INDIVIDUAL SIMILARITIES AND REGIONAL DIFFERENCES: THE IMPACT OF 2015 REFUGEE CRISIS ON EUROPEANS’ ATTITUDES TOWARD IMMIGRATION

Liri Kosovare Bllaca

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BA thesis

Liri Kosovare Bllaca

October, 2018

Prishtinë
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INDIVIDUAL SIMILARITIES AND REGIONAL DIFFERENCES: THE IMPACT OF 2015 REFUGEE CRISIS ON EUROPEANS’ ATTITUDES TOWARD IMMIGRATION

Mentor: Ridvan Peshkopia

October, 2018

This paper has been compiled and submitted to meet the partial requirements for the Bachelor Degree
ABSTRACT

Whereas the extant literature has found much similarities in determinants and correlates of individual attitudes toward immigration to Europe there is less attention on Europe’s regional-based attitudes. We try to unpack this puzzle by accounting for attitude variations that the 2015 Europe’s refugee crisis brought about in three geopolitical regions of the continent, namely EU member countries from former communist Eastern Europe, EU member countries from Western Europe and non-EU Western countries. We argue that whereas some socioeconomic factors and other attitudinal variables predict the same reaction toward more/less immigration from poor countries outside Europe, trust in institutions and their perception as the locus of policymaking predict different attitudes toward such migration. We found that, indeed, the 2015 refugee crisis sparked different reaction between the European East and the European West related to their willingness to admit more/less immigrants. Those findings suggest that much of attitudinal differences related to immigration in Europe can be understood as a product of people’s perception over the locus of policy responsibility, and that the 2015 refugee crisis and the ensuing increased salience of the immigration has helped to crystallize differences in locating such responsibility. We test our hypotheses with a dataset that combines data from the 7th and 8th rounds of the European Social Survey, which happened in 2014 and 2016, respectively.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This journey would not have been possible without the support of my loved ones. I’m deeply indebted to thank my family for encouraging me in all of my pursuits and inspiring me to follow my dreams. I am especially grateful to my parents, who supported me emotionally and financially. I would also like to express my deepest appreciation to my professor Ridvan Peshkopia. Without his assistance and dedicated involvement in every step throughout the process, this paper would have never been accomplished.

All lingering errors and misconceptions remain my own responsibility.
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1 INTRODUCTION

Whereas recent electoral results in Germany and Italy show that the 2015 refugee crisis in Europe has impacted EU member country’s public opinion on immigration, and that impact could affect domestic politics and policies, we lack, to our knowledge, a systematic account on any possible attitudinal differences brought about by the refugee crisis in various European geopolitical regions. As the EU enlargement has contributed to blur Europe’s East-West divisions along economic and political lines, the question remains whether or not public attitudes on both sides of the continent are catching up with each other in various issues. It is worth inquiring whether or not there exist differences on how the crisis has impacted attitudes of Europeans from both sides of the continent on immigration from poor countries outside the continent. Could the civic Western European versus the ethnic Eastern European national identity dichotomy affect different attitudes toward immigration in the continent? Whereas there is a growing body of literature explaining Europeans’ attitudes toward immigration, there is little comparison between such attitudes in the western part of the continent and their former communist, Eastern European counterparts (for exceptions see Ceobanu and Escandell (2008) and Halapuu et al. (2013)). Answering such questions carries both the theoretical importance of understanding possible intracontinental attitudinal differences toward immigration (or ruling them out altogether), and the practical importance of designing EU and domestic public policies accordingly. Moreover, those answers would elucidate the intersectional character of European geopolitics and political culture, and inquire into whether or not the EU has been able to establish an overarching normative behavior on public opinion toward immigration.

We tested whether the 2015 Europe’s refugee crisis brought about changes in Europeans’ attitudes toward immigration from poor countries outside Europe, and whether or not there are attitudinal differences over immigration from outside the continent among people living in EU’s opposing sides of the former Iron Curtain. In the debate of whether or not there are intracontinental attitudinal differences that could be explained by the civic patriotism versus ethnic nationalism dichotomy and those who find such a dichotomy not to be a useful tool, we tend to rest in the between. We argue that, whereas there are differences that could be explained by that dichotomy, another important group of correlates could be
people’s relationship with and trust in their political elites and institutions. We tested our argument by applying multilevel analysis on a series of ordered probit models built with European Social Survey (ESS) data from the 7th and 8th rounds. The ESS 7 was held in 2014 and the ESS 8 was held in 2016, whereas the peak of Europe’s refugee crisis happened in 2015, right between the two rounds. We included in our dataset all the 19 countries where both rounds were held, and divided them in three regions, the EU East, the EU West and the non-EU West.

We found both similarities and differences across all the three geopolitical regions. The main difference is the impact of the 2015 crisis on people’s willingness to admit more/less immigrants from poor countries outside Europe. However, we found that those differences seem to be confined with, and reflect people’s position toward, national and EU institutions, but do not consistently spill outside them. In line with our argument, we found that Eastern Europeans tend to associate their attitudes toward more immigration from poor countries outside Europe only with their trust in the European Parliament but not with domestic politicians and institutions; EU Western Europeans tend to associate such attitudes with both domestic politicians and institutions and the European Parliament; and non-EU Western Europeans tend to associate attitudes toward such immigration only with domestic politicians and institutions. However, we found that the post-crisis conditions brought about some balance between the EU East and the non-EU East regarding the locus of policy responsibility: citizens from both sides associate their attitudes toward immigration with national parliaments and the European Parliament. However, the very post-crisis conditions and the salience that they brought to the issue also crystallized differences between East and West regarding directional association of people’s trust in institutions and their attitudes toward immigration. What makes the EU East and the EU West similar is citizens’ inclination to associate their attitudes toward immigration with national parliaments and the European Parliament), and what make them differ are the opposing directional signs. On the other hand, citizens from the EU West and the non-EU West share their inclination to associate their attitudes toward immigration with trust in domestic politicians and institutions according same directional signs. However, a number of variables similarly affect or associate the dependent variable across the three regions. We
conclude that, whereas the new European political realities have encroached upon intracontinental cleavages along political culture lines, some differences persist and affect people’s different attitudes over immigration from poor countries outside the continent.
2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The East-West National Identity Cleavages and their Impact on People’s Political Attitudes

Answers of our research question are embedded into the answer of a larger question: are there attitudinal differences between the European geopolitical West and East? Most of the existing literature converges toward finding both similarities and differences between Eastern and Western Europeans, and highlighting those similarities and differences becomes paramount in explaining any differing attitudes toward immigration from outside Europe into their continent. Arguably, among the starkest differences are the different versions of national identities and their associated different nationhood concepts (Hjerm, 1998, 2003; Jones, 1997; Jones & Smith, 2001; Shulman, 2002; Smith, 1991; Wright & Reeskens, 2013).

Kohn’s (1944) conceptualization of the distinction between nationhood’s civic West European and ethnic East European conceptions has pioneered a large body of research dealing with understanding the very nature of each of them as well as their relationship (Greenfeld 1993; Ignatieff 1993; Brubaker 1996; Schöpflin 1996; Plamenatz, 1976; Smith, 1986, 1991; Kolstø 2000). Despite a lack of consensus about the exact nature and implications of the distinction, the civic nation is defined as political construct where allegiances rest on political concepts and principles, while the ethnic nation rests on perceptions of and loyalty to specific ethnic characteristics. The ethnic type of nationhood puts an emphasis on fixed, static and sequential ascriptive requirements for national membership such as genealogical descent, race, ethnicity, and place of birth (Bar-Tal & Staub, 1997; Connor, 1994; Smith 1986, 1991). On the other hand, the civic conception of nationhood views it as a matter of choice, considering it as a bundle of shared political principles, subjective ascription to a nation, and equated citizenship. The concept of civic nation is sometimes equated with the idea of the liberal state, while the ethnic nation is defined as an illiberal version of state-formation (Ignatieff 1993).

As “a collective sentiment based upon the belief of belonging to the same nation and of sharing most of the attributes that make it distinct from other nations” (Guibernau, 2007/9: 11), national identity associates the two different interpretations of what constitutes a nation
(Brubaker, 1992; Greenfeld, 1992; Smith, 1991; Bar-Tal 1997; Schatz and Staub 1997; Blank and Schmidt, 2003). Scholars working on national identity have defined patriotism as feelings of attachment to one’s nation, whereas nationalism as viewing one’s nation superior to others (Kosterman and Feshbach 1989; Blank and Schmidt, 2003; de Figueiredo & Elkins, 2003; Esses et al., 2004). This conceptualization relates patriotism with concerns for the well-being of one’s nation, national unity and civic involvement, and nationalism with xenophobia and hierarchy legitimizing ideologies (Bar-Tal and Staub, 1997; Schatz, Staub, & Lavine, 1999; Ariely, 2011; Kemmelmeier and Winter, 2008). Nationalists support social homogeneity, blind obedience and idealized excessive evaluation of their own nation; patriots, on the other side support heterogeneous structures within society and a critical distance to the state and the regime (Blank and Schmidt, 2003).

Research has found differing impact of patriotism and nationalism on people’s political attitudes and behavior, especially in policy areas tightly related with political culture and ideological affiliation (Hadarics 2016). In intergroup relations, nationalism predicts aversion toward multiculturalism and immigration and a longing for cultural purity, whereas patriotism seems either not to be related to intergroup attitudes (Schatz & Staub, 1997; Spry & Hornsey, 2007), or to tolerance toward minorities and foreigners (Blank and Schmidt 2003; de Figueiredo & Elkins, 2003; Esses et al., 2004). In a wider picture, nationalism seems to predict more secondary emotions (e.g., optimism, compassion, melancholy, and guilt) to ingroups versus outgroups, while patriotism negatively predict the differential attribution of secondary emotions to ingroups versus outgroups (Viki and Calitri 2008; Leyens et al 2001).

However, a small but growing body of literature has been able to challenge both theoretically and empirically the European cleavages according to the patriotism-nationalism dichotomy (see Kuzio, 2001, 2002; Kymlicka, 1995, 1999, 2000, 2001; Nieguth, 1999; Yack, 1999; Ceobanu and Escandell 2008; Hjerm, 2003; Janmaat, 2006; Jones and Smith, 2001a,b; Shulman, 2002). This critiques rests on the claim that all nation-state constructions depend on a core of ethnic thinking (Kuzio 2002). As such, the “ethnocultural neutrality” of Western liberal states is a myth, and that the East-West comparison of nation-building processes needed to follow a bi-directional approach
(Kymlicka 2000). Admitting a borderline between the two distinct national identity models, other authors have argued against viewing them necessarily as mutually exclusive (Hjerm, 2003; Shulman, 2002). As Ceobanu and Escabell (2008: 1150) put it, “the question should not be one of if but, rather, how much ethnic straw is needed for the fabrication of political bricks, apart from the civic clay.” Therefore, just as we should expect an overlap between the civic and ethnic representations of the nation (Ceobanu and Escandell 2008), so should we expect an overlap of people’s attitudes and policy preferences in both sides of the continent.

2.2 Determinants and Correlates of People’s Attitudes Toward Immigration from Outside Europe

The dramatic Europe’s 2015 refugee crisis brought about a salience increase of immigration issue. Since crisis are exceptional events, they could interrupt existing narratives and create opportunities for promoting newly emerging interpretations of an issue (Horsti 2008a; Nossek 2008). Presumably, the salience weights are relative (e.g. they add up to one) rather than absolute (Hatton 2017); due to bounded rationality individuals must choose what is more important to them among various preferences (Simon, 1985; Kahneman, 2011). Therefore, individuals must choose among alternatives, and an increasing salience in other issues reduces the salience in immigration (Hatton 2017). And since salience is often measured by media coverage (Gentskow, 2007; Ashworth 2012; Strömberg, 2015), there is abundant literature to bolster claims that media’s coverage of the 2015 refugee crisis increased immigration salience to the European public (Georgiou and Zaborowski 2017; Greussing and Boomgaard 2017). Indeed, using Eurobarometer data, we calculated that the mean for the variable “immigration as an important issue” increased in the EU East from .06 in 2014 to .19 in 2016; and in the EU West increased from .18 in 2014 to .24 in 2016 (the Eurobarometer provided no data for the non-EU Western European countries). Therefore, we should expect that the 2015 refugee crisis to have caused among Europeans attitude change toward immigration from poor countries outside Europe.
In spite of criticism, research continues to highlight important differences between public opinions in Eastern and Western Europe. (Burjanek, 2001; Kunovich, 2002; Rohrschneider, 1999). Those differences include differing preferences in policy areas such as welfare (Alesina & Fuchs-Schündeln, 2007; Lipsmeyer & Nordstrom, 2003; Redmond, Schnepf, & Suhrcke, 2002; Roosma, Gelissen, & van Oorschot, 2013; Suhrcke, 2001). One argument holds that in West more than in East Europe, popular dissatisfaction with policies and governmental actions is remarkably visible during certain periods of time, making exclusionary attitudes more overt (Ireland 1997; Wallace 1999). On the other hand, social upheavals and wars that associated the disintegration of several communist federations seem to indicate the persisting power of the exclusionary ethnonationalism in Eastern Europe. The persistence of such ethnic exclusionism in this region indicates that attitudes of intolerance toward foreigners and immigrants remain widespread among Eastern European publics, who appear to be more exclusionary than Westerners even though the immigration rates of the post-communist countries are significantly smaller than those of their Western counterparts (Okólski, 2000). Therefore, we expect Eastern Europeans to be on average less supportive to more immigrants from poor countries outside Europe. Moreover, if the West civic patriotism versus East ethnic nationalism dichotomy holds, we should expect the exclusionary nature of Eastern European ethnic nationalism to inflict opposition in Eastern Europe to immigration, but the inclusionary nature of Western European nationalism to bring about support for more immigration from poor countries outside Europe.

Halapuu et al. (2013) define institutional trust as people’s belief that country’s institutions do not harm them, at least not willingly, and act in everybody’s interests. The limited literature that link people’s trust in institutions with their attitudes toward immigration argue that social and political alienation impact attitudes towards immigrants; if people feel livelihood insecurity and neglect by their politicians, they tend to show more negative attitudes towards immigrants (Espenshade and Hempstead, 1996). Other authors have found that trust in state institutions could prevent negative attitudes towards immigrants (Husfeldt 2004). Generalized as political trust, institutional trust could expand over trust in elites, politicians and political parties.
The 2015 refugee crisis in Europe provoked strong sentiments and reactions regarding both humanitarian feelings associated with a growth of human solidarity and support, and negative reactions associated with fears of terrorism and national identity erosion (Georgiou and Zaborowski 2017). There is a growing body of literature that discuss how information sources shape people’s policy preferences. By having greater access to the mass media, politicians play a significant role in shaping the public discourse related to immigration and refugees, thus directly impacting public opinion on this issue (Ray 2003). Such capability to cue the general public would mean that politicians transfer to the masses their growing anti-immigrant sentiments, causing higher levels of nationalism among the public (Smith Keller 2016). In turn, people use elites and institutions as informational shortcuts in order to inform their perceptions and preferences on policies, and help to locate and/or place responsibilities about those policies (Brader et al., 2013; Druckman et al., 2013; Lupia and McCubbins, 1998; Tilley and Hobolt, 2011). Moreover, it has been argued that a strong civic national identity that associates patriotism has a positive impact on political trust, whereas a strong ethnic national identity that associates nationalism has a negative impact on political trust (Berg and Hjerm 2010) Therefore, whereas we argue in favor of the association between trust in domestic politicians and institutions and attitudes toward immigration, we do not make a prediction about the directional sign of that association.

However, the established consensus is that citizens are disinterested in the EU, and do not respond to information provided by the EU, thus making the latter unable to serve as informational shortcut (de Vreese et al., 2006; Follesdal and Hix, 2006; Hix and Marsh, 2007, 2011; Hobolt et al., 2013; Hobolt and Tilley, 2014; Weber, 2011). However, Page (2017) has argued that people’s opinions and attitudes might not be as insulated from the influence of institutions as previously argued, and that the EU possesses a greater influence on public opinion than the established consensus presumes. According to this argument, citizens’ interests in and attitudes toward the EU would make them object policies promoted by the EU. Also, people’s position versus their countries’ EU membership seem to guide their responsibility assignment toward policy issues. Moreover, it has been argued that a strong civic national identity that associates patriotism has a positive impact on
political trust, whereas a strong ethnic national identity that associates nationalism has a negative impact on political trust (Berg and Hjerm 2010), but we don’t know how trust in EU institutions would associate attitudes toward an issue of increasing salience such as immigration in Europe from poor countries outside Europe. Hence, whereas we argue in favor of the association between trust in institutions and attitudes toward immigration, we do not make a prediction about the directional sign of that association.

Literature that relates anti-immigration attitudes with people’s attitudes toward EU integration develops in two interrelated streams: perceptions of threats that immigration presents to their resources and people’s fear of losing social cohesion and national identity (McLaren 2002). Those attitudes are related to intolerance toward social diversity, and thus tend to resist further EU integration (Tillman 2013; de Vreese and Boomgaarden 2005; Nelsen and Guth 2003). However, other research has found that anti-immigration attitudes could go beyond fear of losing social cohesion and national identity, and reflect people’s anxieties of losing access to economic resources. Anti-immigrant attitudes might reflect people’s wider prejudice and fears from the outgroups, thus making anti-immigrant attitudes multidimensional, resulting not only from perceived threats to personal values, and national identity but also to group resources and security (de Vreese and Boomgaarden 2005; Azrout et al. 2011). Since EU integration leads to border removal within the EU, hence more immigration and its economic consequences, fueling more opposition to further European integration (Canan-Sokullu, 2011; Lubbers, 2008; van Klinkeren et al., 2013; Kuhn, 2012; Lubbers and Jaspers, 2011; Erisen and Erisen, 2014). Bearing in mind the differences between the arguably inclusive Western European civic patriotism and the exclusionary Eastern European ethnic nationalism, we expect that support for more EU integration to positively predict support for more immigration from poor countries outside the continent.
3 METHODOLOGY

We test our argument with data from the European Social Survey, rounds 7 and 8. Our dataset includes 19 countries, all participants of both rounds 7 and 8, which was our only selection criteria. We operationalized our key independent variable, the European region, by creating a variable which codes differently former communist countries from Eastern Europe (Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland and Slovenia); the EU-member Western European countries (Austria, Belgium, Finland, France Ireland, Germany, Great Britain, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden); and two Western European countries that are not EU members (Switzerland and Norway). Our selection method brought into the dataset only former communist Eastern European countries that are now EU member countries. Therefore, our dataset includes 72,015 observations, of which 22,011 are from Eastern European countries, 43,966 from EU-member Western European countries, and 6,038 from non-EU Western European countries.

We tested a dependent variable that measured people’s support to allow more/less immigrants from poor countries outside Europe, with responses spanning from “allow more” = 1 to “allow some” = 2 to “allow few” = 3 to “allow none” = 4. It is obvious that such responses represent categories of attitude measurement rather than attitudinal fixed and exact points. It seems reasonable that lurking under the survey questions is a continuous range of unobserved attitudes and policy preferences (with real values of attitude presumably ranging from -∞ to +∞), normally distributed around the typical (presumably mixed) perception of the policy and tapering off such that only very few people greatly abhor or truly lust for more or no immigrants from poor countries outside Europe. Therefore, ordered probit models would be most appropriate for this multivariate analysis of normally distributed data. Also, because our data are nested in country settings, but also because our argument about differences between the European West and European East rests on a country/European geopolitical region level of analysis, multilevel regression analysis would be the best strategy for our explanatory statistical analysis. And finally, whereas there is a general consensus that weights should apply to descriptive statistics (Kish & Frankel, 1974), there is no same level of consensus on whether weights should routinely apply in regression analysis (Kott, 2007; Winship & Radbill, 1994). Therefore,
we opted to use weights only in our descriptive statistics, but considered that individual level variables would modify for frequency and analytical weights, whereas multilevel analysis would modify for country weights.

Aside from our key independent variables, we employ a number of control variables, most of them derived from the extant literature. Thus, our models control for age (Markaki and Longhi 2013; Smith Keller 2016; Hainmueller and Hiscox 2007), gender (Markaki and Longhi 2013; Smith Keller 2011; Hainmueller and Hiscox 2007; Kunovich 2004), education (Gordon and Arian 2001; Mayda 2006; O’Rourke and Sinnott 2006), unemployment (Klinger et al. 2013; Markaki and Longhi 2013), being a member of a discriminated minority in the country (Halapuu et al. 2013; Markaki and Longhi 2013), position in the left-right ideological spectrum (Lahav 2002; Givens and Mohanty, 2014; Karreth, Singh and Stojek, 2015) and concerns over security (Hellwig and Sinno, 2017).

It should be noted that causality between trust in institutions and attitudes toward immigrants remains a contested issue. McLaren (2010, 2012) has established the causality direction from attitudes toward immigrants toward trust in institutions; arguable, people who perceive that immigrants threaten their communities are likely to trust less their elites and institutions. On the contrary, arguing in favor of the opposite causal direction, Halapuu et al. (2013) maintain that people with higher level of institutional trust could also be treated as more risk-taking. Consequentially, institutional trust assumes a readiness to take the risk of letting others (elites and institutions) make important decisions for oneself. Accordingly, considering institutional trust as an indication of individual’s inclination toward risk-taking behavior could justify the causal relationship between institutional trust and attitudes towards immigrants. We find both positions unconvincing, and consider the relationship between trust in institutions and attitudes toward immigrants to be locked in an endogenous relationship and will always discuss their association rather than causality.
4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We begin our analysis with some descriptive statistics. Table 1 comparatively describes the distribution frequencies of the dependent variable. It becomes clear that not only support for more immigrants from poor countries outside Europe has been lower in the Eastern European countries in 2014 compared to both western regions, but obviously there are significant differences between the European East and European West regarding the impact of Europe’s 2015 refugee crisis on people’s preferences toward immigration influx into their countries. The table shows that whereas in 2016 there is a growing number of people in both the EU West and Non-EU West supporting more immigrants from outside Europe, that number in the East has dropped in favor of those who support allowing none. Tables 2.1-2.3 show the mean differences between people’s preferences for more/less immigrants from poor countries outside the continent as well as their statistical significance among people of the three European geopolitical regions under discussion. Those results lend support on our argument that people in East Europe tend to be less supportive of immigration from outside the continent, and that the 2015 crisis impacted differently attitudes on such in issue on both sides of the continent. Figures 1.1-1.3 visualize those findings.

Table 1. Weighted frequencies of support for more/less immigrants from poor countries outside Europe in each of the European regions and both ESS rounds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EU East</th>
<th>EU West</th>
<th>Non-EU West</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allow many</td>
<td>545.41</td>
<td>294.87</td>
<td>3,932.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>immigrants</td>
<td>9.64</td>
<td>5.56</td>
<td>14.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow some</td>
<td>1,884.80</td>
<td>1,656.96</td>
<td>10,256.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow few</td>
<td>2,040.98</td>
<td>2,037.28</td>
<td>8,241.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow none</td>
<td>1,189.32</td>
<td>1,310.87</td>
<td>3,906.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5,660.51</td>
<td>5,299.97</td>
<td>26,335.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Results account for post-stratification and population weights. Percentages are in italics below frequencies.
Table 2. Comparing weighted means of support for more/less immigrants from poor countries outside Europe among EU East and EU West Europeans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EU East</th>
<th></th>
<th>EU West</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>se</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>2.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>se</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Results account for post-stratification and population weights. *** p (Ha: diff ≠ 0) < 0.001

Table 3. Comparing weighted means of support for more/less immigrants from poor countries outside Europe among EU East and Non-EU West Europeans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EU East</th>
<th></th>
<th>Non-EU West</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>se</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>2.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>se</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>2.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Results account for post-stratification and population weights. *** p (Ha: diff ≠ 0) < 0.001

Table 4. Comparing weighted means of support for more/less immigrants from poor countries outside Europe among East and West Europeans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EU West</th>
<th></th>
<th>Non-EU West</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>se</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>2.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>se</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>2.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: Results account for post-stratification and population weights. *** p (Ha: diff ≠ 0) < 0.001 and ** p (Ha: diff ≠ 0) < 0.01
We develop our explanatory analysis with Models 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 in Table 3. The statistical significance of the random effects at 99.99 percent confidence level testifies in favor of our multilevel analysis strategy. Moreover, the regression results show that, whereas there is a tendency in the European West to associate attitudes toward immigrations either with trust in country’s politicians and national parliaments (the non-EU West) or country’s politicians, political parties and national parliaments (the EU West), it seems that people in the EU East do not make such an association. The only model where the variable “trust in political parties” carries statistical significance (at 99 percent confidence level) is Model 1.2 (the EU West), and in this case it shows a positive association with opposition to immigration (the more people trust political parties, the more
they oppose immigration). This is quite opposite with the association that people make between trust in other domestic actors, namely politicians and national parliament on the one side, and attitudes toward more/less immigration. Therefore, whereas there is no evidence in the EU East to support any association between trust in domestic politicians and institutions with support for immigration, there is evidence that Western Europeans would associate trust in domestic politicians and institutions with attitudes toward immigration. However, such an evidence uncovers also some inconsistencies. Both in the EU West and the non-EU West, more trust in politicians and national parliaments seems to predict support for more immigrants from poor countries outside Europe. However, whereas there is no evidence in the non-EU West of any association between trust in political parties and attitudes toward immigration, in the EU West more trust in political parties predicts less support for immigration from outside the continent. We will discuss these results more below.

In turn, people in EU member countries, both in its eastern and western sides, strongly associate their preferences for more/less immigration from poor countries outside the continent with their trust in the European Parliament: the more they trust the European Parliament, the more immigrants from poor countries outside Europe they seem to favor. Meanwhile, understandably, people in the non-EU West seem not to make such association. Whereas we expected this association of trust in European Parliament with attitudes toward immigration in the continent, it represents the only case where an institution, the European Parliament, emerges as a cue provides for citizens of the EU East at a 95 percent confidence level. Also, the negative sign of the $\beta$ coefficient indicates that higher trust in the European Parliament associates support by EU citizens in both East and West for more immigration. These results also highlight that, whereas it seems that citizens of the EU West tend to find immigration policy responsibility at both domestic and EU political actors, people in the EU East find the locus of such a responsibility only at EU actors, and people from the non-EU West locate such a responsibility only with domestic actors.

Moreover, the negative sign of the $\beta$ coefficient for the “EU integration has gone too far” variable indicates that people in all of European regions discussed here associate the
dimension on EU integration with their preferences for more/less immigrants form poor countries outside Europe. The strong statistical significance of such a relationship (at 99.99 percent confidence level) turns these findings into empirical evidence in favor of our claim that viewing the EU integration as having gone too far predicts opposing more immigration from poor countries outside Europe, and supporting more EU integration predicts support for such immigration. Our findings corroborate extant literature discussed earlier, arguing that people see European integration as either promoting or supporting immigration through both imposing European immigration policies on sovereign countries and the road to lax border regimes and free movement across national borders.

**Table 5. Predictive models of Europeans’ attitudes toward more/less migration from poor countries outside Europe**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DV: Allow more/less (1-4) immigrants from poor countries outside Europe</th>
<th>MODEL 1.1 EU EAST</th>
<th>MODEL 1.2 EU WEST</th>
<th>MODEL 1.3 NON-EU WEST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model: Mixed-effects ordered probit</td>
<td>Coeff</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>Coeff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.01 (.00) ***</td>
<td>.01 (.00) ***</td>
<td>.01 (.00) ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-.09 (.02) ***</td>
<td>-.13 (.01) ***</td>
<td>-.06 (.03) ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of education</td>
<td>-.04 (.00) ***</td>
<td>-.04 (.00) ***</td>
<td>-.03 (.00) ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>-.05 (.05)</td>
<td>.01 (.03)</td>
<td>-.01 (.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member of a discriminated minority</td>
<td>.07 (.04)</td>
<td>.14 (.02) ***</td>
<td>.13 (.07) ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust country’s politicians</td>
<td>-.00 (.01)</td>
<td>-.01 (.01) **</td>
<td>-.04 (.01) *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust country’s political parties</td>
<td>.00 (.01)</td>
<td>.01 (.01) *</td>
<td>.02 (.01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust in national parliament</td>
<td>-.01 (.01)</td>
<td>-.02 (.00) **</td>
<td>-.03 (.01) *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust in European Parliament</td>
<td>-.02 (.00) ***</td>
<td>-.01 (.00) ***</td>
<td>-.02 (.01) ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust in people</td>
<td>-.04 (.00) ***</td>
<td>-.06 (.00) ***</td>
<td>-.04 (.01) ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-right ideological orientation</td>
<td>.03 (.00) ***</td>
<td>.11 (.00) ***</td>
<td>.16 (.01) ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of interest in politics</td>
<td>.06 (.00) ***</td>
<td>.12 (.01) ***</td>
<td>.10 (.02) ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling safe walking locally after dark</td>
<td>.03 (.01) *</td>
<td>.13 (.01) ***</td>
<td>.08 (.03) **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU integration has gone too far</td>
<td>-.08 (.00) ***</td>
<td>-.09 (.00) ***</td>
<td>-.09 (.01) ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-crisis interview (ESS 8 (2016))</td>
<td>.08 (.02) ***</td>
<td>-.18 (.01) ***</td>
<td>-.16 (.03) ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cut point 1</td>
<td>-2.15 (.20) ***</td>
<td>-1.24 (.11) ***</td>
<td>-.89 (.21) ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cut point 2</td>
<td>-.79 (.20) ***</td>
<td>-.19 (.11) ***</td>
<td>.71 (.21) *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cut point 3</td>
<td>.37 (.20)</td>
<td>1.36 (.11) ***</td>
<td>2.15 (.22) ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Random effects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>.16 (.10) ***</td>
<td>.09 (.04) ***</td>
<td>.02 (.02) ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-17405.70</td>
<td>-40814.99</td>
<td>-5121.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>15472</td>
<td>36288</td>
<td>4964</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:** Standard errors are in parenthesis besides the \( \beta \) coefficients. *** is for \( p < .001 \); ** is for \( p < .01 \); * is for \( p < .05 \).
The “Post-crisis interview” variable intends to capture the effect of the 2015 refugee crisis in people’s attitudes toward immigration as measured during the 8th ESS round. The effects are statistically significant in all the three models, and the directional signs go according to our hypothesis: whereas the 2015 refugee crisis caused more opposition to immigration from poor countries outside the continent among citizens of the EU East, it pumped up support for such an immigration in both EU and non-EU Western European countries. This is evidence that nationalist exclusionism lingers among Eastern Europeans while Western Europeans seem more generous regarding newcomers in their societies.

Now, let have a look at the behavior of the control variables. Age, years of education, trust in people, left-right ideological orientation and level of interest in politics and all have their directional signs pointing to the same direction, and they all carry statistical significance at the 99.99 percent confidence level across the three geopolitical regions under discussion. Another variable, feeling safe walking locally after dark, also carries the same directional sign throughout the three regions—suggesting that concerns over personal safety negatively impact preferences for more immigrants—but its association with the dependent variable display varying statistical significance among the three regions, with a 95 percent confidence level in the EU East, 99.99 percent confidence level in the EU West, and 99 percent confidence level in the non-EU West. This strong evidence attest the transcendentally nature of those stable determinants and correlates in predicting people’s attitudes toward more/less immigration. Also, the results suggest an attitudinal gender gap in the EU member countries from both East and West, where being a male strongly predicts an inclination toward allowing more immigrants. However, there is no evidence of such a gender gap in the non-EU West, and there seems to be no evidence that being unemployed could in any way affect people’s attitudes toward immigration. Also, being a member of a discriminated minority positively affects support for more immigrants from poor countries outside Europe.

What intrigues us most in these findings is the opposite directional sign that associates attitudes toward immigration and trust in political parties in the EU West. How can we explain the finding that the directional sign of the association between trust in political parties in this geopolitical region and attitudes toward immigration from poor countries
outside Europe goes in the opposite direction of the association and politicians, national parliaments and the European Parliament with attitudes toward such immigration? This might have to do with the unique and powerful role that political parties play in shaping attitudes. Recent research in political psychology views political parties as mechanisms that facilitates the application of predispositions to political decisions (Leeper and Slothuus, 2014). This relationship is different from that between people and state institutions, which views people’s preferences as system inputs, and public policies as system outputs (Mettler and Soss 2004). Therefore, the opposite directional sign of EU Westerners’ support for more immigrants with trust in political parties compared with the same association of the dependent variable with trust in domestic politicians and national parliaments as well as with the European Parliament might show that political parties are leading the immigration debate in the EU West, and thus shaping immigration attitudes accordingly. However, it remains unclear why political parties manage to influence the immigration debate in the EU West and not in the other two geopolitical regions discussed in this research.
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Whereas we cannot claim a blunt “No” to our original answer on whether or not public opinions on the two halves of the European continent, East and West, are beginning to converge, at least on immigration issues, we can still see stark differences in attitudes presumably determined by differing political cultures associated with differing types on national identities. However, other differences seem to emerge from more recent institutional developments, especially the perception of policy responsibility location on immigration issues. Therefore, whether there seem to be a convergence of people’s attitudes on immigration from poor countries outside the continent around some more individualistic—and rather stable—socioeconomic and socio-psychological factors such as age, gender, education, left-right ideological orientation, level of interest in politics and feeling safe walking locally after dark, there is less convergence on the relationship that they build around some more structurally-informed attitudes such as the impact of crises and trust in institutions.

Thus, assuming differences in political culture between East and West, as well as the role that various institutional settings would play in such attitudes, we expected that people in the East would be less welcoming toward immigrants from poor countries outside Europe than their counterparts from the West. Moreover, taking into account the exclusionary nature of the ethnic nationalism in the East and the inclusionary nature of the civic patriotism in the West, we expected that the 2015 European refugee crisis would make Eastern Europeans less willing to accept more immigrants, and Western Europeans more willing to admit immigrants. Our findings vindicated our expectations.

Second, building on the extant literature, we argued that Eastern European ethnic nationalism, distrustful as it is toward domestic politicians and institutions, would correlate such distrust with aversion toward more immigrants in the continent, whereas Western European nationalism would associate their trust in domestic politicians and institutions with support for more immigrants from poor countries outside Europe. Results showed no evidence that EU Easterners’ trust in domestic politicians, political parties and national parliaments affect their attitudes toward immigration, but showed
supporting results for EU and non-EU member countries from the West, with trust in political parties being an aberration. We saw that the association of attitudes toward immigration from poor countries outside Europe with trust in political parties is statistically insignificant in the EU East and the non-EU West, but it is statistically significant in the EU West. However, in the latter case, the directional sign of that association takes the opposite direction from the association of the dependent variable with trust in politicians, national parliaments and the European Parliament.

Whereas our analysis showed that institutional setting seems to encroach upon the ethnic nationalism versus civic patriotism dichotomy, both approaches seemed helpful in finding answers. Whereas the latter would help to predict differences in people’s attitudes toward immigration from outside the continent, the former would help to explain differences in determinants and correlates of such attitudes. Moreover, people’s responsibility assignment on domestic institutions requires much to explain: whereas people in the EU West associate their attitudes toward immigration with trust in domestic politicians, political parties (in the case of the EU West), and national parliaments, people in the EU East do not make such association between the attitudes toward immigration and national politicians and institutions. However, like people in the EU West, they associate the dependent variable with the European Parliament, an association absent in responses of people from the non-EU West. These findings are instructive as to where people find the locus of responsibility of immigration policies, and there seem to be different patterns between the EU East, where people find in at the European institutions; the EU West, where people find it with both domestic politicians, political parties and national parliaments as well as the European Parliament; and the non EU West, where people find such responsibility with only national politicians and parliaments.

As usually, while trying to answer our original research questions, other questions emerged. First,
6 REFERENCES


