



IMPROVING US AND EU IMMIGRATION SYSTEMS



The Evolution of Public Attitudes toward Immigration in Europe and the United States, 2000-2010

by Joel S. Fetzer





Improving EU and US Immigration Systems' Capacity for Responding to Global Challenges: Learning from experiences

Research Report Case Study

EU-US Immigration Systems 2011/10

The Evolution of Public Attitudes toward Immigration in Europe and the United States, 2000-2010

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Improving EU and US Immigration Systems' Capacity for Responding to Global Challenges: **Learning from experiences**

The project is co-funded by the European Commission in the framework of the Pilot Projects on "Transatlantic Methods for Handling Global Challenges in the European Union and United States". The project is directed at the Migration Policy Center (MPC – Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies – European University Institute, Florence) by Philippe Fargues, director of the MPC, and Demetrios Papademetriou president of the Migration Policy Institute (MPI) the partner institution.

The rationale for this project is to identify the ways in which EU and US immigration systems can be substantially improved in order to address the major challenges policymakers face on both sides of the Atlantic, both in the context of the current economic crisis, and in the longer term.

Ultimately, it is expected that the project will contribute to a more evidence-based and thoughtful approach to immigration policy on both sides of the Atlantic, and improve policymakers' understanding of the opportunities for and benefits of more effective Transatlantic cooperation on migration issues.

The project is mainly a comparative project focusing on 8 different challenges that policymakers face on both sides of the Atlantic: employment, social cohesion, development, demographic, security, economic growth and prosperity, and human rights.

For each of these challenges two different researches will be prepared: one dealing with the US, and the other concerning the EU. Besides these major challenges some specific case studies will be also tackled (for example, the analysis of specific migratory corridor, the integration process faced by specific community in the EU and in the US, the issue of crime among migrants etc.).

Against this background, the project will critically address policy responses to the economic crisis and to the longer-term challenges identified. Recommendations on what can and should be done to improve the policy response to short-, medium- and long term challenges will follow from the research. This will include an assessment of the impact of what has been done, and the likely impact of what can be done.

Results of the above activities are made available for public consultation through the websites of the project:

- http://www.eui.eu/Projects/TransatlanticProject/Home.aspx/
- http://www.migrationpolicy.org/immigrationsystems/

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Abstract

This paper documents and analyzes trends in immigration-related public opinion over the past decade in the major North Atlantic countries of the EU-15 and US. Opening with a summary of the international social-scientific literature on the roots of immigration attitudes, the essay next documents changes in the average European's and American's views on migration since 2000 using such polls as the Eurobarometer, European Social Survey, World Values Survey, International Social Science Programme, and American National Election Study. A third major section employs over-time statistical models to examine the (minimal) impact of the current economic crisis on such attitudes. Finally, the paper describes the scholarly literature on the relationship between public opinion and immigration policy in Europe and the United States and speculates on how likely the current global recession is to alter immigration laws and their enforcement.

I. Introduction

Especially during a recession, policy makers often worry that economic conditions will spark ethnic conflict or lead to populist campaigns to abolish the economically and demographically rational, status quo immigration laws. Such fears are not completely misplaced given the past 150 years of immigration history in Europe and the United States. To explore the validity of these concerns today, this paper summarizes previous empirical research on the causes of migration-related public opinion, documents changes in the North Atlantic communities' immigration attitudes over the past decade, and estimates several over-time statistical models of the effect, if any, of the 2008-2010 economic crisis on those views.

II. Social-Scientific Literature on the Roots of Immigration Attitudes

Answers to the question "what causes immigration attitudes?" vary based on exactly how one measures the public's views of migration. The existing social-scientific literature generally examines data falling into three categories: 1. "cross-sectional," or surveys of many individuals at one time point; 2. "cross-national," or the national averages of individuals' responses to one immigration-related question, usually also at a single time point; and 3. "over-time" or "time-series," or the average response across many individuals to the same questionnaire item over several different time periods. A fourth category of empirical study examines how the media influence mass-level attitudes about immigration.

Cross-Sectional Models

With few exceptions in the empirical literature on the EU-15 and US, increased education powerfully reduces xenophobia as measured in cross-sectional surveys.² Experts disagree vehemently on the exact causal mechanism, however. Some economically oriented scholars contend that the occupationally useful skills an individual obtains in school reduce her or his fear of competition with low-skilled immigrants on the job market.³ Investigators using cultural or ethnic models, in contrast, conclude that schooling produces pro-immigration views mainly by teaching racial tolerance or liberal, multicultural norms.⁴

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Ulrich Herbert, A History of Foreign Labor in Germany, 1880-1980: Seasonal Workers/Forced Laborers/Guest Workers (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991); Ralph Schor, Histoire de l'immigration en France de la fin du XIXe siecle à nos jours (Paris: A. Colin, 1996); Simon Heffer, Like the Roman: The Life of Enoch Powell (London: Orion, 1999); Joel S. Fetzer, Public Attitudes Toward Immigration in the United States, France, and Germany (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Yvan Gastaut, L'immigration et l'opinion en France sous la Ve République (Paris: Seuil, 2000); Daniel J. Tichenor, Dividing Lines: The Politics of Immigration Control in America (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002); Panikos Panayi, An Immigration History of Britain: Multicultural Racism Since 1800 (London: Longman, 2009); Klaus J. Bade, Pieter C. Emmer, Leo Lucassen, and Jochen Oltmer, eds., The Encyclopedia of European Migration and Minorities: From the Seventeenth Century to the Present (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

Marilyn B. Hoskin, New Immigrants and Democratic Society: Minority Integration in Western Democracies (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1991); Thomas J. Espenshade and Charles A. Calhoun, "An Analysis of Public Opinion Toward Undocumented Immigration," Population Research and Policy Review 12, no. 3 (1993): 189-224; Fetzer, Public Attitudes Toward Immigration in the United States, France, and Germany; Charles R. Chandler and Yung-mei Tsai, "Social factors influencing immigration attitudes: an analysis of data from the General Social Survey," Social Science Journal 38, no. 2 (2001): 177-88; Jack Citrin and John Sides, "Immigration and the Imagined Community in Europe and the United States," Political Studies 56, no. 1 (2008): 33-56; Elisa Rustenbach, "Sources of Negative Attitudes toward Immigrants in Europe: A Multi-Level Analysis," International Migration Review 44, no. 1 (2010): 53-77.

³ Kenneth F. Scheve and Matthew J. Slaughter, "Labor Market Competition and Individual Preferences Over Immigration Policy," Review of Economics and Statistics 83, no. 1 (2001): 133-45; Anna Maria Mayda, "Who Is Against Immigration? A Cross-Country Investigation of Individual Attitudes Toward Immigrants," Review of Economics and

Though being oneself unemployed typically has no effect,⁵ other economic variables sometime do. Being working-class and engaging in a low-prestige profession often appear to foster nativism.⁶ Members of labor unions likewise seem more likely to oppose immigration.⁷

A few more cultural variables likewise play a role. Natives who are somehow outside the dominant ethnic or status group (i.e., "culturally marginal") may tend to sympathize more with immigrants. All else being equal, native-born religious minorities are less likely to oppose immigration, even if actual or potential migrants are not co-religionists. Religious practice also appears to promote pro-immigration views. Having ancestors who themselves recently immigrated usually reduces hostility to today's newcomers. And the more one assimilates into the dominant socio-ethnic group of the host country, the more one exhibits xenophobia.

Cross-National Models

Far fewer studies try to explain variations in the average or aggregate level of anti-immigration sentiment across different countries. Within the EU, however, mean xenophobia correlates positively with some version of the proportion of non-EU-origin (likely a proxy for racially, culturally, and/or religiously

http://www.susdiv.org/uploadfiles/DEL3.8 Facchini.pdf.

Experiment," American Political Science Review 104, no. 1(2010): 61-84.

Marcel Theodorus Aloysius Coenders, "Nationalistic Attitudes and Ethnic Exclusionism in a Comparative Perspective: An Empirical Study of Attitudes Toward the Country and Ethnic Immigrants in 22 Countries" (Ph.D. dissertation, Catholic University of Nijmegen, November 2001), http://ics.uda.ub.rug.nl/FILES /root/Dissertations/2001/m.t.a.coenders/thesis.pdf; Jens Hainmueller and Michael J. Hiscox, "Educated Preferences: Explaining Attitudes Toward Immigration in Europe," International Organization 61, no. 2(2007): 399-442, earlier version at http://www.unc.edu/depts/europe/conferences/euroskepticism /papers/Hiscox.pdf; Jens Hainmueller and Michael J. Hiscox, "Attitudes Toward Highly Skilled and Low-Skilled Immigration: Evidence from a Survey

⁵ Hoskin, New Immigrants and Democratic Society, 82-4; Fetzer, Public Attitudes Toward Immigration in the United States, France, and Germany, 144-48.

⁶ Hoskin, New Immigrants and Democratic Society, 104-8; Robert M. Kunovich, "Social Structural Sources of Antiimmigrant Prejudice in Europe," International Journal of Sociology 32, no. 1(2002): 39-57.

⁷ Thomas J. Espenshade, "Taking the Pulse of Public Opinion Toward Immigrants," In Keys to Successful Immigration: Implications of the New Jersey Experience, ed. Thomas J. Espenshade (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 1997), 89-116.

⁸ Fetzer, Public Attitudes Toward Immigration in the United States, France, and Germany; Bernadette C. Hayes and Lisanne Dowds, "Social Contact, Cultural Marginality or Economic Self-Interest? Attitudes Towards Immigrants in Northern Ireland," Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies 32, no. 3(2006): 455-76; but see Rustenbach, "Sources of Negative Attitudes toward Immigrants in Europe."

⁹ Joel S. Fetzer, "Religious Minorities and Support for Immigrant Rights in the United States, France, and Germany," Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion 37, no. 1(1998): 41-9; Benjamin R. Knoll, "And Who Is My Neighbor?' Religion and Immigration Policy Attitudes," Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion 48, no. 2(2009): 313-31; but see Eric Leon McDaniel, Irfan Nooruddin, and Allyson Faith Shortle, "Divine Boundaries: How Religion Shapes Citizens' Attitudes Toward Immigrants," American Politics Research 39, no. 1(2011): 205-33.

Jennifer Fitzgerald, "Social Ties and Attitudes Toward Immigration in Europe" (Ph.D. dissertation, Brown University, May 2006); Knoll, "And Who Is My Neighbor?"

Véronique De Rudder, Isabelle Taboada Leonetti, and François Vourc'h, "Et si l'on parlait des Français? Perception des immigrés en France, attitudes, opinions et comportements," Revue internationale d'action communautaire 71 (1994): 135-49; Rodolfo O. de la Garza and Louis DeSipio, "Interests Not Passions: Mexican-American Attitudes toward Mexico, Immigration from Mexico, and Other Issues Shaping U.S.-Mexico Relations," International Migration Review 32, no. 2(1998): 401-22.

M. V. Hood, Irwin Morris, and Kurt Shirkey, "¡Quedate o Vente!': Uncovering the Determinants of Hispanic Public Opinion Toward Immigration," Political Research Quarterly 50, no. 3(1997): 627-47.

different) immigrants residing in the particular member state.¹³ Yet the fraction of the population that is simply foreign-born (regardless of national origin) does not correlate with aggregate attitudes.¹⁴

Economic historians have demonstrated that rising economic inequality correlated positively with the passage of anti-immigration legislation in various western countries in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This result thus supports the hypothesis that, cross-nationally, inequality tends to promote xenophobia. At least one cross-country investigation of immigration attitudes in the EU-15 member states, moreover, confirms this view. Other economic variables that sometimes correlate positively with a state's average level of anti-immigration sentiment include lower income, flat or negative economic growth, and little foreign direct investment. Although a high unemployment rate by itself does not appear to increase cross-nationally measured xenophobia, mass perceptions of the unemployment situation in a given country may.

Time-Series Models

Only a handful of rigorous time-series models populate the literature, largely because of the scarcity of comparable over-time data. The post-WWII unemployment rate and mean level of anti-immigration sentiment at least appear positively correlated in the United States and Canada, however. Multivariate time-series or ARIMA analysis of American, French, and German data likewise suggests that unemployment and nativism rise in tandem over time. Yet drops in real wages or real disposable income per capita seem even more likely to boost temporally measured popular hostility to

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Dieter Fuchs, Jürgen Gerhards, and Edeltraud Roller, "Wir und die Anderen: Ethnozentrismus in den zwölf Ländern der europäischen Gemeinschaft," Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie 45 (1993): 238-53; Gallya Lahav, Immigration and Politics in the New Europe: Reinventing Borders (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 118-25; Joel S. Fetzer, Luxembourg as an Immigration Success Story: The Grand Duchy in Pan-European Perspective (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, forthcoming, 2011); see also Jana Chaloupková and Petra Šalamounová, "Postoje k imigrantům a dopadům migrace v evropských zemích [Attitudes towards Immigrants and the Impact of Migration in European Countries]," Sociologický časopis/Czech Sociological Review 42, no. 1(2006): 57-80; Eva G. T. Green, "Guarding the gates of Europe: A typological analysis of immigration attitudes across 21 countries," International Journal of Psychology 42, no. 6(2007): 365-79; but see John Sides and Jack Citrin, "European Opinion About Immigration: The Role of Identities, Interests and Information," British Journal of Political Science 37, no. 3(2007): 477-504.

Lahav, Immigration and Politics in the New Europe, 117-8; Sides and Citrin, "European Opinion About Immigration"; Citrin and Sides, "Immigration and the Imagined Community in Europe and the United States"; Jessamyn Blau, "Estimating Public Opinion on Immigration in Europe: Results Using Multilevel Regression and Poststratification" (working paper, Columbia University, May 2, 2009), http://www.columbia.edu/~jb2732/research/BlauImm2009.pdf; Fetzer, Luxembourg as an Immigration Success Story.

¹⁵ Ashley S. Timmer and Jeffrey G. Williams, "Immigration Policy Prior to the 1930s: Labor Markets, Policy Interactions, and Globalization Backlash," Population and Development Review 24, no. 4(1998): 739-71.

¹⁶ Fetzer, Luxembourg as an Immigration Success Story.

Alan E. Kessler and Gary P. Freeman, "Public Opinion in the EU on Immigration from Outside the Community," Journal of Common Market Studies 43, no. 4(2005): 825-50; Michael O'Connell, "Economic forces and anti-immigrant attitudes in Western Europe: a paradox in search of an explanation," Patterns of Prejudice 39, no. 1(2005): 60-74; Sides and Citrin, "European Opinion About Immigration"; but see Citrin and Sides, "Immigration and the Imagined Community in Europe and the United States."

¹⁸ Rustenbach, "Sources of Negative Attitudes Toward Immigrants in Europe."

Sides and Citrin, "European Opinion About Immigration"; Citrin and Sides, "Immigration and the Imagined Community in Europe and the United States"; Nikolaj Malchow-Møller, Jakob Roland Munch, Sanne Schroll, and Jan Rose Skaksen, "Explaining Cross-Country Differences in Attitudes Towards Immigration in the EU-15," Social Indicators Research 91, no. 3(2009): 371-90, http://www.econ.ku.dk/jrm/PDFfiles/Malchow-M%C3%B8llerMunchSchrollSkaksen2009.pdf.

²⁰ Lahav, Immigration and Politics in the New Europe, 190-3.

Thomas J. Espenshade and Katherine Hempstead, "Contemporary American Attitudes Toward U.S. Immigration," International Migration Review 30, no. 2(1996): 535-70; Douglas L. Palmer, "Determinants of Canadian Attitudes Toward Immigration: More Than Just Racism?" Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science 28, no. 3(1996): 180-92.

immigrants.²² In contrast, changes in the immigration rate over time appear to have no influence on migration-related attitudes.²³

Media Models

A fourth type of empirical study focuses on the influence of the media. Though this literature dates from only a couple years ago, most investigators find that the media profoundly influence the public's immigration attitudes. Not only do broadcasters appear to move immigration to the top of the political agenda, but television also seems to shift viewers' policy positions in a pro- or anti-immigration direction.²⁴

III. Changes in European and American Immigration Attitudes Since 2000

How have the immigration-related views of EU-15 residents and Americans evolved over the past decade? This third section documents relies upon several publicly available datasets²⁵ to illustrate such over-time changes in six multi-national or multi-regional graphs. Figures 1 and 2 display variations in western Europeans' concern about immigration and opposition to migration from outside the EU. Figures 3, 4, and 5 chart fluctuations in American and European support for restricting further immigration. And Figure 6 visualizes the equivalent measure for the United States as a whole as well as for its four major regions.

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Fetzer, Public Attitudes Toward Immigration in the United States, France, and Germany, 81-90; Rima Wilkes and Catherine Corrigall-Brown, "Explaining Time Trends in Public Opinion: Attitudes Toward Immigration and Immigrants," International Journal of Comparative Sociology (2010), http://cos.sagepub.com/content/early/2010/10/07/0020715210379460.

²³ Ibid., 79-91; Juan Díez Nicolás, Las dos caras de la inmigración (Madrid: Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales, 2005), http://extranjeros.mtin.es/es/ObservatorioPermanenteInmigracion/Publicaciones/ archivos/DOS_CARAS_INMIGRACION.pdf, 92-5; but see Bert Meuleman, Eldad Davidov, and Jaak Billiet, "Changing Attitudes Toward Immigration in Europe, 2002-2007: A Dynamic Group Conflict Theory Approach," Social Science Research 38, no. 2 (2009): 352-65.

²⁴ Jennifer L. Merolla and Adrian Pantoja, "The Effects of Media Framing on Attitudes toward Undocumented Immigration" (conference paper, Western Political Science Association, San Diego, CA, April 20-22, 2008); Marisa Abrajano and Simran Singh, "Examining the Link Between Issue Attitudes and New Source: The Case of Latinos and Immigration Reform," Political Behavior 31, no. 1(2009): 1-30; Bethany Albertson and Shana Kushner Gadarian, "Is Lou Dobbs Frightening? The Effect of Threatening Advertisements on Black, White, and Latino Attitudes towards Immigration" (conference January 30, 2009), http://priec.org/ content/uploads/2009/01/loudobbspaper.pdf; Hajo G. Boomgaarden and Rens Vliegenthart, "How news content influences anti-immigration attitudes: Germany, 1993-2005," European Journal of Political Research 48, no. 4(2009): 516-542; Patti Brown, "How Iowa Newspapers Mirror and Shape the Attitudes and Opinions of Iowans about Immigration" (M.S. thesis, Iowa State University, 2009); Giovanni Facchini, Anna Maria Mayda, and Riccardo Puglisi, "Media exposure and illegal immigration: Evidence on attitudes from the US" (conference paper, Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL, April http://www.allacademic.com//meta/p_mla_apa_research_citation/3/6/4/2/9/pages364299/p364299-1.php; Mayda, and Puglisi, "Individual attitudes towards immigration"; Johanna Dunaway, Regina P. Branton, and Marisa A. Abrajano, "Agenda Setting, Public Opinion, and the Issue of Immigration Reform," Social Science Quarterly 91, no. 2(2010): 359-78, http://psfaculty.ucdavis.edu/bsjjones/dunaway.pdf; Heather Anne Nofziger, "The Role of Propaganda in Changing Attitudes and Policy Decisions Regarding Illegal Immigrants" (M.S. thesis, Rutgers University, 2010).

This report relies upon data from several producers and distributors, including ICPSR, World Values Survey, European Social Survey, Eurobarometer, International Social Science Programme, Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, Economic and Social Data Service, American National Election Studies, and Leibniz-Institut für Sozialwissenschaften. Although the author is immensely grateful to these organizations for their data, he is solely responsible for the analyses and interpretations in this study.

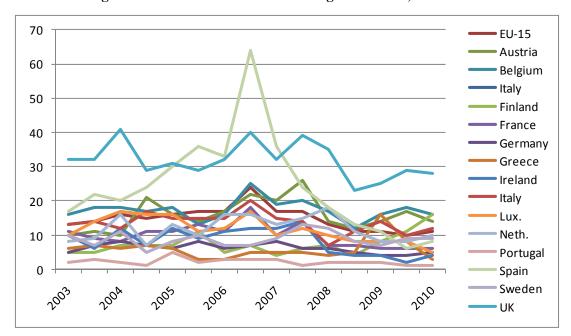


Figure 1. EU-15 Concern Over "Immigration Issue," 2003-2010

Source: Eurobarometer polls from first half of 2003 to first half of 2010, http://ec.europa.eu/public opinion/archives/eb arch en.htm.

Note: Percentages for EU-15 summary series calculated from proportions for individual members states where necessary.

Figure 1 summarizes the bi-annual percentage of respondents to the Eurobarometer who believe that "immigration" is one of the "two most important issues [or "problems" in some translations] facing" their country "at the moment." As the graph shows, most EU-15 member states have percentages that remain below 20 percent throughout the decade. While some series jump up slightly in 2008, the beginning of the current recession, the majority register higher proportions during 2006-2007, when immigrants' entry into the southern borders of the European Union became a pan-EU controversy. The two major outliers are Spain and the United Kingdom, both of whose trend lines soar well above those for the rest of the EU-15. Spain's series peaks in the summer of 2006, probably in reaction to the Canarias immigration crisis of the same period (see discussion in Section IV below). The reasons for the high British proportion seem less obvious, but perhaps UK respondents are responding to the relatively innocuous "issue" phrasing of the English-language questionnaire instead of the more racially charged translation of this word as "problem [e.g., "problème" in French, "problema" in Spanish, and "Problem" in German]" in several of the other countries' interview sheets. ²⁶ Respondents might have felt more comfortable admitting that immigration was a "major issue" than claiming that it was a "major problem" and thereby risking being perceived as racists.

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Although the English-language questionnaire for the Republic of Ireland presumably used the same "issue" wording, Ireland only became a major country of immigration around the middle of this period. Immigration-related topics thus did not dominate domestic political discourse the way they had for decades in Great Britain.

40 EU-15 Austria 35 Belgium Italy 30 Finland France 25 Germany 20 Greece Ireland 15 Italy Lux. 10 Neth. **Portugal** 5 Spain 0 Sweden 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 -UK

Figure 2. EU-15 Opposition to Immigration from "Poorer Countries Outside of Europe," 2002-2008

Source: Waves 1 to 4 of European Social Survey, 2002-2008, http://ess.nsd.uib.no/.

Note: Percentages plotted by year of wave, not necessarily by year of survey administration.

The next graph, Figure 2, sets out European Social Survey data on Europeans' varying levels of support for barring all immigrants from "poorer [perhaps a proxy for "non-white"] countries outside of Europe." Since all the series end in 2008, we cannot evaluate how the economic crisis is affecting such attitudes. Overall, however, the member states' lines seem roughly parallel and flat during this period. Most series remain above 5 percent and below 20 percent throughout the six years. One major exception is Sweden, which seems particularly tolerant perhaps because of its welfarist political culture and low economic inequality. Greece and Portugal represent outliers at the other end of the nativist spectrum, maybe because they were beginning to experience significant immigration themselves in these years instead of being simply countries of emigration. Possibly confirming the earlier hypothesis about the effect of the translation of "issue" from Figure 1, in Figure 2 the trend line for the United Kingdom appears typical for other EU-15 member states.

70 60 50 US 40 Finland Germany 30 Italy 20 Spain Sweden 10 0 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007

Figure 3. American and European Support for Limiting Immigration, 1999-2007

Source: Waves 4 and 5 of World Values Survey, 1999-2007, http://www.wvsevsdb.com/wvs/WVSAnalize.jsp.

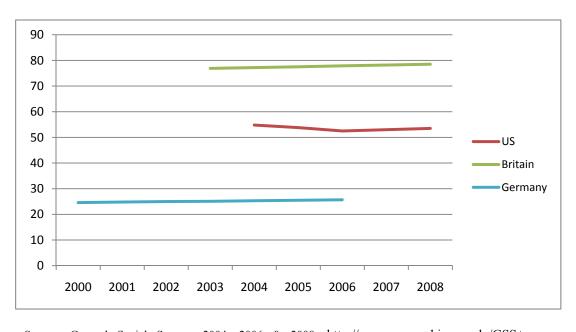


Figure 4. American, British, and German Support for Decreasing or Stopping Immigration, 2000-2008

Source: General Social Survey, 2004, 2006 & 2008, http://www.norc.uchicago.edu/GSS+Website/; British Social Attitudes Survey, 2003 & 2008, http://www.esds.ac.uk/findingData/bsa Titles.asp; and ALLBUS/German General Social Survey, 2000 & 2006, http://www.gesis.org/en/services/data/survey-data/allbus/.

Note: Data weighted to achieve transnational comparability.

Figure 3 introduces a pan-Atlantic perspective to immigration attitudes, including data from both the United States and such EU countries as Finland, Germany, Italy, Spain, and Sweden. Here the trend lines summarize the percentage of valid interviewees who said that immigration should be either "strictly limited" or "prohibited" entirely. In this graph, countries distribute themselves more widely, from a high of over 60 percent for Germany in 1999 to a low of under 30 percent for Sweden throughout the period. Not even the slopes converge; those for the United States and Spain rise, that for Germany is falling, and those for the remaining societies remain comparatively flat. These results may suggest that the principal engine of over-time change in such views may reside within each country itself rather than being some globalized, transnational force.

The data in Figure 4 once again straddle the Atlantic, but this time the polls have become slightly less comparable. The US General Social Survey measures what percentage of valid respondents claimed that "number of immigrants to America nowadays should be decreased a little [or] a lot." The question wording in Great Britain was similar except for the use of "Britain" instead of "America." In the German ALLBUS, however, the series represents the percentage of valid interviewees who agreed that authorities should "totally prohibit [ganz underbinden]" the immigration of all individuals from outside the European Union. Despite the heterogeneity of question wording, this graph primarily presents the impression of constancy over time. British respondents appear more hostile to immigration than are Americans, but the much lower percentage for Germans may reflect the harsher formulation of the question in the German sample; the difference between "decreasing immigration a little" and "totally prohibiting" it remains huge.

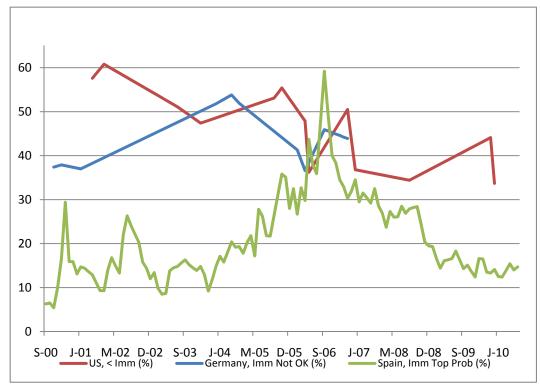


Figure 5. American, German, and Spanish Opposition to Immigration, 2000-2010

Source: CBS/New York Times polls, September 2001 to May 2010, http://s3.amazonaws.com/nytdocs/docs/330/330.pdf; Politbarometer, November 2000 to March 2007, http://zacat.gesis.org/webview/index.jsp; and CIS Barómetro, September 2000 to November 2010, http://www.cis.es/cis/opencms/-Archivos/Indicadores/documentos html/Tres Problemas.html.

Note: Percentages for German series exclude interviewees who answered "don't know" or failed to respond. German data weighted to achieve national representativeness between "New" and "Old Federal States."

The final cross-national graph, in Figure 5, shows over-time variations in general opposition to immigration in the US, Germany, and Spain. The American sequence indicates what percentage of respondents claimed that immigration should "decrease" according to the CBS/New York Times poll. Germans interviewed in the Politbarometer counted as anti-immigration if they claimed that "foreigners in Germany [Ausländer in Deutschland]" were "not OK [nicht in Ordnung]." And I coded Spaniards the same way if they listed "immigration" as one of the three most important "problems" currently facing their country.

Overall, this figure indicates that American nativism seems to be gradually declining over the decade, perhaps as the memory of 9/11 recedes into the past. The German series bounces between about 40 and 50 percent over the period, without a clear trend. The Spanish sample's peaked responses probably reflect the gradual build-up before and descent after the Canarias immigration crisis of the summer of 2006 (see related discussion in Section IV below). The 2008-2010 recession, on the other hand, does not appear to have produced a major shift in American or Spanish public opinion on migration policy (the German trend line unfortunately stops in 2007, before the beginning of the economic downturn).

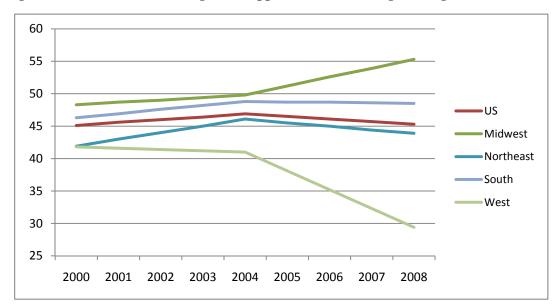


Figure 6. American and US-Regional Support for "Decreasing" Immigration, 2000-2008

Source: American National Election Studies, 2000, 2004 & 2008, http://www.election studies.org/.

Finally, Figure 6 focuses on American national and regional data from the American National Election Studies. Although the fraction of US residents who said they wanted immigration to "decrease" remained flat at about 45 percent from 2000 to 2008, these nationally averaged results obscure considerable regional variation. In particular, while the increasingly Latino and Asian-American western states saw their average nativism decline substantially from over 40 to below 30 percent, the relatively monochromatic Midwest became even more xenophobic at over 55 percent in 2008. Series for the South and Northeast exhibited little over-time change, meanwhile.

IV. Over-Time Models of the Effect of the Economic Crisis on Immigration Attitudes

The over-time graphs of immigration attitudes in the previous section raise the question of the underlying causes of such fluctuations and, especially, invite one to search for economic explanations. This fourth section therefore employs time-series and panel statistical models to examine the impact of the current economic crisis on such attitudes. To do so, the analysis below uses three temporal series of data: the American series from Figure 5 (see Table 1), the EU-15 country-level series from Figure 1

(see Table 2), and the Spanish series from Figure 5 (see Table 3). These three sets of data all run through the duration of the crisis and are reasonably (or almost reasonably, in the American case) complete and long. Unfortunately, I was not able to locate any other time-series that were publicly available, adequately complete, and covered the worst of the economic crisis (2008-2010); publicly accessible waves for the European Social Survey in Figure 2, for example, do not extend past 2008.

Table 1. Time-Series Model of American Support for "Decreased" Immigration

Variable	Estimated Coefficient (Standard Error)	
Unemployment	239	
	(.164)	
Income	.003	
	(.146)	
Constant	162	
	(.452)	
Autoregressive Term, lag 1 month	.908****	
	(.046)	
Autoregressive Term, lag 6 months	150**	
	(.067)	
t	104	
χ^2	449.02****	
degrees of freedom	4	

Source: Author's calculations based on CBS/New York Times polls from September 2001 to May 2010, http://s3.amazonaws.com/nytdocs/docs/330/330.pdf.

Notes: Estimates obtained with ARIMA. Dependent variable based on actual poll data with linear interpolation for missing values, smoothed, detrended, and differenced once. Unemployment is seasonally adjusted monthly unemployment rate from Bureau of Labor Statistics (http://www.bls.gov/webapps/legacy/cpsatab1.htm), detrended, and differenced once. Income is monthly percent change in real disposable income from Bureau of Economic Analysis (http://www.bea.gov/newsreleases/relsarchivepi.htm), differenced once; series already stationary without detrending. * p < .1 ** p < .05 *** p < .01 **** p < .01 **** p < .01

Table 1 presents the results of a time-series model of the effects (if any) of unemployment and income on the percentage of valid (i.e., excluding "don't know" and no response) American respondents in the CBS/New York Times polls who answered "decreased" to the question is "Should legal immigration into the United States be kept at its present level, increased, or decreased?" The overall trend of the US series is downward since the attacks on September 11, 2001, suggesting perhaps that foreign policy or security concerns are driving responses more than economic conditions are. Indeed, the findings in Table 1 confirm that economics is playing little role, with neither the variable for unemployment (p = .145) nor that for income (p = .981) achieving statistical significance. Other, unreported, formulations (e.g., by experimenting with various lag lengths, autoregressive or moving-average terms, and detrending, differencing, and smoothing methods) of the above model also failed to produce any significant results for either economic variable.

If unemployment had achieved statistical significance at even the lax $\alpha = .10$ level, moreover, the estimated coefficient would have suggested that a rise in the percentage of American residents out of work *reduced* opposition to immigration, which is the opposite of what economic self-interest theory predicts (i.e., that natives who have lost their jobs or fear losing their jobs to immigrants are more likely to oppose further international migration). Nevertheless, it is still possible that economics plays some role in Americans' over-time immigration attitudes but that the heavily-interpolated time series (containing only 12 observed data points) in Figure 5 measures public opinion so poorly that any underlying economic dynamic is obscured.

Table 2. Panel Model of EU-15 Concern Over "Immigration Issue"

Variable	Estimated Coefficient (Standard Error)	
Unemployment	156**	
	(.074)	
Economic Growth	.859***	
	(.305)	
Constant	13.935****	
	(2.197)	
t	15	
groups	15	
total observations	225	
χ^2	13.22****	
degrees of freedom	2	
R ² (within groups)	.059	
R ² (between groups)	.029	
R ² (overall)	.030	

Source: Author's calculations based on Eurobarometer polls from first half of 2003 to first half of 2010, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb_arch_en.htm.

Notes: Estimates obtained with random-effects Generalized Least-Squares regression. Dependent variable based on actual poll data. Unemployment is first- and third-quarter unemployment rate from Eurostat (http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/ statistics/search_database). Economic Growth is first- and third-quarter percent change in Gross Domestic Product/capita "at market prices" and "seasonally adjusted and adjusted for working days" from Eurostat (http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset =namq_inc_k&lang=en. Breusch and Pagan Lagrangian multiplier and Hausman tests indicated random-effects specification. Durbin-Watson test was not significant for AR(1) autocorrelation; model therefore uses GLS panel model without assuming any autocorrelation. A Maximum-Likelihood panel model produced almost identical estimates. * p < .1 *** p < .05 **** p < .01 **** p < .001

The Eurobarometer data from Figure 1, bi-annual indicators of concern about immigration in each of the EU-15 member states, arguably present fewer interpolation-caused measurement problems but do require more linguistic analysis. The panel model in Table 2 analyzes the percentage of valid interviewees in each country who viewed "immigration" as "one of the two most important issues facing [our country] at the moment." Although the French- and German-language questionnaires translated "issues" as the equivalent of "problems" ("problèmes" in French and "Probleme" in German), the more neutral "issues" or equivalent in the English-language and, presumably, several other translated questionnaires do not allow us to assume that everyone who checked "immigration" is necessarily xenophobic. Overall, this dependent variable therefore more likely indicates the respondent's belief that immigration is an important political topic rather than measuring his or her opposition to further international migration, at least in those EU-15 member states whose local-language questionnaire followed the "issues" rather than "problems" formulation.

The robust results in Table 2 suggest that higher unemployment in a particular period or country decreases the likelihood that residents of a particular EU-15 country will view immigration as one of the two top "issues" facing them. Similarly but just as counter-intuitively, relative economic growth²⁷ in a given period or country *increases* interviewees' propensity to see immigration as an important issue. Although these two findings also fly in the face of economic self-interest theory's standard predictions,²⁸ residents of states experiencing an economic downturn may be more apt to name some

²⁷ Unfortunately, Eurostat does not provide monthly data on real disposable income per capita. Tables 2 and 3 therefore substitute GDP growth.

Joel S. Fetzer, "Economic self-interest or cultural marginality? Anti-immigration sentiment and nativist political movements in France, Germany and the USA," Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies 26, no. 1(2000): 5-23. The over-

specifically economic challenge (e.g., unemployment or falling wages) as one of the top two issues confronting them and/or to believe that a recession will deter potential migrants.²⁹ Perhaps indicating that the estimates in Table 2 are not simply flukes, at least one other published study reports parallel outcomes,³⁰ and the sign of the almost-significant coefficient for unemployment in Table 1 points in the same substantive direction.

Table 3's opinion time-series represents the percentage of Spanish respondents who included "immigration" in a list of "three main problems that exist currently in Spain [tres problemas principales que existen actualmente en España]" as measured by the Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas' monthly Barómetro surveys. Since the Spanish term "problema" translates best as "problem" in English, this question arguably measures not only the interviewee's perception that immigration is a major issue in Spanish society but also her or his actual xenophobia. Unfortunately for material self-interest theory, neither unemployment nor economic growth achieves statistical significance in columns two and three of Table 3, suggesting that the roots of Spanish variations in anti-immigration sentiment lie elsewhere.

Indeed, investigation into the politics of immigration in Spain during this decade reveals that citizens, the media, and government officials seemed particularly exercised over the arrival of thousands of undocumented African (typically Senegalese) immigrants to the Spanish territory of the Canary Islands/Islas Canarias, which sits just off the Moroccan/Western Saharan coast and represents a gateway to continental Europe. Concern about the Canarias' "immigration crisis" appears to have peaked in the summer of 2006, when Spanish security and migration agents were detaining as many as 600 would-be-immigrants per day and the controversy quickly took on pan-EU dimensions. If one thus employs a variant of the number of arrivals of unauthorized immigrants as recorded by the Spanish Ministry of the Interior, the resulting independent variable is statistically significant at the .10 level (p = .088) if used as the sole substantive regressor in an ARIMA time-series model and falls slightly outside the least restrictive significance criterion (p = .174) if included along with unemployment and economic growth.

(Contd.)

time estimates in Table 2 also run contrary to those reported in Fetzer, Public Attitudes Toward Immigration in the United States, France, and Germany, 81-90, perhaps suggesting that the relatively minor economic downturns in the 1980s and '90s did not have the same influence on immigration attitudes that the more traumatic "Great Recession" of 2008-2010 is having. Parallel analysis of the relevant impact of the Great Depression of the 1930s, available data permitting, would likely make an important contribution to the empirical literature on immigration and public opinion.

Kristen McCabe and Doris Meissner, "Immigration and the United States: Recession Affects Flows, Prospects for Reform," Migration Information Source, January 2010, http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/display.cfm?ID=766.

³⁰ Citrin and Sides, "Immigration and the Imagined Community in Europe and the United States."

Simon Freeman, "Spain declares crisis over Canary Islands migrants," [London] Times, May 19, 2006, http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/europe/article721734.ece; Maria Lorca-Susino, "Immigration to the EU Through Spain" (European Union Miami Analysis paper, vol. 2, no. 13, Miami-Florida European Union Center of Excellence, University of Miami, June 2006), http://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/7949/1/MPRA_paper_7949.pdf; Migration News, "Southern Europe," vol. 13, no. 4(October 2006), http://migration.ucdavis.edu/mn/more.php?id=3231_0_4_0.

Table 3. Time-Series Models of Percentage of Spaniards Viewing Immigration as Top "Problem"

Variable	Estimated Coefficient (Standard Error)	Estimated Coefficient (Standard Error)	Estimated Coefficient (Standard Error)
Canarias Arrivals	3.43 x 10 ⁻⁴ *		2.64 x 10 ⁻⁴
	(1.96 x 10 ⁻⁴)		(1.94×10^{-4})
Economic Growth		1.288	.879
		(5.200)	(5.047)
Unemployment		-1.647	-1.553
		(1.692)	(1.546)
Constant	.039	.174	.162
	(.268)	(.213)	(.189)
Moving Average Term, lag 1 month	100	121**	138**
	(.063)	(.058)	(.065)
Moving Average Term, lag 2 months	170**	212**	228***
	(.082)	(.088)	(.085)
Moving Average Term, lag 3 months	190***	225****	244***
	(.072)	(.067)	(.073)
T	121	120	120
χ^2	13.36***	22.56***	21.84***
degrees of freedom	4	5	6

Source: Author's calculations based on CIS Barómetro polls from September 2000 to November 2010, http://www.cis.es/cis/opencms/-Archivos/Indicadores/documentos html/Tres Problemas.html.

Notes: Estimates obtained with ARIMA. Dependent variable based on actual poll data with linear interpolation for missing values (no actual poll in August because of summer vacation), detrended, and differenced once to make stationary. Canarias Arrivals is smoothed (with 12-month moving average) annual data on undocumented entries into the Canary Islands from (http://www.mir.es/DGRIS/Notas Prensa/PDF notas de Ministry of the Interior prensa/2009/bal lucha inmigracion ilegal 2008.pdf; annual totals at tails assumed to equal previous/following year's reported data), differenced once. Unemployment is monthly, seasonally adjusted unemployment rate from Eurostat (http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu /portal/page/portal/employment unemployment lfs/data/database), differenced once to render stationary. Economic Growth is percent change in Gross Domestic Product/capita "at market prices" and working adjusted adjusted days" from "seasonally and for Eurostat (http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=namq inc k &lang=en), linearly interpolated from quarterly into monthly data, smoothed with a 3-month moving average, and differenced once; resulting series stationary without linear detrending. * p < .1 ** p < .05 *** p < .01 **** p < .001

In sum, then, the time-series and panel models in this section undermines the idea that the current economic crisis is driving an increase in xenophobia among ordinary European citizens. These results also disconfirm the predictions of economic self-interest theory, which holds that anti-immigration sentiment is primarily rooted in economic hardship or decline. Paradoxically, these models suggest instead that popular nativism and concern about immigration have been more likely to occur in economically prosperous countries and periods, at least during the first decade of the 21st century.

V. Social-Scientific Literature on the Relationship Between Public Opinion and Immigration Policy in Europe and the United States

This paper's final substantive task is to describes the scholarly literature on the relationship between public opinion and immigration policy in Europe and the United States. If public opinion has no influence on actual policy, then political leaders should be less concerned about temporary spikes in xenophobia. If mass-level attitudes and any resulting legislation are tightly bound, however, ordinary citizens' views take on much more significance.

The relevant literature on this question tends to take a middle ground between these two extremes. On the one hand, many scholars express astonishment that immigration policy is as generous as it is given the public's typically negative views of international migration.³² A plurality of relevant studies nonetheless attributes relatively liberal policy to better organization and more effective lobbying by pro-migration leftists, big business, and co-ethnics ³³; potentially anti-immigration forces, such as the general public and labor unions, often are poorly represented in the national capital or internally divided on the question.³⁴

On the other hand, a growing number of investigators do find significant links between mass attitudes and eventual immigration legislation. To the extent that the legislative process incorporates direct voter input such as during an initiative, immigration-related laws tend to track public opinion more closely, usually in a restrictionist direction.³⁵ Legislators also have a habit of taking particular notice of popular nativism just before an election.³⁶ Over the long haul, sustained public opposition to immigration is more likely to result in corresponding policy than is temporary populist outrage against the foreign-born.³⁷ Although not measuring public attitudes directly, one historical study finds that

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Wayne Cornelius, Philip Martin, and James Hollifield, eds., Controlling Immigration: A Global Perspective (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994); Christian Joppke, "Why Liberal States Accept Unwanted Immigration," World Politics 50, no. 2 (1998): 266-93; Kenneth K. Lee, Huddled Masses, Muddled Laws: Why Contemporary Immigration Policy Fails to Reflect Public Opinion (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1998).

Edwin Harwood, "American Public Opinion and U.S. Immigration Policy," Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 487, no. 1(1986): 201-12; Gary P. Freeman, "Modes of Immigration Politics in Liberal Democratic States," International Migration Review 29, no. 4 (1995): 881-902; Lee, Huddled Masses, Muddled Laws, 89-122; Giovanni Facchini and Anna Maria Mayda, "From individual attitudes towards migrants to migration policy outcomes: Theory and evidence," Economic Policy 23, no. 56(2008): 651-713; see also James F. Hollifield, Immigrants, Markets, and States: The Political Economy of Postwar Europe (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992); Facchini, Mayda, and Mishra, "Do Interest Groups Affect U.S. Immigration Policy?"; see also Antje Ellermann, States Against Migrants: Deportation in Germany and the United States (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

Freeman, "Modes of Immigration Politics in Liberal Democratic States"; Stephen Castles, "Why migration policies fail," Ethnic and Racial Studies 27, no. 2(2004): 205-27, http://meme.phpwebhosting.com/~migracion/rimd/documentos_miembros/16245SC_Why_Mig_Policies_Fail_ERS.pdf; Janice Fine and Daniel J. Tichenor, "A Movement Wrestling: American Labor's Enduring Struggle With Immigration, 1866-2007," Studies in American Political Development 23, no. 1(2009): 84-113; but see Vernon M. Briggs, Jr., Immigration and American Unionism (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001).

Jack Citrin, Beth Reingold, Evelyn Walters, and Donald P. Green. "The 'Official English' Movement and the Symbolic Politics of Language in the United States," Western Political Quarterly 43, no. 3 (1990): 535-59; Marc Morjé Howard, "Comparative Citizenship: An Agenda for Cross-National Research," Perspectives on Politics 4, no. 3(2006): 443-55, http://www18.georgetown.edu/data/people/mmh/publication-12332.pdf; Robin Dale Jacobson, The New Nativism: Proposition 187 and the Debate over Immigration (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).

³⁶ Philip Kretsedemas and Ana Aparicio, eds., Immigrants, Welfare Reform, and the Poverty of Policy (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004).

³⁷ Vanessa Pascual-Moran, "The Shadow of Public Opinion and Various Interlocking Issues on U.S. Immigration Policy: 1965-1982" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1987).

economic inequality – which we now know is correlated with popular xenophobia³⁸ – appears to have made the passage of restrictive legislation more likely.³⁹

Although the relevant literature is still in its infancy, those few empirical investigations of the question that exist usually also find that immigration lobbyists are remarkably successful in shaping legislation and even implementation of related laws. ⁴⁰ The authors of probably the most rigorous study to date conclude that "both pro- and anti-immigration interest groups play a statistically significant and economically relevant role in shaping migration across sectors." Where "business interest groups incur larger lobby expenditures," migration is less regulated, but where labor lobbyists are more active, immigration suffers from additional restrictions. ⁴¹

VI. Conclusion

In short, the global recession that began in 2008 does not by itself seem to be provoking widespread public opposition to immigration in Europe or the United States. Moreover, the economic crisis does not necessarily have to cause more anti-immigration legislation, but the downturn likely will if political entrepreneurs in the media, political parties, or legislatures choose to agitate, organize, and lobby on the issue. Only a relatively weak connection normally exists between mass public opinion and immigration policy, yet the relationship can become stronger when demagogic political actors (e.g., Switzerland's Christoph Blocher⁴² or California's Pete Wilson⁴³) elect to mobilize popular xenophobia in support of an anti-immigrant initiative or bill. Such extremist politicians often seize the opportunity presented by the breakdown of the mainstream political elite's previous consensus on immigration policy and/or on the political utility of an electorally viable far-right, nativist party or movement.⁴⁴

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³⁸ Fetzer, Luxembourg as an Immigration Success Story.

³⁹ Timmer and Williams, "Immigration Policy Prior to the 1930s."

Philip G. Schrag, A Well-Founded Fear: The Congressional Battle to Save Political Asylum in America (London: Routledge, 1999); Carolyn Wong, Lobbying for Inclusion: Rights, Politics, and the Making of Immigration Policy (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006); Giovanni Facchini, Anna Maria Mayda, and Prachi Mishra, "Do Interest Groups Affect U.S. Immigration Policy?" (working paper, International Monetary Fund, October 2008), http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/2008/wp08244.pdf; Ellermann, States Against Migrants; Deirdre Martinez, Who Speaks for Hispanics? Hispanic Interest Groups in Washington (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009).

⁴¹ Facchini, Mayda, and Mishra, "Do Interest Groups Affect U.S. Immigration Policy?"

Anthony J. McCann and Herbert Kitschelt, "The Radical Right in the Alps: Evolution of Support for the Swiss SVP and Austrian FPÖ," Party Politics 11, no. 2(2005): 147-71; Elaine Sciolino, "Immigration, Black Sheep and Swiss Rage," New York Times, October 8, 2007, http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/08/world /europe /08swiss.html?_r=1; Joel S. Fetzer and J. Christopher Soper, "An Ecological Analysis of the 2009 Swiss Referendum on the Building of Minarets," in Islamaphobia in Western Europe and North America, ed. Marc Helbling (London: Routledge, forthcoming).

⁴³ R. Michael Alvarez and Tara L. Butterfield, "The Resurgence of Nativism in California? The Case of Proposition 187 and Illegal Immigration," Social Science Quarterly 81, no. 1(2000): 167-80, earlier version at http://polmeth.wustl.edu/media/Paper/alvar97d.pdf; Fetzer, Public Attitudes Toward Immigration in the United States, France, and Germany, 93-103; Kent A. Ono and John M. Sloop, Shifting Borders: Rhetoric, Immigration, and California's Proposition 187 (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002); Jacobson, The New Nativism.

⁴⁴ Such a pro-immigration elite consensus seems to have broken down in France by the early 1980s (Martin A. Schain, "The National Front in France and the Construction of Political Legitimacy," West European Politics 10, no. 2[1987]: 229-52) but still appears intact in Luxembourg in the early 21st century (Fetzer, Luxembourg as an Immigration Success Story). For a similar issue in Sweden, see Goran Rosenberg, "Sweden and its Immigrants: Policies versus Opinions," Dædalus, 124, no. 3(1995): 209-18.

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