflict within and across Countries

From a practical standpoint, studying within-country variation in immigrant conflict outcomes allows us to better isolate the variables that cause these clashes. Even within countries, immigration regimes and citizenship laws can vary across immigrant groups and over time. In France, for instance, postwar labor migration coincided with inflows of refugees that fled the war in Algeria. In Germany, migrants of German lineage from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union were granted automatic access to citizenship, but regulations were successively tightened in the mid-1990s. By contrast, the guest-worker population initially faced stringent naturalization requirements that were later liberalized. Moreover, the skills and economic resources of earlier ethnic German migrants generally surpassed those of later waves, while the

[14] On the distinction between ethnic salience and ethnic conflict, see Laitin (1986), Chandra (2001), and Fearon (2006).