

The Roots of Xenophobia

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Why the concern about xenophobia?

- In 2014 far right parties significantly increased their representation in the European Parliament, gaining a record 52 seats, up by 15 seats since the 2009 elections
- Xenophobia can have severe negative consequences on individual, societal, economic and international politics levels

Theoretical framework

- The Cultural and Economic Threat theory (Blalock 1967; Glaster 1994; Pettigrew 1998; Taylor 1998)
- The Value Change theory (Inglehart 1990; Inglehart and Welzel 2005)

Hypotheses

- **Insecurity is conducive to xenophobic attitudes**
- (H1) The surge of *vote* for xenophobic parties in 2014 was determined by heightened economic insecurity that occurred as a result of economic decline and rising unemployment due to the Great Recession of 2007-2012. It does not necessarily reflect a surge of xenophobic attitudes in the given country
- (H2) Less prosperous countries will show higher *levels* of xenophobic attitudes than other countries
- (H3) A country's level of xenophobic attitudes will be more accurately predicted by its level of GDP per capita several decades before the survey, than at the time of the survey
- (H4) Countries with large numbers of Islamic immigrants will show high levels of xenophobic attitudes because of a negative response to reports of Islamic terrorism and intolerance
- (H5) Subjective perception of personal safety/unsafety where one lives (individual-level security/insecurity) significantly impacts on contemporary attitudes toward immigration
- (H6) Less-educated and lower-income individuals will show higher levels of xenophobic attitudes than individuals with higher income and education
- (H7) Individuals with Survival values will show higher levels of xenophobia than individuals with Self-expression values

Data

- European Union members (N=28) and some other countries (N=4) that have experienced substantial flows of economically-motivated immigrants and also have a dominant Caucasian-race population (total N=33):
Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the United States and Russia
- WVS: 1989-1993; 1994-1999; 1999-2004; 2005-2009; 2010-2012

Dependent variables

Dependent variables	Scale	WVS variables
Xenophobic attitudes	0= 2 non-xenophobic answers 1= mixed 2= 2 xenophobic answers	V39 foreign neighbor V46 jobs for natives>foreigners
Vote intention for xenophobic parties	0= vote for non-xenophobic party 1= vote for xenophobic party	V228 vote in a hypothetical national election
Dynamics of non-xenophobic attitudes	in changing per cent from earliest to last survey	

Independent variables

Independent variables	National-level/WVS variables
Contextual-level	
Economic situation	GDP/capita (PPP estimates) Economic growth rate in recent years Unemployment rate
Ethnic diversity	Size of immigration flow Percentage of immigration that is Islamic
Individual level	
Economic security	V229 mostly manual/intellectual tasks at work V235 saved money/went in debts during the past years V236 subjective social class V237 income scale V246 educational level V249 age left school
Subjective security	Survival/Self-expression values index
Individual security	V170-178 secure in the neighborhood V179-180 being the victim of a crime during the last year V181-186 worried situations V188-191 physical secure
Left-Right dimension	V95 left/right self-identification V96 income equality V97 private/government ownership V98 government/individual responsibility
Group-identity	V211 national proud V212-216 national/civil group-identity

Methodology

- 1) The description whether there has been an increase in xenophobic attitudes in given countries, comparing surveys carried out before and after the Economic Crises, that is before 2007 and after 2009 using the data of WVS and EVS
- 2) Regression analyses for each country, using as the core predictors the following indicators: economic security/insecurity, survival/self-expression values index, individual security/insecurity, left/right ideology and national/civil group-identity
- 3) A multi-level analysis using national mean score on each of the predictors, plus national-level variables

The dynamics of attitudes toward immigrants (%)

Table 1

	Time series				
	1989-1993	1994-1999	1999-2004	2005-2007	2008-2009
Non-xenophobic	25.3	27.6	28.6	27.9	28.1
Mixed	61.9	61.2	61.3	59.4	58.5
Xenophobic	12.9	11.7	10.9	12.8	13.4

Source: WVS/EVS

Countries (N=22): Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom, the United States and Russia

Table 2

	Time series					
	1989-1993	1994-1999	1999-2004	2005-2007	2008-2009	2010-2012
Non-xenophobic	33.6	33.5	35.3	30.5	31.4	27.7
Mixed	56.9	57.4	55.3	57.4	55.1	58.5
Xenophobic	9.5	9.1	9.4	12.1	13.5	13.8

Source: WVS/EVS

Countries (N=8): Estonia, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, Russia, Spain, Sweden, the United States

The dynamics of attitudes toward immigrants (%)

	non-xenophobic						mixed						xenophobic						(N)		
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	I	II	III	IV	V	VI			
Austria	15.0	-	16.4	-	23.6	-	Austria	67.3	-	71.7	-	56.0	-	Austria	17.8	-	11.9	-	20.4	-	4336
Belgium	24.4	-	40.5	-	40.8	-	Belgium	59.4	-	47.2	-	53.7	-	Belgium	16.2	-	12.3	-	5.4	-	6030
France	30.0	-	35.2	36.6	54.6	-	France	58.0	-	53.9	41.2	41.7	-	France	12.0	-	10.9	22.1	3.7	-	5005
Germany	26.5	33.6	22.6	25.2	28.0	29.6	Germany	57.3	59.9	67.7	63.0	61.5	57.0	Germany	16.2	6.5	9.7	11.9	10.5	13.3	12671
Switzerl.	-	21.1	-	33.5	45.0	-	Switzerl.	-	70.2	-	61.4	52.4	-	Switzerl.	-	8.8	-	5.2	2.7	-	3555
Italy	16.8	-	18.8	17.9	10.2	-	Italy	71.9	-	86.6	69.0	76.1	-	Italy	11.3	-	12.7	13.0	13.7	-	6222
Spain	15.4	12.1	22.8	33.0	29.1	31.5	Spain	77.5	82.1	69.4	62.0	67.2	62.3	Spain	7.1	5.7	7.8	5.0	3.7	6.2	11287
Portugal	7.2	-	23.8	-	17.3	-	Portugal	84.1	-	75.0	-	76.7	-	Portugal	8.7	-	1.2	-	6.0	-	3653
Great Br	40.1	37.8	29.0	34.5	23.4	-	Great Br	50.5	52.4	59.2	52.2	62.6	-	Great Br	9.4	9.8	11.8	13.3	14.0	-	5929
Ireland	28.5	-	18.3	-	20.5	-	Ireland	66.6	-	71.2	-	66.3	-	Ireland	4.9	-	10.5	-	13.2	-	2773
Sweden	55.1	72.5	77.1	79.4	75.8	74.7	Sweden	37.9	24.9	21.1	19.5	19.3	22.9	Sweden	7.0	2.5	1.8	1.1	4.9	2.4	6206
Norway	35.6	49.6	-	56.1	60.8	-	Norway	50.1	42.4	-	39.9	34.7	-	Norway	14.2	8.0	-	4.0	4.5	-	4416
Denmark	37.5	-	52.6	-	62.2	-	Denmark	51.7	-	39.4	-	33.3	-	Denmark	10.9	-	8.0	-	4.5	-	3234
Netherlan.	60.2	-	62.6	46.6	53.0	36.7	Netherlan.	33.3	-	34.4	45.6	38.8	49.0	Netherlan.	6.9	-	3.0	7.9	8.2	14.2	6260
Finland	16.5	17.4	27.1	27.4	25.0	-	Finland	79.5	70.7	62.0	60.0	60.8	-	Finland	4.1	11.9	10.8	12.7	14.2	-	4593
Estonia	14.0	38.0	37.4	-	15.7	6.3	Estonia	70.1	47.4	49.7	-	58.3	62.5	Estonia	15.9	14.6	12.9	-	26.0	31.2	5883
Latvia	13.9	38.6	17.5	-	8.7	-	Latvia	56.9	50.2	73.6	-	73.9	-	Latvia	29.2	11.2	8.9	-	17.4	-	4425
Lithuania	5.1	3.0	2.5	-	3.9	-	Lithuania	80.4	68.9	76.3	-	68.7	-	Lithuania	14.5	28.1	21.2	-	27.4	-	4438
Hungary	9.9	4.3	-	-	9.0	-	Hungary	68.8	72.5	-	-	76.0	-	Hungary	21.3	23.1	-	-	15.0	-	3107
Poland	28.9	4.0	3.0	7.7	18.3	13.4	Poland	64.4	75.7	73.6	81.1	67.4	79.7	Poland	6.7	20.3	23.4	11.2	14.3	6.9	6489
Czech Rep	8.8	2.9	8.5	-	11.5	-	Czech Rep	67.6	70.2	74.4	-	64.0	-	Czech Rep	23.7	26.9	17.1	-	24.4	-	7744
Greece	-	-	12.0	-	18.5	-	Greece	-	-	76.0	-	67.2	-	Greece	-	-	12.0	-	14.2	-	2601
Bulgaria	7.1	5.9	4.6	13.1	4.8	-	Bulgaria	62.3	80.0	74.4	73.6	78.3	-	Bulgaria	30.5	14.0	20.9	13.3	16.8	-	5298
Russia	28.6	16.6	19.1	7.2	10.9	7.3	Russia	62.4	73.6	71.3	64.7	60.2	67.8	Russia	8.9	9.8	9.6	28.1	28.9	24.9	11943
US	40.3	30.1	37.5	18.4	-	21.8	US	52.1	61.8	55.5	69.4	-	66.8	US	7.6	8.2	7.0	12.2	-	11.4	7915
Canada	40.9	-	37.8	40.5	-	-	Canada	54.8	-	58.6	56.3	-	-	Canada	4.3	-	3.6	3.2	-	-	5712
Australia	-	47.7	-	36.1	-	-	Australia	-	48.7	-	59.1	-	-	Australia	-	3.5	-	4.8	-	-	3463

Source: WVS/EVS

* I: 1989-1993; II: 1994-1999; III: 1999-2004; IV: 2005-2007; V: 2008-2009; VI: 2010-2012

Elections results of some far-right parties in the European Union before and after the Global Financial Crises

Country	Name of party	National Parliament elections year			European Parliament elections %		
		%			2004	2009	2014
Austria	Freedom Party of Austria	2006	2008	2013	6.31	12.71	19.72
		11.04	17.54	20.51			
Belgium	Flemish Interest	2007	2010	2014	14.34	9.85	4.26
		11.99	7.76	3.67			
Denmark	Danish People's Party	2005	2007	2011	6.80	15.28	26.61
		13.25	13.86	12.32			
Finland	The Finns	2003	2007	2011	0.54	9.79	12.87
		1.57	4.05	19.05			
France	National Front	2002	2007	2012	9.81	6.34	24.86
		11.34	4.29	13.60			
Greece	Golden Dawn	2009	2012	2012	-	0.46	9.39
		0.29	6.97	6.92			
Hungary	Jobbik	2006	2010	2014	-	14.77	14.67
		2.20	16.67	20.54			
Italy	Northern League	2006	2008	2013	4.96	10.21	6.15
		4.58	8.30	4.08			
The Netherlands	Party of Freedom	2006	2010	2012	-	16.97	13.32
		5.89	15.45	10.08			
Sweden	Swedish Democrats	2002	2006	2010	1.13	3.27	9.70
		1.44	2.93	5.70			

Correlations between a society's GDP/capita at various times in the past and responses to questions about jobs for one's own nationality and about having immigrants/foreign workers as neighbors

	<i>I would not like to have immigrants/foreign workers as neighbors</i>	<i>When jobs are scarce, employers should give priority to people of this country over immigrants</i>
2011 GDP/capita (ppp)	.185	.519
2008 GDP/capita (ppp)	.186	.508
2000 GDP/capita (ppp)	.236	.553
1990 GDP/capita (ppp)	.243	.570
1980 GDP/capita (ppp)	.314	.681
1970 GDP/capita (ppp)	.310	.755
1960 GDP/capita (ppp)	.304	.762
Survival/Self-Expression values at the time of survey	.250	.599

Source: WVS 2010-2014; Penn World Tables 7.1

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