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The European residents' attitude towards immigrants: a comparative analysis based on the ESS data

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SEARCH Project



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Work Package 5: Institutional Environment Differences with respect to **levels of social capital** in European and neighborhood countries

- **Brenner J. and Fertig M. (2006). “Identifying the Determinants of Attitudes Towards Immigrants: A Structural Cross-Country Analysis.”**
- **Card D., Dustmann C. and Preston I. (2005). “Understanding attitudes to immigration: The migration and minority module of the first European Social Survey” . CReAM Discussion Paper No 03/05**
- **Hjerm M. (2009). “Anti-Immigrant Attitudes and Cross-Municipal Variation in the Proportion of Immigrants”**
- **Malchow-Moeller N., Munch J. R., Schroll S. and Skaksen J. R. (2006). “Attitudes Towards Immigration: Does Economic Self-Interest Matter?”**
- **Müller T. and Tai S. (2010). “Individual attitudes towards migration: a reexamination of the evidence”**
- **Rustenbach E. (2010). “Sources of Negative Attitudes toward Immigrants in Europe: A Multi-Level Analysis”.**

Main previous results

- Card: “there is **substantial variation** in the strength of anti-immigrant opinion across European countries, and that **attitudes towards immigration also vary systematically with characteristics such as age, education, individuals’ employment status, religion, and urban/rural location**”.
- Malchow-Moeller: There is “positive relationship between **education** and the general attitude towards immigration”
- Brenner and Fertig: “Higher education of both the respondents and their parents affect views on foreigners positively”, “Differences in average attitudes across countries can to some extent be explained by **per capita GDP** differences”.
- Müller and Silvio: “**The labor-market and welfare-state mechanisms** play a significant role in explaining individual attitudes”
- Rustenbach: “Key predictors of anti-immigrant attitudes are regional and national interpersonal trust, **education level**, foreign direct investment, and political variables”.

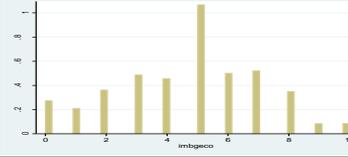
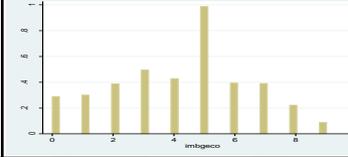
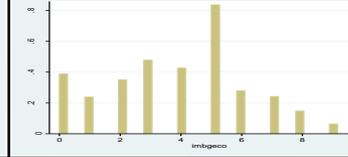
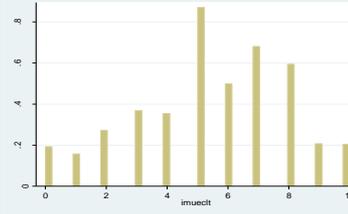
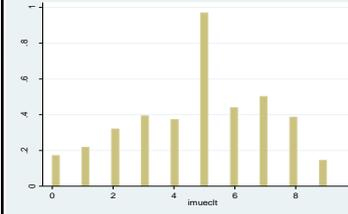
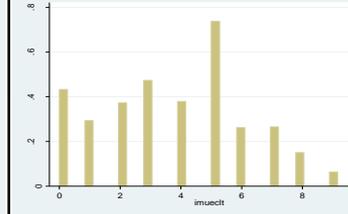
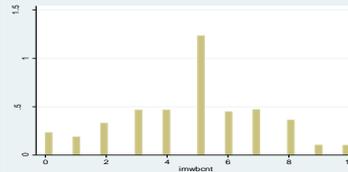
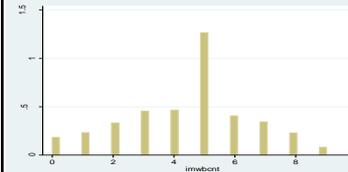
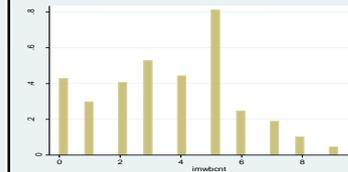
A distinctive feature of this paper

- 1. Comparing the attitude towards immigrants in three types of countries:**
 - those which joined the European Union before 2004 (“Old” European Countries),**
 - those which joined the European Union since 2004 (“New” European Countries),**
 - and non European Union countries, Russia and Ukraine, which border the European Union.**
- 2. Revealing what factors, individual or macroeconomic, have a greater impact on the attitude of people towards migrants.**

Data: ESS, 5th wave, 2010-2011

"New" EU countries	Number of respondents	"Non" EU countries	Number of respondents	"Old" EU countries	Number of respondents
Bulgaria	2434	Russian Federation	2595	Germany	3031
Cyprus	1083	Ukraine	1931	Greece	2715
Czech Republic	2386	"Old" EU countries	Number of respondents	Ireland	2576
Estonia	1793	Belgium	1704	Netherlands	1829
Hungary	1561	Croatia	1649	Portugal	2150
Poland	1751	Denmark	1576	Spain	1885
Slovakia	1856	Finland	1878	Sweden	1497
Slovenia	1403	France	1728	United Kingdom	2422

Some descriptive statistics for the dependent variables

	“Old” European Countries	“New” European Countries	Russia and Ukraine
Immigrants bad or good for country's economy (0 – bad for the economy, ..., 10 – good for the economy)	Mean=4.69 	Mean=4.39 	Mean=4.12 
Country's cultural life undermined or enriched by immigrants (0 - Cultural life undermined, ..., 10 - Cultural life enriched)	Mean=5.45 	Mean=5.05 	Mean=4.04 
Immigrants make country worse or better place to live (0 - Worse place to live, ..., 10 - Better place to live)	Mean=4.79 	Mean=4.61 	Mean=3.76 

Hypothesis 1. The attitude of the inhabitants in "Old", "New", and "Non" European countries to migrants differs.

Hypothesis 2. The higher individual level of education the better his/her attitude towards migrants.

Hypothesis 3. The higher the level of country's economic development (high GDP per cap, low level of corruption and unemployment) the better the citizens' attitude towards migrants.

Independent variables

Basic individual variables	Description	Additional individual variables	Description	Macro-economic variables	Description
Age	Age of respondent	Religiosity	How religious are you? (0 – not at all, ..., 10 – very)	GDP	GDP per capita, PPP (current international \$)
Male	Sex of respondent (1 – male, 0 – female)	Citizenship	Citizen of country (1=yes, 0 – no)	Unemployment	Unemployment rate in the country (%)
Income	Income scale (1 – low, ..., 10 – high)	Minority	Belong to the minority ethnic group	CPI	Corruption Perception Index
Unempl	Indicator of unemployment status	NE	“New” EU country indicator	Migration	Net migration/Population total·100%
Ed3, Ed4, Ed5, Ed6	Levels of education	RU	Russia and Ukraine indicator		

$$\begin{aligned} Y = & \beta_0 + (\beta_a + \delta_{NEa}NE + \delta_{RUa}RU)Age + (\beta_{a^2} + \delta_{NEa^2}NE + \\ & + \delta_{RUa^2}RU)Age^2 + (\beta_m + \delta_{NEm}NE + \delta_{RUm}RU)Male + \\ & + (\beta_{in} + \delta_{NEin}NE + \delta_{RUin}RU)Income + \\ & + (\beta_u + \delta_{NEu}NE + \delta_{RUu}RU)Unempl + (\beta_{ed3} + \delta_{NEed3}NE + \\ & + \delta_{RUed3}RU)Ed3 + (\beta_{ed4} + \delta_{NEed4}NE + \delta_{RUed4}RU)Ed4 + \\ & + (\beta_{ed5} + \delta_{NEed5}NE + \delta_{RUed5}RU)Ed5 + \\ & + (\beta_{ed6} + \delta_{NEed6}NE + \delta_{RUed6}RU)Ed6 + \\ & + (\gamma_x + \delta_{NEx}NE + \delta_{RUx}RU)X + \\ & + (\gamma_z + \delta_{NEz}NE + \delta_{RUz}RU)Z + u \end{aligned}$$

Results of estimation (Y = Immigrants make country worse or better place to live, 0 – worse, ..., 10 – better)

Variable	Coefficient estimate	Variable	Coefficient estimate	Variable	Coefficient estimate
Age	-0.032***	Income	0.081***	Ed4	0.786***
Age·NE	0.014***	Income ·NE	-0.037***	Ed4·NE	-1.058***
Age·RU	-0.007	Income ·RU	-0.095***	Ed4·RU	-0.701***
Age2	0.00024***	Unempl	0.031	Ed5	1.071***
Age2·NE	-0.00017***	Unempl ·NE	-0.008	Ed5·NE	-0.801***
Age2·RU	0.000061	Unempl ·RU	-0.265***	Ed5·RU	-0.52
Male	0.012	Ed3	0.255	Ed6	1.416***
Male ·NE	-0.014	Ed3·NE	-0.273***	Ed6·NE	-0.883***
Male ·RU	-0.048	Ed3·RU	-0.315***	Ed6·RU	-1.379***

Hypothesis 1. The attitude of the inhabitants in "Old", "New", and "Non" European countries to migrants differs - Confirmed

Hypothesis 2. The higher individual level of education the better his/her attitude towards migrants - Confirmed

Hypothesis 3. The higher the level of country's economic development (high GDP per cap, low level of corruption and unemployment) the better the citizens' attitude towards migrants – Only partly confirmed

Common features

- **With age attitude towards migrants firstly gets worse, then after reaching a turning point (50-60 years) starts to improve.**
- **In all countries men more than woman believe migrants help the economy but more critically evaluate to the cultural contribution of immigrants.**
- **Attitude towards immigrants improves with increasing educational level.**
- **People having citizenship evaluate the contribution of migrants negatively.**
- **At the same time minorities (who may or may not have citizenship) estimate migrants' contribution higher.**
- **The estimated contribution of migrants also increase with GDP growth.**
- **The less corrupt a country is, the higher the estimated economic contribution of migrants**

- In Europe, with increasing income residents' evaluation of both the economic and the cultural contribution of migrants increases, while in Russia and Ukraine only the economic contribution increase (whereas evaluation of cultural contribution decrease).
- The unemployed in Russia and Ukraine are also skeptical about the cultural contributions of migrants.
- In “Old” Europe more religious citizens regard the cultural impact of migrants negatively, and in “New” Europe, Russia and Ukraine positively.
- The higher the level of unemployment in “Old” Europe, the lower the estimate of the economic contribution of migrants. In “New” Europe, Russia and Ukraine there is the opposite trend.
- In the countries of “Old” Europe, the percentage of migrants in the population of a country is positively related to the assessment of the economic contribution of migrants. In “New” Europe, Russia and Ukraine there is the opposite trend.

Influence of micro and macro level factors

$$R_Y^2 = \sum_{i=1}^k \hat{\beta}_i \frac{\hat{\text{cov}}(X_i, Y)}{\hat{\text{var}}(Y)}$$

	Immigrants bad or good for country's economy (0 – bad for the economy, ..., 10 – good for the economy)			Country's cultural life undermined or enriched by immigrants (0 - Cultural life undermined, ..., 10 - Cultural life enriched)			Immigrants make country worse or better place to live (0 - Worse place to live, ..., 10 - Better place to live)		
Micro-level factors	Old EU	New EU	Non EU	Old EU	New EU	Non EU	Old EU	New EU	Non EU
	59.7%	55.5%	66.5%	42%	29.7%	35.7%	42.3%	36.5%	40.4%
Macro-level factors	Old EU	New EU	Non EU	Old EU	New EU	Non EU	Old EU	New EU	Non EU
	40.3%	44.5%	33.5%	58%	70.3%	64.3%	57.7%	63.5%	59.6%

Conclusions and policy implications

- **Using the analysis for the three groups of countries we can pick out groups of citizens whose attitudes to immigrants are most negative. For example, in all countries, it is middle-aged, low educated citizens. In the "Old" Europe they are the most religious citizens. In Russia and Ukraine they are on the one hand people with high income and on the other hand the unemployed. To avoid increased social tension authorities should pay such groups of citizens more attention.**
- **General attitudes towards migrants are mostly dependent not on the individual characteristics of citizens but on the economic situation in the country in which these citizens live. In particular, the higher the GDP per cap the higher the estimated contribution of immigrants.**



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Thank you for your attention!

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