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**Article (Accepted version)  
(Refereed)**

**Original citation:**

Gulzau, Fabian, Mau, Steffan and Zaun Natascha. (2016) *Regional mobility spaces? Visa waiver policies and regional intergration*. [International Migration](#) 54, (6) pp. 164-180

DOI: [10.1111/imig.12286](https://doi.org/10.1111/imig.12286)

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## **REGIONAL MOBILITY SPACES?**

### **VISA WAIVER POLICIES AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION**

(Date of acceptance 11 August 2016, *International Migration*, Vol. 54, Issue 6, pp. 164-180)

#### **ABSTRACT**

Visa policies today are a central instrument for filtering wanted and unwanted types of travellers, leading to a hierarchy of mobility rights. While there is evidence of a “global mobility divide”, we still know little about the role of regional integration when it comes to the distribution of mobility rights and the (re)structuring of mobility spaces. Against this background, the paper examines the structure of visa relations in different bodies of regional integration (EU, MERCOSUR, ASEAN, ECOWAS, EAC, NAFTA, SADC and SICA). In this article, we compare visa policies in the member states of these institutions in 1969 and 2010 from a social network perspective. While one would generally expect each institution’s member states to become more similar with regard to both internal and external mobility regulations, we find that not all regional clusters align their visa policies. Potential explanations for this state of affairs are investigated.

Keywords:

Regional Integration, Mobility, Visa Policies, Visa Waivers

## INTRODUCTION

For more than two decades, globalization has been a major topic in the social sciences. At the most general level, globalization is often defined as the intensification of economic, social, political and cultural transactions and relations across borders (Held et al., 1999). Whether in international trade, investment flows, the internet, migration, tourism, information flows or the consumption of cultural goods – all indicators point to a sharp increase in the degree of globalization over time (Dreher et al., 2008). In this paper, we are dealing with the short-term travel of people. However, we are interested not in mobility flows *per se*, but in how states attempt to manage and regulate these. Visa policies are the central means of regulating the mobility of persons and can be regarded as a form of exterritorialization of control which allows states to exercise control far beyond their own borders. A visa is a form of “remote control” (Zolberg 2006, 443), since it enables states to exercise a form of “pre-emptive mobility governance” (Broeders and Hampshire, 2013). In combination with associated measures such as carrier sanctions, visa requirements can prevent people from approaching the territory or commencing their journey without prior permission.<sup>1</sup> In this context, Neumayer (2006, 73-74) rightly stresses that research on visa regimes is of utmost interest because “visa restrictions directly relate to the issue of governments’ attempts to control and ultimately deter immigration from certain groups of people, they are pertinent to debates on whether or not borders have become more permeable in a globalized world undermining the sovereignty of nation-states and they represent an important manifestation of inequalities imposed on people on the basis of nationality”. However, a few years ago the study of visa policies has been rightly classified as an almost “virgin subject for academic research” (Whyte 2008, 132). While some research has been undertaken on visa policies since then (see Laube and Heidler 2016; Mau et al., 2015; Hobolth 2014; Neumayer 2010; Neumayer 2011), it still remains a heavily under-researched field.

The first large scale studies of visa policies show that there is not a general trend toward greater openness and that visa policies are increasingly used to discriminate between wanted and unwanted travellers (Mau et al., 2015). Against this background, we want to draw attention to the regional aspect of visa policies, particularly to the role of regional integration processes in structuring internal and external visa relations. Our starting hypothesis is that the macro-regional level plays a significant role in shaping visa relations. More specifically, we assume that the economic and political integration of neighbouring countries triggers openness within the macro-territory as well as standardization in relation to outsiders or ‘non-

members'. Processes of regional integration may thus engender macro-territorial mobility spaces and clusters in their own right. Our paper will look at a select number of bodies of regional integration from a comparative perspective. Analysing the patterns of visa waiver policies at two points in time (1969 and 2010), we ask how internal and external relations have changed with regard to internal openness and external standardization or closure. Does the joining of individual states within a region into a larger whole matter for the granting of mobility opportunities? Are member states of one regional institution more likely to grant freedom of movement to one another, and do they exhibit convergence with regard to the granting of free visas to citizens of non-member states?

### THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

By and large, the literature on the mobility of persons has suggested that states increasingly seek to facilitate the mobility of welcomed and trusted travellers and to concentrate their control resources on those who are seen as a risk for internal security, considered less attractive in economic terms or are seen as being prone to 'irregular' forms of migration (Bigo and Guild, 2005; Bauman, 2002; Guild, 2001; Rygiel, 2008; Torpey, 2000; Walters, 2006). Research on visa waiver policies confirms the selective nature of travel rights (Czaika and de Haas, 2016; Neumayer, 2006 and 2011; Hobolth, 2014; Mau et al., 2012; Mau et al., 2015; Whyte, 2008). Visa-free travel is heavily biased towards highly influential, high-status countries, mainly rich democracies (Smith and Timberlake, 2001; Mau, 2010; Mau et al., 2015; Reyes, 2013; Hakyemez, 2014), while people from poorer countries or unstable democracies face high barriers to mobility. It seems that there is a growing "global mobility divide" (Mau et al., 2015) with a polarization between the "mobility rich" and the "mobility poor".

While this perspective displays an important feature of the global mobility regime today, this is by no means the whole story. In this paper, we try to shed light on processes of regional integration which may (or may not) undercut or counteract the overall global trend. By regional integration we refer to processes of supranational community building with the creation of a common market at its core (Deutsch et al., 1957; Haas, 1964; Beckfield, 2010). For some, regional integration is considered to offer a better explanation than globalization does of convergence among states, as well as of issues of openness or closure and levels of economic interaction (Beckfield, 2006; Fligstein and Merand, 2002). In relation to the issue of migration and mobility of persons, it could be argued that the economic gains of a common market will remain unexploited without a commitment to the free movement of people.

Supporting this argument, Neumayer (2011) has shown that visa restrictions are indeed negatively associated with bilateral trade flows and foreign direct investment, for they hamper direct contact across borders and raise the costs of travel.

Indeed, regional integration initiatives often encompass the establishment or reconfiguration of mobility spaces, labelled ‘Common Travel Areas’, ‘Agreements on the Freedom of Movement’ or the like, giving mobility privileges to citizens of member states (Hakyemez, 2014). The most striking example is the European Union (EU), where every EU national not only has the right to move to another member state without a visa but also has the right to reside freely within any other member state for a period up to three months, encountering hardly any formal obstacles. Within the context of the Schengen agreement, most EU member states have even abolished border controls for those crossing borders, and people can travel from one country to another without a passport. Moreover, the EU level also takes on competencies when it comes to visa waiver negotiations with other countries as the recent case of Turkey shows. Further examples for the prominence of the mobility issue in the context of regional integration include the Mercado Común del Sur (MERCOSUR) and the East African Community (EAC). Still, approaches to mobility and the actual implementation of such provisions by member states vary quite significantly (see IOM, 2010).

But what are conditions of internal openness? We assume that the internal freedom of movement is dependent on internal homogeneity within a community of nations, whereas larger wealth gaps and political-institutional differences serve as impediments to the liberalization of mobility. Past research looking at country pairs<sup>2</sup> has found that the factor “similarity” is of importance for the likelihood of the existence of visa waivers (Neumayer, 2006; Mau and Brabandt, 2011). In this paper, we particularly investigate economic and political similarity, as both can be considered key determinants of openness, closure and standardization. As far as economic disparities are concerned, larger inequalities within a macro-territory may trigger substantial mobility and migratory movements, so that the willingness to allow visa waiver mobility may be restrained (Castles, 2004: 210-212; Hooghe et al., 2008: 478-480; Massey et al., 1993). Political factors may also matter: According to democratic peace theory, democratic states have a high level of trust for each other (cf. Braumoeller, 1997; Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman, 1992; Gelpi and Griesdorf, 2001) and can thus be expected to be more likely to engage in cooperative efforts, including in the area of visa waiver policies. If democratic and less democratic countries are part of a regional integration body, we would expect less internal openness.

What about the external visa relations of countries engaged in regional integration? It stands to reason that joining forces and internal openness will trigger a standardization of external visa relations. Thus, we expect that visa waiver policies become more and more alike. Here again, differences among bodies of regional integration may exist due to their respective internal disparities, making standardization less likely. A word of caution: While we emphasize that the regional level matters, our perspective on regional integration bodies should not lead to an underestimation of the role of global hierarchies, geopolitics and power relations in the system of states, which clearly influence and shape visa relations (see Hakyemez 2014).

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS, DATA AND METHODS

Against the background of our discussion above, we will focus on three sets of issues:

- 1) We hypothesize that regional integration makes visa-free travel among the members of a regional integration body more likely, if not typical. In other words, the deeper the level of integration, the greater the internal freedom of movement should be.
- 2) Deeper integration and internal openness are likely to be connected to a standardization of external visa relations. Thus, over time, we expect that visa relations with non-members will become more similar.
- 3) While internal openness and external standardization is hypothesized to depend on the level of integration, we also expect that the degree of internal homogeneity matters. The more equal the member countries are in political and economic terms and the more unified they are geographically, the higher their levels of internal openness and external standardization should be.

We compare different bodies of regional integration, namely the European Union (EU), the Mercado Común del Sur (MERCOSUR), the Sistema de Integración Centroamericana (SICA), the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the East African Community (EAC), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). While there are more examples of regional integration, we focus on those with a longer history, some institutional significance, political activity and a clear economic bent. Moreover, we chose to study these institutions because they cover roughly all regions of the world. For a comparison of the degree of integration of the different regional institutions, please consult Table 1.

The EU is the role model for regional integration. It has now developed not only a common market, but – for 19 out of its 28 member states<sup>3</sup> – it has introduced a shared currency, the Euro. In addition, 23 of the EU member states plus Switzerland, Liechtenstein and Iceland take part in the Schengen agreement, which deinstitutionalizes internal border controls. Regional institutions with a customs union but no monetary union or internal market are MERCOSUR, the EAC and SADC. MERCOSUR is located in South America and is composed of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela. While MERCOSUR's economic integration has been stagnant for years, it is quite progressive in terms of integration of mobility rights for MERCOSUR citizens (IOM, 2010: 93). The EAC was founded in 1967 but collapsed in 1977 and was re-founded in 2000 and is composed of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. There is an EAC passport, which allows multiple entries and relatively free travel within the region. The Protocol for the Establishment of a Common Market from 2010 even stipulates that partner countries should warrant free entry into their territories (UNECA, 2012; IOM, 2010: 101). The Southern African SADC consists of politically diverse states such as Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, the Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.<sup>4</sup> SADC was founded in 1992 and its forerunner was the Southern African Development Coordination Conference, formed in 1980. Though SADC has set itself ambitious objectives for deepening regional cooperation, its institutions are weak and its administrative capacity is limited (Nathan, 2012; UNECA, 2012). Its borders have not been well policed, and hence informal cross-border movement has been substantial. Though the objective of visa-free entry is part of a Protocol related to the SADC treaty, the reluctance of the member governments to relinquish control over their national decisions is a major obstacle to achieving free movement (Williams, 2011).

The West African ECOWAS<sup>5</sup>, founded in 1979, is not well integrated in economic terms, as it only has a free trade area. Moreover, it has two distinct monetary unions which reflect its separation into a French- and an English-speaking part. ECOWAS has however taken considerable steps toward the integration of mobility rights. As early as 1979, the member states adopted a Protocol on the free movement of persons: It provides for the right to enter, inhabit and establish economic activities in other member states, and it has been implemented successively (IOM, 2010: 76-77; UNECA, 2012).

The Southeast Asian ASEAN, Central American SICA and North American NAFTA (Canada, USA, Mexico) are rather weakly integrated. They only have a free trade area and both SICA and ASEAN, in particular, consist of politically and economically disparate countries. Moreover, SICA still struggles with unresolved border disputes (Medina-Nicolas, 2007: 81). SICA is composed of Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama.<sup>6</sup> Members of ASEAN are Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. The ASEAN Economic Community aims at transforming ASEAN into a region with the free movement of goods, services and capital, but it is less ambitious when it comes to the free movement of persons. However, ASEAN citizens are allowed to travel without a visa for two weeks to another ASEAN member state (IOM, 2010: 88). NAFTA is composed of Canada, the USA and Mexico and was founded in 1994. It provides short-term entry to business people and their families, and residence for business people who hold certification of employment.

[Table 1 about here]

Our key variable is visa-free travel to and between the countries of regional integration bodies. We make use of Visa Network Data<sup>7</sup> (Mau et al., 2015) which consists of information on bilateral visa waiver relations for country pairs. The data are based on the Travel Information Manual (TIM) issued by the International Air Transportation Association (IATA, 1969, 2010). The manual collects information on travel requirements (i.e. passport, visa, health) of all sovereign nation-states for use by airlines and travel agents. Unlike former analysis of visa restrictions (Neumayer, 2006; Hakyemez, 2014), we collected data for two points in time<sup>8</sup> (1969, 2010 in each case for December) for 155 or respectively 166 countries.<sup>9</sup> 1969 represents a time before many states started to readjust their visa policies in response to globalization and migration movements. Case studies have shown that before that period visa waivers were expanding, while after the sorting aspect gained importance (Mau et al., 2012). Czaika and de Haas (2016: 24) found that the frequency of visa introductions and removals increased throughout the 1970s and thereafter. With regard to the issue of internal homogeneity or respectively heterogeneity as a key explanatory factor for converging visa policies only few indicators are available when encompassing the global level. Hence, we focus on GDP as a measure of wealth, and the political system. Wealth is measured by gross domestic product (GDP) per capita (purchased power parity) (Heston et al., 2012) and the political system by the Polity2 score (Marshall et al., 2014).<sup>10</sup>



The definition of “visa waiver” applied here counts visa obligations as lifted if visitors<sup>11</sup> are allowed to enter a country without applying for a pre-arrival visa (normally a so-called standard tourist visa for 90 days). The dataset is a cross table that encompasses over 150 sample countries in rows and columns for the two points in time. This kind of data format is, in network research, also called binary socio-matrix. For our analysis, we make use of a subset of the data, namely all countries which were members of the regional integration bodies in 2010 (not necessarily already in 1969). The total number of countries included is 83<sup>12</sup>; the number of member states in each body varies from 3 (NAFTA) to 27 (EU). Based on social network analysis, we compare visa waiver programmes in the (current) member states of these institutions in 1969 and 2010. The network analysis programme ‘Pajek’ is used for visualization and presenting a measure of dissimilarity (Batagelj and Mrvar, 2011).

## ANALYSIS

### Growing similarity, higher network density?

In a first step, we are interested in whether the visa relations of member states in these bodies of regional integration are more alike in 2010 than in 1969. As a benchmark, we compare the trend with the global level (all countries in the sample) to see whether the trend toward similarity is particularly strong within the context of regional integration. The dissimilarity score offered by Pajek (Batagelj and Mrvar, 2011: 34-35) measures how many visa waiver programmes are *not* shared between two countries, while taking their overall number of programmes into account (see appendix 2 for the formula). The results range from 0 to 1, where zero means perfect similarity and one perfect dissimilarity.<sup>13</sup>

Figure 1 provides the mean dissimilarity score for bodies of regional integration as well as the global measure for the two points in time. As indicated by the dashed line (World) at the top, there is only weak convergence of the patterns of visa waiver programmes worldwide (1969: 0.83; 2010: 0.79). Hence the assumption that all countries are becoming increasingly alike in their global visa relation patterns finds only modest support. At the level of regional integration, the strongest convergence has occurred within the European Union<sup>14</sup>. There are also striking convergence trends for MERCOSUR, SICA, NAFTA and ECOWAS. This trend is evident to a lesser extent for EAC. Interestingly, we find that for two bodies of regional integration – SADC and ASEAN – the dissimilarity score in 2010 is higher than in 1969. ASEAN is economically very weakly integrated and consists of island states, which may make integration difficult (see Etzioni, 2001). Moreover, both ASEAN and SADC are composed of politically heterogeneous

states. Overall, six out of eight regional integration bodies display rather strong trends toward similarity, with their member states' visa patterns becoming more and more alike.

[Figure 1 about here]

#### Internal openness?

In some regional integration bodies, the facilitation of internal mobility is an explicit policy goal, in other regional bodies either no joint provisions for liberalized freedom of movement are in place or they encompass only specific groups of persons (e.g. business travellers). In order to get a picture of internal openness, we analyse the proportion of visa waivers currently in force within a given macro-territory (among the member states themselves) while taking into account the total number of possible positive visa waiver relations.<sup>15</sup>

[Figure 2 about here]

Figure 2 shows that the EU, EAC and ECOWAS have increased their internal openness substantially. Within the EU, no visa is required to enter any other member state. Also EAC and ECOWAS citizens also have the right to enter any other member state without a visa. MERCOSUR comes close, but Brazil still has visa restrictions in place for citizens of Venezuela. Within SICA and NAFTA some visa restrictions are still in place and not much has changed between 1969 and 2010. Within NAFTA, Mexicans still have to apply for a visa to travel to the US or Canada. SICA offers visa-free travel for only 70 per cent of the possible country dyads. Costa Rica in particular has a restrictive approach (O'Keefe, 2001: 247). In the case of the SADC, there are a growing number of visa waiver programmes between member states, but the approach toward migration and mobility is "largely restrictive and protection-oriented" (Williams, 2011: 165). Even though some member states of SADC agreed on a Draft Protocol on the Facilitation of Movement of Persons in 2005, it has been ratified by only two states thus far (ibid.).<sup>16</sup> South Africa in particular is responsible for slowing down freedom of movement in the region, as immigrants are often considered to be a burden, potentially taking away jobs (Oucho and Crush, 2001: 144-149). In the case of ASEAN, one can hardly notice any impact of regional integration on visa waiver programmes. However, already in 2006, ASEAN members agreed on two-week visa-free entry for their citizens, but did not extend this scheme further (IOM, 2010: 88).

To get some idea of the increased tightness of the visa waiver relations, we have visualized the visa waiver relationships in our eight sample cases (see Figure 3). This visualization

confirms our findings: In most cases the positive relationships among the members have intensified. ASEAN, NAFTA and SICA are obviously deviant cases where little has changed over time and the level of internal openness remains comparatively low.

[Figure 3 about here]

#### External Standardization?

We now turn to the external relations of the members of regional integration bodies assuming that regional integration triggers convergence in external relations. Table 2 provides information on the percentage of visa waiver programmes to non-member states that are shared either by (1) all, (2) at least half of or (3) less than half of the member states of a given body of regional integration. A high percentage of shared visa-waivers to non-member states, i.e. high numbers in category (1) and (2), points to common visa lists, while a high number in category (3) indicates that member states of a macro-territory scatter their visa-waivers all over the world. What is striking is that, with the exception of the EAC and MERCOSUR, there are no macro-territories that reach a high level of external visa-waiver standardization in 1969. However, in 2010 approximately 50 per cent of the visa waiver relationships to non-member states are shared by all member states of the EU, MERCOSUR, NAFTA and SICA. What is more, at least half of the member states of those bodies of regional integration share an additional 13-35 per cent of their visa waivers with non-member states. The remaining macro-territories in our sample either did not increase their shared visa-waiver relationships to non-member states over the course of time (ASEAN, ECOWAS, SADC) or even lose shared relations (EAC), indicating that discretion over visa relations to non-members is still very much in the hands of national governments.

[Table 2 about here]

#### Explaining differences: The role of internal disparities

##### Conditioning factors

What can account for the differences? The most obvious answer is that the regional integration endeavours differ substantially. The EU and MERCOSUR, for example, have taken a strong interest in liberalizing the movement of its citizens and in the coherence of external relations, while other integration undertakings are less ambitious. However, integration intensity itself is dependent on a number of important factors, among them the homogeneity of member states (Williams, 2011: 153). As discussed earlier, we hypothesized

that internal openness as well as external standardization depends on similarity among member states, in particular economic and political ones (see Mau, 2010; Mau and Brabant, 2011). Not only is it more likely that states can agree on a joint policy approach if they share important characteristics; this also reduces negative externalities related to the mobility of persons (security issues, asymmetrical movements of people etc.). We scrutinize this issue descriptively by looking at the degree of internal disparities. Though this does not enable us to pin down causality, it may well help to contextualize the findings. Figure 4 and 5 provide dotplots for the GDP per capita (PPP, US\$) and the Polity2 score, respectively. The horizontal line indicates the group mean thus easing the comparison of the distributions (for coefficients of variation see appendix 3).

[Figure 4 about here]

The graphs support our assumption that high disparities in economic output go hand in hand with little convergence of visa waivers. Macro-territories that rank low regarding the freedom of movement like ASEAN and SADC are also characterized by strong disparities in economic terms. For SADC, observers have highlighted that “the region was not ready for the free movement of people yet, given the economic disparities between various member states” (Williams, 2011: 153). However, we also see that macro-territories being ahead concerning convergence of visa waivers (EU, NAFTA, SICA) still have a considerable variance in the GDP measure, but most of them are relatively affluent. MERCOSUR stands out here due to its low variability in GDP per capita and high convergence of visa waivers. Finally, bodies of regional integration that occupy a middle position regarding visa waiver convergence (EAC, ECOWAS) are made up of countries that are all equally poor. Thus, economic disparities seem to play a role, but its effect is mediated by the mean level of economic output.

[Figure 5 about here]

Turning to the analysis of the political system, it is striking that those macro-territories that score relatively high in terms of internal openness and external convergence of their visa waiver programmes are also, by and large, stable democracies (EU, NAFTA, SICA and MERCOSUR). Democratic countries within one regional integration setting seem to pioneer when it comes to setting up a regional mobility space. The case of the EU teaches us that even strong economic disparities may be trumped by countries’ political similarities. On the other hand, ASEAN and SADC, which score worst in terms of visa waiver convergence, are also the regional integration bodies with the highest political-system disparities. Here, countries with a high democracy

score are joined together with non-democratic or autocratic countries, making steps toward openness or external harmonization less likely.

## DISCUSSION

In this article, we seek to contribute to an emerging strand of social science research looking at visa policies as a central means of mobility regulation. While it has been shown that there is a “global mobility divide” (Mau et al., 2015) with rather unequal powers of passports, we have drawn attention to processes of regional integration as partly undercutting global trends. Regional integration involves intensified economic interaction and elements of common market building which are likely to produce spill-overs for the issue of mobility. Moreover, the regional context is of particular importance given that most travellers who cross borders do so in the regional vicinity; in most cases they travel to neighbouring countries and not around the globe (UN DESA 2012).

Based on a new dataset, the Visa Network Data, which captures two points in time (1969 and 2010), we were able to scrutinize this issue by comparing eight different regional integration bodies. First, we find that in most regionalization contexts, similarity of visa waiver (and non-visa waiver) patterns of the associated countries has substantially increased, with notable exceptions. Second, in the vast majority of cases (not NAFTA and SICA), internal openness has increased. In the EU, ECOWAS, EAC and MERCOSUR, all or nearly all countries grant visa-free travel to the citizens of the other member countries. Third, while for some regional integration undertakings there is a trend toward standardizing external visa relations (EU, MERCOSUR, NAFTA, SICA), for others this assumption does not hold, i.e. entry regulations did not become more similar among member countries. Being part of a regional integration body with weak bargaining power, low standing or little capacity to act jointly may not bring much benefit when it comes to external visa relations. On the contrary, for a number of national governments, full discretion over the visa issue may carry advantages in negotiating visa relationships, in particular if they seek reciprocal relationships with other states.

To make sense of these findings, we looked at internal disparities within each group of the associated countries, in particular at differences in economic power and the political system. The results suggest that internal heterogeneity, both in political and economic terms, seem to set obstacles to internal openness and external standardization. Citizens of poor and politically less democratic countries are considered a potential burden or risk in wealthier, democratic member states of a regional institution. As they are also less attractive destination countries

for citizens of other member states, these countries have less bargaining power in negotiations on visa liberalisations. Many of these dynamics reflect historical power relations within regional bodies of integration. The more diverse a regional integration body is, the less likely it is that there will be a full-scale liberalization of the movement of persons (here measured as visa-free travel), and the less likely (or pressing) is the development of a common set of rules and standards governing external relations or the facilitation of convergence. Further research could develop explanations for the heterogeneity of member states in some regional bodies of integration, which ultimately results in lower levels of visa policy harmonisation.

Our findings show that while there may be a global hierarchy of mobility rights and while the power of citizens' passports may be unequal, regional integration represents an independent level of clustering of mobility rights. In terms of the distribution of mobility rights, they can be regarded as mobility hubs. Our results are thus aligned with those from other fields of research such as economic clustering and social inequality, which indicate that the regional level of international embeddedness matters (Beckfield, 2009). Regional integration processes are putting their own stamp on the global (and regional) distributions of mobility rights, and are thus creating new forms of territoriality. Besides the global bifurcation of mobility rights, which is essentially related to the standing and power of individual states, there is some evidence for a regional clustering linked to the integration process, which fosters the liberalization of the movement of persons and has repercussions on external relations. This means that regional efforts offer sizable possibilities to facilitate the mobility of people. As for the discussion on globalization, this clearly suggests that regional integration is not simply a smaller version of globalization or contained within globalization (like Russian Matryoshka dolls), but represents a structuring level in its own right, notwithstanding the manifold linkages to globalization processes. In light of this, it stands to reason that the issue of mobility is – and continues to be – strongly linked to multiple regional world polities and clusterings.

#### Note

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<sup>1</sup> How effective such measures are, is a matter of debate (Parusel 2014). For example, it has been shown that visa restrictions have an immigration reducing effect, but that this effect is partly counterbalanced by a lowering of emigration (Czaika and de Haas 2016).

<sup>2</sup> Other factors that have been examined are travel flows, trade flows, and specific connections like colonial or embassy ties between country pairs (Neumayer 2006).

<sup>3</sup> These are: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

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<sup>4</sup> However, Madagascar’s membership was suspended from 2009 to 2010 and is therefore not included in our analysis. Moreover, our dataset consists of countries with more than 500,000 inhabitants, and accordingly the Seychelles are not part of the analysis.

<sup>5</sup> Member states are Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ivory Coast, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. However, Cape Verde is excluded due to data limitations.

<sup>6</sup> However, we do not consider Belize, as our dataset only covers states with a population larger than 500,000. In addition, the Dominican Republic only joined SICA only in 2013 after our second point of measurement. Accordingly, it is also excluded from the analysis.

<sup>7</sup> The dataset is publicly accessible as a scientific-use-file via [www.fiw.uni-bonn.de/visanetworkdata](http://www.fiw.uni-bonn.de/visanetworkdata).

<sup>8</sup> The vast majority of existing studies are cross-sectional, looking only at one point in time (Neumayer 2006, 2011; Hobolth 2014; Whyte 2008). Very few studies trace changes over time, but even these have no global coverage and are restricted to a few, mainly western countries (Czaika and de Haas 2016; Mau et al. 2012). A first paper looking at two points in time with a global perspective is Mau et al. (2015).

<sup>9</sup> As some countries lack information on several additional variables which are needed for further analysis (GDP, Polity2), the original dataset was reduced.

<sup>10</sup> For a more detailed description of the variables and the data sources see Appendix 1 and 2. In addition, it should be noted that even for the widely used measures GDP per capita and Polity2 score, we had to exclude 19 (GDP) and two (polity2) cases respectively due to missing values.

<sup>11</sup> While we are aware that there are other forms of visas, our focus is on so-called tourist visas as these are covered by Visa Network Data.

<sup>12</sup> The sample size for 1969 is slightly lower (81), as Namibia (SADC) and Guinea-Bissau (ECOWAS) were not yet sovereign states in 1969.

<sup>13</sup> Note that for two countries that share all visa waiver programs the resulting dissimilarity score is set to zero, as the measure is not defined for perfect similarity.

<sup>14</sup> A comparable but slightly more pronounced trend towards convergence can be reported for member states of the Schengen Area and associated states.

<sup>15</sup> In network science, this measure is termed network density (Wasserman and Faust 2007, 101).

<sup>16</sup> As Williams (2011) notes, “the Protocol will not come into effect until nine member states have ratified it” (154).

## Appendix 1

**GDP per capita:** The GDP per capita measure was derived from the Penn World Table 7.1 issued by Heston et al. (2012) at the Center for International Comparisons of Production, Income and Prices, University of Pennsylvania. To allow for a better cross-country comparison, we use the variable *rgdpl*, which adjusts for purchasing power parity. As far as possible, missing values were imputed with the help of the CIA’s World Factbook (2014).

**Political system:** The political system of a country was measured by making use of the Polity2 score issued by Marshall et al. (2014) at the Center for Systemic Peace. The Polity2 score was used because it provides information on regime characteristics over a long time period (1800-2013).

## Appendix 2

The dissimilarity score D3 implemented in Pajek is defined as  $d3(u, v) = \frac{|N_u + N_v|}{|N_u| + |N_v|}$

where  $N_v$  is a set of (...) output (...) neighbours of vertex  $v$ ; + stands for the symmetric sum (...); and | stands for set cardinality” (Batagelj and Mrvar, 2011: 35). In order to compare the

dissimilarity scores of different bodies of regional integration, we computed the arithmetic mean for each macro-territory.

### Appendix 3

[Table 3 about here]

[Table 4 about here]



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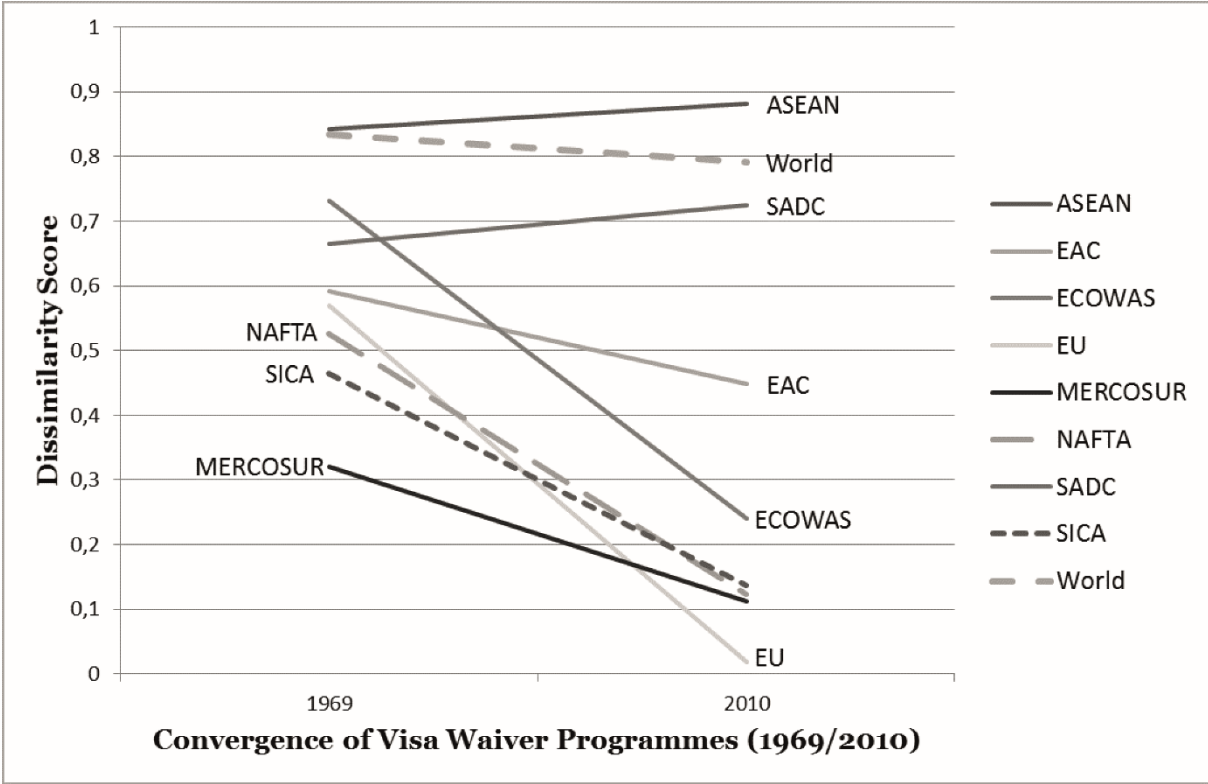
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Figures and Tables

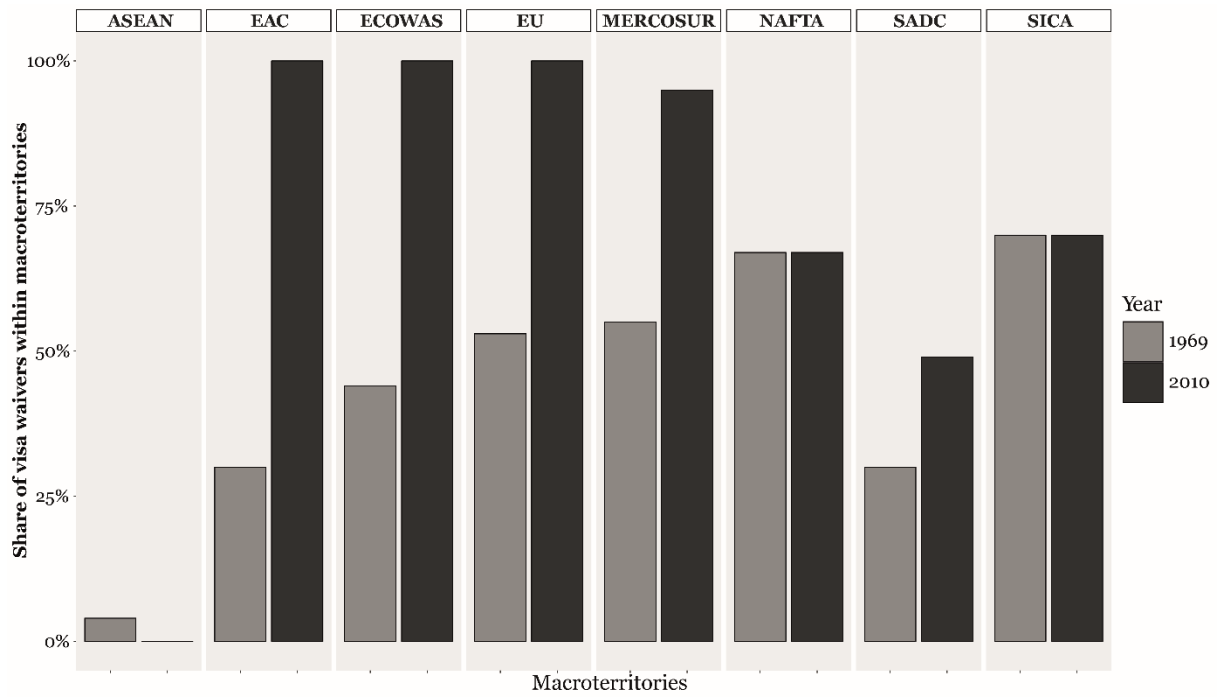
Figure 1: Dissimilarity scores (Pajek D3) for bodies of regional integration and world, 1969/2010



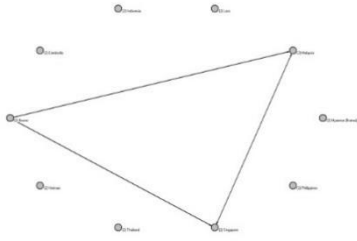
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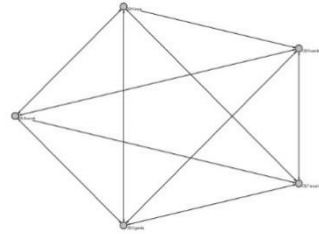
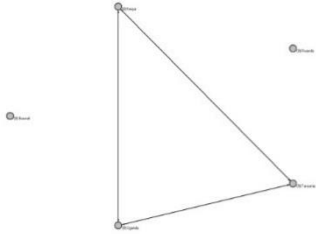
Figure 2: Density of visa waiver programmes within bodies of regional integration (1969/2010)



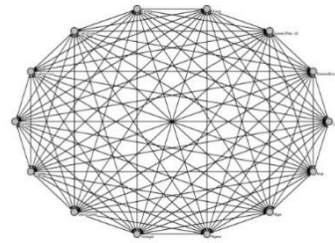
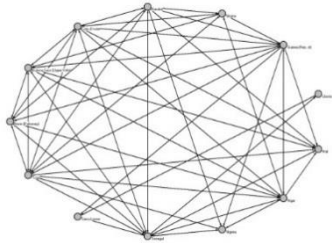
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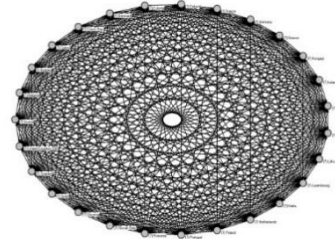
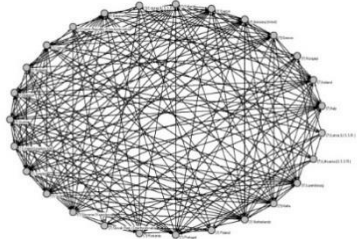
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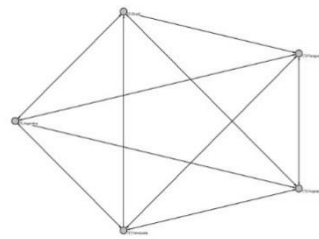
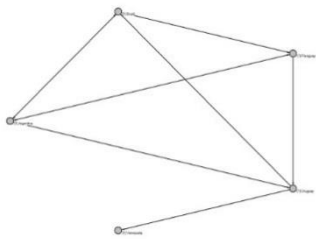
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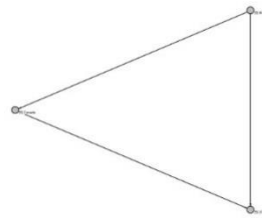
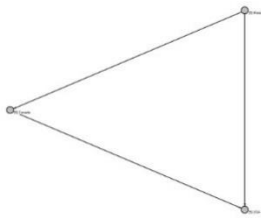
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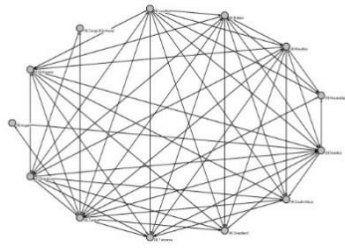
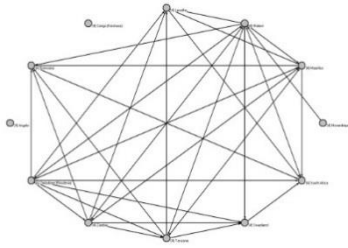
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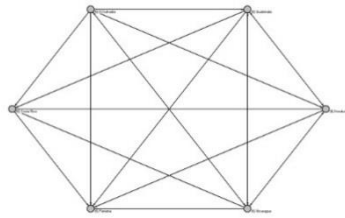
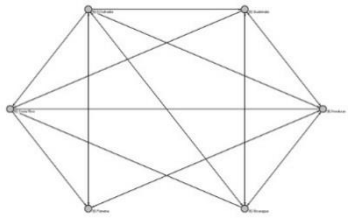
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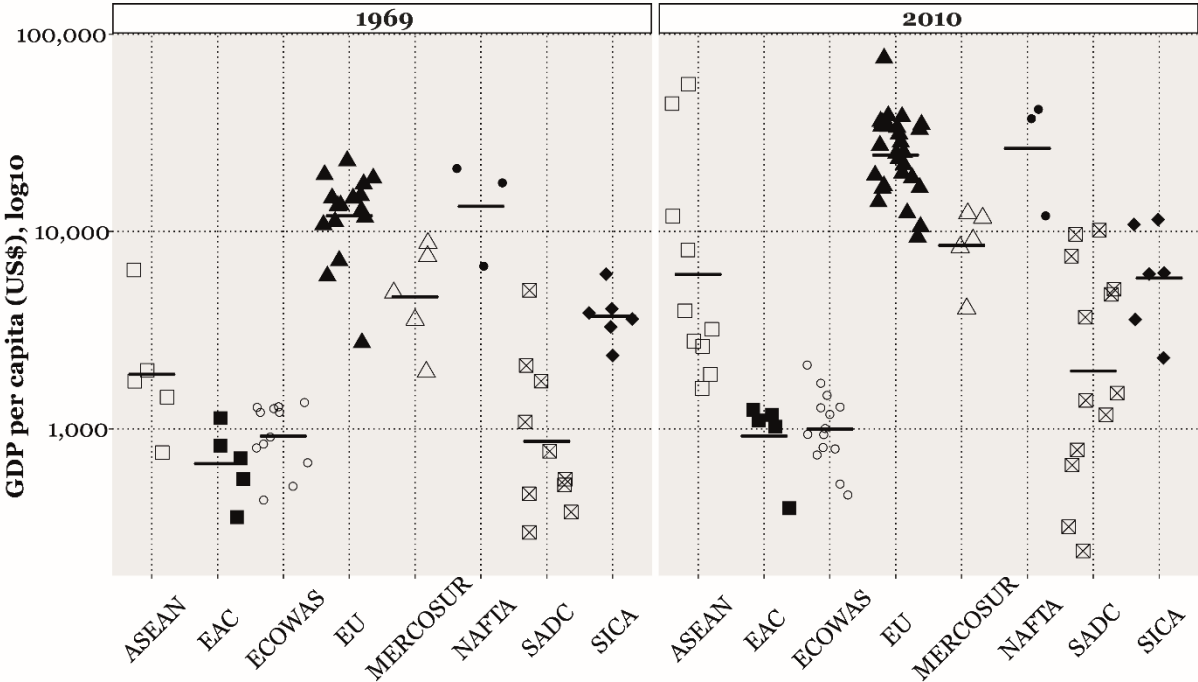


SICA

Figure 3: Visa Waiver Programmes in bodies of regional integration, 1969/2010

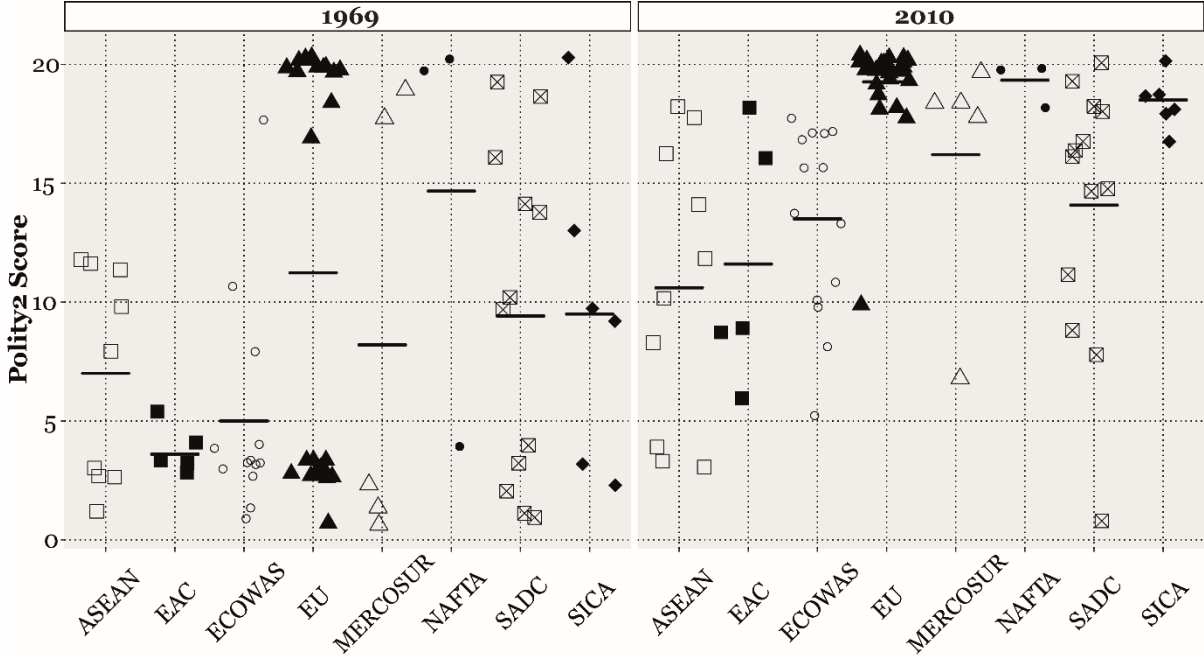
Source: Visa Network Data

Figure 4. Dotplot of GDP per capita (PPP, US\$) (1969/2010)



Source: Visa Network Data; GDP measure by Heston et al. (2012)

Figure 5. Dotplot of the Polity2 score (1969/2010)



Note: The Polity2 score was transformed. Instead of ranging from -10 to +10, it now ranges from 0 to 20. This procedure was necessary for the computation of the coefficient of variation. However, it does not change the interpretation or relative ranking.

Source: Visa Network Data; Polity2 score by Marshall et al. (2014)

Table 1. Overview of degree of integration of regional institutions

	Member states	Founding year	Common market	Shared currency	Customs union	Free trade area
ASEAN	10	1967	No	No	No	Yes
EAC	5	1967-1977; 2000	In Progress	No	Yes	Yes
ECOWAS	15	1975	No	Partly	Partly	Yes
EU	28	1993	Yes	Partly	Yes	Yes
MERCOSUR	5	1991	No	No	Partly	Yes
NAFTA	3	1994	No	No	No	Yes
SADC	15	1992	No	No	No	Yes
SICA	8	1993	No	No	No	Yes

Table 2. External convergence of visa waiver programmes

	Visa waivers to non-member states shared by ... (%)					
	All	1969		2010		
		at least half	less than half	all	at least half	less than half
ASEAN	0	0	100	0	0	100
EAC	0	<b>63</b>	37	0	8	92
ECOWAS	0	6	94	0	2	98
EU	0	20	80	<b>56</b>	17	27
MERCOSUR	<b>14</b>	31	55	<b>51</b>	25	24
NAFTA	0	32	68	<b>57</b>	13	30
SADC	0	21	79	0	6	94
SICA	1	6	93	<b>49</b>	35	16

Source: Visa Network Data

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of the GDP per capita (PPP, US\$)

	mean		standard deviation		coefficient of variation	
	1969	2010	1969	2010	1969	2010
ASEAN	2462.05	13645.69	2240.28	19705.50	90.99	144.41
EAC	715.58	989.31	291.31	341.89	40.71	34.56
ECOWAS	977.06	1081.83	327.45	453.57	33.51	41.93
EU	13290.41	27075.30	5156.89	13218.69	38.80	48.82
MERCOSUR	5322.91	9103.92	2783.42	3288.21	52.29	36.12
NAFTA	14976.64	30142.08	7400.39	15907.30	49.41	52.88
SADC	1294.98	3617.40	1446.51	3567.46	111.70	98.62
SICA	3876.11	6746.18	1238.51	3745.05	31.95	55.51

Source: Visa Network Data; GDP measure by Heston et al. (2012)

*Table 4. Descriptive statistics of the Polity2 score*

	mean		standard deviation		coefficient of variation	
	1969	2010	1969	2010	1969	2010
ASEAN	7.00	10.60	4.47	5.95	63.89	56.11
EAC	3.60	11.60	0.89	5.13	24.85	44.21
ECOWAS	5.00	13.50	4.76	4.07	95.22	30.16
EU	11.23	19.26	8.59	1.97	76.44	10.24
MERCOSUR	8.20	16.20	9.42	5.22	114.85	32.19
NAFTA	14.67	19.33	9.24	1.15	62.98	5.97
SADC	9.42	14.08	6.99	5.41	74.19	38.42
SICA	9.50	18.50	6.66	1.05	70.06	5.67

Note: The Polity2 score was transformed. Instead of ranging from -10 to +10, it now ranges from 0 to 20. This procedure was necessary for the computation of the coefficient of variation. However, it doesn't change interpretation or relative ranking.

Source: Visa Network Data; Polity2 score by Marshall et al. (2014)