Immigration and Immigrants

The Extreme Right in Western Europe
Review

Immigrants

Theory & concepts

Data & methods

Findings

Summary

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Last week

- Religion

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No direct effect of religious beliefs on vote or immigration attitudes

But many parties ditch their traditional anti-semitism to focus on Islam/Muslims

Attacks on (problematic aspects of) religion more acceptable than traditional racism/xenophobia?!?
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- But many parties ditch their traditional anti-semitism to focus on Islam/Muslims
- Attacks on (problematic aspects of) religion more acceptable than traditional racism/xenophobia?!?
Immigration fears

- Immigration of Non-West-Europeans became central issue for all parties of the Extreme Right from ca. 1980
- Extreme Right vote closely correlated with
  - Support for anti-immigration policies
  - Negative attitudes towards immigrants
- But what is behind it?
Immigration fears

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- But what is behind it?
  - Fear?
  - Hate?
  - Competition?
  - Economic considerations
  - A realistic view of state capacities?
- Are all the Extreme Right parties equally xenophobic (e.g. Vlaams Blok vs. Norwegian Progress Party)?
Theoretical positions on group conflict

- Very broad spectrum of explanations ranging from the visceral to the rational

- Examples:
  - Scapegoating: “Others” as target for unrelated frustration
  - Varieties of (relative) deprivation theory: Debase “others” to feel better about position of own group
  - Varieties of social identity theory: hostility towards “others” helps to create (random) collective identity
  - Mobilisation against “others” to improve access to resources, status, benefits for in-group

- Negative reaction to out-group over-determined

- But conflict between “natives” and “immigrants” framed & politicised, not random
Two hypotheses: ethnic competition vs. contact

- Two very prominent approaches
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  2. (Positive) contacts with out-group members reduce hostility
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- Mixed evidence
  - Levels and interactions
  - Patterns of segregation
Four immigration frames

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3. Immigration as a cause of unemployment
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  3. Immigration as a cause of unemployment
  4. Immigrants as welfare cheats
- First two frames: ethnopluralism
- Frames 3&4: welfare chauvinism
- Diverging use/appeal in different countries
Types of anti-immigrant attitudes

- Very strong link between anti-immigrant attitudes and Extreme Right vote
  - Less than 3 per cent of the voters of the Extreme Right want “many immigrants”
  - 90%+ of the Extreme Right voters want “only a few” immigrants
- But: different type of anti-immigrant attitudes/immigration critics
  - Racists
  - Xenophobes
  - Immigration sceptics
- Non-symmetric overlap between categories
Types of anti-immigrant attitudes

- Racists
- Xenophobes
- Immigration Sceptics
Say what?

**Xenophobia:** “Fear of strangers or guests”
- All people should live amongst their own kind
- Hostility/fear towards strangers
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- Traditional (biological) racism: hierarchy based on genetic makeup
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**Immigration Sceptics**: Simply want to stop/limit immigration
Data

- First round of ESS (2002/3), same as last week
- Six countries: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Netherlands, Norway
- Information
  - Vote for RRP
  - Socio-demographics
  - *Many* attitudes on immigrants/immigration
  - Also: Perceptions of ethnic heterogeneity & contacts with immigrants
Methods

- Multivariate logistic regressions
- Run in parallel on data from six countries
- Comparison of various models (I counted 13)
- Not necessarily the most lucid exposition
(Limited) evidence: scepticism or xenophobia

- Simple model of voting for the Extreme Right (table 1)
- Immigration scepticism: allow no/few immigrants
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- Boss/spouse indicator has (often) no significant effect once immigration scepticism is controlled for
- Xenophobia less crucial than expected?
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  - Two indicators for xenophobia
  - Multicollinearity, high degree of overlap
Frames and the RRP vote

- Table 2 tries to relate the (many) ESS indicators to frames
- Tested in various permutations
- Again: problems with multicollinearity
- Arguments based on (in)significance of effects, but estimated effects quite large
Which frames do work?

- Immigration and crime (works everywhere)
- National identity (does not work in France)
- Less success with welfare chauvinist frames (doe not work in Belgium, Norway; dodgy in Austria, Denmark Netherlands)
- Is that really the question we are interested in?
Competition or contact?

- **Consequences of competition hypothesis:**
  - RRP more successful in areas with more immigrants
  - RRP more successful with voters who face competition from immigrants: unskilled, low levels of education, male

- **Contact hypothesis:**
  - Less support for RRP in areas with more immigrants
  - Really that simple?
  - *Personal (positive) contacts*
Findings: competition vs. contact

- Table 3
- Perceived number of immigrants in local area has weak & inconsistent effect – why?
- Similarly, having immigrant friends does not really play (does not differentiate between European and other immigrants)
Summary/class questions

- Can you summarise, in your own words, the core findings? Where do you see potential problems/shortcomings?
- Which of the four frames (national identity, crime, unemployment, welfare) is particularly relevant for which country/party? Has the situation changed recently, and how does “Europe” fit in?