

Governance Indicators' Influence on Young Asylum Seekers Decision to Migrate: A Panel Data Approach for EU Countries*

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Abstract

This paper analyses the relationship between young asylum seekers aged 18 to 34 years and political factors in European destination countries, measured by the Worldwide Governance Indicators. The main purpose of including these indicators was to observe if the political aspects of the European Union contribute to the asylum seekers' decision to migrate. The analysis included three different panel data estimations, including the Arellano–Bover/Blundell–Bond linear dynamic panel-data estimation. The models were estimated on a sample of 27 European countries for the period 2009 – 2019. Results showed that the freedom of expression in the destination country doubles the number of young asylum seekers. Nonetheless, other political factors (government effectiveness or political stability) are not significantly associated with the number of young asylum seekers. However, there is a strong positive correlation between the development level of the destination country (measured by the HDI) and the number of young asylum seekers. The results confirm that young asylum seekers are mainly push migrants, but the choice of the destination country is not completely random. Results can be used in developing policies to better integrate young asylum seekers in the European destination countries.

Keywords: migration, pull factors, young asylum seekers, governance indicators, World Bank.

JEL classification: C23, D73, F68, J15, O15