

## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction – the puzzle of managed migration**

*“I think it is a good rule of thumb to ask of a country: are people trying to get into it or out of it? It's not a bad guide to what sort of country it is” (Tony Blair 2003)*

#### **1 Introduction**

There is hardly a day that goes by without immigration featuring in the headlines. The issue dominates debate across the political spectrum, and has been a top voting issue amongst the British public for over a decade (Duffy and Frere-Smith 2014; Blinder and Allen 2016), becoming the most important issue facing Britain for voters in 2014 (Dennison and Goodwin, 2015, p. 173). It is one of the most divisive and at the same time, with public concern over immigration being acute amongst working and middle classes and across partisan divides (Fabian Society 2017), paradoxically unifying issue of our times.

The referendum in Britain on membership of the EU in June 2016 sent shockwaves across the political establishment not just in Britain itself but also throughout Europe and the world beyond. This was a campaign and, some would say, a vote fuelled by anti-migrant sentiment (Portes 2016). Current Prime Minister Theresa May is so convinced that ‘Brexit must mean control of the number of people who come to Britain from Europe’ (May 2017), that the government, against damaging economic forecasts, plan to take Britain out of the single market for the apparent trade-off of reduced immigration. Immigration has undoubtedly shifted from the periphery to the centre of the political landscape, and will be a fixture in Britain for years to come. To understand how and why immigration has gravitated from low to high politics, we have to turn to the New Labour government’s period in office between 1997 and 2010.

Under New Labour, Britain’s economic (or labor) immigration policy went from a highly restrictive approach to one of the most expansive in Europe: work permit criteria were relaxed, international students were doubled, the government expanded existing and launched new low and high skilled migrant worker schemes, and from

2005, a new points-based system (PBS) was initiated. Overshadowing these important reforms was the decision in 2004, to allow citizens of the eight EU accession states the right to work in Britain, resulting in one of the largest migration flows in Britain's peacetime history. Couched in the narrative of managed migration, these policy reforms signified a new approach to immigration based on economic utilitarian arguments (Balch 2010). Coupled with the mantra of attracting the "brightest and best" immigrants, managed migration denoted an alternative immigration system based on the supply and demand of skills, and above all embracing the positive economic benefits of immigration. With two and a half million foreign born workers added to the population since 1997, and over half of Britain's foreign born population arriving between 2001 and 2011 (ONS 2012), immigration under Labour 'quite literally changed the face of Britain' (Finch and Goodhart 2010, 3). This period was, and is, the *Making of a Migration State*.

New Labour's managed migration policy stood in stark contrast to Britain's restrictive immigration past. Writing in 1994, Gary P. Freeman famously described Britain as a 'deviant case' in Western European migration policy. For over three decades, successive British governments had managed to combine a liberal approach to flows of capital and trade with effective limits on the flow of immigrants. Historically for Britain, and comparatively across Europe, Labour's reforms were an 'unprecedented policy reversal' (Hansen 2014).

By the time Labour left office in 2010 then, a 'reluctant country of immigration' (Layton-Henry 1994) had been transformed into a fully-fledged 'migration state' (Hollifield 2004). This was the defining breakpoint between Britain's post-war bipartisan consensus of 'zero immigration' (Freeman, 1994), and today's political fixture, where far from being a taboo subject for politicians, immigration could not figure more prominently in political debate. This was an unprecedented period of immigration policymaking, which both broke with the past and set the stage for where Britain is now.

The Labour government's rapid policy change is puzzling for at least two reasons. Firstly, the existing political science literature has often emphasised the 'path dependent' character of immigration policy in Britain and indeed elsewhere (Hansen

2000; Tichenor 2002), suggesting that immigration policy change is likely to be incremental at most. Immigration policy is often shaped by legacies of the past because policies can change populations and set the policy norms for successive administrations (Ellerman 2015; Wright 2012). Secondly in no Western country can a party gain votes by promoting or expanding immigration (Lahav 1997). The Labour government's liberalisation of immigration policy went against public opinion, and therefore there was no obvious electoral dividend to their expansive regime. Whilst the British public has long been in favour of reducing immigration, the high level of public concern began in 2000, at a time where the New Labour government were pursuing the most expansive immigration regime to date (Ipsos Mori 2015; Evans and Chzhen 2013). Indeed Labour's policies were certainly not a vote winner; they have since dogged Labour's time in opposition, and public concern about large-scale immigration contributed to their electoral defeat in 2010 (Carey and Geddes 2010; Bale 2014), and hindered their chances of winning office in 2015 (Beckett 2016, p.7; Cruddas 2016; Geddes and Tonge 2015).

How then to explain a change that was both electorally risky, and ran counter to Britain's past immigration policy? How did a country that was defined by its 'aspiration for zero immigration' (Freeman 1994) evolve into a fully-fledged 'migration state'? The *Making of a Migration State* explains why such a policy transformation transpired under the Labour governments, by unpacking the mechanisms and processes that led to such an unexpected outcome. Ultimately, this book is about why governments liberalise economic immigration policy, and the unintended consequences of intended actions. This book will be of interest for anybody who wants to understand why immigration is dominating the political debate, and will be essential reading for those wanting to know why governments pursue expansive immigration regimes.

## **1.2 Unpacking the Migration State**

The objective of this book is to explain the expansionary developments of economic immigration policy under the Labour administrations of 1997 – 2010. It is important to stress from the outset that the focus of this research is explicitly with labour and

student immigration, which combined I refer to hereon in as economic immigration. These two categories are closely related because these streams are ‘wanted’ immigration in contrast to ‘unwanted’ immigration such as irregular, humanitarian or family migration (Joppke 1998). I use the terms expansive and/or liberal policy to signify the Labour government’s approach to facilitate entry of migrant workers, rather than any liberalisation in terms of migrant rights. Although workers rights in terms of transitions and qualifying settlement periods were also loosened under Labour in conjunction with the wider managed migration regime. While other areas of immigration policy, such as asylum and irregular immigration, became increasingly restrictive during this period, the Labour government’s economic immigration policy, which this book is concerned with, was undoubtedly an expansive one.

In the context of economic globalisation and an embedded international human rights discourse, some contend that there has been a decline in power, significance and sovereignty of the nation state. In turn, it is argued that nation states have ‘lost control’ of their borders and are thus no longer the crucial actors in immigration policymaking (Soysal 1994; Sassen 1996; Jacobson 1996). This may hold true for some migration streams, such as humanitarian immigration or family reunification where international conventions can override domestic autonomy, but given that the nation state primarily determines the management and regulation of economic immigration policy, at least in Britain, this book employs approaches that focus on the domestic political arena.

The literature on immigration was once dominated by accounts from economists and sociologists that suggest (if only tacitly) that the nation-state and the institutions which comprise it were of secondary importance relative to international market forces and the personal networks which drive individuals to migrate (Castles 2004; Wright 2010). Yet what ‘governments do matters a great deal’ (Castles and Miller 2003, p. 94) in terms of explaining migratory movements. While immigration flows are not entirely determined by states, the decision ‘to accept or reject aliens has not been relegated to actors other than the state, and the infrastructural capacity of modern states has not decreased, but increased over time’ (Joppke 1998, 267). Independently of other conditions, ‘it is state actions with respect to borders that determine whether any international migration will take place’ (Zolberg 1989, 205).

In other words, without nation-states and their associated apparatuses that define their borders, ‘there would be no such thing as international migration’ (Balch 2010, 4). The state still retains an active role in defining a liberal or restrictive immigration regime, and it is the state which ultimately decides who enters and resides legally, naturalizes and who can become part of the nation (Guiraudon and Lahav 2000, 167).

This is not to say that policy is the only driver of immigration or that policies always achieve their intended outcomes (Cornelieus et al. 1994). For example, the sharp increase in net migration in Labour’s first year office (1997-1998) was largely beyond the government’s control and attributable to other factors. Net migration rose from 48,000 in 1997 to 140,000 in 1998 in large part due to: a rise in asylum applications following the Kosovo War (Home Office 1999); emigration decreasing from 45,000 to 11,000 (ONS 2006 p. 13); and EU immigration from the 15 Member States rising from 18,000 in 1997 to 33,000 in 1998 (ONS 2014). Thus net migration rose due to both an increase in inflow of 63,000 and a 28,000 reduction in emigration, neither of which in this case was due to any policy action by the Labour government. However, whilst the economic and social push and pull factors which drive immigration explains some of the increase in net migration under Labour, it is fair to say that the unprecedented increase overall was largely due to the government’s policy reforms, and in particular the A8 decision in 2004.

Policy levers do not always drive immigration flows then, and this is true across liberal states. Immigration policies in labour-importing countries have been said to be converging (Cornelieus et al. 2006), partly because of the shared challenges, they face because of the liberal paradox. The liberal paradox first coined by James Hollifield (2004) refers to the contradictory pressures that the nation state face on immigration, between market forces pushing states towards greater openness, and powerful domestic pressures pushing towards closure. Alternatively, as James Hampshire puts it (2013, p. 12) the contradictory pulls between the logic of openness (because the liberal state is conditioned by constitutionalism and capitalism) and the logic of closure (because representative politics and nationhood are also facets of the liberal state). This leads Hollifield (2004) to conclude that ‘trade and migration are inextricably linked... Hence, the rise of the trading state necessarily entails the rise of the migration state where considerations of power and interest are driven as much by

migration as they are by commerce and finance (p. 193). Whilst economic and social forces are the necessary pre-conditions for migration to occur, the 'sufficient conditions are legal and political' (Hollifield et al. 2008, p.341) because 'states must be willing to accept immigration and to grant rights to outsiders' (Hollifield 2004, 885) in the first instance, thus policies themselves clearly have a significant role in shaping patterns and flows of immigration (Meyers 2000). It makes sense then that we would seek to understand the factors that drive states to formulate their immigration policies in the way they do.

If Britain was previously 'a country of zero immigration (Freeman 1994), it is hard to deny that the Labour administrations transformed Britain into a migration state in terms numbers alone, even more so because, as we shall see, their reforms were driven by a capitalist imperative to some extent. The 2011 Census showed that the population of England and Wales was 56.1 million, a growth of 3.7 million or 7.1 per cent increase in the 10 years since the last census in 2001; a period almost entirely governed by Labour. Fifty six per cent of the population increase in England and Wales was due to migration. In the UK as a whole, the foreign-born population nearly doubled between 1993 and 2011 from 3.8 million to over 7 million, with almost 40 per cent of foreign-born population arriving in 2004. This was the largest growth in the population in England and Wales in any 10-year period since the census began in 1801 (Duffy and Frere-Smith 2014).

This book is about explaining how and why a government expands labour immigration policy, and the consequences of doing so in terms of the politics such a policy can produce. I therefore want to expand the concept of the Migration State to also refer to the politicization of migration as a further component. What I mean by this is the way in which immigration has come to dominate the political debate, shaping voting intentions, and becoming a contested policy arena across partisan divides. This is harder to quantify but nonetheless that immigration has gravitated from a marginal issue of concern to one of the top three voting issues in itself demonstrates how politicized immigration has become (Ipsos Mori, 2015; Duffy, 2014). Few would deny that immigration has become highly salient amongst the public, and in turn, the policy dilemmas of immigration have consumed political elites.

The degree of saliency and polarization condition whether an issue is politicized or not. Drawing from van der Brug et al. (2015, p.6) it is the combination of agenda-orientated and conflict-orientated approaches that configure whether an issue is politicized. The agenda-setting literature (Jones and Baumgartner 2004; Kingdon 1995) tells us that it is only when a social topic is defined as a problem that we can really speak of a political issue. Agenda-setting theory focuses on the different thresholds that prevent a topic from becoming a political issue. It serves to reinforce that as long as 'the topic is treated as one that does not require state action, it is not politicized; it is not even a political issue' (van der Brug et al. 2015, p.). Although public concern over immigration was acute in early 1970s Britain (Saggar 2003), and so-called bogus asylum seekers received a vast amount of press attention in the late 1990s (Kaye 2001), these waves of public discontent are marginal in contrast to how salient, or at least the importance, the public attribute to the issue now. As we shall see in chapter three, in the post-war period a bipartisan consensus of limited immigration dominated the political spectrum, which served to defuse the issue altogether so that immigration was not on the political agenda. In the 2010s increasingly elites frame immigration as a problem that requires state action. Immigration in 2010s Britain certainly fulfills the criteria of heightened saliency, intensified attention and resoundingly framed as a problem needing state action.

An issue only qualifies as politicized if there is also a high degree of conflict, be this conflict over the policy direction or conflict upon the means, and instruments to resolve the problem. The polarization element of politicization draws from the party politics or electoral competition school of thought (Downs 1957), scholars of which highlight the importance of positional competition and the extent to which different parties have polarizing positions on the issue. When political actors have different positions on an issue they are in conflict, and thus the issue is polarized. Opposing positions may have always existed, but if the issue is not on the political agenda, the conflict is dormant (van der Brug et al. 2015, p. 5).

Conflict can divide both across and within parties. Thus where an issue produces intense intra-party conflict, parties and governments will try to de-emphasize issues on which they internally disagree. But of course parties and governments do not

exercise full control over the political agenda. Newer parties, such as green parties politicizing environment issues or more aptly here radical right parties politicizing immigration, often politicize new issues. Immigration in Britain clearly meets the criteria of a high conflict and thus polarizing issue, both across parties and perhaps more interestingly within parties. We delve into more detail on the politicization of immigration in the epilogue chapter. Suffice to say for now that immigration in 2010s Britain is both highly salient, and highly polarizing and thus a politicized issue. These three components then – immigration being tied to trade, actual unprecedented increase in net migration and immigration being highly salient, highly polarizing and thus politicized – comprise Britain as a migration state.

Britain is of course not alone in becoming a migration state; as mentioned, liberal states are arguably converging on immigration policy. Wide ranges of explanations have been advanced to explain such convergence but these often overlook the policy process itself. Analysis of immigration in political science has been particularly attentive to the challenges immigration poses to the nation state (Joppke 1998; Hampshire 2013), but very few scholars have attempted to unpack the ‘black box’ of immigration policymaking. This has meant that the existing literature tends to focus on how just one aspect shapes policy outcomes. Whilst political economists look to the role of trade, production, economic context and demands from employers (Caviedes 2010; Freeman 2006; Cerna 2009; Menz 2008), institutionalists have demonstrated how liberal norms and international courts facilitate humanitarian and family migration (Guiraudon 2000; Joppke 1998). Meanwhile party politics scholars have shown us how mainstream and particularly extreme parties mobilize the issue (Bale et al. 2010; Mudde 2007; Norris 2005), in contrast to public opinions researchers who demonstrate the drivers of public anti-migration sentiments (Citrin et al. 1997; Ivarsflaten 2005; McLaren and Johnson 2007). Finally, scholars of national identity have shown how nation building, national cultures and policy legacies (Wright 2012; Ellerman 2015) can shape policy.

### **1.3 Multiple lenses**

Immigration policymaking has long been an explanatory challenge for political scientists because a myriad of factors and considerations shape policy outputs. As

Jupp (1993, 254) notes, there is ‘no single “scientific” analysis that is likely to provide a complete model for the politics of immigration policy’, because any comprehensive analysis of immigration policymaking needs to consider a variety of determinants. Precisely because a number of factors shape immigration policy, to understand the policymaking process it makes sense to adopt a multiple lenses framework that can explain the different determinants of government action and elite preferences.

At any one time, governments must grapple with public demands and electoral competition, the needs of the labour market and the consequential demands from employers, conflicting policy visions from different departments, as well as geopolitical pressures and international conventions that restrict the autonomy of the state. Three approaches – organised interests, party politics and historical institutionalism – were used to understand the divergent objectives, drivers and considerations that influence the construction of immigration policy. By employing different lenses to the question of policy change, the book offers an account that recognises the multifaceted considerations of policymakers, as well as the complexity of the policymaking process.

The first approach – organised interests – looks to the role of non-governmental actors to explain policy change. The organised interests approach posits that immigration policy is a product of bargaining and compromise between government and interest groups. This position contends that governments have expanded economic immigration because organised interests try to force governments to adopt specific policies (Freeman 1995; Menz 2008; Caviedes 2010). Central to this is the recognition that contemporary liberal states are capitalist states and are thus responsive to the demands of business (Hollifield 2004; Hampshire 2013).

Gary Freeman commented over thirty years ago that migrant labour was, ‘not merely a temporary convenience or necessity, but a structural requirement of advanced capitalism’ (Freeman 1979, 3), and this remains the case. In lower-wage sectors migrants fill labour market shortages, in particular the so-called 3D jobs (dirty, dangerous or degrading) which indigenous populations are reluctant to do. At the other end of the scale, high-skilled immigrants have become imperative to fill skill

shortages. The need for a mobile and flexible labour pool has intensified and in a globalised economy, where large transnational firms operate without borders, greater flows of intra-corporate transfers are inevitable. The dependence on immigration has also extended to the higher education sector, where non-EU students and their considerable tuition fee contributions are now integral to financing the system as a whole. In essence, ‘advanced capitalist states cannot afford – literally as well as metaphorically – not to solicit immigrants’ (Hampshire 2013, 12).

The organised interest approach argues then that interest groups, especially employers in the case of economic immigration, will attempt to convince governments of the need for foreign labour and thus lobby governments for more expansive immigration policies. Accordingly, because these groups have more resources and are better organised than anti-migrant groups, governments respond to such mobilised demands as it is in their electoral interest to do so. Immigration policies are thus said to mirror the interests of those who can mobilise most effectively and/or have the most resources, and these tend to be those who stand to gain from expansive policies.

While those who adhere to the organised interests approach place primacy on the role of non-state actors, other authors contend that it is political parties that shape policy (Triadafilopoulos and Zaslove 2006; Bale 2008; Givens & Luedkte 2005). Stemming from a broadly elitist perspective, proponents of the “politics matter” school of thought’ (Imbeau et al. 2001, 1) argue that it is the political parties and the actors that comprise them which shape the political debate and ultimately determine policy. Political parties influence public policy both by translating public opinion into policies in exchange for support, and at times acting as agents of change on the basis of ideologies (Schmidt 1996, 155). This perspective argues then that immigration policy is a product of partisan differences and/or party strategy.

Whilst parties are office-seeking organisations they are also fundamentally configured by a set of defining ideas (in other words a party ideology), which provides a coherent package of principles and beliefs. This ideology, in principle, reflects both the party’s tenets and their core constituents concerns and thus acts as blueprint to guide party action. Immigration is an ideologically divisive issue for established parties of the left and right as it ‘cuts across normal lines of political battle’, precisely because it relates

to wider social issues such as ‘law and order, integration, employment and national identity’ (Lahav 1997, 382; Freeman 1979; Triadafilopoulos & Zaslove 2006, 32). Nonetheless, party ideology and the broad left/right spectrum persist in shaping elite preferences to immigration to some degree (Ireland 2004; Lahav 1997), and fundamentally while office-seeking may be the primary motivation for parties to change policy, the essence of party success entails an ‘achievement of a satisfactory trade-off between ideological introversion and electoral extroversion, between principles and power’ (Bale 1999, 7).

Essentially parties matter in explaining policy change because unlike organised interests ‘parties actually control the government’ (Burstein and Linton 2002, 385). If party ideology conditions political elite preferences, since it is these actors which ultimately direct and enact policy, we would expect this to be reflected in policy. Accordingly, it is political parties and the elites which constitute them, which condition the direction of immigration policy by way of channelling their ideology through policies, reflecting electoral preferences, competing with opposition parties to win voters and in turn structuring the political debate on immigration.

In contrast to those who focus on party political interactions, a third perspective looks to the state itself and the institutions which comprise it to explain government decisions on immigration policy. New institutionalism “brings the state back in” by focusing on how administrations and bureaucracies shape immigration policy. The new institutionalist school claims that political institutions can be autonomous, and it is therefore these apolitical (in partisan political terms) institutions that form immigration policy according to the interests of the state. These emphasise the way in which actions of individuals exist within the context of the rules and norms of institutions (March and Olsen 2006). According to Boswell (2007, 79) there are two features of a definition of the state necessary for a neo-institutionalist analysis. The first is that the state cannot be understood as a monolithic entity; there must be some disaggregation between a system of party politics and the administration or the state’s bureaucratic apparatus that determine the implementation of policy. Secondly, there must be conceptual space that allows for the possibility of the state having ‘preferences which are not reducible to some matrix of societal interests’ (Boswell 2007, 79). The autonomy of preferences could stem from the interest of the

administration in securing legitimacy and/or the organisational dynamics and interests of different state departments.

One variant of new institutionalism, historical institutionalism, is particularly pertinent for explaining state decisions with regards to immigration policy, because immigration policy is so often a product of policy legacies (Wright 2012) and made and framed on the basis of long-held, embedded ideas about the objectives and ideal approach to the regulation of immigration (Hay 2006; Béland 2005; Hansen 2000). This approach argues that immigration policy is often a product of past political decisions – both in terms of the ideas structuring policy and more technical elements such as legislation – which constrains future action and thus create a path-dependent effect on policy (Hansen 2000).

Drawing from a ‘cultural’ understanding of human agency (Hall and Taylor 1996; Hay and Wincott 1998), historical institutionalism postulates that the agencies, bureaucracies and departments, which make immigration policy, are built on ideational foundations – that is the initial construction of institutions are built on ideas. Subsequently these institutions develop ideas and framings on the policy areas within their remit in an autonomous manner, ‘screened from political pressure’ (Boswell 2007, 83). Through processes of normalization and socialisation, certain ideas and framings become embedded in these institutions, which serve as cognitive filters through which actors come to interpret their environment. Crucially, the historical institutionalist is concerned with how, under certain conditions, such institutionalised ideas and paradigms, such as an established policy frame of immigration, are contested, challenged, and replaced (Hay 2006, 65; Berman 1998). For the historical institutionalist, it is the state and the institutions that comprise it, which shape immigration policy.

In some ways these approaches offer ‘self-contained “worlds” from which to view the policy process’ (John 1998, 16), although they can work to complement each other. Organised interests focus on the associational relationships between non-state actors and government. The politics matter school of thought places primacy on the party composition of government, and the preferences and interests of party actors. Historical institutionalists examine the norms and habits of policymaking in different

policy sub-systems. Although these approaches are in ‘dialogue with each other’, they are also ‘self-referential paradigms based on assumptions about the possibilities of human agency, the effect of structures, the meaning of power and the nature of the state’ (John 1998, 17). Fundamentally each approach assumes that a different set of actors dominate and control the policy agenda – non-governmental actors, political parties and institutional actors respectively – and each stresses different causal mechanisms at play in policy change. The book applies each approach to the case of immigration policy under the Labour governments, and examines the explanatory power they hold.

#### **1.4 Plan of the book**

The book is organised as follows. Chapter two considers the three theoretical approaches adopted in more detail and addresses some key issues of defining policy change. The chapter explores the core explanatory argument of each approach, and reviews the evidence in terms of how each factor has been demonstrated to shape immigration policy, and gives details on the adopted methodology and research design. The chapter delves into how different sets of actors, including non-governmental actors, political parties and civil servants, are said to influence policy, and establishes the conceptual and analytical tools to examine how interests, ideas and institutions can prompt policy change.

In chapter three we move to Britain’s history of immigration policy from the post-war period until Labour left office in 2010. Britain has long been a ‘reluctant country of immigration’ (Layton-Henry 1994) and given that the majority of Britain’s post-war restrictive measures were targeted at non-white immigrants; many scholars contend that Britain’s immigration regime was underpinned by racialisation. This chapter traces Britain’s immigration evolution from a ‘country of zero immigration’ (Freeman 1994) to a migration state, to illustrate the unprecedented shift under the Labour governments in comparison to Britain’s post-war restrictive framing.

Chapter four turns to the role of non-state actors in Labour’s immigration policy. Taking an organised interests lens the chapter examines whether policy change was a result of interest groups lobbying the government for expansive policies. The chapter explores the ways in which non-state actors, such as employers and employer

associations, unions, sectoral interest groups, and think tanks, did or did not influence immigration policy in the period 1997 to 2010.

The focus of chapter five is on the governing party and the elites that comprised it. Here we consider the party political context and explore whether party ideology, intra-party change and party competition shaped immigration policy in this period. The chapter focuses on how the ideas of the governing party changed, and the impact this had on the immigration policy preferences of the political elite. Relatively few scholars have examined how party ideology shapes immigration policy (see Odmalm 2014; Hinnfors et al. 2012 for exceptions), and this research seeks to fill this gap by analysing how Labour's ideology changed the preferences of the leading political elite.

Chapter six adopts a 'culture' understanding of historical institutionalism, and considers the role of government departments, and the policymaking process itself. The chapter does this by examining the administrative context of immigration policymaking, analysing the processes of policymaking, such as which departments were involved, how immigration was framed, and how entrenched institutional cultures did or did not influence immigration policy. The chapter also considers whether changes to the machinery of government – including an initiative for joined-up government and evidence-based policy – had an impact on immigration policymaking. This chapter delves into the 'black box' of policymaking, and gives insights into the conflicting objectives that inform government decisions on economic immigration policy.

Chapter seven brings the key arguments of the book together by summarising the findings from the three empirical chapters, and reflecting on the utility of the different theoretical approaches employed for explaining policy change. The chapter calls for complex causality and provides an overarching explanation for this case of policy change, outlining the necessary conditions, ideas, and context which gave way to a shift in the policy framing of immigration.

The final epilogue chapter reflects on New Labour's legacies on the politics of immigration and beyond. The chapter looks at feedback effects of Labour's reforms

on policymaking, and the repercussions of Labour's policies on the broader political landscape to unravel how immigration has become so dominant in debate. New Labour's policies brought immigration to the fore of the political landscape, and in this sense, it is no exaggeration to say that the period under Labour has transformed the politics of immigration in Britain.