

Explaining Immigration Attitudes before the Syrian Diaspora: A Seven Country Study

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Immigration issues during periods of globalization were and are prevalent across nations. In the first globalization of the economy over the roughly 1850 to 1912-13 era, the active economies of the world were the recipients of a vast migration of workers from other countries with the United States and Canada having six and thirteen percent of their populations' migrants, which was nothing compared to Argentina's 43 percent.¹ Then as the Panic of 1893 took effect many nations—including the United States—turned to protectionism, passing anti-immigration policies to keep jobs for native-born citizens. After 1897 anti-immigration policies were set in Argentina, Brazil, Canada, U.K. and the United States.² For example, the Democratic Party's 1896 platform took advantage of the populist sentiments evoked by the first great transformation of the world economy by proposing to limit "the importation of pauper labor." The anti-immigration policies, in addition to having an economic component, had a cultural and racial dimension as well. Australia had a white only immigration policy, and the United States prohibited Chinese immigrants.³

¹ Freiden, J., 2006, *Global Capitalism*, New York, Norton

² See Timmer, A. and Williams, J., "Immigration Policy Prior to the 1930s: Labor Markets, Policy Interactions and Globalization Backlash," *Population and Development Review*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (Dec, 1998), pp. 739-771

³ Freiden, J., 2006, *Global Capitalism*, New York, Norton. California was a leader in anti-Chinese legislation and, in fact, the stimulus for the 1879 California constitution was largely the result of the rise of the anti-Chinese Workingman's party which, together with the Grangers, elected most of the delegates. The radicals were convinced that big companies, railroads and big farms and ranches had imported immigrant labor to hold down wages.. "Denis Kearney and the Workingmen's Party of California (WPC) became the voice of urban workers who saw themselves as victims of corporate interests whose livelihoods were threatened by Chinese laborers." Arthur Rolston, "Capital, Corporations, and Their Discontents in Making California's Constitutions, 1849–1911," *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 80, No. 4 (November 2011), p. 537. While the radical faction lost on many issues and, where their views prevailed, courts undid

These issues are also present in the second great transformation of the world economy.⁴ Scholars have shown that “people with higher levels of education and occupational skills are more likely to favor immigration regardless of the skill attributes of the immigrants in question.”⁵ Other studies have shown that economics plays a role in shaping a country’s views toward immigration.⁶ In addition to the economic impact of globalization on attitudes toward immigration, cultural variables also come into play when explaining contemporary attitudes toward immigrants.⁷

Immigration has become an explosive issue in the developed countries in the past year. Part of the reason for this is the vast influx of Syrian refugees and others from chaos and civil war in the Middle East. Recent events have raised public concerns that disorderly flows of immigrants may hide infiltration by terrorists. Efforts by leaders of these countries to attempt to settle refugees have, for that reason, triggered popular backlashes. Obviously these problems have intensified recently but concerns over immigration are not really new and have both an economic and cultural basis.

Over the period from March of 2015 to June of that year we conducted, through YouGov polling, a survey of seven nations –U.S., Canada, Britain, Denmark, Italy, France and Germany - that asked the same questions about immigration and other issues to about 1000 respondents in these seven advanced industrial democracies. The survey also permits the investigation of attitudes and beliefs about political parties, which will be useful in assessing the effects of immigration attitudes. Our paper might serve as a kind of baseline for future studies that might take account of more recent events.

most of their reforms. Still, they left their mark: “the convention was virtually unanimous in adopting anti-Chinese provisions intended to deprive the Chinese of employment and to empower local governments to exclude them as undesirables.” P. 543.

⁴ Spence, M., 2011, *The Next Convergence: The Future of Economic Growth in a Multispeed World*, Farrar, Strauss, Giroux

⁵ Hainmueller, J. and Hiscox, M., 2007, “Educated Preferences: Explaining Attitudes Toward Immigration in Europe,” *International Organization*, Vol. 61, No. 2 (Spring, 2007), pp. 399-442

⁶ O’Rourke, K., 2003, “Heckscher-Ohlin Theory and Individuals’ Attitudes Towards Globalization.” NBER Working Paper 9872, and Malhotra, N., Margalit, Y., and Hyunjung Mo, C., 2008, “Economic Explanations for Opposition to Immigration: Distinguishing Between Prevalence and Conditional Impact,” *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 52, No. 4, pp. 959-978

⁷ Brader, T., Valentino, N., and Suhay, E., 2008, “What Triggers Public Opposition to Immigration? Anxiety, Group Cues, and Immigration,” *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 52, No. 4 (Oct., 2008), pp. 959-978

Obviously the YouGov sample is a cross section and so we can say little about attitude dynamics. However, the different countries were at different places in the business cycle in the Spring of 2015 so that our measures of “country effects” may incorporate some cyclic elements.⁸

There are several questions that need answering. Some of these are descriptive: what do people in these countries think about immigrants and immigration policies? Second, what explains these attitudes? Third, what are the likely impacts of variations in immigration attitudes for electoral politics and public policy?

I. Description

The study asks two questions about immigration. One asks about the Level of immigration (too many, about right, too little). The other asks how immigrants should be treated (responses range from asking them to leave to integrating them into the society). Responses to these questions are quite different in all seven countries and there is significant cross-national variation. Here we show dichotomized responses to the questions – with the anti-immigrant response coded 1 -- and an Index constructed by adding the responses together.

⁸ For example, the economies in the US, Canada, the UK and Germany were performing well (overall) in that period while Italy and, to some extent, France were still mired in economic doldrums. On the other hand, there are significant regional variations within even well performing countries that need to be taken into account in future work on this sample of countries.

Table 1 – Preferences on the immigration survey items in the selected countries

| | Encourage immigrants to leave | | Decrease current level of immigration | | Anti-immigration Index | | |
|---------|-------------------------------|------|---------------------------------------|------|------------------------|------|------|
| | Yes % | No % | Yes % | No % | 0 % | 1 % | 2 % |
| Canada | 27.2 | 72.8 | 44.0 | 56.0 | 55.3 | 25.7 | 19.0 |
| Denmark | 41.2 | 58.8 | 63.7 | 36.3 | 23.6 | 53.5 | 22.9 |
| France | 50.0 | 50.1 | 70.3 | 29.7 | 30.5 | 29.3 | 40.2 |
| Germany | 37.4 | 62.6 | 59.7 | 40.3 | 40.2 | 28.3 | 31.5 |
| Italy | 45.6 | 54.4 | 72.8 | 27.3 | 23.3 | 41.3 | 35.4 |
| UK | 41.3 | 58.7 | 74.2 | 25.9 | 27.8 | 34.0 | 38.2 |
| US | 38.8 | 61.2 | 48.0 | 52.0 | 46.5 | 28.2 | 25.2 |
| Overall | 40.4 | 59.6 | 62.5 | 37.5 | 35.2 | 34.2 | 30.7 |

For both measures, Canadians appear to be more welcoming to immigrants than respondents in other countries, with the US in second place. The countries least favorable to immigrants on Levels are France, Italy and the UK; the least favorable on integration are France, Italy and Denmark. It is hard to interpret these data, as it is not clear what respondents are thinking about when they are asked about immigration. The following table reports immigrants, foreign born, and Muslim in each country for which the numbers are available. Each of these might serve as referents for survey respondents. Moreover, as can be seen, even if the percentage of immigrants is small, as it has been in Italy, the number may have risen quickly over a short time period and may be more salient for that reason.

Table 2 – Levels of immigrant population and foreign-born population in the different countries

| | Immigrant population ⁹ | | Foreign-born population ¹⁰ | | Muslims |
|---------|-----------------------------------|------|---------------------------------------|------|---------|
| | 2005 | 2013 | 2004 | 2007 | |
| | % | % | % | % | % |
| Canada | 18.8 | 20.7 | | 18.0 | 2.1 |
| Denmark | 7.2 | 9.9 | 4.9 | 6.3 | 4.1 |
| France | 10.2 | 11.6 | | | 7.5 |
| Germany | 12.3 | 11.9 | 8.9 | 12.9 | 5.8 |
| Italy | 4.3 | 9.4 | 3.9 | | 3.7 |
| UK | 9.0 | 12.4 | 4.9 | 9.3 | 4.4 |
| US | 12.8 | 14.3 | | 12.8 | 0.9 |
| Average | 10.7 | 12.9 | | | 4.1 |

While we cannot be sure what was in the minds of respondents early in 2015, we suspect that had the survey been conducted now, respondents might have been thinking more about Muslims whether or not they were actually immigrants. This may have been the focus of French respondents 2015, with its large Muslim population, or in Denmark or the UK, which had experienced recent terrorist events.

A second phenomenon that is of interest is the way in which the political system – notably the political parties - have responded to immigration issues. The survey asked respondents to place themselves and the political parties according to various issues. Table 3 contains average party placements.

⁸ UN: Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2013 Revision

⁹ OECD Factbook

Table 3 – Perceived parties’ positions on integration and levels

| | Encourage immigrants to leave | | Decrease current Level of immigration | | Anti-immigration Index | | |
|-------------|-------------------------------|------|---------------------------------------|------|------------------------|------|------|
| | Yes | No | Yes | No | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| | % | % | % | % | % | % | % |
| CAN New Dem | 14.7 | 85.3 | 11.4 | 88.6 | 82.0 | 16.4 | 1.6 |
| CAN Cons | 29.5 | 70.5 | 34.1 | 65.9 | 64.2 | 25.6 | 10.1 |
| CAN Liberal | 16.8 | 83.2 | 10.9 | 89.1 | 80.5 | 17.5 | 2.1 |
| DEN A | 35.3 | 64.7 | 17.5 | 82.5 | 58.1 | 37.0 | 4.9 |
| DEN O | 43.8 | 56.2 | 95.8 | 4.2 | 14.5 | 49.1 | 36.5 |
| DEN V | 32.0 | 68.0 | 71.9 | 28.1 | 36.3 | 45.6 | 18.1 |
| FR Ps | 17.9 | 82.1 | 16.8 | 83.2 | 76.3 | 18.2 | 5.6 |
| FR Ump | 49.0 | 51.0 | 64.2 | 35.8 | 39.0 | 30.5 | 30.5 |
| FR Fn | 77.1 | 22.9 | 95.1 | 4.9 | 15.0 | 18.8 | 66.2 |
| GER Cdu | 30.3 | 69.7 | 40.4 | 59.6 | 59.2 | 24.0 | 16.8 |
| GER Spd | 15.2 | 84.8 | 18.1 | 81.9 | 77.4 | 18.2 | 4.4 |
| IT Pd | 15.4 | 84.6 | 41.0 | 59.0 | 61.2 | 31.3 | 7.5 |
| IT Fi | 58.3 | 41.7 | 77.2 | 22.8 | 26.2 | 28.3 | 45.5 |
| IT M5s | 37.0 | 63.0 | 67.4 | 32.6 | 40.7 | 34.2 | 25.1 |
| UK Labour | 15.8 | 84.2 | 35.7 | 64.3 | 66.7 | 26.6 | 6.7 |
| UK Cons | 39.8 | 60.2 | 68.0 | 32.0 | 38.2 | 33.9 | 27.9 |
| UK Ukip | 82.1 | 17.9 | 94.6 | 5.4 | 13.2 | 17.8 | 69.1 |
| US Dem | 13.1 | 86.9 | 9.0 | 91.0 | 83.5 | 13.8 | 2.7 |
| US Rep | 67.1 | 32.9 | 69.3 | 30.7 | 26.9 | 32.4 | 40.6 |

These party placements correspond more or less to how we would think the parties would be placed on these issues. The Major conservative or center right parties, in every country, were significantly more anti-immigrant on both of our measures than

their center left opponents. Those parties with an anti-immigrant message were placed higher still in each country where such a party existed. Secondly, taking differences between center left and center right parties on the two variables, we can see there is a very strong positive correlation between differences on integration and differences on Levels (the correlation is .7 and, if Denmark was dropped the correlation is .93). So, at the national level there is reason to think that party placements on both issues are both meaningful and closely connected to one another. We think, therefore, that these data form a reasonable basis for comparing party and self placements of voters. For example, in Figure 1, below, we can see self and party placements on the integration scale – here it is a 7 point scale, with the anti immigrant positions to the right. Figure 2 exhibits placements on the Levels question. The important thing to note in these figures is that, for the major parties in each country, average self placements for party “adherents” -- measured by those who say the party is closest to them -- are almost invariably more anti-immigrant than the average perceived party position.

Figure 1 - Average positions of the various parties (capital letters) and partisans of that party (capital letters followed by the letter “s”) on immigrants’ integration in the various countries¹¹

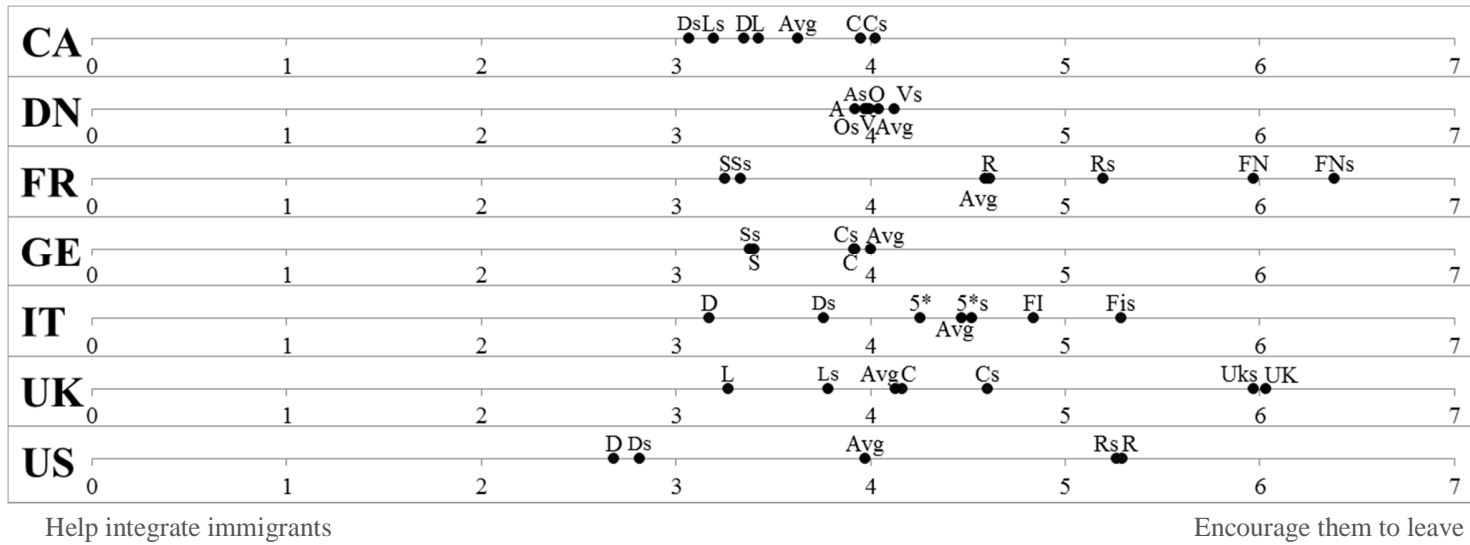
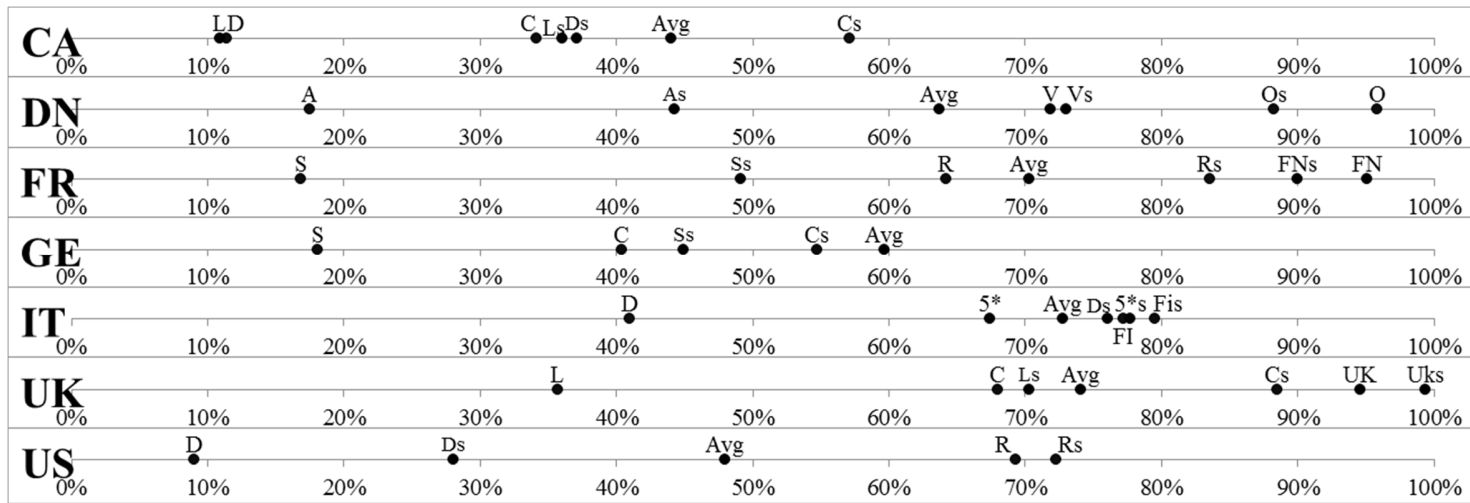


Figure 2 –Percentages of respondents thinking that various parties are in favor of decreasing current immigration level (capital letters), and partisans of that party in favor of a decrease in immigration level (capital letters followed by the letter “s”) in the various countries



These figures suggest a striking fact: party leaders (who we can assume are driving party placements to some extent) have positioned their parties in more pro-

¹⁰ In all countries, the dot labeled “Avg” represents the average positions of all respondents of that country. In Canada the letter D stands for the New Democratic Party, C for Conservative Party and L is for the Liberal Party. In Denmark, the letter A is for the Social-Democratic Party, O stands for the Danish People’s Party, and V for the Liberals. In France, S represents the Socialist Party, R the Republicans, and FN the National Front. In Germany, S is for the SPD and C for the CDU-CSU. In Italy D represents the Democratic Party, FI is for Go Italy, and 5* stands for the 5-Star Movement. In the UK the letter L is for Labour Party, the C for Conservative Party, and UK for UKIP. In the US D is for the Democratic Party, while R represents the Republican Party. The same code is used in the next figures.

immigrant positions than their adherents. The only exceptions to this are anti-immigrant parties such as the FN in France (but only on the question of Levels; not with respect to Integration). In hindsight it seems clear enough that, to the extent that establishment parties (those that might be in government) are thought of as relatively pro-immigrant, there is a great deal of vulnerability to events that might make a pro-immigrant stance less popular. We are currently seeing this throughout Europe and in the United States as well. Not to say it too loudly, but these data (from the Spring of 2015) were a harbinger of what was to come in Europe! It seems important to emphasize that this systematic left shift is general and includes nearly all the parties on which we have data.

2. Explaining Immigration Attitudes

Our theory is that immigration attitudes are driven, in part, by how “threatened” one feels by immigration. We think this has (at least) two dimensions (or at least two that we have some hope of measuring): economic threat and cultural threat. The theory is that those who feel threatened in one of these two ways will tend to adopt more anti-immigrant attitudes. This theory is not completely novel. Economists have argued that the structure of an economy would tend to make immigration have more or less negative impacts on some workers.¹² Sociologists have produced studies, which emphasize cultural factors.¹³ We think this theory fits pretty well with the

¹¹ The sample of counties in our study is probably not heterogeneous enough to find these effects crossnationally. We attempt to use our SES measures to take account of within country sectoral variation. The reader will need to judge how successful our attempts are. See Borjas, G. 2003. "The Labor Demand Curve Is Downward Sloping: Reexamining the Impact of Immigration on the Labor Market." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 118 (4): 1335-74. Scheve, K., and M. Slaughter. 2001. "Labor Market Competition and Individual Preferences over Immigration Policy." *Review of Economics and Statistics* 83 (1): 133-45. Mayda, A. 2006. "Who Is Against Immigration? A Cross-Country Investigation of Individual Attitudes toward Immigrants." *Review of Economics and Statistics* 88 (3): 510-30.

¹² McLaren, L. 2003. "Anti-immigration Prejudice in Europe: Contact, Threat Perception, and Preferences for the Exclusion of Migrants." *Social Forces* 81 (3): 909-36. McLaren, L., and M. Johnson. 2007. "Resources, Group Conflict, and Symbols: Explaining Anti-immigration Hostility in Britain." *Political Studies* 55 (4): 709-32. Citrin, J., D. P. Green, C. Muste, and C. Wong. 1997. "Public Opinion towards Immigration Reform: The Role of Economic Motivations." *Journal of Politics* 59: 858-81.

behavior perspective, which emphasizes that loss aversion is a powerful motivation both in forming attitudes and taking action.

Economic Explanations

The survey presents us with some plausible measures. It asks respondents whether the economy has gotten better or worse over the last year; and it asks the same question about their family's financial situation. The following two tables (4 and 5) summarize the effects of these judgments on immigration attitudes:

Table 4 – Percentages picking the anti-immigration stance by change in economy

| | Encourage immigrants to leave | | Reduce immigration Level | | Anti-immigration Index (=2) | |
|---------|-------------------------------|------|--------------------------|------|-----------------------------|------|
| | Worse (W) | NW | W | NW | W | NW |
| Canada | 28.3 | 26.5 | 47.1 | 41.7 | 21.0 | 18.8 |
| Denmark | 33.2 | 42.3 | 65.7 | 63.6 | 23.3 | 22.9 |
| France | 58.3 | 33.5 | 77.9 | 54.9 | 48.3 | 24.9 |
| Germany | 58.0 | 33.5 | 77.9 | 56.1 | 46.5 | 28.5 |
| Italy | 52.1 | 37.7 | 73.7 | 71.5 | 41.1 | 28.3 |
| UK | 48.3 | 39.8 | 72.4 | 74.6 | 42.5 | 37.3 |
| US | 63.7 | 29.0 | 70.7 | 38.5 | 45.9 | 17.0 |
| Average | 50.6 | 35.1 | 70.2 | 58.5 | 40.3 | 25.7 |

Table 5 – Percentage picking the anti-immigration stance by change in family economy situation

| | Encourage immigrants to leave | | Reduce immigration Level | | Anti-immigration Index (=2) | |
|---------|-------------------------------|------|--------------------------|------|-----------------------------|------|
| | W | NW | W | NW | W | NW |
| Canada | 33.2 | 25.1 | 56.3 | 39.8 | 26.3 | 16.5 |
| Denmark | 34.8 | 42.2 | 71.2 | 62.6 | 26.4 | 22.4 |
| France | 57.9 | 41.5 | 77.2 | 62.1 | 47.4 | 32.6 |
| Germany | 52.2 | 33.2 | 70.8 | 56.4 | 45.2 | 27.5 |
| Italy | 52.3 | 41.5 | 72.8 | 73.5 | 41.0 | 31.9 |
| UK | 42.1 | 40.8 | 74.4 | 74.0 | 38.6 | 38.0 |
| US | 57.2 | 32.1 | 66.3 | 40.8 | 44.3 | 18.5 |
| Average | 49.8 | 36.4 | 71.3 | 58.7 | 40.7 | 26.4 |

We focus on the anti-immigrant Index first. Notice that Denmark, Canada and the UK are distinct from the others in that anti immigrant attitudes do not depend strongly on how either the economies or family’s financial situation has changed. But things get more complicated if we examine the two attitudes separately and if we distinguish between sociotropic and family centered judgments. For example, attitudes toward Levels only respond to sociotropic judgments in France, Germany and the US. Whereas one’s family’s financial situation has no effect of Levels for Italian and UK respondents; elsewhere there is a correlation. For the Integration variable, Canada and Denmark stand out from the others, with the Danes actually showing an inverse relationship: opposing integration in greater proportion when their family or national economy has not worsened.

Respondents were also asked how they saw the unemployment situation. Was

it normal or abnormally high and the results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6 – Percentages of respondents picking the anti-immigration or pro-protectionism stance according whether unemployment was seen as abnormally high

| | Encourage immigrants to leave | | Reduce immigration Level | | Anti-immigration Index (=2) | |
|---------|-------------------------------|------|--------------------------|------|-----------------------------|------|
| | Yes | No | Yes | No | High | Low |
| Canada | 27.7 | 27.8 | 45.9 | 40.0 | 19.9 | 18.8 |
| Denmark | 39.6 | 46.0 | 64.3 | 61.4 | 22.3 | 26.3 |
| France | 51.3 | 29.5 | 71.2 | 43.7 | 41.9 | 11.6 |
| Germany | 44.0 | 30.8 | 68.0 | 49.6 | 38.0 | 25.5 |
| Italy | 46.0 | 34.3 | 72.7 | 64.4 | 35.6 | 23.4 |
| UK | 41.7 | 43.0 | 73.6 | 75.1 | 37.7 | 41.3 |
| US | 45.9 | 26.6 | 54.4 | 35.1 | 31.1 | 15.5 |
| Average | 43.2 | 35.2 | 65.5 | 54.2 | 33.4 | 25.9 |

The figures in this table look roughly like those in Table 4. Respondents in Canada, Denmark and the UK do not become more anti immigrant when they believe that unemployment is too high. This is probably to be expected since both tables pose a sociotropic question: asking about the economy in general and not about their own circumstances. Table 7, summarizes the overall economic effects by adding all three measures together.

Table 7 – Percentages of respondents picking the anti-immigration or pro-protectionism stance for different values of the economic performance in the previous 12 months index

| | Encourage immigrants to leave | | | | Reduce immigration Level | | | | Anti-immigration Index=2 | | | |
|---------|-------------------------------|------|------|------|--------------------------|------|------|------|--------------------------|------|------|------|
| | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Canada | 26.2 | 24.9 | 27.0 | 34.5 | 38.9 | 39.5 | 47.5 | 55.9 | 16.9 | 15.7 | 21.5 | 26.1 |
| Denmark | 44.3 | 41.1 | 32.6 | 34.1 | 60.9 | 64.6 | 71.4 | 54.6 | 22.5 | 23.1 | 23.9 | 20.3 |
| France | 22.3 | 30.4 | 53.0 | 60.7 | 37.2 | 53.5 | 71.2 | 80.1 | 6.2 | 23.2 | 41.7 | 51.0 |
| Germany | 28.5 | 34.3 | 58.5 | 60.7 | 46.7 | 64.9 | 69.3 | 82.8 | 23.8 | 28.3 | 50.0 | 52.9 |
| Italy | 24.3 | 38.0 | 47.0 | 54.4 | 62.5 | 73.3 | 71.4 | 73.9 | 18.7 | 28.0 | 37.9 | 42.4 |
| UK | 40.8 | 39.6 | 42.4 | 48.8 | 75.3 | 72.7 | 76.5 | 71.1 | 39.0 | 35.8 | 40.9 | 40.5 |
| US | 20.4 | 33.6 | 61.6 | 62.2 | 30.2 | 43.0 | 62.7 | 75.7 | 10.4 | 19.6 | 42.0 | 50.2 |
| Average | 32.9 | 35.0 | 46.1 | 54.9 | 53.4 | 60.0 | 66.9 | 74.3 | 23.3 | 25.0 | 36.9 | 44.7 |

The overall effects are that anti-integration attitudes respond strongly to negative economic judgments in France, Germany, Italy and the US. There are weak effects in Canada and even weaker in the UK; in Denmark the effect is reversed. With respect to Levels, economic judgments make no difference in Denmark and the UK.

Cultural Explanations

There are two questions that seem to us to get at cultural conservatism – a sense that the culture is threatened by change or heterogeneity of the kind that might come with immigrants (though, not necessarily from them). We think of it as a diffuse attitude rather than one focused specifically on immigrants (a new survey might seek to get better measures of specific threats that immigrants might bring to the culture). In any case, we think that cultural threat is likely to respond to the Level of immigration more than to the business cycle. The two examples we use are attitudes to Gay Marriage and Support for the Death penalty. The following tables (8 ,9 and 10) show how these attitudes are related to immigration attitudes:

Table 8 – Percentages of respondents picking the anti-immigration stance according to their position on the death penalty

| | Encourage immigrants to leave | | Reduce immigration Level | | Anti-immigration Index=2 | |
|---------|-------------------------------|---------|--------------------------|---------|--------------------------|---------|
| | Pro DP | Against | Pro DP | Against | Pro DP | Against |
| Canada | 34.7 | 15.7 | 56.4 | 23.2 | 27.7 | 6.9 |
| Denmark | 37.2 | 47.5 | 88.3 | 46.5 | 32.6 | 19.4 |
| France | 69.6 | 24.4 | 84.1 | 43.2 | 59.1 | 18.0 |
| Germany | 55.8 | 22.6 | 77.3 | 42.4 | 50.4 | 18.1 |
| Italy | 67.4 | 29.4 | 79.8 | 70.0 | 55.8 | 23.8 |
| UK | 61.9 | 13.6 | 89.2 | 51.3 | 60.0 | 12.0 |
| US | 49.4 | 17.0 | 61.3 | 23.3 | 35.5 | 9.0 |
| Average | 54.0 | 26.5 | 75.9 | 46.4 | 45.9 | 16.5 |

Evidently death penalty attitudes are strongly related to both of our immigration attitudes. The only exceptions are that for Italians, there is no effect on the desired immigration level; and for the Danes, those with a negative attitude toward the death penalty are more anti immigrant than those favoring it, though pro death penalty people in Denmark favor reducing the level of immigration more than those who are opposed to the death penalty. It must be something in the aquavit. Indeed, looking at the summed Index, the effect of death penalty attitudes on immigration is fairly strong in every country.

Table 9 – Percentages of respondents picking the anti-immigration stance according to their position on gay marriages

| | Encourage immigrants to leave | | Reduce immigration Level | | Anti-immigration Index=2 | |
|---------|-------------------------------|--------|--------------------------|--------|--------------------------|--------|
| | Con GM | Pro GM | Con GM | Pro GM | Con GM | Pro GM |
| Canada | 34.9 | 25.0 | 55.3 | 41.8 | 24.9 | 18.4 |
| Denmark | 48.9 | 42.7 | 83.6 | 58.7 | 40.8 | 21.4 |
| France | 68.7 | 40.6 | 83.6 | 60.3 | 58.9 | 31.9 |
| Germany | 55.0 | 33.8 | 70.1 | 56.3 | 48.8 | 30.1 |
| Italy | 58.3 | 39.9 | 77.3 | 71.7 | 49.7 | 30.5 |
| UK | 59.3 | 33.2 | 86.3 | 67.6 | 57.5 | 31.2 |
| US | 58.2 | 24.8 | 68.1 | 35.7 | 42.8 | 15.1 |
| Average | 56.9 | 34.4 | 75.9 | 56.6 | 48.1 | 25.4 |

The effect of attitude to gay marriage is pretty clear in every country: those opposing gay marriage are most anti immigrant. This effect is weakest in Canada and, to a lesser extent, in Denmark. Table 10 summarizes the effects using constructed indexes for cultural conservatism:

Table 10 – Percentages of respondents picking the anti-immigration stance for different values of the social conservatism index

| | Encourage immigrants to leave | | | Reduce immigration Level | | | Anti-immigration Index=2 | | |
|---------|-------------------------------|------|------|--------------------------|------|------|--------------------------|------|------|
| | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Canada | 16.9 | 31.4 | 42.0 | 26.8 | 49.9 | 69.1 | 8.2 | 23.6 | 34.4 |
| Denmark | 41.5 | 41.1 | 39.3 | 49.9 | 83.2 | 97.0 | 15.7 | 34.4 | 36.7 |
| France | 23.7 | 59.7 | 79.2 | 48.1 | 77.9 | 89.7 | 15.7 | 48.0 | 70.6 |
| Germany | 25.0 | 47.8 | 67.5 | 46.8 | 72.4 | 78.5 | 18.8 | 42.8 | 60.8 |
| Italy | 31.5 | 54.1 | 76.9 | 68.5 | 73.2 | 86.7 | 21.6 | 42.8 | 68.0 |
| UK | 18.1 | 52.8 | 70.2 | 55.1 | 84.0 | 92.8 | 14.5 | 49.4 | 70.2 |
| US | 16.0 | 40.8 | 63.4 | 18.6 | 50.6 | 74.7 | 4.6 | 26.2 | 49.0 |
| Average | 26.1 | 46.6 | 66.4 | 47.6 | 69.7 | 83.8 | 15.1 | 37.8 | 58.7 |

Despite country differences, there are clear and strong effects for cultural conservatism as we measure it. Indeed, comparing this table to table 7 above, it seems likely that the effect of cultural conservatism is stronger than the effect of economic adversity. Finally we present multivariate analysis of the effects of the cultural and economic variables controlling for SES variables and with country fixed effects (we do not display those controls in the table). The first two columns are logistic regressions and the last one is an ordered logit analysis. The results in Table 11 indicate that both cultural and economic worries play a large role in anti-immigrant sentiments, with the cultural effect being substantially larger.¹⁴

¹⁴ At the risk of starting a “what’s the matter with Denmark” discussion [to which the best answer might be something like “what’s the matter with Italy or France”], we note that the Danish data do look different than those in the other countries in that immigrant attitudes seem pretty unresponsive to either the economic or cultural variables. Danish scholars have noticed something like this themselves, pointing out that Denmark is a small open economy (except it uses the Kroner rather than the Euro) which has been culturally very homogeneous until recently. Since 1990 there has been a substantial uptick in Muslim immigration: “The Muslims are still not a very big minority, but they do constitute a fast growing one [some scholars]have calculated their number in 2006 to be about 200,000 - and they are often very visible, with special clothing and dietary rules, and different attitudes to the relationship between men and women and to the structure of the family. Whether this is caused by religion or by traditions and customs from their homeland is debatable. The attitude to the Muslim minority has been an important part of the political debate in Denmark, and one of the most controversial parts of it, as seen, for example, in the heated debate about the publication of cartoons depicting the prophet Mohammed at the end of 2005 and the beginning of 2006...” leaving aside anti-immigrant attitudes this poses a challenge to the Danish welfare state: “It is no doubt a problem for the Danish welfare state that considerably fewer non-western immigrants have work and pay taxes than is the case for

Table 11 – Effects of cultural and economic indices on preferences concerning immigration¹⁵

| | (1) Integration | (2) Level | (3) Index |
|------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Culture index | 0.861*** (0.000) | 1.002*** (0.000) | 1.047*** (0.000) |
| Economic index | 0.242*** (0.000) | 0.196*** (0.000) | 0.265*** (0.000) |
| _cons | -2.002*** (0.000) | -0.429* (0.042) | |
| <hr/> | | | |
| cut1 | | | |
| _cons | | | 1.137*** (0.000) |
| <hr/> | | | |
| cut2 | | | |
| _cons | | | 2.875*** (0.000) |
| <hr/> | | | |
| <i>N</i> | 7,311 | 6,546 | 7,376 |
| <i>pseudo R</i> ² | 0.104 | 0.141 | 0.113 |

p-values in parentheses
* *p* < 0.05, ** *p* < 0.01, *** *p* < 0.001

the rest of the population. A welfare state of the Danish type is built on the implicit assumption that people will work and pay taxes for a period of their lives and receive support from the public purse when they are children or elderly, or if they become sick. The net balance of transfers to the public purse is negative for non-western immigrants as a group. Fewer are in work and more live on public transfer incomes than is the case for the remainder of the population; of the non-western immigrants and second-generation immigrants, only 55 percent of males and 41 percent of females are in employment, compared with 81 and 75 percent respectively of males and females of Danish ethnic origin..." Niels Kærgård, "Social cohesion and the transformation from ethnic to multicultural society: The Case of Denmark," *Ethnicities*, Vol. 10, No. 4, Special issue: Immigration, diversity and social cohesion (December 2010), pp. 476. There is evidence that, despite efforts at integration, Danish policy has been less welcoming to Muslims than other countries in our sample: Kærgård reports that only Germany and Italy have more restrictive rules for integration than Denmark's." In an overview, the policy in 12 different areas (rules for family reunification, for refugees, residence permits, possibilities of citizenship, etc.) for different countries are compared with the Danish rules and are classified as equal to, or more or less restrictive than, the Danish rules. Sweden is, for instance, not more restrictive than Denmark on any of the 12 measures, is equally restrictive on four of them, and is less restrictive on eight. This makes Denmark the most restrictive of (Sweden, Netherlands, Germany, Italy, UK, Canada, Finland), though it is not very different from Germany."

¹⁵ Fixed effects and SES controls are omitted. We need to remark that all of our regressions support the common finding that education is negatively related to anti-immigrant sentiments even controlling for our variables. The same holds for the effects of income. Some have argued that this effect ought to be ascribed to "culture" rather than the economy where the "culture" in this case is the culture of educated, or wealthier, people. An alternative interpretation would say that educated or well off people tend to be fairly insulated from the negative economic consequences of immigration (or will tend to be well positioned to benefit from them). These tendencies, if they exist, seem to be merely contingent claims about correlations. We take no position on that debate here.

3. The Politics of Immigration: Two models

This section will examine the effects of immigration attitudes on how people vote in elections. As we noted in the first section of the papers, the establishment parties tend systematically to be more pro-immigrant than their partisans. This seems to place them in a vulnerable position if popular attitudes shift in an anti-immigrant direction. In the first model in this section we take a “retrospective” view of elections and ask whether a party in government pays a price for being out of step with those who voted to put it into the government. We can define *party loyalty* as the propensity to vote for the same party that they voted for last time and look only at loyalty to parties in government for various levels of immigration attitudes. Thus these figures will show the price paid in loss of voters from their electoral coalition for taking immigration positions that are not popular with their voters. Of course, they may possibly pick up some other voters too but if they do, that may be a “prospective” rather than a “retrospective” effect.

Figure 3 – Party loyalty and distance from party to respondent on Integration

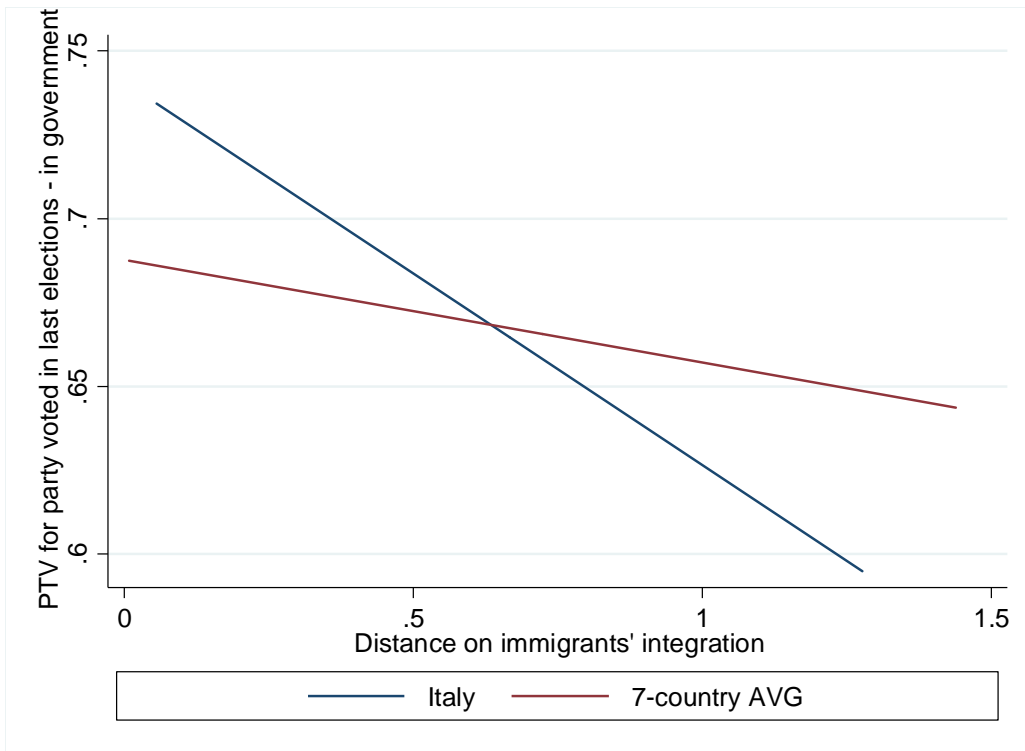


Figure 4 – Party loyalty and distance from party to respondent on immigration Level

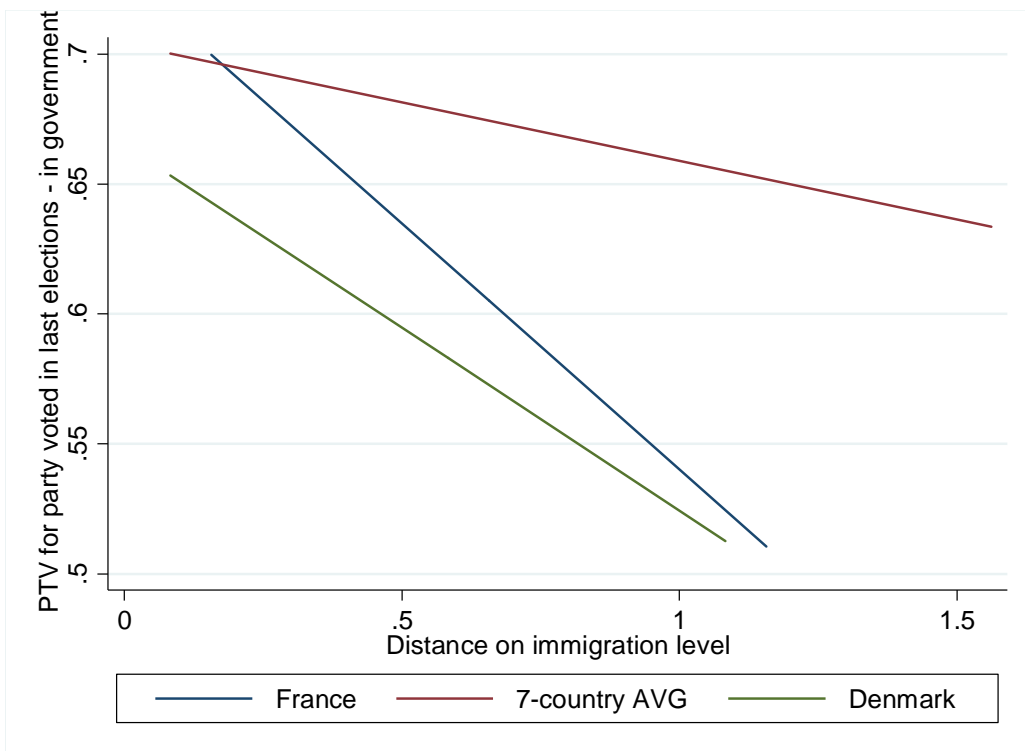
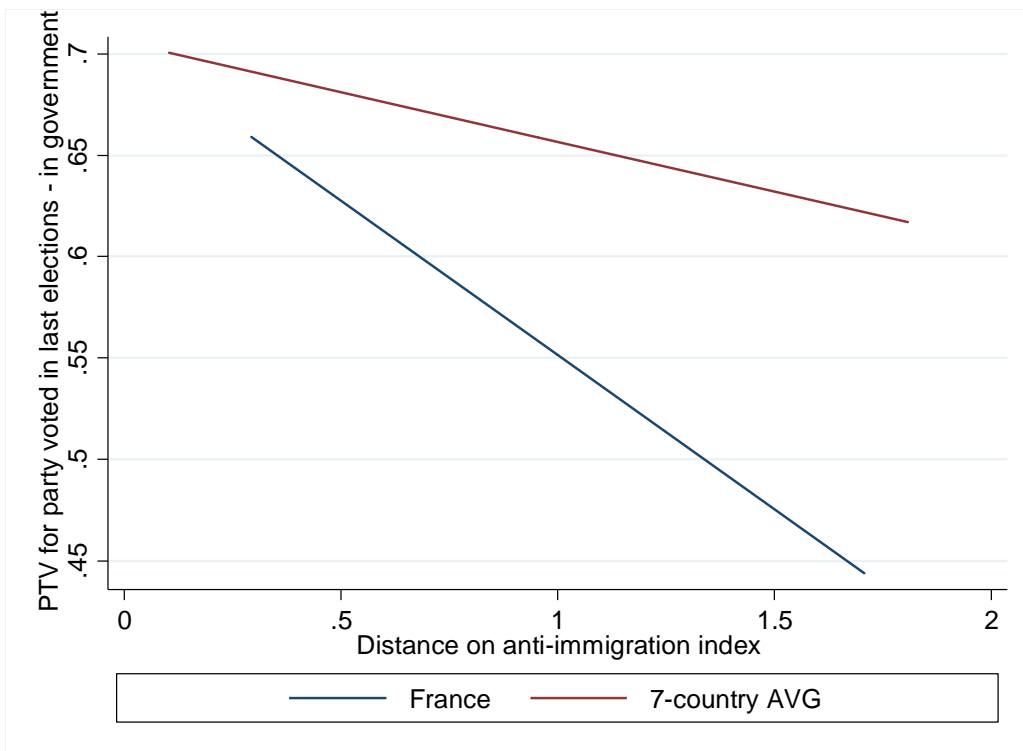


Figure 5 – Party loyalty and distance from party to respondent on immigration Index



The thing to emphasize in these figures is that the pooled (average) effect of taking an unpopular position is negative. However, as can be seen there is a good deal of cross country variation, so it is difficult to say that the retrospective effect of immigration has been uniformly adverse for parties in government.

Finally we return to the retrospective question of how potent the immigration issue is to a party that received a voter's support in the previous election. The question of how the immigration issue affects an individual's vote for his or her party is shown in Table 12. The results show that both distance on immigration and Level and distance on Integration have negative effects on vote propensity for the respondent's preferred party. The further one is from their preferred party on integration and immigration, the less likely they will be to vote for that party in future elections. The distance on integration variable has a coefficient twice the size of the immigration level variable, which is somewhat inconsistent with the results in Table 13. However, both are

significant as is the case in the following Table. It could be that this result is due to reactions to immigrants who are already in the country and thus are not integrated according to the respondent, making this problem more immediate in time than future immigration, Subsequent work will have to determine the truth. It is, nevertheless, true that a retrospective model has explanatory power. which thus has possible real world consequences.

Table 12 – Effects on Propensity-To-Vote for the party you voted for in last general elections

| | All Voters |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| Normal vote | |
| Distance on integration | -0.439*** (0.000) |
| Distance on immigration level | -0.213* (0.030) |
| <i>N</i> | 3,899 |
| <i>pseudo R²</i> | 0.196 |

We can now turn to a prospective voting model. For this purpose we make use of a variable entitled *propensity to vote* for a party (which can take on values from 0 to 1, and can sum to more than one if a voter says she may vote for more than one party in the future). It is supposed to be a measure of favorable feelings toward a party. Each respondent can appear several times in the following table so we need to take account of correlation in the error structure. Table 13 presents two ordered logit analyses of the propensity to vote for a party as a function of the distance between the party and the respondent on each issue, plus the left right scale. The left hand column presents the results for “objective” differences – where we define the party position as the average placement of the party in the whole sample. And the subjective difference – the difference between the respondent’s self placement and her placement of the

party -- is in the right hand column. The analysis is clustered by respondent in order to correct for correlated errors. As above we suppress the SES controls and country fixed effects. The last row of the table shows that distance from a party in the Left-Right dimension is a powerful predictor of vote propensities as expected.

The results in Table 13 show that, even after controlling for the left-right dimension, the various issue distances have strong effects on the vote propensity. Most of these effects are negative as expected. But among these effects the two immigration issues stand out. This suggests that politics in these countries is multidimensional and that the immigration dimension is real and powerful. Again, these results are cautionary for other parties – especially those that can expect to be in government.

Table 13 – Effects on Propensity-To-Vote for a party in general

| | Objective distances | Subjective distances |
|------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Integration | -0.264*** (0.000) | -0.313*** (0.001) |
| Immigration level | -0.449*** (0.000) | -0.208** (0.003) |
| Death penalty | 0.00664 (0.858) | -0.0482 (0.331) |
| Gay marriages | -0.0834* (0.027) | -0.00342 (0.942) |
| Credit to foreign buyers | -0.227** (0.010) | -0.0258 (0.585) |
| Income inequality | -0.157* (0.024) | -0.496*** (0.000) |
| Minimum wage | -0.334*** (0.000) | -0.244** (0.001) |
| Unemployment benefits | -0.235*** (0.000) | 0.0123 (0.861) |
| Firing employees | -0.106 (0.091) | -0.0941 (0.155) |
| Governmental businesses | -0.102 (0.092) | -0.115* (0.018) |
| Retirement age | -0.106 (0.051) | -0.121 (0.066) |
| LR dimension | -1.287*** (0.000) | -1.117*** (0.000) |
| <i>N</i> | 10,123 | 3,371 |
| <i>pseudo R</i> ² | 0.181 | 0.229 |

p-values in parentheses
* *p* < 0.05, ** *p* < 0.01, *** *p* < 0.001

Conclusion

In this paper we used a seven nation survey to ascertain the countries' attitudes toward immigration in regard to levels of immigration and integration into the country. The results showed differences across countries but in regard to the causes of attitudes on both dimensions of immigration, both economic well being and cultural variables were relevant determinants of attitudes. In perhaps the most innovative part of the paper we estimated the effect that disagreement between respondents and parties on immigration and other issues have on voter's propensity to vote for parties. Moreover, when we analyzed the respondent's preferred party the results showed that immigration issues have an impact on future votes. Our hope is that these results, particularly the political implications, can become a baseline for future research.

In addition to the social science implications of our study there are also public policy implications. Namely, in a world where Donald Trump wants to withdraw the United States from world trade, the British are voting on exiting the European Union and all across Europe anti-immigration and anti-trade parties and movements are rising, it is important to understand where the opposition to trade is coming from. This research shows that in large part those who perceive themselves as having lost out economically are more anti-immigrant. In addition, social conservatives are more anti-immigrant than are social liberals across all of our countries. The fact that most political parties in our survey have taken positions which are more pro immigration and pro free trade is, in our view, a good sign since those policies have benefitted the world by reducing poverty. Voters, however, seem less inclined to give leaders the benefit of the doubt and, as our paper shows, they are willing to vote against parties if the parties' immigration positions are too out of line with voters' views. Policy makers should take heed and move slowly lest they generate trends, which would be similar to those that ended the first transformation of the world economy.

