



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO

DIPARTIMENTO DI
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Anti-Immigration attitudes in Europe, 2002-2016

A Longitudinal test of the group conflict theory

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THREAT THEORIES

Negative attitudes towards outgroups as a defensive reaction of the majority group to the perception that their exclusive privileges are threatened by the presence of minority groups

(Blalock 1967; Blumer 1958; Bobo 1983; Quillian 1995, 1996; Scheepers et al. 2002).

Threat theories - theoretical issues

- **Individual vs group threats**

- ▶ Competition between individuals (individual in weak position)
- ▶ Competition between groups (all members of the majority group)

- **Economic vs cultural threats**

- ▶ Competition over scarce economic resources (housing, good jobs)
- ▶ Outgroup as a threat to - national - identities

- **Static or longitudinal interpretation**

- ▶ Impact of high but stable levels of competition
- ▶ Evolution of attitudes when changes in competition happen

ENDURING THREATS HYPOTHESES

- HP1: The larger the immigrant population in a country, the higher the level of individual anti-immigration attitudes
- HP2: The higher the unemployment rate in a country, the higher the level of individual anti-immigration attitudes

LONGITUDINAL HYPOTHESES

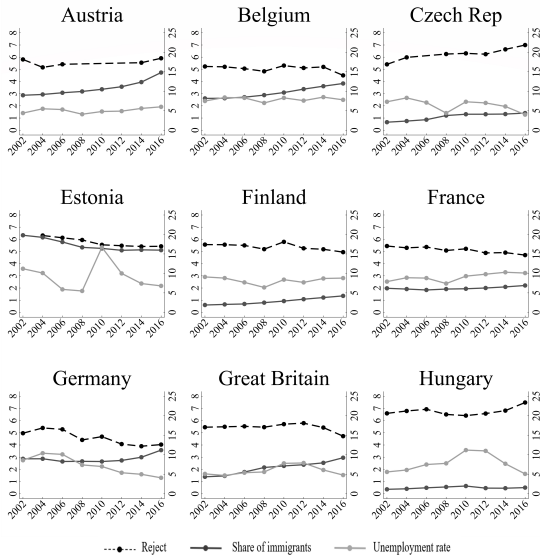
- HP3: A growing immigrant population in a country is linked to an increase in individual anti-immigration attitudes
- HP4: A growing unemployment rate in a country is linked to an increase in individual anti-immigration attitudes

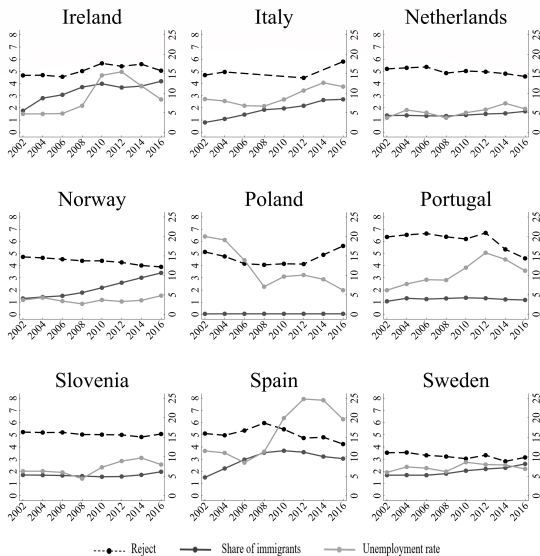
Data & Methods

- **ESS Longitudinal dataset** (waves 1-8, 2002-2016)
- **DV:** *reject* scale as proposed by Meuleman et al. (2009)
 - ▶ Allow people from same race/different race/poorer countries...
 - ▶ Checked for both cross-country and across-time equivalence
- **Individual IV**
 - ▶ Employment status (Employed, unemployed, inactive)
 - ▶ Social class (5 cat. ESeC scheme)
 - ▶ Feeling about household income (Difficult, not difficult)
 - ▶ + gender, age, education, migratory background
- **Macro IV**
 - ▶ Share of immigrants (OECD International Migration Database)
 - ▶ Unemployment rates (Eurostat LFS database)

- **Longitudinal 3 levels model (I,CY,C)**
 - ▶ MACRO vbl as country means - enduring cross-sectional differences
 - ▶ MACRO vbl as country-year deviations from the country means - longitudinal effects
 - ▶ INDIVIDUAL variables
 - ▶ Control for time (2nd order)

Results



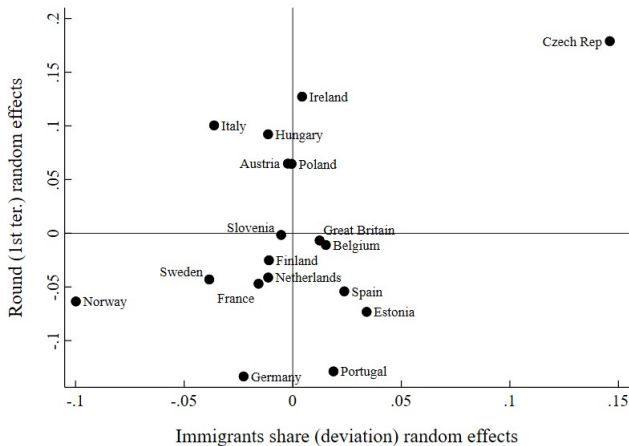


	INDIVIDUAL	COUNTRY	COMPLETE
INDIVIDUAL			
<i>Education (ref: Less than lower sec.)</i>			
Lower secondary	-0.215***		-0.216***
Upper secondary	-0.521***		-0.522***
Post-secondary	-0.742***		-0.742***
Tertiary	-1.174***		-1.175***
<i>Migratory background (ref: No)</i>			
Migratory background	-0.385***		-0.385***
<i>Employment status (ref: Employed)</i>			
Unemployed	0.103***		0.103***
Inactive	0.010		0.010
<i>Difficult on present income (ref: No)</i>			
Difficult on present income	0.289***		0.288***
<i>Social Class ESeC (Ref: Higher)</i>			
Lower-grade service class	0.177***		0.177***
Small business owners	0.442***		0.442***
Skilled workers	0.529***		0.529***
Unskilled workers	0.606***		0.606***
MACRO			
Immigrants share		0.009	0.030
Unemployment rate		0.019	-0.002
Immigrants share - deviation		0.130***	0.135***
Unemployment rate - deviation		0.015	0.004

DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

- Very strong effect of education and social class
- Weak - but existing - effect of employment status and income difficulties
- No effects of enduring cross-sectional differences
- Effect of longitudinal change in the share of immigrants
- Both individual and contextual threats play a role, but the effects are independent

BUT...



TAKE-HOME MESSAGES

- Enduring country differences do not explain AIA
- Longitudinal changes in the country share of immigrants matter
- ...but results obtained for Hungary, Poland, Austria and Italy cannot be explained by increased competition
- POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS
 - ▶ Change in immigrant population are just pre-condition to politicize immigration issues
 - ▶ Media power to emphasise even small changes, thus raising public concern
- FUTURE RESEARCH: how such changes can - or cannot - be perceived and transformed into political issues

THANK YOU!

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