

European Opinion About Immigration: The Role of Identities, Interests and Information

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This article assesses the influence of material interests and cultural identities on European opinion about immigration. Analysis of respondents in twenty countries sampled in the 2002–03 European Social Survey demonstrates that they are unenthusiastic about high levels of immigration and typically overestimate the actual number of immigrants living in their country. At the individual level, cultural and national identity, economic interests and the level of information about immigration are all important predictors of attitudes. ‘Symbolic’ predispositions, such as preferences for cultural unity, have a stronger statistical effect than economic dissatisfaction. Variation across countries in both the level and the predictors of opposition to immigration are mostly unrelated to contextual factors cited in previous research, notably the amount of immigration into a country and the overall state of its economy. The ramifications of these findings for policy makers are discussed in the context of current debates about immigration and European integration.

Immigration is on the political agenda in Europe, pushed there by the collision of European integration with enduring national loyalties, the impact of long-run demographic trends and, more recently, the spectre of terrorism. Life expectancy is up and fertility is down, resulting in an ageing population and a steadily shrinking workforce.¹ Noting these demographic trends, some commentators argue that it is ‘increasingly difficult to refute’ the case for a permissive immigration policy in contemporary Europe.² Whether or not this is ‘objectively’ so, however, electoral realities may stand in the way of such a policy. The recent successes of extreme right-wing parties make it clear that the mobilization of public opinion can batter an elite consensus characterized by greater tolerance of immigrants. Moreover, the mere presence of anti-immigrant parties can push mainstream parties towards a tougher line on immigration for fear of being outflanked.

The relevance of public opinion thus dictates a need to understand its underpinnings. The purpose of this article is to assess the empirical validity of ‘rational’ and ‘symbolic’ theories of attitudes towards immigration. We conclude that European opinion about immigration depends less on economic status (material ‘interests’) and more on both ‘symbolic’ attitudes about the nation (‘identities’) and on misperceptions of the size of immigrant populations (‘information’ or, in this case, lack thereof). This conclusion is buttressed by the finding that the national economic or demographic context does not affect public opinion: residents of countries with large immigrant populations or countries experiencing economic difficulties are not especially likely to oppose immigration. Social-psychological factors at the individual level rather than conditions at the country

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¹ United Nations Population Division, *Replacement Migration* (New York: UNO, 2000).

² C. Joppke, ‘European Immigration Politics at the Crossroads’, in P. Heywood, E. Jones and M. Rhodes, eds, *Developments in Western European Politics 2* (Basingstoke, Hants: Palgrave, 2002), pp. 259–76, at p. 259.

level are the dominant influences on preferences about immigration. One possible reason for this is the pervasive tendency of the general public to overestimate the number of immigrants in their country.

Amid all the talk of a growing sense of European identity, the present research points to the explanatory power of identification with the nation-state and beliefs about the nation-state's cultural identity. More specifically, popular preferences for cultural unity are powerful influences on attitudes towards immigration, despite elite endorsements of a multicultural society engendered by immigration. Perhaps as a consequence, the impacts of material self-interest and objective economic and demographic conditions are attenuated. Overestimating the level of immigration also exacerbates the sense of threat and boosts restrictionist sentiment. The policy implication of these results is that creating more favourable attitudes towards immigration may require re-imagining national identities in many countries as well as disseminating more accurate information about the actual immigration stocks and flows.

MICROFOUNDATIONS: INTERESTS, IDENTITIES AND INFORMATION

The scholarly literature concentrates on two main sources of attitudes towards immigration: interests and identities. The theories emphasizing one or the other motivational basis generate distinct hypotheses about the role of individual-level factors, country-level factors and the interaction of the two in shaping people's opinions. In both interest-based and identity-based theories, a sense of threat is a prior condition of hostility to immigration. What differs is the nature of the threat and whether its origins lie in objective social and economic conditions or in cultural and psychological predispositions.

Interests

In interest-based theories of immigration, ethnic competition over scarce resources is the motivational basis of opposition to immigration.³ From this perspective, antagonism towards immigrants is based on the threat they pose to one's material well-being. The overt political debate about immigration tends to focus on this issue, weighing the threat to jobs and wages against the need for people to do the dirty and dangerous jobs many native-born workers eschew. The debate about material costs and benefits also concerns the perceived impact of immigration on crime, schools and welfare programmes.

Prior research provides some empirical support for this economic threat hypothesis. Scholars have shown that opposition to immigration and support for anti-immigrant political parties increase with unemployment,⁴ though the effect of unemployment may

³ For discussion, see: J. Citrin, D. P. Green, C. Muste and C. Wong, 'Public Opinion Towards Immigration Reform: The Role of Economic Motivations', *Journal of Politics*, 59 (1997), 858–81; V. M. Esses, L. M. Jackson and T. L. Armstrong, 'Intergroup Competition and Attitudes Toward Immigrants and Immigration: An Instrumental Model of Group Conflict', *Journal of Social Issues*, 54 (1998), pp. 699–724; G. Lahav, *Immigration and Politics in the New Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); P. M. Sniderman, L. Hougendoorn and M. Prior, 'Predispositional Factors and Situational Triggers: Exclusionary Reactions to Immigrant Minorities', *American Political Science Review*, 98 (2004), 35–50.

⁴ J. Fetzer, *Public Attitudes Toward Immigration in the United States, France, and Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); R. W. Jackman and K. Volpert, 'Conditions Favouring Parties of the Extreme Right in Western Europe', *British Journal of Political Science*, 26 (1996), 501–21.

be conditional on the presence of a larger immigrant population.⁵ Permitted levels of immigration also tend to decrease during economic hard times.⁶ Similarly, opposition to immigration is higher among lower-income or less-skilled workers.⁷ Interest-based explanations sometimes differ over whether the threats to which people respond are perceived as *personal* ('to me') or *collective* (to the country or society as a whole) and the evidence on this is mixed.⁸ But the underlying logic of preference formation is the same.⁹ To explore the role of economic interests cross-nationally, four specific hypotheses are examined:

- HYPOTHESIS 1 Those who express a negative assessment of their personal financial circumstance or of the financial climate in the country as a whole will be more opposed to immigration.
- HYPOTHESIS 2 Those who may experience more direct competition with immigrant labour, i.e., lower-income workers, will be more opposed to immigration.
- HYPOTHESIS 3 The economic health of a country will have a direct effect on attitudes: residents of countries experiencing greater economic difficulties, such as high unemployment, will be more opposed to immigration.
- HYPOTHESIS 4 The overall economic health of the country should 'prime' individual-level economic assessments, making them stronger predictors of attitudes towards immigration when the country's economy is suffering. Individual-level economic assessments should be stronger predictors in hard times because a suffering economy will render those concerns more salient in people's minds, and thus they will more readily link them to their overall opinion of immigrants and immigration.

Identities

Symbolic politics theory emphasizes the potency of values and identities on opinion formation, arguing that the role of these 'ideal interests' frequently overrides the influence of material concerns.¹⁰ In the case of immigration, beliefs about the nation and its cultural make-up are particularly important. According to social identity theory, the innate tendency towards 'in-group favouritism' is more intense when the group in question has great emotional significance.¹¹ In most modern societies, the nation is an object of strong

⁵ M. Golder, 'Explaining Variation in the Success of Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe', *Comparative Political Studies*, 36 (2003), 432–66.

⁶ J. Money, *Fences and Neighbors: The Political Geography of Immigration Control* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1999).

⁷ K. F. Scheve and M. J. Slaughter, 'Labor Market Competition and Individual Preferences over Immigration Policy', *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 83 (2001), 133–45.

⁸ Citrin *et al.*, 'Public Opinion Toward Immigration Reform'; Lahav, *Immigration and Politics in the New Europe*.

⁹ It is important to note that from a theoretical perspective, prejudice does not enter into the perception of threat or the calculation of self-interest. Immigrant ethnicity, religion, etc. should not matter. For the interest-based explanation, all that matters is the existence of a threat to one's economic circumstances. If there is a preference for immigrants of one ethnicity over another, this should reflect differences in the estimates, presumably accurate, of the impact of these groups on one's material interests.

¹⁰ D. O. Sears, 'Symbolic Politics: A Socio-psychological Theory', in S. Iyengar and W. McGuire, eds, *Explorations in Political Psychology* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1996), pp. 113–49; D. Chong, *Rational Lives* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2000).

¹¹ H. Tajfel, *Human Groups and Social Categories* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

allegiances, so groups perceived to threaten a nation's distinctive identity are likely to elicit hostility. Immigrants are by definition outsiders in contexts where national identity is the basis of self-categorization and emotional attachment.¹² Three hypotheses derive from this theoretical approach:

- HYPOTHESIS 5 Anti-immigrant sentiments should be more prevalent among people with a strong sense of national identity, and in particular a national identity that is predicated on an 'ethnic' definition of the nation that emphasizes cultural homogeneity.¹³
- HYPOTHESIS 6 Negative attitudes towards immigrants should be triggered when the sense of threat is heightened, i.e., when there is a large population of immigrants who are visibly different in appearance, customs and values. Thus, we should see a direct relationship between country-level measures of immigrant populations and attitudes towards immigrants.¹⁴
- HYPOTHESIS 7 A final hypothesis specifies a cross-level interaction: individual-level measures of identity should be stronger predictors when there is a salient immigrant 'threat' in the form of a larger immigrant population.

Information

Whether it emphasizes interests or identities as explanatory factors, prior research has paid little attention to the nature of public knowledge about immigration. Yet if a sense of threat underlies opposition to immigration, then beliefs about the size of the immigrant population are a logical trigger for such feelings of anxiety. According to Freeman, 'there are serious barriers to acquisition of information about immigration.'¹⁵ More generally, several studies document the public's 'innumeracy' with regards to demographic estimates of minority populations in the United States.¹⁶ The overwhelming tendency is to overestimate the size of minority populations. Moreover, Theiss-Morse shows that when minorities are perceived as a threat, overestimates of minority populations are associated with opposition to programmes that would benefit these groups. Our primary source of data, the European Social Survey (ESS), asked respondents about the number of

¹² L. Huddy, 'From Social to Political Identity: A Critical Examination of Social Identity Theory', *Political Psychology*, 22 (2001), 127–56; Sniderman *et al.*, 'Pre-dispositional Factors and Situational Triggers'.

¹³ J. Citrin and J. Sides, 'More than Nationals: How Identity Choice Matters in the New Europe', in R. Herrmann, T. Risse and M. Brewer, eds, *Identities in Europe and the Institutions of the European Union* (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004), pp. 161–85; J. Citrin, C. Wong and B. Duff, 'The Meaning of American National Identity', in R. D. Ashmore, L. Jussim and D. Wilder, eds, *Social Identity, Intergroup Conflict and Conflict Resolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 71–100; R. de Figueiredo and Z. Elkins, 'Are Patriots Bigots?' *American Journal of Political Science*, 47 (2003), 171–88; J. Sidanius and J. Petrocik, 'Communal and National Identity in a Multiethnic State', in Ashmore, Jussim and Wilder, eds, *Social Identity, Intergroup Conflict and Conflict Resolution*, pp. 101–27; Sniderman *et al.*, 'Pre-dispositional Factors and Situational Triggers.'

¹⁴ Lahav, *Immigration and Politics in the New Europe*. The relationship between the size of the immigrant population and attitudes towards immigrants may also depend on the economic circumstances in the country.

¹⁵ G. P. Freeman, 'Modes of Immigration Politics in Liberal Democratic States', *International Migration Review*, 24 (1995), 881–902, p. 883.

¹⁶ R. Nadeau, R. G. Niemi and J. Levine, 'Innumeracy about Minority Populations', *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 57 (1993), 332–47; L. Sigelman and R. G. Niemi, 'Innumeracy about Minority Populations: African-Americans and Whites Compared', *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 65 (2001), 86–94; E. Theiss-Morse, 'Characterizations and Consequences: How Americans Envision the American People' (paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, 2003).

foreign-born residents in their country, enabling perhaps the first systematic investigation of whether a similar pattern prevails in Europe, as hypothesized below:

HYPOTHESIS 8 European respondents will overestimate the proportion of immigrants in their own countries.

HYPOTHESIS 9 Those who overestimate the proportion of immigrants will be more opposed to immigration, as they are more likely to perceive a greater 'threat'.

DATA: THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL SURVEY

The evidence for this article comes from the European Social Survey of 2002–03, an ongoing research project funded in part by the European Commission's 5th Framework Programme. (The Appendix provides more information about the survey's administration, sampling procedure, and response rate.) The first survey included a module of fifty-eight questions relating to immigration posed to national samples in twenty European countries (total $N = 38,339$). These include fifteen members of the European Union (EU) at that time (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden) as well as two West European states that are not members (Norway and Switzerland). The ESS also included three East European countries that entered the EU in 2004 (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland), a useful feature that allows the creation of a baseline for studying trends in attitudes once outsiders and potential immigrants turn into insiders.¹⁷ Looking beyond the previously studied EU member states in Western Europe is especially important given that immigration also constitutes a salient issue in non-EU states and in the East European states who have just joined the EU.¹⁸

THE PERCEIVED IMPACT AND PREFERRED LEVEL OF IMMIGRATION

The policy debate about immigration centres on how many and which newcomers to admit. And because immigration can challenge the identity of a nation-state, these issues also are fundamental from a conceptual point of view. Our principal dependent variable therefore measures beliefs about the appropriate level of immigration into one's country. In theorizing about the origins of these beliefs, theories that emphasize economic interests and those that emphasize symbolic politics both employ the concept of 'threat' or the perceived costs and benefits of immigration. As in the study of ethnic group relations in general, a leading hypothesis is that the size of the 'other' ethnic group, usually a minority, affects the likelihood that one's own group will suffer in the competition for jobs, power or cultural prestige.¹⁹ Theories grounded in economic interests focus on the threat to

¹⁷ The ESS also included samples in Israel and Slovenia, which we do not utilize here. OECD country-level data, which we rely on here, are not available for Slovenia. We do not examine Israel since our focus is on European attitudes towards immigration.

¹⁸ Studies of attitudes in the Western European EU members include: Lahav, *Immigration and Politics in the New Europe*; L. McLaren, 'Immigration and the New Politics of Inclusion and Exclusion in the European Union', *European Journal of Political Research*, 39 (2001), 81–108; L. Quillian, 'Prejudice as a Response to Perceived Group Threat: Population Composition and Anti-Immigrant and Racial Prejudice in Europe', *American Sociological Review*, 60 (1995), 586–611.

¹⁹ V. O. Key, *Southern Politics in State and Nation* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1949); H. M. Blalock, *Toward a Theory of Minority-Group Relations* (New York: Wiley, 1967).

material resources, while symbolic politics theorists emphasize the threat to a group's values or sense of distinctiveness and superiority.²⁰ Accordingly, the second major construct employed here is a measure of the subjective threat posed by immigrants – specifically, the perceived consequences that immigrants pose to such things as the economy and culture. Both measures also dovetail with extant literature on attitudes towards immigration, which focuses on the preferred level of immigration²¹ and with beliefs about the effects of immigration on the host country.²²

To measure these two constructs, we rely on two sets of items from the ESS. The first set deals with the preferred level of immigration. The ESS asked a series of questions that referred to different kinds of immigrant populations.²³ Two questions centred on race and ethnicity: 'To what extent do you think [country] should allow people of the same race or ethnic group as most [country] people to come and live here?' and 'How about people of a different race or ethnic group from most [country] people?' Respondents were given these options: allow many, allow some, allow a few, or allow none. The modal preference of respondents was for the vague category of 'some', which we interpret as an acceptance of only a modest level of immigration. In regard to immigrants of the same race or ethnicity, 16 per cent answered 'many', 49 per cent answered 'some', 29 per cent answered 'a few' and only 6 per cent answered 'none'.²⁴ Respondents were a little less welcoming when asked about immigrants of a different ethnic background: the majority said 'many' or 'some' (10 and 43 per cent, respectively) while 36 per cent said 'a few' and 11 per cent said 'none'. Answers to these two questions are highly correlated ($r = 0.76$). Of course, asking the questions in this precise order may have engendered a social desirability bias, such that respondents were less willing to express negative sentiments towards immigrants of a different ethnic background.²⁵

²⁰ Sears, 'Symbolic Politics'; Chong, *Rational Lives*.

²¹ M. V. Hood III and I. L. Morris, '¿Amigo o Enemigo? Context, Attitudes, and Anglo Public Opinion toward Immigration', *Social Science Quarterly*, 78 (1997), 309–23; Citrin *et al.*, 'Public Opinion Toward Immigration Reform'; Scheve and Slaughter, 'Labor Market Competition and Individual Preferences over Immigration Policy'; McLaren, 'Immigration and the New Politics of Inclusion and Exclusion in the European Union'.

²² Quillian, 'Prejudice as a Response to Perceived Group Threat'.

²³ The ESS immigration battery began with this preamble: 'People come to live in [country] from other countries for different reasons. Some have ancestral ties. Others come to work here, or to join their families. Others come because they are under threat. Here are some questions about this issue.'

²⁴ Whenever we report results for the entire ESS sample, we weight responses so that each country's sample is represented in proportion to that country's actual population (using the ESS variable *pweight*). Results for individual countries are weighted to account for an unequal probability of selection into the sample within those countries (the ESS variable *dweight*).

²⁵ McLaren, in 'Immigration and the New Politics of Inclusion and Exclusion in the European Union', examines similar Eurobarometer questions and finds that 'most individuals [appear] not to make a distinction between EC/EU and non-EC/EU immigrants' (p. 85). However, Lahav's examination of other Eurobarometer indicators, presented in *Immigration and Politics in the New Europe*, does find differences between attitudes towards African and Asian immigrants and attitudes towards European immigrants. Sniderman *et al.*, in 'Predispositional Factors and Situational Triggers', randomize survey respondents into different experimental conditions that describe immigrants in different ways, and find that respondents react more harshly to immigrants who are described as less educated or as culturally dissimilar (see their Figure 1, p. 43). As Pettigrew and Meertens discuss in T. F. Pettigrew and R. W. Meertens, 'Subtle and Blatant Prejudice in Western Europe', *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 25 (1995), 57–75, there is a developing European norm against blatant prejudice, though this does not obviate the existence of what they term 'subtle prejudice'. Moreover, subtle prejudice is in fact strongly linked to view of immigrants (see, for example, T. F. Pettigrew, 'Reactions to the New Minorities of Western Europe', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24 (1998), 77–103.)

TABLE 1 *The Perceived Consequences of Immigration*

	Positive	Neutral	Negative
Country made worse vs. better place to live	28%	35%	38%
Bad vs. good for economy	36	30	34
Take jobs away vs. help create new jobs	25	35	40
Take out more (services) vs. put in more (taxes)	21	32	47
Crime worse vs. better	10	22	68
Undermine vs. enrich cultural life	50	23	27

Source: 2002–03 European Social Survey.

Question Text: Is [country] made a worse or a better place to live by people coming to live here from other countries?

'Would you say it is generally bad or good for [country]'s economy that people come to live here from other countries?'

'Would you say that people who come to live here generally take jobs away from workers in [country], or generally help to create new jobs?'

'Most people who come to live here work and pay taxes. They also use health and welfare services. On balance, do you think people who come here take out more than they put in or put in more than they take out?'

'Are [country]'s crime problems made worse or better by people coming to live here from other countries?'

'Would you say that [country]'s cultural life is generally undermined or enriched by people coming to live here from other countries?'

N = 32,130.

The ESS then differentiated immigrants in terms of place of origin and the economic status of this place of origin. Respondents were asked about people 'from the richer countries *in* Europe' and 'from the poorer countries *in* Europe', and then about 'people from the richer countries *outside* Europe' and 'the poorer countries *outside* Europe'. In every case, the most common response (40–45 per cent) was to allow 'some' immigrants. There were only slight differences based on place of origin. Given the background of most recent immigrants and asylum-seekers, however, the relevant meaning of immigration to most respondents is likely to be the immigration of people with a different ethnic background from poor countries, politically correct expressions of indifference to the background of newcomers notwithstanding.

The second set of questions centres on the perceived consequences of immigrants. The ESS included a series of scales referring to different areas of a country's life, for example, economy, crime and culture. The response categories ranged from 0 to 10, where one endpoint indicated a bad outcome, such as 'take jobs away', and the other indicated a good outcome, such as 'create new jobs'. In Table 1, we report the percentage of respondents who placed themselves on positive (0–4), 'neutral' (5), and negative (6–10) positions of the scale. These assessments suggest that negative views are typically more common than positive views, though there is a notable lump of respondents at the midpoint of each scale. Thirty-seven per cent of respondents believe that immigrants make the country a worse place to live, and 34 per cent believe that immigrants are bad for the economy.²⁶ There

²⁶ Other ESS items suggest a somewhat more positive view of immigrants. For example, only 38 per cent agree that 'Average wages and salaries are generally brought down by people coming to work and live here', while 60 per cent agree that 'People who have come to live and work here help to fill jobs where there are shortages of workers'.

TABLE 2 *Level of Opposition to Immigration, by Country*

Country	Mean perceived consequences	Country	Mean preferred level
Greece	0.69	Greece	0.64
Hungary	0.62	Hungary	0.62
Czech Republic	0.62	Portugal	0.58
Belgium	0.57	Austria	0.53
United Kingdom	0.56	Finland	0.51
Portugal	0.56	United Kingdom	0.50
Poland	0.55	Netherlands	0.49
Germany	0.55	France	0.49
Netherlands	0.54	Luxemburg	0.48
Ireland	0.54	Czech Republic	0.48
France	0.54	Belgium	0.47
Italy	0.53	Spain	0.46
Spain	0.52	Poland	0.44
Austria	0.52	Denmark	0.44
Norway	0.52	Norway	0.44
Denmark	0.51	Germany	0.43
Switzerland	0.51	Ireland	0.42
Finland	0.49	Italy	0.41
Luxemburg	0.45	Switzerland	0.39
Sweden	0.45	Sweden	0.31
Total	0.55	Total	0.47

Source: 2002–03 European Social Survey.

Note: Cell entries are means from six-item indices that run from 0 (most accepting of immigration) to 1 (most opposed to immigration).

is slightly more concern that immigrants take away jobs (40 per cent) and demand more in services than they pay in taxes (47 per cent). By a substantial margin, crime is the dominant concern: 68 per cent believe that immigrants make crime ‘worse’. Perhaps surprisingly, most respondents do not believe that immigration ‘undermines’ the country’s cultural life. Indeed, a bare majority (50.4 per cent) places themselves on the positive, ‘cultural enrichment’ side of the scale. In the light of subsequent evidence about preferences for cultural unity, it seems likely that this item elicited positive feelings about the introduction of such things as new foods and music rather than negative feelings about the erosion of the dominant language or national culture.

Composite ‘perceived consequences’ and ‘preferred levels’ indices were created by averaging responses to the six items related to each of these topics. Each index is coded from 0 to 1, where 1 indicates more *negative* feelings about immigration.²⁷ Within the ESS sample, these two indices correlate at $r = 0.53$ ($p < 0.001$), suggesting that these two constructs are strongly related though not identical.²⁸

²⁷ We computed this index by scaling each individual item to range from 0 to 1 (such that 1 indicates allowing no immigrants into the country), and then averaging these items. The reliabilities of the two indices are very high overall (for perceived consequences, $\alpha = 0.84$; for preferred levels, $\alpha = 0.94$) and is comparably high in each individual country (for a discussion of the α statistic, see L. J. Cronbach, ‘Coefficient Alpha and the Internal Structure of Tests’, *Psychometrika*, 16 (1951), 297–334). Exploratory factor analyses of the items in each index suggest that each set of items taps a single dimension.

²⁸ Exploratory factor analysis also suggests that these two sets of items are tapping different underlying constructs.

Table 2 presents the average score within each of these twenty countries for these two indices. With regard to perceived consequences, in most countries the average assessment is on the negative side (i.e., greater than 0.5). With regard to preferred levels, the means in most countries are below the midpoint of the scale (0.5), but whether this reflects a general acceptance of a higher level of immigration depends on how one interprets the ambiguous word 'some'. Clearly, there is no enthusiasm in any country for a wide open door to new immigrants, whatever their origin. Across these two indicators, the rank order of countries is relatively similar, though not identical. The correlation between the two sets of country-level means is strong though not perfect ($r = 0.69$, $p < 0.001$).

AN INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL MODEL OF ATTITUDES TOWARDS IMMIGRATION

The initial test of the hypotheses regarding European attitudes about immigration entails an individual-level model of the measures of the perceived consequences of immigration and preferred levels of immigration.²⁹ Country-level factors that potentially affect these measures or prime the role of interests and identities are excluded. They will be investigated in more detail below.

To measure subjective economic concerns, the predictors in the model are a standard question about the respondent's level of satisfaction with the overall economy and an indicator of personal economic concerns consisting of a two-item index addressing the respondent's sense of security about being able to cope with financial stress.³⁰ Respondents who are less satisfied with the economy and/or their own financial situation should be more opposed to immigration. Objective economic circumstances are assessed by income and employment status. We hypothesize that respondents who are poorer or unemployed will be more opposed to immigration.³¹

To capture cultural and national identities, we first include a measure of people's beliefs about the value of cultural homogeneity or unity. Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with this statement: 'It is better for a country if almost everyone shares the same customs and traditions'. A narrow majority (51 per cent) agrees with this item, compared to 26 per cent who disagree, with the remainder uncertain or ambivalent. This preference for cultural unity is interpreted as support for an 'ethnic' definition of nationhood and should be associated with opposition to immigration.³² Unfortunately, the

²⁹ We remain agnostic as to the relationship between the perceived consequences of immigration and preferred levels of immigration. It may be that beliefs about consequences lead to preferred levels. Or beliefs about consequences may only be rationalizations of preferred levels. Given this ambiguous causation, we do not include consequences in our model of preferred levels, and vice versa.

³⁰ These two items are: 'Which of the descriptions on this card comes closest to how you feel about your household's income nowadays?: living comfortably, coping, finding it difficult, finding it very difficult' and 'If for some reason you were in serious financial difficulties and had to borrow money to make ends meet, how difficult or easy would that be?' These items were combined into a scale ($\alpha = 0.59$). More information about variable coding is available from the authors.

³¹ Scheve and Slaughter, 'Labor Market Competition and Individual Preferences over Immigration Policy'.

³² The ESS included other items that speak to this general idea but that tap different specific aspects of a nation's identity. An overwhelming majority of European publics believe in the benefits of a common language: 91 per cent agree that 'It is better for a country if almost everyone is able to speak at least one common language.' When asked if 'It is better for a country if there are a variety of different religions', 36 per cent of the ESS respondents agree and 32 per cent disagree. There is majority opposition (54 to 30 per cent) to the idea that 'communities of people who have come to live here should be allowed to educate their children in their own separate schools if they wish'. There is, then, a general belief in the benefits of cultural unity for social harmony and a desire that

ESS does not include any general measure of the overall strength of national identity, such as degree of pride in country. To develop a reasonable substitute, we first note that the degree to which Europeans support policy making at the national as opposed to supra-national level is related both to a strong sense of national attachment and to negative beliefs about ethnic minorities.³³ We then take advantage of eight ESS items about whether policy in a particular domain should be made at the international, European or national level. The resulting measure, 'preference for supranational authority', is constructed by summing the number of policy-making domains that the respondent ceded to the European or international level. We employ this measure as a proxy for a more direct assessment of the strength of the respondent's national identity.³⁴ The expectation is that a greater willingness to cede political authority to European and international institutions will mitigate opposition to immigration because this indicates both a less intense attachment to the nation as a focus of political identity and a greater willingness to go with the official, relatively tolerant attitude towards immigration among European leaders.

Two ESS items tap the public's level of information about immigration. The first asks respondents for a comparative assessment: 'Compared to other European countries of about the same size as [country], do you think that more or fewer people come to live here from other countries?' Most Europeans view their own country as a relatively popular destination: 19 per cent of respondents said 'far more people come to live here' and 38 per cent said 'more people come to live here'. Only 14 per cent said 'fewer' or 'far fewer'. The second item asks for an estimate of the absolute size of the foreign-born population: 'Out of every 100 people living in [country], how many do you think were born outside [country]?'³⁵ Figure 1 gives the average estimate of the foreign-born population in each country as well as the actual foreign-born population and reveals popular perceptions to be largely inaccurate.³⁶ Respondents in every country overestimated the percentage of

(F'note continued)

immigrants acculturate, particularly by learning their new country's language and participating in a country's educational institutions. However, there is no consensus on the need for religious homogeneity in the abstract. Given the different foci of these items, it is not surprising that they do not scale together readily. We therefore rely on the single indicator of preferences for cultural unity because it reflects the broadest endorsement of an 'ethnic' conception of the nation.

³³ Citrin and Sides, 'More than Nationals'; see also A. Luedtke, 'European Integration, Public Opinion and Immigration Policy: Testing the Impact of National Identity', *European Union Politics*, 6 (2005), 83–112.

³⁴ This scale has a reliability of 0.73.

³⁵ Approximately 17 per cent of the ESS sample could not provide a numerical estimate of the immigrant population. To avoid throwing out these cases, we imputed values on a country-by-country basis, drawing on respondent's level of education and frequency of political discussion as predictors. One or both of these variables was significantly associated with estimates in all of these twenty countries. Their substantive effect was to reduce the estimates, since more educated or politically engaged people are in general less likely to overestimate immigrant population size. Most importantly, the multivariate results discussed below are substantively the same if we exclude those who could not provide an estimate.

³⁶ The actual percentage of foreign-born residents derives from OECD data to be found at <<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/18/23/34792376.xls>>. This dataset contains a count of the number of residents in each country, broken down by their country of origin. To calculate the number of immigrants, we simply summed up the number of residents and subtracted the native-born. Some residents' countries of origin could not be determined and they were coded as 'unknown'. For the purposes of this analysis, we count them as native-born. In practice, this has little effect on the estimates except in Germany, where a large number of residents were classified as 'unknown'. Considering the 'unknowns' in Germany to be foreign-born generates an estimate of the proportion of foreign-born residents of 19 per cent, while considering them native-born generates an estimate of 11 per cent. Given that this latter figure better corresponds to other OECD analysis (see J. C. Dumont and G. Lemaître, 'Counting Immigrants and Expatriates: A New Perspective', OECD Social, Employment, and Migration working

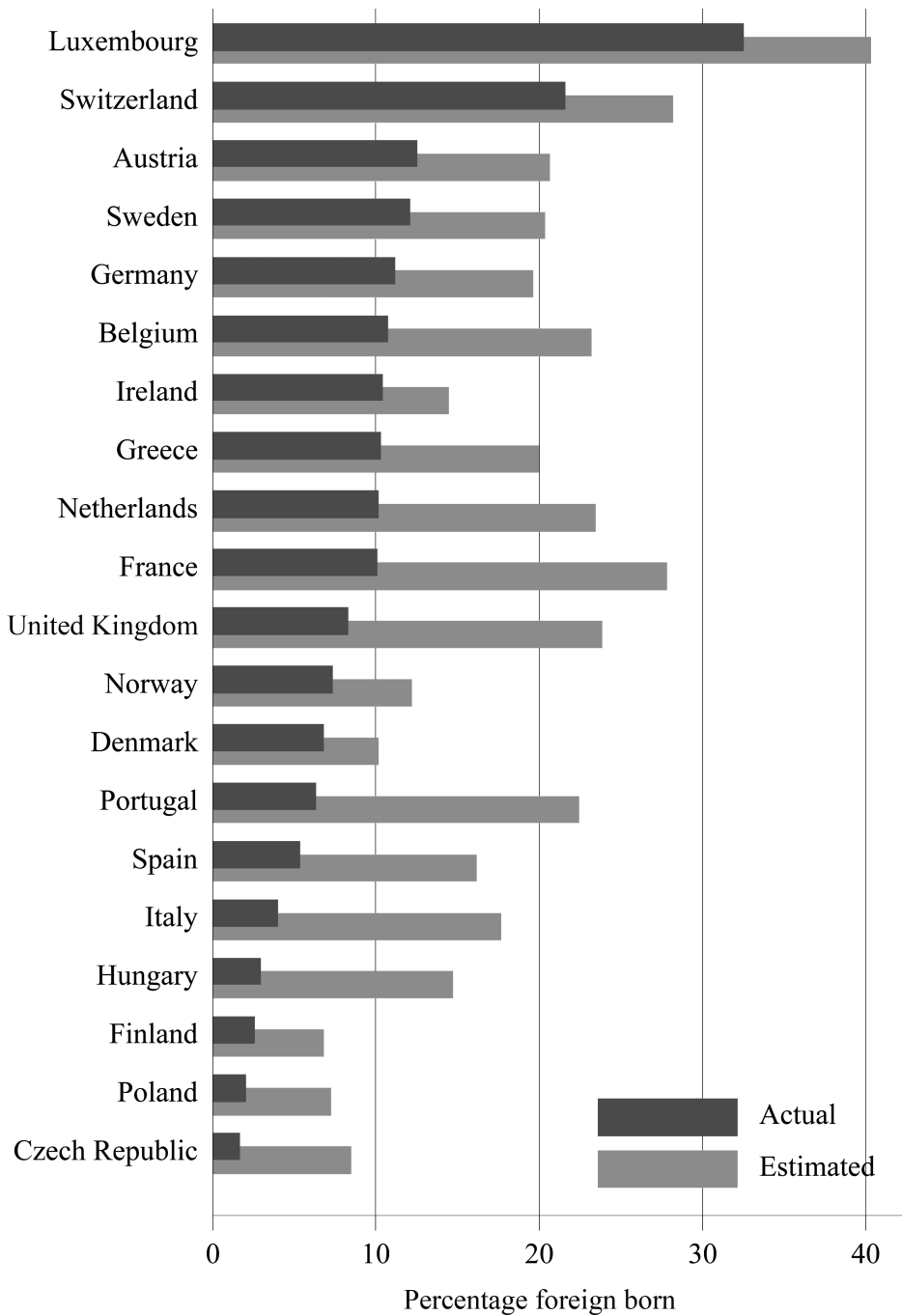


Fig. 1. Estimated versus actual percentage foreign-born residents in each country
 Source: 2002–03 European Social Survey, OECD.

immigrants in their country, often by a substantial amount.³⁷ Thus, when confronted with the most direct test of knowledge about immigrant levels, respondents tended to fail this test, as we hypothesized above (Hypothesis 8).³⁸

The model includes as predictors both the comparative estimate of immigrant levels and a measure of absolute 'misperception', calculated as the difference between each respondent's absolute estimate of immigrant levels and the actual proportion of foreign-born residents in the respondent's country. It also includes the interaction of these two measures, because it is plausible that an assessment of immigration that is high in both absolute and relative terms will engender even stronger opposition than the additive effects of each belief.

The multivariate statistical model includes a number of political and demographic factors, including ideology, political awareness, life satisfaction, social trust, friendship with immigrants, age, education, minority group status and immigrant status.³⁹ The nature of the relationships between these variables and immigration attitudes is not a primary concern, so we shall not outline our expectations in detail. Previous research indicates that opposition to immigration should be greater among the dissatisfied and distrustful,⁴⁰ those with little personal contact with immigrants⁴¹ and the less-educated.⁴²

One hypothesis to highlight concerns the interaction between political ideology and political awareness. Political ideology, measured here by self-placement on an eleven-point left-right scale, is consistently related to immigration attitudes in European politics, with opposition concentrated on the political right. However, the impact of the respondent's ideological position should be conditioned by political awareness. Because the politically aware are more attuned to elite debate, they are better able to link their attitudes on specific issues to underlying values like ideology.⁴³ Thus, the polarization of the left and right on questions of immigration should occur most strongly among those who are high in awareness. To test this proposition we include the interaction of

(*F*'note continued)

paper, available at <<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/27/5/33868740.pdf>>, accessed 6 July 2005), we employ the measure that counts the 'unknowns' as native-born.

³⁷ There is a statistically significant relationship between the estimated and actual percentage of foreign-born residents. Nevertheless, that there is some regularity to popular estimates of immigrant numbers does not detract from the level of misperception in these estimates.

³⁸ These two questions about the size of immigrant populations occurred relatively late in the battery of questions about immigration. Thus, it is possible that respondents had been 'primed' to think about immigration and to consider it a more serious issue, thereby leading them to give higher estimates than they would have otherwise. However, we do not think that the question ordering is a serious confound. The amount of overestimation is comparable to that found in other studies (such as Theiss-Morse, 'Characterizations and Consequences'). Moreover, other polling in Britain by the MORI organization has found that respondents estimated the proportion of foreign-born residents to be 23 per cent, which is very close to the estimate reported in Figure 1 (23.8 per cent). See <<http://www.mori.com/polls/2003/community.shtml>>.

³⁹ Our measure of social trust is an index combining three questions: 'Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?'; 'Do you think that most people would try to take advantage of you if they got the chance, or would they try to be fair?'; and 'Would you say that most of the time people try to be helpful or that they are mostly looking out for themselves?' These items were all 0-10 scales, and the resulting index has a reliability of 0.77.

⁴⁰ Quillian, 'Prejudice as a Response to Perceived Group Threat'.

⁴¹ Pettigrew and Meertens, 'Subtle and Blatant Prejudice in Western Europe'.

⁴² L. Hagendoorn and S. Nekuee, eds, *Education and Racism: A Cross-National Inventory of Positive Effects of Education on Ethnic Tolerance* (Brookfield, Vt.: Ashgate, 1999).

⁴³ J. Zaller, *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

ideology and the extent of political discussion, which serves as a proxy for political awareness.⁴⁴

A second hypothesis is that among members of a minority ethnic group, social and political incorporation into the host country, whether through birth, citizenship or length of residence in the host country, should diminish support for immigration and engender views similar to those of the native majority. By contrast, recent immigrants, those who are more ‘marginal’ in Fetzer’s terminology, are more likely to see themselves as the target of negative beliefs about the consequences and therefore to reject them to maintain a sense of self-esteem. Moreover, recent immigrants should have a stronger interest in a liberal immigration policy as they are more likely to seek entry for family members. To measure this, we include a dichotomous measure of whether the respondent sees himself or herself as a member of a minority group as well as a series of dummy variables that capture the respondent’s immigrant status. These variables were constructed from several questions about whether the respondent’s parents were born in the country, whether the respondent was born in the country, whether the respondent has become a naturalized citizen, and how long he or she has lived in the country. These effects of these dummy variables are relative to the excluded category, which is native-born citizens whose parents were also born in the country.

Results

In Table 3 we present the results of these individual-level models of the perceived consequences and preferred levels of immigration. These models were estimated using ordinary least squares, with clustered standard errors to account for the nesting of individuals within countries.⁴⁵ Each of the dependent variables and each of these individual-level independent variables are coded 0 to 1 (or 0 and 1 when the variable is dichotomous). This means that the individual-level coefficient estimates are somewhat comparable across variables, in the sense that they can be regarded as an estimate of the numerical change on the 0–1 anti-immigration index resulting from moving from the lowest to the highest category of the independent variable.⁴⁶

The effects of the individual-level variables confirm many of our expectations. First, several measures of economic interests, including both personal and sociotropic concerns, have statistically significant effects (see Hypothesis 1). Economic satisfaction tends to decrease opposition to immigration. In line with previous research, we find that sociotropic

⁴⁴ M. Gabel, ‘Public Support for European Integration: An Empirical Test of Five Theories’, *Journal of Politics*, 60 (1998), 333–54; McLaren, ‘Immigration and the New Politics of Inclusion and Exclusion in the European Union’.

⁴⁵ We weight the sample by the ESS variable *pweight*. We also estimated these models using hierarchical or multilevel modelling techniques (see A. S. Byrk and Stephen W. Raudenbush, *Hierarchical Linear Models: Applications and Data Analysis Methods*, 2nd edn (Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage Publications, 2002); D. A. Luke, *Multilevel Modeling* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 2004); M. R. Steenbergen and B. S. Jones, ‘Modeling Multilevel Data Structures’, *American Journal of Political Science*, 46 (2002), 218–37). The results obtained were substantively very similar to those obtained with the simpler estimation strategy employed here – a strategy some have argued can be employed successfully as long as the standard errors are adjusted (see C. Kam and R. Franzese, ‘Modeling and Interpreting Interactive Hypotheses in Regression Analysis: A Refresher and Some Practical Advice’ (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, forthcoming)). Replication of the analysis using hierarchical models is available from the authors.

⁴⁶ The models also include a dummy variable for each country except one, though we do not report the coefficient estimates.

TABLE 3 *Individual-Level Model of Opposition to Immigration*

Variable	Perceive negative consequences		Prefer lower levels	
	Coeff.	s.e.	Coeff.	s.e.
<i>Economic interests</i>				
Satisfaction with personal finances	-0.018	(0.011)	-0.035*	(0.016)
Satisfaction with economy	-0.093***	(0.008)	-0.058**	(0.016)
Income	0.007	(0.009)	-0.031	(0.016)
Employment: unemployed	0.0003	(0.006)	-0.003	(0.009)
Employment: student	-0.015**	(0.004)	-0.037***	(0.006)
Employment: retired, etc.	-0.004	(0.002)	-0.011*	(0.004)
<i>Cultural and national identities</i>				
Prefer cultural unity	0.146***	(0.005)	0.180***	(0.009)
Preference for national authority	0.041***	(0.005)	0.062***	(0.007)
<i>Information about immigration</i>				
Comparative estimate	0.111***	(0.018)	0.118***	(0.022)
Absolute misperception	-0.019	(0.056)	-0.013	(0.058)
Comparative × absolute estimate	0.125	(0.079)	0.170*	(0.065)
<i>Contact with immigrants</i>				
Have immigrant friends	-0.065***	(0.006)	-0.087***	(0.005)
<i>Alienation</i>				
Social trust	-0.121***	(0.012)	-0.131***	(0.008)
Life satisfaction	-0.022***	(0.003)	-0.025**	(0.007)
<i>Political awareness and ideology</i>				
Frequency of political discussion	-0.048***	(0.009)	-0.073**	(0.024)
Conservatism	0.028	(0.022)	0.039	(0.021)
Conservatism × Political discussion	0.079**	(0.020)	0.076*	(0.036)
<i>Immigrant status</i>				
Self-identified minority	-0.018**	(0.005)	-0.007	(0.007)
Second generation	-0.046	(0.024)	-0.048*	(0.022)
Naturalised (> 10 yrs in country)	-0.032*	(0.011)	-0.001	(0.018)
Naturalised (< 10 yrs in country)	-0.047*	(0.018)	-0.041	(0.023)
Non-citizen (> 10 yrs in country)	-0.064***	(0.010)	-0.020*	(0.008)
Non-citizen (< 10 yrs in country)	-0.111***	(0.011)	-0.090***	(0.015)
<i>Other controls</i>				
Education	-0.057***	(0.007)	-0.082***	(0.011)
Age	-0.008	(0.007)	0.046**	(0.015)
Female	-0.001	(0.002)	0.003	(0.004)
Constant	0.614***	(0.014)	0.529***	(0.009)
R ²	0.350		0.293	

Sources: 2002–03 European Social Survey.

Note: Table entries are coefficients and standard errors from weighted OLS regression models with clustered standard errors. The dependent variables are coded 0 (most favourable) to 1 (least favourable). All individual-level independent variables are coded 0 to 1 or 0 and 1. The models also include dummy variables for country of residence.

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$ (two-tailed). $N = 34,427$.

orientations outweigh personal financial concerns.⁴⁷ For example, in the model of perceived consequences, the effect of sociotropic evaluations ($b = -0.093$) is much greater than that of personal evaluations ($b = -0.018$).⁴⁸ In the model of preferred levels, this gap shrinks, but sociotropic concerns still have a larger substantive effect than personal evaluations. Income is not associated with greater opposition to immigration (Hypothesis 2). Compared to subjective evaluations of the economy and personal finances, objective measures of economic situation have smaller substantive effects – suggesting a lesser role for labour market position in boosting opposition to immigration than reported in studies of American opinion.⁴⁹

The two measures of cultural and national identities also have significant effects: the preference for cultural unity and the preference for retaining national authority, our proxy for a sense of national attachment, are associated with negative assessments of immigration (Hypothesis 5). Of these the most significant is the former. Fears about the consequences of cultural pluralism are strongly related to harsher assessments of immigration. Indeed, the effect of this variable is the largest of any in the model. For example, in the model of preferred levels, a shift from the minimum to maximum value (that is, from the least support for cultural unity to the most support) is associated with a 0.18 increase in opposition to immigration, which is almost equal to one standard deviation in this variable.⁵⁰

The model also demonstrates that perceptions of immigrant numbers are associated with a negative assessment of immigration (Hypothesis 9). The results suggest that there is an interaction between comparative estimates of immigration levels and the absolute level of misperception of the immigrant population. In Figure 2, we present a graph that captures the substantive meaning of this interaction. We plot the marginal effect of absolute misperceptions on preferred levels of immigration, conditional on the comparative estimate.⁵¹ The dotted lines represent 95 per cent confidence intervals for the marginal

⁴⁷ Citrin *et al.*, ‘Public Opinion Toward Immigration Reform’; Lahav, *Immigration and Politics in the New Europe*.

⁴⁸ The maximum substantive impact of sociotropic evaluations in this model is equivalent to about one-half of a standard deviation in the perceived consequences index.

⁴⁹ Scheve and Slaughter, ‘Labor Market Competition and Individual Preferences over Immigration Policy’.

⁵⁰ It is possible that this measure of preference for cultural unity is at least somewhat endogenous to attitudes about immigration. Perhaps those who advocate cultural unity are doing so as a consequence of their opposition to immigration. The design of the ESS module on immigration, in which the measure of preferences for cultural unity occurred roughly in the middle of the various questions about immigration, may have exacerbated this possibility, if respondents were explicitly thinking about immigrants when they answered this question. A typical strategy to deal with any endogeneity would be a two-stage least-squares regression, drawing on other variables as ‘instruments’ for preferences for cultural unity. Unfortunately, ideal instruments do not exist in the ESS survey – i.e., there are no measures that strongly correlate with preferences for cultural unity but not with either of the dependent variables we employ here. However, other analysis (for example, de Figueiredo and Elkins’s ‘Are Patriots Bigots?’) that draws on a two-stage estimator still finds a relationship between attitudes towards the nation – in particular, a more aggressive nationalism – and hostility towards immigrants. Moreover, Sniderman *et al.* show in ‘Predispositional Factors and Situational Triggers’ that cultural threats are more strongly associated with views on immigration when statements about these threats are ‘decoupled’ from any reference to immigrants. Thus, if our measure, even though its wording does not reference immigrants, is nevertheless not fully ‘decoupled’, this may actually attenuate its impact.

⁵¹ More specifically, the marginal effect is computed as the change associated with a shift from the minimum to maximum value of misperception. The logic of these graphs and the STATA code used to make them is discussed in T. Bomber, W. R. Clark and M. Golder, ‘Understanding Interaction Models: Improving Empirical Analyses’, *Political Analysis*, 13 (2005), 1–20. A graph of the same interaction from the model of perceived consequences produces a substantively similar result.

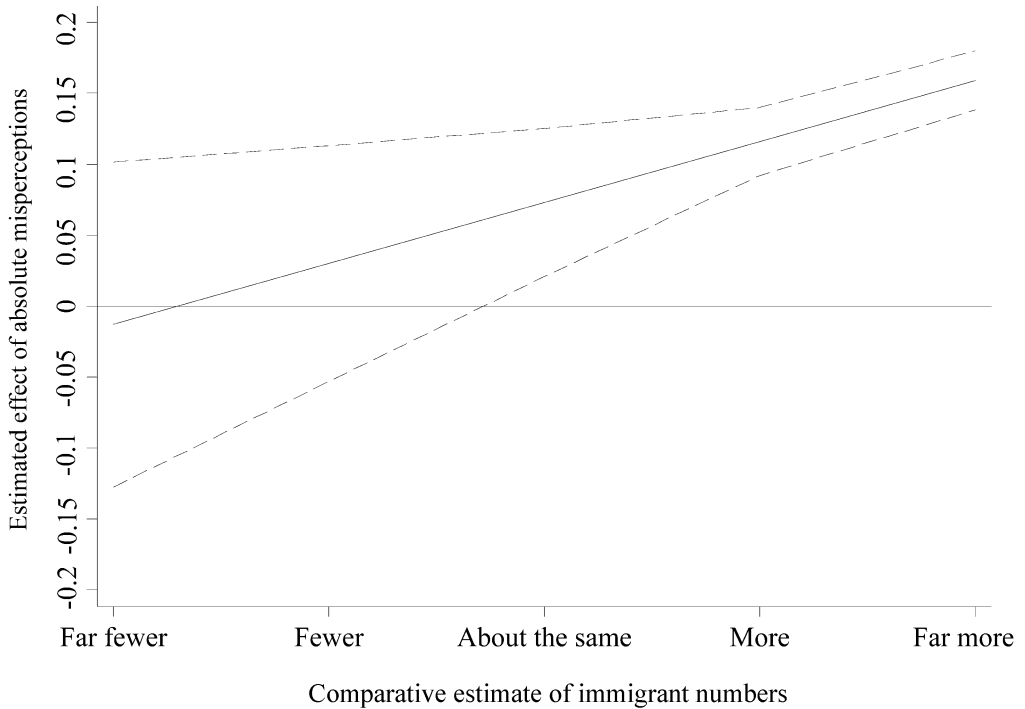


Fig. 2. The effect of misperception of immigrant numbers on preferring lower levels of immigration, conditional on comparative estimates of immigration

Note: The solid line represents the marginal effect on preferred levels of immigration of a shift in misperception from its minimum to maximum value, conditional on comparative estimates of immigration. The dotted lines represent 95 per cent confidence intervals. This figure is based on the model presented in Table 3.

effect.⁵² Figure 2 demonstrates that absolute misperceptions do not have a statistically significant impact if respondents believe their country receives ‘far fewer’ or ‘fewer’ immigrants than other countries. However, among those 80 per cent of respondents who believe that their country receives about the same, more or far more immigrants than other countries, the effect of misperception is quite notable. The degree of misperception is significantly associated with opposition to immigrants, as we hypothesised, though only among those who feel that their country is being ‘singled out’ relative to its peers.⁵³

We also find evidence of a significant interaction between political ideology and the frequency of political discussion. Drawing on the model of preferred levels of immigration, we depict this interaction in Figure 3. The marginal effect of conservatism is statistically

⁵² As Bomber, Clark and Golder, ‘Understanding Interaction Models’, point out, the statistical significance of the interaction term does not necessarily indicate whether the independent variable’s effect on the dependent variable can be distinguished from zero at all levels of the conditioning variable. This is why Figure 2 is particularly important.

⁵³ There is also the potential for endogeneity here: perhaps people who are opposed to immigrants over-estimate their numbers (consciously or not). However, the findings of the research cited previously – which finds that overestimates of minority populations are related to opposition to programmes that would benefit these minorities – gives us confidence that our results are not spurious.

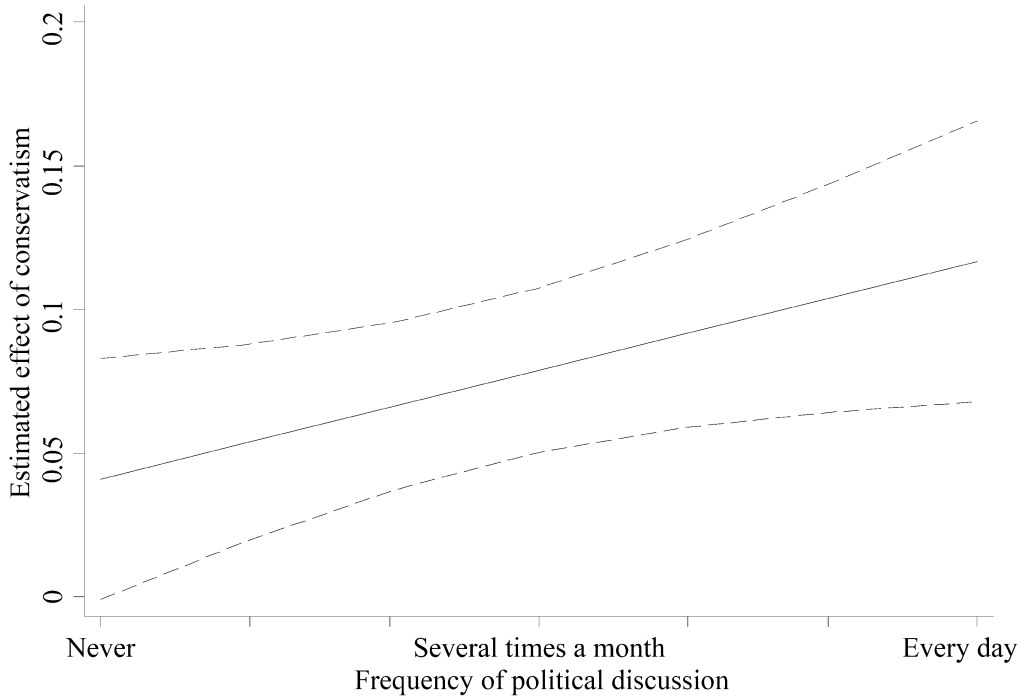


Fig. 3. The effect of conservatism on preferring lower levels of immigration, conditional on the frequency of political discussion

Note: The solid line represents the marginal effect on preferred levels of immigration of a shift in misperception from its minimum to maximum value, conditional on comparative estimates of immigration. The dotted lines represent 95 per cent confidence intervals. This figure is based on the model presented in Table 3.

significant even when respondents report never discussing politics. However, its influence increases nearly three-fold among those who discuss politics frequently. Put differently, conservatism is associated with negative judgements about immigration regardless of the level of discussion, but that association is particularly pronounced among those who engage in more frequent political discussions.

Social-psychological factors are strongly associated with both dependent variables. Higher levels of social trust and having immigrant friends tend to produce attitudes that are less anti-immigrant. The influence of socialization is apparent as well: the better-educated and students, both embedded in social networks that generally are favourable to immigrants, express more positive views of immigration.

Finally, ethnic background and immigrant status also affect attitudes towards immigration. These perceptions are more positive among self-identified minorities, though the effect is quite small and statistically significant in only the model of perceived consequences. Similarly, perceptions are more positive among immigrants themselves, relative to respondents who are native-born and whose parents were also native-born. However, the size of this effect depends on the degree of the immigrant's incorporation into the host society. Both naturalization and longer residence weaken the effect of immigrant status on opinions of immigration. The group that feels most positively towards immigrants is non-citizens who have arrived in the country recently. It is as though integration (or assimilation) involves adopting the more restrictionist outlook of the native-born.

These results confirm and extend the findings of previous research. Although both cultural attitudes and economic concerns matter, cultural factors seem to have a larger substantive impact, as predicted by symbolic politics theory. Opposition to immigration is enhanced when respondents endorse the value of cultural homogeneity, regardless of how economic consequences are perceived. Overestimating the number of immigrants is also associated with opposition to more immigration, and it is plausible that these misperceptions stem from contact with or media stories about visibly different groups such as Muslims and non-whites. At the individual level (in a model we do not report here), misperceptions are driven by several factors. Not surprisingly, education and political engagement tend to render estimates more accurate. Those who are themselves immigrants, who have immigrant friends and who live in urban areas tend to over-estimate immigrant numbers. This suggests that misperceptions derive in part from an availability bias: the more prominent are immigrants in one's immediate environment or social networks, the greater the over-estimate. Misperceptions are positively related to economic dissatisfaction as well, which implies that estimates are driven not only by availability but also by anxiety. At the aggregate level, it appears that the extent of misperception in the country as a whole is greatest in countries with a higher proportion of immigrants from Africa (such as France and Portugal), giving some provisional support to the notion that ethnically distinct immigrant populations engender exaggerated views of their numbers. Finally, it is worth noting the important effect of friendship with immigrants. This result suggests that 'genuine' contact across group lines can reduce the sense of threat and increase acceptance of immigration.⁵⁴

THE ROLE OF CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

Thus far we have not examined whether contextual factors measured at the country level, notably the size of the immigrant population and the state of the economy, have any direct effects on attitudes. Moreover, by combining the twenty country samples into a single European public, we have not investigated whether the effects of the individual-level variables are themselves related to these contextual factors, i.e., whether contextual conditions may 'prime' certain of these individual-level factors. This section considers whether, as hypothesized above, a large immigrant population (Hypothesis 3) or an unhealthy economy (Hypothesis 6) within a particular country creates greater opposition to immigration among that country's residents. We also test the hypotheses about how particular individual-level effects should vary across countries: first, whether economic hardship primes economic evaluations (Hypothesis 4), and, secondly, whether the presence of large immigrant populations primes cultural and national identities (Hypothesis 7).

Testing these hypotheses requires careful attention to the quality of the sample of countries that we have. Though the twenty countries examined here are more numerous and more diverse than those included in other surveys of European public opinion, such as the Eurobarometer, these countries do not constitute a 'random sample' of European countries, particularly given the small number of countries from Eastern Europe. As Bowers and Drake discuss, traditional hypothesis-testing and inference assume a random sample; without it, the usual interpretation of *t*-statistics and *p*-values is problematic.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ G. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice* (Cambridge, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1954).

⁵⁵ J. Bowers and K. Drake, 'EDA for HLM: Visualization When Probabilistic Inference Fails', *Political Analysis*, 13 (2005), 301–26. See also the other articles in this same issue of *Political Analysis*, which focus on 'multilevel modelling for large clusters' and analyse multi-country surveys similar in structure to the ESS.

Moreover, the number of countries, twenty, is too small a sample to ensure that the asymptotic properties of the typical maximum likelihood estimator ‘kick in’ – notably, that the estimator converges on the ‘right’ answer as the sample size increases. Thus, it is potentially problematic to add country-level variables, or interactions between country-level and individual-level variables, to the model in Table 3 and estimate that model using a least squares or hierarchical modelling routine.⁵⁶

Instead, we rely on a ‘two-stage’ estimation procedure, followed by careful graphical representations of the hypotheses. In the first stage, we estimate a separate individual-level model for each of these twenty countries. The model’s specification is identical to that in Table 3. From this model, we then create a second dataset, where the unit of analysis is the country and the variables are the country-specific intercept and coefficients from these models. To investigate whether contextual factors have a direct effect on attitudes, we plot these intercepts against the relevant country-level variables in Figure 4. To investigate whether contextual factors condition individual-level predictors, we plot coefficients against the relevant country-level variables in Figures 5–6.

The Direct Effect of Contextual Factors

Figure 4 presents two scatterplots. In each plot, the magnitude of the intercept is plotted along the y-axis, and the country-level variable along the x-axis. Each data point represents

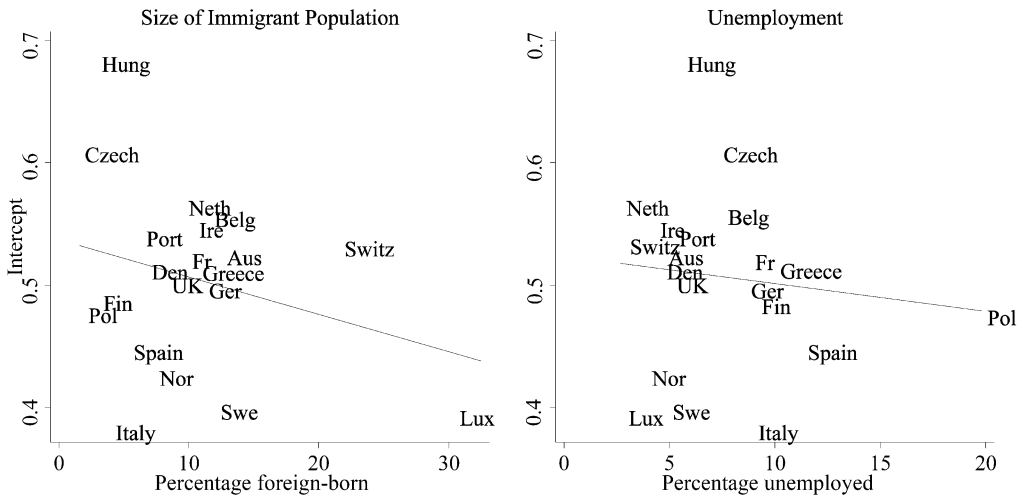


Fig. 4. Scatterplots of country-specific intercepts against contextual factors

Source: 2002–03 European Social Survey, OECD.

Note: The graphs present intercepts that derive from separate regression models for each country (see Table 3 for model specification). These intercepts are plotted against country-level indicators. The line is fitted using ordinary least squares.

⁵⁶ It is telling that Quillian, who uses hierarchical models to investigate opinion about immigration in only twelve countries in ‘Prejudice as a Response to Perceived Group Threat’, finds ‘fragility’ in his estimates (see his fn. 21, p. 603; see also I. Kreft, ‘The Estimation of Cross-Level Interactions’ at <<http://www.calstatela.edu/faculty/ikreft/quarterly/node13.html>>), accessed 17 February 2005.

an individual country's intercept from the model estimated on that country's sample.⁵⁷ For the sake of presentation, we present results from models of preferred levels of immigration, but the results would be substantively the same if we were to draw upon the models of perceived consequences.

The first plot in Figure 4 presents the relationship between the country-level intercepts and the size of the immigrant population, specifically the percentage who are foreign-born in each country, as calculated from the previously described OECD data. The second plot presents the relationship between these country-level intercepts and the state of the economy, operationalized as the level of unemployment in 2002.⁵⁸ We hypothesized that the relationship between these contextual factors and the intercepts should be positive: opposition to immigration will be stronger in countries that have larger immigrant populations and greater unemployment. As Figure 4 shows, however, there is no such effect. If anything, opposition to immigration is slightly *lower* in countries that have larger numbers of immigrants or higher levels of unemployment. These findings are robust if we employ the intercepts from the model of perceived consequences as well (results not shown).⁵⁹

To confirm this result, we employed alternative measures of both contextual variables. These included alternative measures of economic health (GDP per capita), as well as changes in both GDP and unemployment between 2001 and 2002. In only one case – involving GDP and the intercepts from the preferred levels model – did the hypothesised relationship emerge, in that countries with a higher GDP per capita were less hostile to immigration. However, this relationship did not emerge when we substituted the intercepts from the perceived consequences model.

We considered alternative measures of immigrant stocks that capture the distinctiveness of the immigrant population, such as the proportion of each country's population born outside Western Europe,⁶⁰ the proportion born in various regions of the world (Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, East Asia, etc.), the proportion of those who are asylum-seekers, as well as the change in the percentage foreign-born in 1992–2002. The observed relationships were essentially null or directly contrary to the hypothesis – for example, opposition to immigration was *lower* in countries with large proportions of asylum-seekers, such as Switzerland and Sweden.⁶¹

Thus, in these data it appears that objective contextual factors play a small role in explaining attitudes towards immigrants.⁶² Of course, context is measured here at the

⁵⁷ To make the graph more readable, we do not indicate the 95 per cent confidence interval around the estimate of the intercept. All of these intercepts are statistically distinguishable from zero.

⁵⁸ The unemployment data were compiled by the OECD. See <<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/41/13/18595359.pdf>>.

⁵⁹ There is a positive relationship between the size of the foreign-born population and the intercepts from the model of perceived consequences, but it is driven by a single outlier (Luxembourg), suggesting that this relationship is not broadly representative of all of the data.

⁶⁰ See Lahav, *Immigration and Politics in the New Europe*; Quillian, 'Prejudice as a Response to Perceived Group Threat'.

⁶¹ See also C. Dustmann and A. Glitz, *Immigration, Jobs, and Wages: Theory, Evidence and Opinion* (London: Centre for Research and Analysis of Migration, 2005).

⁶² We also found no evidence that these intercepts were related to the combination, or interaction, of the size of the immigrant population and any of these measures of economic health (see Golder, 'Explaining Variation in the Success of Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe'; Quillian, 'Prejudice as a Response to Perceived Group Threat'). They are also not related to membership in the EU or length of tenure in the EU. It is also worth noting that estimating a hierarchical model with both individual-level and country-level measures produces insignificant coefficient estimates for the country-level measures. Though we are cautious about the value of these hypothesis tests, for the reasons stated above, this at least confirms the descriptive results presented in Figure 4.

country level and this may be too crude or remote a measure to capture the environmental influences that shape experiences with and beliefs about immigrants.⁶³ In addition, other contextual factors such as political history, the presence of right-wing parties, or media coverage – any of which could make immigration a salient issue – might well be important in explaining country-level differences. Nevertheless, our findings do suggest that attitudes towards immigration are grounded more in individuals' attitudes and perceptions than in objective economic or demographic conditions at the national level.⁶⁴

The Conditioning Effect of Contextual Factors

Figures 5–6 present similar plots of coefficients from the country-specific models and the relevant country-level variables that we hypothesize will condition the size of these coefficients. The vertical lines through the data points signify the 95 per cent confidence intervals for these country-specific coefficients. These intervals help identify whether an individual-level variable has robust, statistically significant effects across these countries. If the hypotheses about cross-level interactions are correct, then the magnitude of these coefficients should increase with either the size of the immigrant population or the level of economic hardship.⁶⁵ As in Figure 4, we present coefficients from the models of preferred levels.

The first hypothesis is that individual-level evaluations of the economy and of one's personal financial situation will be stronger predictors of anti-immigrant sentiment in countries experiencing economic hardship (Hypothesis 4). The first two plots in Figure 5 – labelled (a) and (b) – present the relationship between unemployment levels and the coefficients for both the personal and the national (or sociotropic) measures of economic evaluations. The second two plots – labelled (c) and (d) – present the relationship between gross domestic product (GDP) per capita and these same two sets of coefficients.⁶⁶ We note first that the effect of satisfaction with the economy, while important in many countries, is not consistently robust. It has a statistically significant impact in nine out of twenty countries. The impact of satisfaction with personal finances is weaker, attaining significance in only two of the twenty countries. These results confirm the previous finding that sociotropic evaluations tend to outweigh personal evaluations, and also suggest that the role of economic evaluations generally is not consistently important across these twenty countries.

⁶³ Hood and Morris (in '¿Amigo o Enemigo? Context, Attitudes, and Anglo Public Opinion toward Immigration') find that respondents in the United States who live in counties with larger Asian and Hispanic populations tend to feel more positively towards immigration. Scheve and Slaughter ('Labor Market Competition and Individual Preferences over Immigration Policy') do not find the same, however, using the metropolitan statistical area as the contextual unit. Perrineau finds that voting for the National Front is actually more strongly related to immigrant presence in a larger contextual unit (the *département*) than in a smaller unit (*communes*) – see P. Perrineau, 'Le Front National: un électorat autoritaire', *Revue Politique et Parlementaire*, 87 (1985), 24–31. Specifying the correct contextual unit and isolating its effect is a significant task for future research.

⁶⁴ We also used hierarchical modelling techniques to 'decompose' the variance in attitudes to determine the proportion of variance explained at the individual and country levels, respectively. For both indices, nearly 90 per cent of the variance was explained at the individual level. This suggests that country-level attributes, while not inconsequential, are substantively a smaller part of the explanatory picture.

⁶⁵ The coefficients for both measures of economic evaluations have been multiplied by -1 , so that the hypothesized relationship between the magnitude of these coefficients and country-level economic hardship will be positive.

⁶⁶ We employ GDP per capita (in 2002 US \$1000), based on purchasing power parities. See <http://www.oecd.org/document/28/0,2340,en_2825_495684_2750044_1_1_1_1,00.html> .

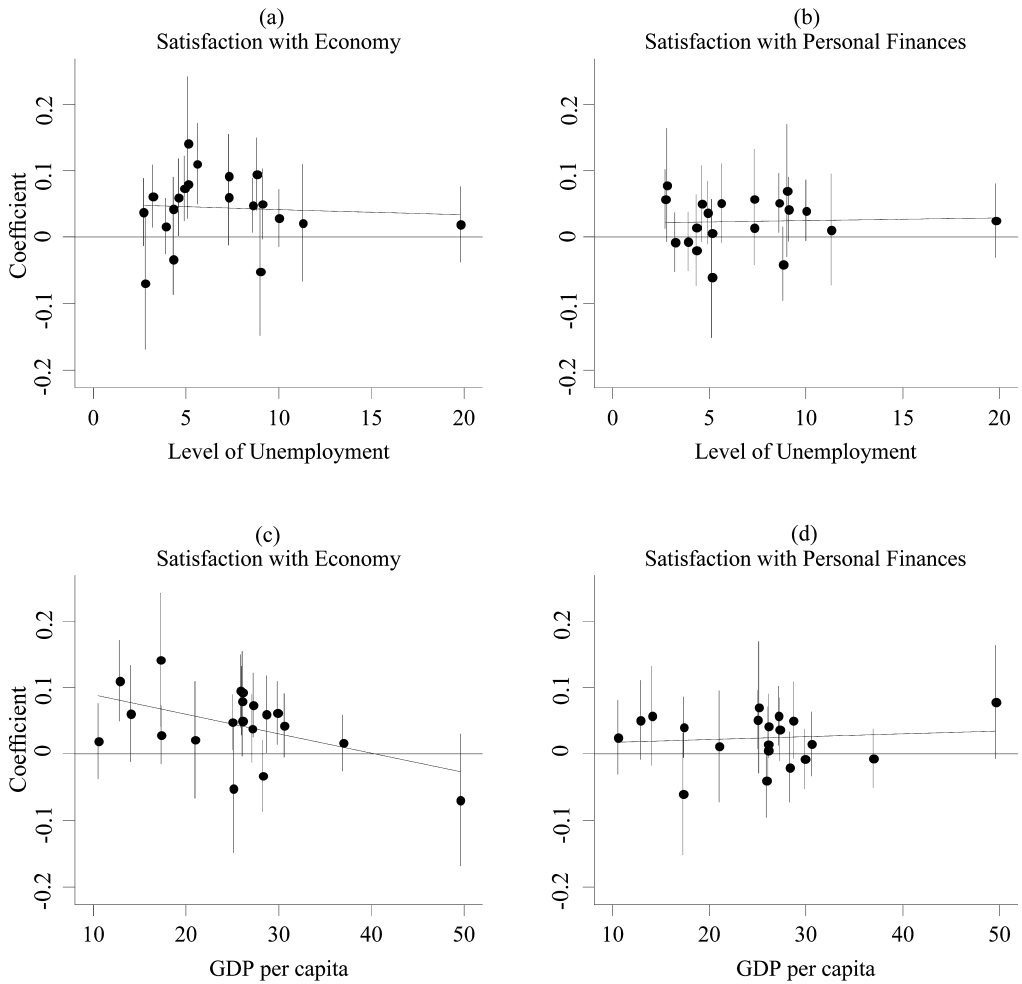


Fig. 5. Scatterplots of country-specific coefficients for economic evaluations against contextual factors
 Source: 2002–03 European Social Survey, OECD.

Note: The graphs present coefficients that derive from separate regression models for each country (see Table 3 for model specification). The vertical lines represent 95 per cent confidence intervals. These coefficients are plotted against country-level indicators. The line is fitted using ordinary least squares.

If unemployment levels ‘prime’ economic predictors of attitudes towards immigration, then plots (a) and (b) should show a positive relationship; there should be larger coefficients in countries with higher levels of employment. This is not the case. There appears to be little relationship between unemployment and the coefficients for either measure of economic evaluations. The same is true if we employ coefficients from the models of perceived consequences rather than preferred levels (results not shown).

If GDP per capita primes these predictors, then there should be larger coefficients at low levels of GDP relative to higher levels of GDP. Plot (c), which presents the coefficients for satisfaction with the overall economy, does demonstrate such a relationship. Plot (d), which presents coefficients for satisfaction with personal finances, does not. There is

thus mixed evidence for the hypothesis that economic evaluations are more potent predictors of opposition to immigration in poorer countries. However, additional plots of the effects of both measures of economic evaluations that employ the coefficients from the models of perceived consequences depict relationships that resemble plot (c) and thus provide stronger evidence for this hypothesis (results not shown).⁶⁷ Taken together, these results suggest that economic evaluations are more strongly associated with attitudes towards immigrants in countries with a lower GDP per capita.

Figure 6 presents similar plots of the country-specific coefficients for cultural and national identity: preference for cultural unity and preference for national authority. We plot these against the percentage of foreign-born residents in the country. First, it is apparent that the effect of preferences for cultural unity is quite robust, as it is statistically significant in each country. The effect of preferences for national authority is significant in twelve out of twenty countries. These findings provide evidence that the impact of cultural and national identities is not only often larger in magnitude, but it is more robust across this large set of countries. However, the plots in Figure 6 fail to support the priming hypothesis (Hypothesis 7): the effects of cultural and national identity should be larger in

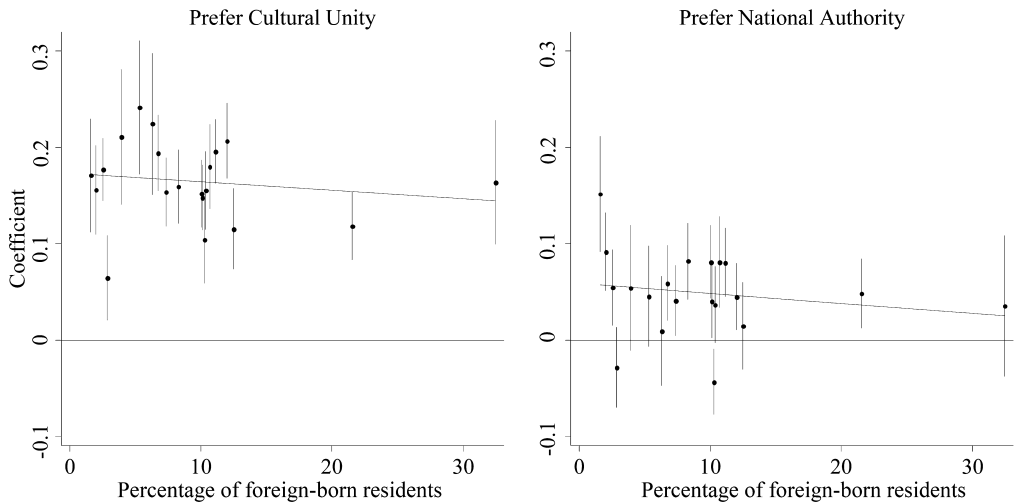


Fig. 6. Scatterplots of country-specific coefficients for cultural and national identity against contextual factors
Source: 2002–03 European Social Survey, OECD.

Note: The graphs present coefficients that derive from separate regression models for each country (see Table 3 for model specification). The vertical lines represent 95 per cent confidence intervals. These coefficients are plotted against country-level indicators. The line is fitted using ordinary least squares.

⁶⁷ The correlation presented in plot (c) is $r = -0.48$. The correlation between GDP per capita and the coefficients from the models of perceived consequences are $r = -0.71$ (satisfaction with personal finances) and $r = -0.60$ (satisfaction with economy). It is worth noting that including a cross-level interaction between economic concerns and GDP in a single hierarchical model of both individual-level and country-level attributes generates similar findings: the impact of satisfaction with the economy is larger among respondents who live in countries with a lower GDP per capita. A similar investigation of the relationship between country-level economic indicators and the coefficients for the other individual-level economic measures, income and unemployed status, generated insignificant results.

countries where a larger proportion of foreign-born residents putatively poses a more visible immigrant ‘threat’. There is, if anything, a very modest negative relationship between the percentage of foreign-born residents and the coefficients for the preference for cultural unity.⁶⁸

In conclusion, we find that contextual factors have few systematic influences on the magnitude of these individual-level effects. The only notable cross-level interaction was between GDP per capita and evaluations of the economy, which were more strongly related to anti-immigrant sentiment in poorer countries. The other cross-level interactions did not emerge in these data.⁶⁹ Thus, our findings diverge from those of Quillian, who finds evidence of several robust cross-level interactions.⁷⁰ This may stem from differences in survey samples (Quillian’s includes only twelve EU nations) and in question wording.⁷¹ Explaining cross-national variation in the correlates of attitudes towards immigration remains a task for future research. Nevertheless, despite this degree of variation, these country-specific models do confirm the consistent role of cultural and national identities relative to that of economic evaluations.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

A succinct summary of the modal opinion towards new immigration in these twenty European countries is ‘we’ll take some, but not too many’, with concomitant concerns about the consequences of immigration, particularly for government services and crime. Europeans do not embrace extremely anti-immigrant views, but neither are they yearning to welcome the world’s huddled masses.

A significant finding is that opinion about immigration is unrelated to the demographic and economic circumstances of countries, contrary to our Hypotheses 3 and 6. Citizens of countries that contain large numbers of immigrants, such as Switzerland, Germany or Sweden, are not more resistant to immigration, nor are citizens of countries facing greater economic hardship, such as Poland or Spain. Individual differences in attitudes tend to derive instead from attitudinal and psychological factors: information about immigrants (Hypothesis 9), cultural and national identities (Hypothesis 5), economic anxiety (Hypothesis 1), membership in social groups and networks that communicate a particular outlook about accepting immigrants and a generalized disposition to trust other people. Country-level variations in the effects of these variables are generally not well explained by the demographic or economic circumstances of countries (see Hypotheses 4 and 7), though the effect of economic evaluations appears somewhat stronger in poorer countries.

Among these factors, cultural and national identities are particularly potent, as is the commonplace overestimation of immigrant numbers. These factors outweigh the role of economic interests, whether conceptualized using objective indicators such as income or

⁶⁸ The same is true in plots of the coefficients from the models of perceived consequences, and if we use alternative measures of immigrant presence, such as the proportion of immigrants from outside Western Europe. We got similar findings when we included cross-level interactions in the multivariate model shown in Table 3.

⁶⁹ We also found no systematic differences among regions within Europe in terms of the magnitude of individual-level coefficients. For example, it does not appear that attitudes in the three East European countries in the ESS sample have a qualitatively different structure than those in Western Europe.

⁷⁰ Quillian, ‘Prejudice as a Response to Perceived Group Threat’. See Scheve and Slaughter, ‘Labor Market Competition and Individual Preferences over Immigration Policy’, for results similar to ours.

⁷¹ Quillian also argues that it is the interaction of country-level economic hardship and immigrant populations that ‘prime’ individual-level attributes. Though we do not present such tests, other analysis (not shown) finds no evidence of such a relationship.

subjective assessments of the economy and one's personal financial situation. In this sense, our results dovetail with other studies of public opinion about immigration that also find perceptions of cultural threat more important than perceptions of economic threat.⁷² Indeed, a striking result is the significant relationship between a preference for cultural unity and opposition to immigration in each of the twenty countries studied.

One policy implication stems from the influence of misperceptions about the size of immigrant populations. Numerous studies show that providing respondents with correct factual information can have substantial consequences for their opinions.⁷³ If correct information about immigrant stock and flows reached the general public, our analysis suggests that the sense of 'threat' might wane, mitigating hostility towards immigrants.

A second implication concerns the role of cultural and national identities. Public opinion is not insensitive to the economic consequences of immigration, but more important are deeply held symbolic attitudes, such as beliefs about cultural unity or homogeneity. As such, the populace's conception of its national self may balk at fully accepting people of different cultural origins into what David Hollinger has dubbed the national 'Circle of We'.⁷⁴ Troubled by this, proponents of 'post-national' citizenship such as Soysal seek to ground political and social rights in personhood rather than nationality and to trumpet the legitimacy of transnational identifications.⁷⁵ In many ways, the maximalist vision of the European Union as a mega-state shares this perspective. The influence of cultural and national identities on immigration attitudes suggests that such openness to 'outsiders' may find considerable resistance within European public opinion.

The challenge of integrating diverse peoples into a cohesive polity at either the national or European level is complicated by the growing salience of Muslim immigrants in Europe at a time of highly publicized, terrorist acts by Muslim extremists, such as the 11 September attacks, the Madrid and London train bombings and the assassination of Theo van Gogh in the Netherlands, as well as during times of unrest among immigrants in the French *banlieues* and in Denmark as a result of the cartoon depictions of Muhammad. The ethnic and religious distinctiveness of Muslim populations, coupled with these episodes, seems likely to keep concerns about national identity salient as citizens consider the costs of homegrown multiculturalism – even in countries that have yet to experience violent episodes on their own soil. The small explanatory role played by country-level factors suggests that attitudes towards immigrants have become increasingly divorced from social reality as the issue has become politicized; that is, people's perceptions of immigration and immigrants come to rely more on vivid events (at home and abroad) and messages from politicians and media, and less on the demographic and economic conditions that have been the main focus of research to date.

The pattern of opinion emerging from the ESS prodded European governments in the late 1990s to intensify co-operative efforts to stem the flow of refugees, asylum seekers

⁷² For example, Sniderman *et al.*, 'Predispositional Factors and Situational Triggers'.

⁷³ For example, see M. Gilens, 'Political Ignorance and Collective Policy Preferences', *American Political Science Review*, 95 (2001), 379–96.

⁷⁴ D. Hollinger, *Post-ethnic America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

⁷⁵ Y. Soysal, *Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Post-national Membership in Europe* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1994).

and illegal immigrants, with mixed success.⁷⁶ European governments also have grappled with the problem of redefining access to the welfare state, whose provisions initially were confined to citizens, by implementing new rules for residence permits and social entitlements.⁷⁷ Popular opinion also is consistent with the shift from multiculturalism to assimilation, whereby states have begun to emphasize linguistic and cultural integration as immigrants' price of entry.

With integration the new catchword, it is worth exploring how European publics react to multiculturalism and assimilation as ideological formulas for dealing with the ethnic diversity engendered by immigration. Will a 'civic' definition of nationhood emerge and facilitate the psychological inclusion of immigrants? Indeed, the problem of redefining nationhood to accommodate cultural differences seems significant in Europe, in part because so many of immigrants to Europe are Muslims with cultural traditions about family life that diverge sharply from the current European mainstream. One is left to wonder whether outside the intelligentsia the abstract values of Rawlsian liberalism and cosmopolitan humanitarianism are a strong enough impetus to incorporate immigrants into the political and welfare institutions that remain grounded in the eroding but not yet vestigial nation-state. Among ordinary people, a thicker cultural brew may be needed to sustain social solidarity and welcome newcomers into a democratic welfare state.

APPENDIX: INFORMATION ABOUT THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL SURVEY

The European Social Survey (ESS) is a joint venture of the European Commission, the European Science Foundation and academic organizations in the participating countries. Its director is currently Roger Jowell at the Centre for Comparative Social Surveys at the City University of London. Other partner institutions include the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven of Belgium, ZUMA in Germany, Norwegian Social Science Data Services, the Social and Cultural Planning Office of the Netherlands, and the University of Amsterdam. Further information can be found at: <http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org>. The first round of this survey was fielded in 2002–03. In this Appendix, we briefly discuss the ESS methodology for sampling design, the response rate and the consequences of non-response.⁷⁸

Sampling Design

The stated goals of the ESS in regards to sampling design are: full coverage of the target population; high response rates (the target minimum response rate is 70 per cent); no substitution; and the same minimum effective sample sizes in participating countries (1,500 or 800 where the population is smaller than two million inhabitants). In practice, the sampling design in some countries approximates a simple random sample: names are drawn from a list of residents aged 15 and over. In countries that do not have such lists, a multi-stage or 'cluster' sampling procedure is employed, which entails a first-stage sampling of municipalities and then a second-stage random sampling of households within each municipality. This kind of cluster sampling is what the American National Election Study employs to obtain respondents for

⁷⁶ Such sensitivity to public opinion inevitably has its limits. First, some leaders believe that immigrant workers benefit countries with declining native-born populations. Secondly, completely closing the door to immigration is probably impossible for governments to implement, constrained as they are by permeable borders and international pressures to accept at least some of the people uprooted by war and persecution. And since migration is largely voluntary behaviour, a 'designer' policy that admits just the 'right' kind of immigrant also may not be feasible. Germany may want Indian software engineers, but these people may prefer to immigrate into the United States or Great Britain.

⁷⁷ M. Bommers, 'The Shrinking Inclusive Capacity of the National Welfare State: International Migration and the Deregulation of Identity Formation', in G. Brockman, ed., *The Multicultural Challenge: Comparative Social Research*, vol. 22 (London: Elsevier, 2003), pp. 43–68.

⁷⁸ For more information, see < http://naticent02.uuhost.uk.uu.net/archive/tech_report/2_sample.doc > ; and < http://naticent02.uuhost.uk.uu.net/methodology/monitoring_evaluating_non_response.doc > .

face-to-face interviews. The Eurobarometer likewise does multi-stage sampling. Table A1 presents the mode of sampling in each country. It lists the unit that is sampled (individuals or households) as well as the list from which those units are drawn. The term 'area-based' denotes countries where no such list existed and thus sampling was done through this multi-stage procedure. The ESS does not employ quota sampling techniques. The ESS, like many surveys, will not fully reach some subsets of the population, such as illegal immigrants. Thus, in this article, we employ the design weights that the ESS provides to account for any deviations between the sample and the target population (see footnote 5).

Non-response and Sample Size

Table A1 also presents the response rate and sample size for the twenty countries in our analysis. Table A1 shows that the ESS was able to meet or approximate its target rate of 70 per cent in many countries. In ten countries, the response rate was 65 per cent or greater – which is comparable to that of the American National Election Studies, which for its face-to-face interviews typically generates a response rate of around 70 per cent.⁷⁹ Similarly, the British Election Studies typically achieve a response rate that averages around 65 per cent.⁸⁰ In other countries, the response rate was lower, though not necessarily lower than other multi-country surveys are able to obtain. For example, the ESS response rate in Switzerland (33 per cent) is comparable to that obtained in the 2001 ISSP Social Networks II Survey (38 per cent).

TABLE A1 *Sample Size and Response Rate in ESS*

Country	Sampling method	N	Response rate
Greece	Area-based	2,566	80.0%
Finland	Individuals (population register)	2,000	73.2
Poland	Individuals (personal records of population)	2,110	73.2
Hungary	Individuals (central register)	1,685	69.9
Sweden	Individuals (population register)	1,999	69.5
Portugal	Area-based	1,511	68.8
Netherlands	Addresses (list of postal delivery points)	2,364	67.9
Denmark	Individuals (central person register)	1,506	67.6
Norway	Individuals (National Population Register)	2,036	65.0
Ireland	Addresses (National Electoral Register)	2,046	64.5
Austria	Individuals (telephone books)	2,257	60.4
Belgium	Individuals (national register)	1,899	59.2
Germany	Individuals (local residents register)	2,919	57.1
United Kingdom	Addresses (postcode address files)	2,052	55.5
Spain	Individuals (municipal rolls)	1,729	53.2
Luxembourg	Households (social security register)	1,552	43.9
Italy	Addresses (electoral register)	1,205	43.7
Czech Republic	Individuals (SIPO database)	1,360	43.3
France	Area-based	1,503	43.1
Switzerland	Households (telephone book)	2,040	33.5

Source: http://ess.nsd.uib.no/2003_Fworksummary.jsp.

Sources of non-response are similar across countries. Specifically, the dominant reason for non-response was refusal to participate, rather than the inability of ESS interviewers to contact the respondent. The ESS employs various methods to try to reduce the problem of non-response, and interviewers in different countries were permitted to use differing techniques because the same techniques do not work equally well

⁷⁹ See Table 1 of this ANES analysis at <<ftp://ftp.nes.isr.umich.edu/ftp/nes/bibliography/documents/nes010162.pdf>> .

⁸⁰ E. Scarbrough, 'The British Election Study and Electoral Research', *Political Studies*, 48 (2000), 391–414.

in each country – for example, the most effective timing on interview (morning, afternoon, etc.) varies across countries.

We undertook several auxiliary analyses to determine whether there were any consequences of the difference in response rates across countries. We estimated the correlation between the country-level response rates and both country-specific intercepts (as in Figure 4) and coefficients (as in Figures 5–6) and found no significant relationships. This means that neither the level of opposition to immigration nor the underpinnings of attitudes about immigration are systematically related to differences in response rates. It is important to note that various studies comparing the effects of response rates on the distribution of survey responses have found that a lower response rate does not necessarily create systematic bias in responses.⁸¹

⁸¹ See the studies cited in G. Langer, ‘About Response Rates’, *The Public Perspective*, 14 (2003), 16–18.