



Public opinion on migrant presence in the society, economy and culture spheres

A report on desk research
done by the MAX project



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I. Introduction

Public Opinion is key component of migration debates. It is not enough to know objective facts about the benefits and opportunities of immigration to European societies or to be committed to the moral and human obligation to support a refugee. In the frail and fractured public spheres of early C21st Europe, the voice of public opinion has become shrill and powerful presence lurking at the back of any debate concerning migration. So how do we cut through the omnipotent presence of public opinion? In short, we cannot and should not. Rather we must engage with it, think carefully about how we want to measure it and who we want to represent it and find ways of challenging those who seek to present the worst view of public opinion for their own narrow aims.

This does offer data and reports on public information that will we hope be helpful to those trying to understand how and why it has changed in relation to immigration debates in the member states of the EU. But it is also designed to offer tips for challenging the received wisdom of public opinion. It introduces one of the largest data sources on public opinion that covers migration in the EU and shows how to interpret the data in a way that is both loyal to the figures but also effective at identifying the positive trends in public opinion to migrants. It also offers a brief over view of some of the factors that contribute to public opinion on migration. Again, these will link you to cutting edge contemporary research on public opinion that you can follow up in future months. But it also encourages you to think critically about a wide range of contributing factors that influence public opinion on migration. Finally, we look to country reports to understand some of the dynamics of contemporary debates from the perspective of the partner organisations who work in, and sometimes against, public opinion to support migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in Europe today.

The report therefore draws on three key sources of information to explore the debate over public opinion and migration.

First survey data, and specifically the ESS, is used to identify broad patterns across Europe. The ESS is one of many surveys now available to explore attitudes to migration which are normally accessible for free.

Next, we refer to the academic literature of which there is a large volume even post refugee crisis, with much of it readily available online. This offers us concepts to help structure our discussion and draw conclusions, interpret data and present alternative view points and questions through which to unpack the meaning of public opinion in relation to migrants

Finally, we have the country studies, drafted by the partner organisations, which offers a view from the frontline of how migration is understood through public opinion in a few partner countries. The data is patchy but there are some interesting and important observations that we can draw from them.

Introduction to European Surveys

This note uses European Social Survey (ESS) and Eurobarometer (EB) survey data to demonstrate some notable trends in social attitudes in Europe towards immigrants in European societies. This relies overwhelmingly on ESS

survey data, using a comparison of 2018 and 2012 surveys and then compares this with the EB report from 2018 called *Integration of Immigrants In The European Union*. Despite cross-national differences, some persistent negative attitudes and some corners of Europe and evidence of polarisation, a broad trend of improving (positive) sentiment towards immigrants is clearly present.

II. European Social Survey

The European Social Survey (ESS) has run a battery of questions addressing immigration since 2004. Here, results from its 9th (2018), 7th (2014) and 6th (2012) rounds are analysed (with a focus on 2012 to 2018 comparisons) with patterns of public attitudes towards immigration presented. A similar analysis was conducted for the OECD (Heath & Richards 2019), but this one focuses more on demonstrating how the many tables can be interpreted.

Four survey question categories from the ESS are presented and then compared to the same surveys performed in 2014 and 2012. This allows us an opportunity to make longitudinal analysis of public opinion towards migration.

ESS Survey links: Online Analysis

- [Open ESS Round 9 \(2018\)](#)
- [Open ESS Round 8 \(2016\)](#)
- [Open ESS Round 7 \(2014\)](#)
- [Open ESS Round 6 \(2012\)](#)
- [Open ESS Round 5 \(2010\)](#)
- [Open ESS Round 4 \(2008\)](#)
- [Open ESS Round 3 \(2006\)](#)
- [Open ESS Round 2 \(2004\)](#)
- [Open ESS Round 1 \(2002\)](#)

III. ESS question categories

1. *Allow many/few immigrants from poorer countries outside Europe*
2. *Immigration bad or good for country's **economy***
3. *Country's **cultural** life undermined or enriched by immigrants*
4. *Immigrants make country worse or better place to live*

The data for these categories differ based upon the questions asked and the types of scales used by the ESS. The ESS is very transparent on what the questions are and you can explore them, and academic arguments that justify them, on the ESS website¹. There are four sections covering each of these four ESS questions and results.

¹ https://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/docs/round7/questionnaire/ESS7_immigration_final_module_template.pdf

1. Question 1: Allow many/few immigrants from poorer countries outside Europe

a. ESS 2018 and recent evidence on Europeans' attitudes

This question only uses four more qualitative, broad categories for survey responses. These possible responses include: Allow: **many**, **some**, **a few**, **none**. With each of these categories it is tempting to look at and compare the polar extremes (**Allow many** vs. **Allow none**) and note that most (8 out of 18²) see more respondents favouring **no** immigrants being allowed from poor non-European countries rather than **many**. Here, the categories are interpreted seeing the **allow many** category as simply the most positive and the **allow none** as the most negative. The other two are in between (**allow some**, **allow a few**) interpreted as moderately positive/negative accordingly. Therefore, when these four categories are cut into two and placed either side of a simple divide we have two positive categories (**many**, **some**) and two more negative (**a few**, **none**).

Allow Many Or Some Migrants

Belgium	69.5%
Switzerland	65.9%
Germany	68.1%
Ireland	65.4%
Italy	50.9%
Netherlands	59.9%
Norway	77%
France	64.1%
Slovenia	54%

Dataset: ESS9-2018, ed.1.1



Country	Austria	Belgium	Bulgaria	Switzerland	Cyprus	Czechia	Germany	Estonia	Finland	France	United Kingdom	Hungary	Ireland	Italy	Netherlands	Norway	Poland	Serbia	Slovenia
Allow many/few immigrants from poorer countries outside Europe																			
Allow many to come and live here	9.2	16.3	5.9	16.1	2.7	2.0	20.9	5.0	10.3	15.7	16.2	0.8	20.3	16.3	13.2	26.2	6.3	17.0	9.4
Allow some	29.1	53.2	23.7	49.8	13.0	19.1	47.2	31.6	33.9	48.4	49.0	7.3	45.1	34.6	46.7	50.8	34.1	26.5	44.6
Allow a few	39.9	22.5	30.1	29.1	66.7	35.6	26.5	38.4	49.1	23.3	23.8	32.3	23.9	33.1	29.6	21.1	39.6	27.3	31.7
Allow none	21.8	7.9	40.2	5.0	17.5	43.3	5.5	25.1	6.6	12.7	11.0	59.6	10.7	16.1	10.4	1.9	20.0	29.3	14.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=	2,431	1,754	1,961	1,490	775	2,320	2,328	1,891	1,718	1,947	2,168	1,575	2,178	2,652	1,640	1,391	1,438	1,943	1,288

A brief overview of all of the categories reveals a different picture with considerable majorities in favour of either allowing **some**, **many**, or **just a few** immigrants into their country. If however, the two more 'negative attitude' categories (**none**; **a few**) are compared with the two 'positive categories' (**many**, **some**) the 9 countries that appear more foror against migration present a clear geographical pattern. Besides Finland, each of those on the 'negative' side are central and eastern European countries (CEECs) whilst the others are western. This clear geographical

² Not including the UK as not included in the project.

pattern sees mostly western European countries and their citizens take a much more positive view (in terms of the two more positive categories) and by a considerable margin.

These nine countries (not including the UK which would join these 'more positive' western European countries) do not just present simple majorities (50%+) in favour of **many** or **some** migrants. Rather they produce figures of over 60% in these two positive categories.

The category **only a few** is the third out of the four categories on this simple positive-negative scale, so should not necessarily be interpreted as evidencing a purely negative view of migrants. **Some** is also a broad category, which could imply far more negative or positive views of immigrants depending on personal interpretation of ones given country or community.

Qualitative context in many countries is therefore also important. Some countries like Cyprus have about 66% of its citizens (as the table above shows) stating that only **some** migrants should come. Cyprus is a small island nation with sensitive ethnic divisions defined by two Greek and Turkish ethnic groupings. In addition to the legacy of the conflict in the 1970s and the different political systems in North and South Cyprus, Turkish Cypriots may be more influenced by their association with Turkey. Cyprus' context is also altered its geographical (Mediterranean) position vis-à-vis the recent post-2010 refugee crisis.

Different countries may have particular circumstances based on their standard pattern of immigration (particular countries of origin, or more circular forms of migration) which require QUALITATIVE reassessment of the country's results in this survey. Finland too, like Cyprus, have a disproportionate (44%) in the **same** category, and a higher figure in the **allow many** categories than the **allow none** (most negative) category. Once these two outlier cases are removed, the balance of support for immigrants' role in European societies improves.

b. Movement over time: comparisons with round 2012 (ESS6), 2014 (ESS7) and 2018 (ESS9)

The 6th round of ESS surveys in 2012 and ESS round 7 (2014) allow a longer time-frame with the same categorised questions³. The results here show a marked increase in positive sentiment towards welcoming migrants. The top-line numbers indicate a rise in the top 2 'positive categories' (allow many or some) migrants of 4.4% on 2014 numbers (45.6% in 2014, 49.0% in 2018) and 1.9% increase on 2014. While there was a rise in negative sentiment between 2012 and 2014, many countries saw a very sharp rise in recorded positive sentiment up to 2018.

Specific countries are now looked at. Belgium, among the more positive countries in 2018, saw those citizens willing to accept many migrants (the most positive) increase by 7% in this six-year period. In the same period, the bottom category (allow none) dropped 5.3% on 2012 and by nearly 10% (9.7%) in 2014. This least favourable category saw a continuing rise between 2012 and 2014 and then a precipitous drop from 2014 to 2018.

³ 2014 ESS7 data is missing Italy and the Netherlands.

One might expect any rise in positive attitudes to be more gradual over such a short (four-year) period and to see rises in the two intermediate categories (*some, few*) to come before any later improvement in the top category (*allow many*). But the case of Belgium shows this not to have been the case. Furthermore, it was not the only country to see this. Ireland's most favourable category (*allow many*) jumped by 7.3% from 2012 and from a huge 10.9% from 2014. It showed a similar pattern to Belgium of rising negative views from 2012 to 2014 before a sharp drop and corresponding rise from 2014. Ireland's numbers for the most negative category dropped by a similarly large 12.1% in 2014. Norway's number for the *allow many* saw a 8.7% increase in this time. France saw the support for the top two categories (*allow many, some*) increase from 51.7% in 2014 to 64.1%, a 12.4% increase but a 9.8% increase from 2012. This was a slightly steadier rise compared to Ireland and Belgium.

Switzerland also saw a sharp increase in its figures for *allow many* (most positive) up 7% but curiously it *allow some* (moderately positive) increased only 0.2% and its two negative categories dropped a combined 6%. Support in Germany was roughly the same although with small increases in support for the top two categories (4%).

Increases in top two 'positive' categories (many, some) from 2012

Belgium	+13.7%
Switzerland	+6.8%
Germany	+1.0%
Ireland	+14.6%
Netherlands	+4.4%
Norway	77%
France	64.1%
Slovenia	54%

□

Tables for ESS 2014 (ESS7) and 2012 (ESS6)

Dataset: ESS7-2014, ed.2.2



Country	Austria	Belgium	Switzerland	Czechia	Germany	Denmark	Estonia	Spain	Finland	France	United Kingdom	Hungary	Ireland	Israel	Lithuania	Netherlands	Norway	Poland	Portugal
Allow many/few immigrants from poorer countries outside Europe																			
Allow many to come and live here	10.3	9.3	11.3	2.4	19.8	10.4	5.1	21.4	9.4	10.5	7.5	2.7	9.4	5.3	7.9	10.8	17.9	12.8	8.4
Allow some	32.3	43.1	44.3	24.3	44.3	34.4	25.8	31.2	25.7	41.2	34.3	10.1	31.7	20.1	30.1	42.7	50.1	39.6	41.1
Allow a few	38.4	30.0	37.0	44.3	28.1	43.2	39.8	33.3	49.4	30.3	35.6	39.7	36.1	28.1	33.3	33.3	28.6	34.5	31.5
Allow none	19.0	17.6	7.5	28.9	7.9	12.0	29.3	14.1	15.4	18.0	22.6	47.6	22.8	46.5	28.7	13.2	3.4	13.2	18.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=	1,733	1,759	1,498	2,093	3,004	1,478	2,007	1,781	2,054	1,890	2,225	1,621	2,320	2,437	2,055	1,899	1,422	1,543	1,237

Dataset: ESS6-2012, ed.2.4



Country	Albania	Belgium	Bulgaria	Switzerland	Cyprus	Czechia	Germany	Denmark	Estonia	Spain	Finland	France	United Kingdom	Hungary	Ireland	Israel	Iceland	Italy	Lithuania
Allow many/few immigrants from poorer countries outside Europe																			
Allow many to come and live here	22.9	9.3	21.9	9.1	2.0	5.9	18.4	11.5	7.0	22.2	7.0	9.5	6.6	4.3	13.0	5.2	33.9	21.5	14.1
Allow some	23.3	46.5	29.5	50.0	6.0	26.7	48.7	37.6	25.5	33.4	30.3	43.7	33.9	15.0	37.8	17.3	41.5	43.1	38.0
Allow a few	22.8	30.9	23.3	34.6	43.3	43.3	26.1	41.9	37.7	31.6	52.3	30.6	35.7	42.1	31.0	27.6	21.3	23.6	28.0
Allow none	31.1	13.2	25.3	6.2	48.7	24.0	6.8	8.9	29.8	12.8	10.4	16.2	23.9	38.6	18.3	49.9	3.3	11.8	19.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=	1,164	1,865	2,013	1,458	1,099	1,858	2,925	1,600	2,324	1,816	2,163	1,944	2,227	1,802	2,584	2,323	723	933	1,814

Caveats to these numbers however are required. The cross-national average did not rise as one might expect given these trend numbers from Western Europe countries. As noted above, there is a clear polarising pattern between east and west and with particular countries showing a sharp turn toward anti-migrant sentiment. Hungary and other eastern European countries saw their negative views of immigrants *increase* whilst Western Europe saw the reverse. This does present, unfortunately, a clear geographical divide that is also widening (polarization). Italy and the Netherlands can only rely upon a 2012-2018 (ESS6-ESS9) comparison as these countries were not included in the ESS7 2014 data. Italy represents an important caveat to this broad east vs. west divide as it saw a similar precipitous decline in positive attitudes seen in Hungary and elsewhere. From 2012 to 2018, the number of Italians whose answers placed them into the two positive categories fell by a huge 13.7% (from 64.4% to 50.9%) in the six years to 2018. The Netherlands saw a similar small rise to Germany (4.4%) over this six-year period.

The overall picture from the above concerning how welcoming Europeans are to non-European migrants is positive, despite those particular cases of concern such as Hungary and most CEECs and the trend line in Italy. The sharp rise in positive attitudes towards non-European migrants in many countries however combined with those where average support was already high points a far more positive overall picture.

2. Question 2: Is immigration bad or good for a country's economy?

This category of ESS survey data doesn't use the same four-pronged categorisation as Q1. Instead, a simpler positive-negative numerical scale of 0-to-10 is used with the most positive being **10** and most negative being **0** and variations in between.

The two tables of results below are provided first to enable comparison between 2018 (ESS9) and 2012 (ESS6).

2018 ESS9 - Immigration bad or good for the economy?

Dataset: ESS9-2018, ed.1.1



Country	Austria	Belgium	Bulgaria	Switzerland	Cyprus	Czechia	Germany	Estonia	Finland	France	United Kingdom	Hungary	Ireland	Italy	Netherlands	Norway	Poland	Serbia	Slovenia
Immigration bad or good for country's economy																			
Bad for the economy	6.1	3.6	10.9	0.9	9.6	9.0	2.5	6.7	2.5	6.5	3.8	13.5	2.8	10.2	1.2	1.8	4.1	23.2	9.7
1	3.3	1.7	8.8	1.3	5.4	8.1	1.9	3.5	2.6	3.0	2.4	7.2	2.6	3.9	1.8	1.1	2.1	5.1	5.3
2	5.4	5.8	9.7	2.9	11.7	9.0	3.6	6.1	4.6	7.6	3.7	13.4	3.6	8.6	3.9	4.0	4.3	6.9	9.8
3	8.4	9.2	10.8	5.3	12.2	11.0	5.5	11.0	7.6	7.9	5.3	15.1	6.1	10.0	6.1	5.4	6.3	8.4	12.4
4	8.3	7.0	11.5	7.5	10.1	10.7	6.1	9.5	8.4	9.2	7.1	13.1	6.3	9.1	9.9	7.5	6.9	7.5	9.9
5	21.8	26.2	22.3	20.3	27.8	19.9	20.1	26.3	17.6	25.4	21.3	20.2	17.4	18.2	24.8	24.2	24.7	25.4	20.1
6	14.2	14.6	8.2	12.5	8.8	12.7	10.8	12.6	13.0	10.8	11.8	7.6	11.3	14.3	18.0	13.4	13.6	6.1	8.3
7	13.0	18.6	8.1	20.5	7.1	11.7	18.7	11.1	20.6	12.8	16.3	4.9	18.0	12.2	22.7	21.5	15.2	5.4	10.3
8	10.8	9.7	4.0	19.3	4.2	5.1	17.7	8.0	16.1	9.9	15.9	3.5	19.2	7.3	9.4	13.7	12.6	4.0	8.7
9	3.8	2.3	3.0	5.0	1.0	1.7	6.6	2.5	4.8	3.3	6.6	0.6	6.1	2.4	1.3	4.1	3.9	0.9	3.0
Good for the economy	4.9	1.4	2.8	4.5	2.1	1.2	6.6	2.7	2.0	3.5	5.6	0.8	6.7	3.8	0.9	3.2	6.3	7.2	2.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=	2,399	1,751	1,838	1,491	762	2,281	2,325	1,860	1,735	1,955	2,181	1,558	2,181	2,653	1,632	1,383	1,386	1,838	1,287

2012 ESS6 - Immigration bad or good for the economy?

Dataset: ESS6-2012, ed.2.4



Country	Albania	Belgium	Bulgaria	Switzerland	Cyprus	Czechia	Germany	Denmark	Estonia	Spain	Finland	France	United Kingdom	Hungary	Ireland	Israel	Iceland	Italy	Lithuania
Immigration bad or good for country's economy																			
Bad for the economy	13.2	5.5	9.0	1.0	22.4	9.6	2.9	3.9	4.9	7.5	2.1	8.9	7.3	10.6	7.4	13.9	2.4	10.4	2.9
1	4.4	4.5	7.1	1.2	12.8	5.9	1.6	3.8	3.1	2.0	2.5	3.1	6.6	5.8	5.4	5.5	0.9	3.0	3.1
2	6.2	8.7	6.4	2.4	11.8	10.4	4.5	6.9	6.9	6.8	4.4	7.8	9.8	9.3	7.8	6.4	3.5	6.2	6.7
3	7.2	13.2	8.5	6.7	11.2	14.6	7.6	9.7	12.9	7.3	7.3	10.2	12.5	11.7	11.0	10.3	5.5	6.7	7.9
4	4.9	10.8	9.1	7.0	9.4	12.8	8.0	10.2	8.6	6.9	12.1	9.6	9.3	10.8	11.0	10.0	6.2	7.4	12.1
5	17.3	22.1	21.0	21.5	15.6	24.5	23.9	24.2	28.3	25.7	22.4	27.4	23.4	27.0	19.5	17.4	25.8	19.9	23.3
6	6.9	14.2	9.7	13.3	5.4	8.8	11.5	10.6	12.0	10.8	14.1	9.1	9.6	9.0	9.5	8.2	11.5	10.9	12.8
7	8.8	13.3	9.3	19.1	4.8	6.5	16.8	14.4	10.0	12.7	18.7	10.5	9.9	8.2	11.0	8.4	21.0	12.6	12.4
8	11.6	6.0	6.4	18.5	3.9	4.1	14.2	11.3	7.3	12.4	11.5	7.9	7.7	4.3	9.0	10.4	15.9	12.6	10.9
9	4.2	1.3	3.8	5.4	1.4	1.7	3.7	3.0	1.8	3.6	3.5	2.1	2.2	1.5	2.6	3.1	4.4	4.4	4.2
Good for the economy	15.4	0.4	9.7	3.9	1.4	1.1	5.2	2.1	4.2	4.4	1.3	3.2	1.7	1.7	5.8	6.4	2.8	6.0	3.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=	1,171	1,859	1,949	1,476	1,105	1,850	2,914	1,600	2,256	1,838	2,177	1,953	2,233	1,864	2,589	2,190	705	936	1,912

In most of the country cases **more citizens put 0 (bad for the economy) rather than 10 (good)**, although both distributions are small. The vast majority of the distribution is in the middle of these two 0-10 extremes, and mostly rest around input number 5, indicating perhaps ambivalence or lack of certainty. This point links neatly

with EU-Eurobarometer data from 2017 that suggest **only 1 in 4 Europeans actually, feel informed about immigration⁴**.

A simple targeting approach looks at the answers in the area 5 to 8 (where most answers land) for each country. This allows us to see shifts into these 5 to 8 areas, over time, from the 0-4 and 9-10 ends of the scale. Put another way, this explores whether the mode moves by asking whether the *5-to-8 region of the scale gets larger due to shifts up from 0-to-4* (more negative views)? If so, this would indicate a shift towards more positive views towards immigrants' role in the economy. An example (using the case of Switzerland) is presented in the table below.

COUNTRY	2018 ESS % WITHIN 5- TO-8 ANSWERS	INCREASE DECLINE FROM 2012
SWITZERLAND	72.6%	+0.2%
GERMANY	67.3%	+0.9%
IRELAND	65.9%	+16.9%
NETHERLANDS	74.9%	+6.1%
ITALY	52%	-4%
HUNGARY	36.2%	-12.3%
FRANCE	58.9%	+5%

Country	Austria	Belgium	Bulgaria	Switzerland	Cyprus	Czechia	Germany	Estonia	Finland	France	United Kingdom	Hungary	Ireland	Italy	Netherlands	Norway	Poland	Serbia	Slovenia
Immigration bad or good for country's economy																			
Bad for the economy	6.1	3.6	10.9	0.9	9.6	9.0	2.5	6.7	2.5	6.5	3.8	13.5	2.8	10.2	1.2	1.8	4.1	23.2	9.7
1	3.3	1.7	8.8	1.3	5.4	8.1	1.9	3.5	2.6	3.0	2.4	7.2	2.6	3.9	1.8	1.1	2.1	5.1	5.3
2	5.4	5.8	9.7	2.9	11.7	9.0	3.6	6.1	4.6	7.6	3.7	13.4	3.6	8.6	3.9	4.0	4.3	6.9	9.8
3	8.4	9.2	10.8	5.3	12.2	11.0	5.5	11.0	7.6	7.9	5.3	15.1	6.1	10.0	6.1	5.4	6.3	8.4	12.4
4	8.3	7.0	11.5	7.5	10.1	10.7	6.1	9.5	8.4	9.2	7.1	13.1	6.3	9.1	9.9	7.5	6.9	7.5	9.9
5	21.8	26.2	22.3	20.3	27.8	19.9	20.1	26.3	17.6	25.4	21.3	20.2	17.4	18.2	24.8	24.2	24.7	25.4	20.1
6	14.2	14.6	8.2	12.5	8.8	12.7	10.8	12.6	13.0	10.8	11.8	7.6	11.3	14.3	18.0	13.4	13.6	6.1	8.3
7	13.0	18.6	8.1	20.5	7.1	11.7	18.7	11.1	20.6	12.8	16.3	4.9	18.0	12.2	22.7	21.5	15.2	5.4	10.3
8	10.8	9.7	4.0	19.3	4.2	5.1	17.7	8.0	16.1	9.9	15.9	3.5	19.2	7.3	9.4	13.7	12.6	4.0	8.7
9	3.8	2.3	3.0	5.0	1.0	1.7	6.6	2.5	4.8	3.3	6.6	0.6	6.1	2.4	1.3	4.1	3.9	0.9	3.0
Good for the economy	4.9	1.4	2.8	4.5	2.1	1.2	6.6	2.7	2.0	3.5	5.6	0.8	6.7	3.8	0.9	3.2	6.3	7.2	2.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=	2,399	1,751	1,838	1,491	762	2,281	2,325	1,860	1,735	1,955	2,181	1,558	2,181	2,653	1,632	1,383	1,386	1,838	1,287

⁴ Special Eurobarometer report Summary - *Integration of immigrants in the European Union* (2018) requested by the European Commission, Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs and co-ordinated by the Directorate-General for Communication

From the box drawn around this 5-8 area for a given country, an arrow will be drawn indicating which direction any shift has occurred. The total figures for the following countries have been collated: Germany, Italy, France, Ireland, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Hungary.

The overall number for this four-category area of the distribution (5-8), saw an overall increase of 4.5%. It follows a similar pattern to what is presented in the previous section concerning non-European immigrants: some countries saw a sharp increase in the positive sentiments, some saw a moderate increase, whilst the same countries broadly saw a sharp decrease in attitudes towards immigrants.

As the table to the right shows, Ireland and the Netherlands saw considerable increases in positive sentiment towards immigrants' role in the economy. France too showed an increase. Germany and Switzerland showed very modest increases on 2012, but in truth remained stable. Italy and Hungary saw sharp decreases in positive views towards migrants, with Hungary again showing a very sharp decline as the rump of the distribution rested in between 0 and 4. Italy's decline was smaller, but not insignificant.

ESS 2018 table: Distribution shifts "5-to-8 squares"

Dataset: ESS9-2018, ed.1.1



Country	Austria	Belgium	Bulgaria	Switzerland	Cyprus	Czechia	Germany	Estonia	Finland	France	United Kingdom	Hungary	Ireland	Italy	Netherlands	Norway	Poland	Serbia	Slovenia
Immigration bad or good for country's economy																			
Bad for the economy																			
1	6.1	3.6	10.9	0.9	9.6	9.0	2.5	6.7	2.5	6.5	3.8	13.5	2.8	10.2	1.2	1.8	4.1	23.2	9.7
2	3.3	1.7	8.8	1.3	5.4	8.1	1.9	3.5	2.6	3.0	2.4	7.2	2.6	3.9	1.8	1.1	2.1	5.1	5.3
3	5.4	5.8	9.7	2.9	11.7	9.0	3.6	6.1	4.6	7.6	3.7	13.4	3.6	8.6	3.9	4.0	4.3	6.9	9.8
4	8.4	9.2	10.8	5.3	12.2	11.0	5.5	11.0	7.6	7.9	5.3	15.1	6.1	10.0	6.1	5.4	6.3	8.4	12.4
5	8.3	7.0	11.5	7.5	10.1	10.7	6.1	9.5	8.4	9.2	7.1	13.1	6.3	9.1	9.9	7.5	6.9	7.5	9.9
6	21.8	26.2	22.3	20.3	27.8	19.9	20.1	26.3	17.6	25.4	21.3	20.2	17.4	18.2	24.8	24.2	24.7	25.4	20.1
7	14.2	14.6	8.2	12.5	8.8	12.7	10.8	12.6	13.0	10.8	11.8	7.6	11.3	14.3	18.0	13.4	13.6	6.1	8.3
8	13.0	18.6	8.1	20.5	7.1	11.7	18.7	11.1	20.6	12.8	16.3	4.9	18.0	12.2	22.7	21.5	15.2	5.4	10.3
9	10.8	9.7	4.0	19.3	4.2	5.1	17.7	8.0	16.1	9.9	15.9	3.5	19.2	7.3	9.4	13.7	12.6	4.0	8.7
Good for the economy	3.8	2.3	3.0	5.0	1.0	1.7	6.6	2.5	4.8	3.3	6.6	0.6	6.1	2.4	1.3	4.1	3.9	0.9	3.0
10	4.9	1.4	2.8	4.5	2.1	1.2	6.6	2.7	2.0	3.5	5.6	0.8	6.7	3.8	0.9	3.2	6.3	7.2	2.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=	2,399	1,751	1,838	1,491	762	2,281	2,325	1,860	1,735	1,955	2,181	1,558	2,181	2,653	1,632	1,383	1,386	1,838	1,287

The table above demonstrates countries indicating downwards shifts towards more positive attitudes and upwards shifts for less positive movements. A fuller analysis incorporating more CEECs will likely produce a more mixed picture, probably underlining the east-west polarization seen in the previous section addressing views of non-European immigrants. The overall picture however comparing 2012 to 2018 ESS data sees a similar shift towards positive attitudes toward migrants and specifically in their role in the economy.

3. Question 3: Is a country's cultural life undermined by or enriched by immigrants?

The same methodological approach to presenting the ESS in the second section above is repeated here as ESS data for assessing public attitudes to *migrants' contribution to cultural life* is organised using a 0-10 scale, from 'bad' to 'good'.

cultural life undermined (0) – cultural life enriched (10)

The results for this survey question are a little more mixed than in the previous two sections. A quick overview of the two extreme answers in the survey (0= 'cultural life *undermined*'; 10= 'cultural life *enriched*') sees that 9 countries saw higher numbers at the 10 rather than the zero in 2018 whereas only four countries presented such results in 2012, indicating a broad improvement in attitudes over all countries.

Similarly, to the previous category (immigrants and the economy), this basic (even crude) comparison does not tell us too much about substantive shifts in distribution. Again, the middling '5' category still sees most of the inputs in both the 2018 and 2012 ESS survey results (as with the previous section on migrants' economic contribution). For this reason, the distributions in and around the '5-to-8' area of the scale are again used.

Tables ESS 2018 (ESS) and ESS 2012 (ESS6)

Dataset: ESS9-2018, ed.1.1



Country	Austria	Belgium	Bulgaria	Switzerland	Cyprus	Czechia	Germany	Estonia	Finland	France	United Kingdom	Hungary	Ireland	Italy	Netherlands	Norway	Poland	Serbia	Slovenia
Country's cultural life undermined or enriched by immigrants																			
Cultural life undermined	6.9	2.1	10.7	0.8	7.9	10.4	3.0	5.1	0.8	6.2	4.6	13.3	2.3	10.4	0.7	1.2	4.1	18.1	8.1
1	4.5	1.7	10.5	1.7	3.8	8.8	2.4	3.0	0.9	3.0	2.6	5.6	2.1	4.4	1.6	1.8	2.0	3.6	4.2
2	8.5	3.8	9.3	3.5	11.8	12.4	5.0	7.4	2.4	6.1	5.5	12.1	4.8	8.4	2.5	3.2	5.4	5.8	9.3
3	12.5	6.7	11.1	6.8	13.5	16.9	6.8	9.7	3.7	6.9	6.4	13.2	6.1	11.0	5.3	5.2	6.5	6.5	10.4
4	12.2	6.2	10.7	7.4	11.7	13.2	7.0	7.6	3.1	7.8	7.8	13.3	7.2	8.6	6.7	7.1	6.6	6.5	9.6
5	18.5	16.8	23.0	16.2	21.2	19.1	16.7	25.0	10.8	18.5	16.0	20.9	15.9	15.8	14.8	19.2	24.9	27.0	24.4
6	8.8	13.5	8.5	11.5	12.1	9.4	10.9	12.4	9.8	11.4	10.4	9.5	9.9	12.7	14.6	10.1	13.4	6.7	9.2
7	10.7	21.0	6.7	19.8	9.9	5.9	16.5	12.6	21.6	13.6	16.7	6.2	18.0	12.0	24.9	19.1	14.0	6.7	9.4
8	8.3	18.6	4.1	19.8	5.6	2.3	15.6	10.0	25.6	14.0	14.2	3.1	19.4	9.0	20.1	16.2	12.1	5.6	9.3
9	3.6	5.6	2.3	6.2	0.9	0.9	8.0	3.3	13.8	5.9	7.1	1.1	7.0	2.9	5.6	9.0	3.8	2.1	2.7
Cultural life enriched	5.4	4.0	3.1	6.4	1.6	0.8	8.1	3.8	7.6	6.6	8.8	1.8	7.4	4.8	3.2	8.0	7.3	11.4	3.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=	2,422	1,753	1,765	1,513	755	2,328	2,339	1,874	1,735	1,977	2,170	1,576	2,171	2,660	1,636	1,393	1,381	1,854	1,285

Dataset: ESS6-2012, ed.2.4

Country	Albania	Belgium	Bulgaria	Switzerland	Cyprus	Czechia	Germany	Denmark	Estonia	Spain	Finland	France	United Kingdom	Hungary	Ireland	Israel	Iceland	Italy	Lithuania
Country's cultural life undermined or enriched by immigrants																			
Cultural life undermined	8.4	2.6	5.2	1.5	17.4	8.8	2.7	2.2	2.9	3.8	0.4	7.1	5.5	3.8	5.2	10.7	0.8	7.7	4.3
1	2.6	1.9	4.5	1.2	10.8	5.0	1.1	2.2	3.2	1.5	0.7	3.5	4.7	2.4	3.6	4.3	1.2	3.0	4.7
2	4.2	5.0	5.0	4.1	15.9	9.3	3.6	3.9	6.0	4.1	0.8	7.9	8.6	3.6	5.9	7.6	1.1	5.4	6.5
3	5.1	7.5	6.4	6.0	14.6	13.1	5.5	5.4	8.4	5.1	2.2	8.6	9.8	6.4	8.0	9.6	2.5	6.6	9.7
4	4.0	6.7	8.3	9.0	9.3	13.1	6.6	8.2	7.4	4.9	3.0	8.5	9.2	7.1	8.9	7.1	4.1	6.7	10.9
5	15.7	18.5	23.1	17.9	16.8	24.5	19.5	16.5	23.7	18.5	11.2	19.5	20.8	31.4	20.2	18.9	19.8	16.5	21.5
6	7.8	14.7	11.9	12.1	5.0	9.4	11.4	8.8	11.4	10.8	10.7	10.7	10.6	14.7	11.0	8.5	10.8	11.0	11.6
7	10.9	20.7	12.4	18.5	4.2	7.7	17.9	17.2	14.8	17.0	22.5	12.5	11.1	13.8	13.2	10.2	18.8	13.5	11.5
8	15.1	14.4	8.5	18.1	4.1	4.9	16.5	19.0	11.0	18.2	27.6	11.3	11.7	10.5	11.4	13.8	22.8	16.1	10.6
9	5.4	4.7	4.5	6.5	0.7	1.7	5.8	7.5	4.2	7.1	14.4	4.4	4.3	3.0	4.9	3.8	9.7	5.8	4.7
Cultural life enriched	20.8	3.2	10.2	5.0	1.1	2.4	9.3	9.2	6.9	9.2	6.5	6.0	3.7	3.2	7.8	5.4	8.5	7.6	4.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=	1,160	1,856	1,842	1,461	1,090	1,822	2,918	1,621	2,291	1,836	2,181	1,960	2,206	1,872	2,563	2,188	733	943	1,948

The shifts here are again more modest than those found in the above sections so we have increased the number of countries to 10 from 7 (introducing Czechia and Bulgaria and Belgium).

The overall figure for agreeing that “migrants enrich our culture” fell in all countries from 58.1% to 55.6%⁵. But this might well be because the countries not included in the question were Sweden and Denmark which, like Norway and Finland, weighed the overall results with more positive numbers (positive attitudes to migrants). Hungary and Bulgaria, however, were present in the 2018 and 2012 surveys and showed a sharp turn towards negative attitudes towards migrants. These two countries were joined by Austria in the 2018 ESS survey, a country that shows a similar (although not as extreme) pattern of negative attitudes towards migrants. 63.1% of Austrian respondents were in the bottom half (0-to-5) indicating a negative reception to the cultural contribution of immigrants. But even Austria's 2018 scale was favourable in comparison to 75.3% for Bulgaria and 78.4% for Hungary. The overall figure is only 52.7%.

The table to the side also indicates that those countries that traditionally represented the most positive attitudes did not have much more room to grow. The Netherlands and Switzerland stayed more or less where they were in 2012. Germany's

Country	2018 ESS % within 5-To-8 answers	Increase/Dcline From 2012
Bulgaria	42.3%	-12.6%
Switzerland	67.3%	+0.6%
Germany	59.7%	-5.6%
Ireland	63.2%	+7.4%
Netherlands	74.4%	-0.4%
Italy	49.5%	-7.6%
Hungary	39.7%	-30.7%
France	57.0%	+3%

⁵ Please bear in mind again that not all countries surveyed were the same in 2012 and 2018,

5.6% decline however is notable. Italy and Ireland present similar sharp movement as they did in the previous categories and in the same directions (Italy a sharp fall in positive attitudes, Ireland a sharp rise).

ESS 2018 table: distribution shifts - "5-to-8 squares"

Dataset: ESS9-2018, ed.1.1

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Country	Austria	Belgium	Bulgaria	Switzerland	Cyprus	Czechia	Germany	Estonia	Finland	France	United Kingdom	Hungary	Ireland	Italy	Netherlands	Norway	Poland	Serbia	Slovenia
Country's cultural life undermined or enriched by immigrants																			
Cultural life undermined	6.9	2.1	10.7	0.8	7.9	10.4	3.0	5.1	0.8	6.2	4.6	13.3	2.3	10.4	0.7	1.2	4.1	18.1	8.1
1	4.5	1.7	10.5	1.7	3.8	8.8	2.4	3.0	0.9	3.0	2.6	5.6	2.1	4.4	1.6	1.8	2.0	3.6	4.2
2	8.5	3.8	9.3	3.5	11.8	12.4	5.0	7.4	2.4	6.1	5.5	12.1	4.8	8.4	2.5	3.2	5.4	5.8	9.3
3	12.5	6.7	11.1	6.8	13.5	16.9	6.8	9.7	3.7	6.9	6.4	13.2	6.1	11.0	5.3	5.2	6.5	6.5	10.4
4	12.2	6.2	10.7	7.4	11.7	13.2	7.0	7.6	3.1	7.8	7.8	13.3	7.2	8.6	6.7	7.1	6.6	6.5	9.6
5	18.5	16.8	23.0	16.2	21.2	19.1	16.7	25.0	10.8	18.5	16.0	20.9	15.9	15.8	14.8	19.2	24.9	27.0	24.4
6	8.8	13.5	8.5	11.5	12.1	9.4	10.9	12.4	9.8	11.4	10.4	9.5	9.9	12.7	14.6	10.1	13.4	6.7	9.2
7	10.7	21.0	6.7	19.8	9.9	5.9	16.5	12.6	21.6	13.6	16.7	6.2	18.0	12.0	24.9	19.1	14.0	6.7	9.4
8	8.3	18.6	4.1	19.8	5.6	2.3	15.6	10.0	25.6	14.0	14.2	3.1	19.4	9.0	20.1	16.2	12.1	5.6	9.3
9	3.6	5.6	2.3	6.2	0.9	0.9	8.0	3.3	13.8	5.9	7.1	1.1	7.0	2.9	5.6	9.0	3.8	2.1	2.7
Cultural life enriched	5.4	4.0	3.1	6.4	1.6	0.8	8.1	3.8	7.6	6.6	8.8	1.8	7.4	4.8	3.2	8.0	7.3	11.4	3.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=	2,422	1,753	1,765	1,513	755	2,328	2,339	1,874	1,735	1,977	2,170	1,576	2,171	2,660	1,636	1,393	1,381	1,854	1,285

Hungary's enormous fall of 30%, even when compared to the previous economy part of the survey, raises question marks about over whether the high number in the 2012 ESS was representative. However, given the results Hungary has displayed in other ESS survey categories on immigration, there is little doubt that there has been a sharp movement on the scale towards 0 and extreme negative categories, as there has with Bulgaria.

The table above leaves movement arrows off for Germany, Netherlands and Switzerland since there was negligible movement in these countries' from 2012. But if we depart from the 5-to-8 view for a moment, and instead split the 0-10 distribution into two halves (ie a 'Migrants are bad half' between (0-5) vs. a 'Migrants are bad Good half' (6-10)) there is also little movement, but still positive shifts towards more positive attitudes.

Germany still saw a slight drop (1.8%) in the percentage of this 5-to-8 portion. This was down from 60.9% in 2012 to 59.1% in 2018. About 60% of Germans were more positive than negative about the cultural contribution of immigrants. The Netherlands and Switzerland both saw increases. In the Netherlands this was a marginal 0.6% (to a still high 68.4% from 67.8%) and in Switzerland a more impressive 3.2% increase to 63.5% (from 60.2%).

Overall, these numbers show similar patterns to those of the previous section on the economy and non-European migrants. Hungary and Ireland behaved to form showing sharp drops (or jumps) again. Overall, there was a stagnation in attitudes, with countries in eastern Europe and Italy underlining the same long-term trend problem in previous sections. We might also observe that the culture section demonstrates the importance of checking just what the data population is for a survey – excluding countries can have a dramatic effect on the outcome of a survey!

4. Question 4: Do immigrants make country worse or better place to live?

The results presented in the three preceding sections present a similar pattern (for the same countries). For this broader summative question, the scale used to organise the questions and results was the same 0-10 (bad-good) as with the preceding two categories of question (economy, cultural contribution). This time the questions were di immigrants make my country a...

Worse place to live (0) – Better place to live (10)

As with the preceding section, a very simple comparison of the two extreme ends (top vs. bottom, or 0 vs. 10) is instructive. This raises similar caveats to those above in relation to the number of countries surveyed in 2012 which were not surveyed in 2018. In particular countries producing more positive scores (6-10) on this attitudinal scale (Denmark, Sweden) were omitted in 2018 and those countries included, like Austria, produced more negative scores (0-4). There was therefore less to counterweight the predictably sharp movement in Bulgaria, Hungary and Czechia towards *very* negative attitudes. Given Austria's inclusion and Sweden's and Denmark's omission, it is tempting to take a country like Czechia out to balance this picture of selected countries. It should therefore be noted that difference in the data between 2012 and 2018 do skew the *overall* figures.

Nonetheless the picture painted by this simple starting point is not very positive, with 8 countries shifting towards more negative attitudes and 5 towards more positive. This does include very minor shifts (<1.0%) in Germany and Finland however which, in line with the preceding sections (economy, culture, non-Europeans), contrast with larger big shifts up and down in countries such as Ireland, Bulgaria, Hungary, Italy.

Dataset: ESS9-2018, ed.1.1

Country	Austria	Belgium	Bulgaria	Switzerland	Cyprus	Czechia	Germany	Estonia	Finland	France	United Kingdom	Hungary	Ireland	Italy	Netherlands	Norway	Poland	Serbia	Slovenia
Immigrants make country worse or better place to live																			
Worse place to live	7.8	2.4	11.3	0.8	7.6	9.2	3.6	6.1	1.9	4.2	4.3	8.8	1.8	12.0	0.6	1.5	2.5	18.2	8.1
1	4.4	1.9	8.9	0.9	4.2	9.3	2.2	4.3	2.2	2.9	3.1	5.0	2.1	5.6	1.0	1.1	1.8	4.3	5.0
2	9.3	4.9	10.8	3.6	11.8	13.1	4.6	8.5	4.4	6.8	5.3	10.7	3.9	9.8	2.2	2.2	3.6	5.9	8.4
3	13.3	7.7	11.5	5.1	12.6	16.0	8.3	10.8	5.6	7.3	6.9	15.2	5.3	11.8	5.4	6.1	7.1	7.0	12.1
4	11.6	9.9	11.5	7.5	10.4	14.5	8.9	11.6	9.5	9.1	6.8	16.6	5.7	10.8	10.0	6.9	7.1	7.2	9.8
5	29.3	32.9	24.8	38.7	24.0	20.0	31.6	34.5	26.5	35.8	22.6	26.6	17.7	21.1	31.2	30.7	32.2	27.7	32.1
6	7.8	13.8	7.0	12.1	10.9	7.7	10.0	9.9	12.7	10.6	10.1	8.9	11.3	12.9	16.5	11.2	12.7	5.5	6.8
7	6.0	13.6	6.3	14.3	10.5	5.8	12.6	8.0	17.6	9.9	15.2	4.8	16.2	7.9	18.7	16.4	13.0	7.1	8.2
8	6.0	9.1	3.9	10.9	5.4	3.0	11.0	4.1	13.7	8.1	13.6	2.6	21.7	5.0	10.1	13.8	10.2	5.5	5.3
9	1.5	2.3	2.0	3.1	0.5	0.5	4.1	0.9	4.0	2.2	5.8	0.6	7.2	1.2	2.8	5.1	3.6	1.9	2.1
Better place to live	3.0	1.4	2.0	2.9	2.1	1.0	3.2	1.4	1.9	3.2	6.3	0.3	7.2	1.8	1.5	5.0	6.1	9.5	2.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=	2,413	1,749	1,807	1,477	762	2,304	2,329	1,867	1,735	1,955	2,170	1,555	2,177	2,667	1,634	1,387	1,371	1,849	1,293

Dataset: ESS6-2012, ed.2.4



Country	Albania	Belgium	Bulgaria	Switzerland	Cyprus	Czechia	Germany	Denmark	Estonia	Spain	Finland	France	United Kingdom	Hungary	Ireland	Israel	Iceland	Italy	Lithuania
Immigrants make country worse or better place to live																			
Worse place to live	8.0	4.5	4.6	1.2	15.5	7.8	3.5	1.8	3.9	5.3	1.1	7.5	6.9	7.4	5.7	9.9	1.1	10.7	2.6
1	1.7	3.2	3.6	1.0	14.3	5.3	1.6	1.5	3.5	2.0	1.5	3.4	5.3	3.8	3.4	4.3	0.7	4.8	3.8
2	3.4	7.3	4.4	4.5	15.6	9.1	4.4	3.5	7.2	5.6	3.0	8.1	9.6	7.7	6.0	9.2	1.4	8.3	7.0
3	4.1	10.4	6.9	7.6	11.7	13.3	8.0	5.5	11.2	6.9	6.7	10.1	10.0	10.6	7.8	9.8	2.3	9.9	8.6
4	5.2	12.9	10.7	10.2	11.2	14.7	10.2	6.2	11.1	8.6	9.6	10.0	11.0	10.7	9.1	8.3	3.7	9.4	12.2
5	21.3	30.2	30.3	36.0	15.4	27.8	31.3	25.8	34.8	28.8	31.1	34.5	25.2	36.3	23.2	19.9	27.8	26.7	30.6
6	9.0	11.7	12.4	11.8	4.5	8.2	10.7	9.9	10.2	11.4	14.1	8.9	9.0	9.9	10.7	8.8	10.8	10.6	11.6
7	11.8	10.4	10.5	13.4	4.3	5.9	14.0	16.6	8.1	12.3	15.6	7.7	9.9	7.2	9.9	10.6	19.9	9.1	9.7
8	15.1	6.6	6.6	10.3	2.8	3.8	9.5	17.2	4.8	9.9	11.6	5.8	7.5	4.5	12.5	10.6	17.5	6.3	8.7
9	6.0	1.7	3.4	2.1	0.5	1.9	3.3	6.4	1.7	4.2	3.8	1.3	3.1	1.0	4.8	3.1	7.9	2.1	2.9
Better place to live	14.4	1.2	6.7	1.9	4.2	2.0	3.5	5.5	3.5	4.9	1.8	2.5	2.5	0.8	6.9	5.5	6.9	2.1	2.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=	1,124	1,859	1,836	1,451	1,106	1,858	2,921	1,622	2,231	1,843	2,173	1,943	2,229	1,823	2,582	2,201	724	937	1,852

Again, looking at the area of the distribution where most numbers fall (in the middle), a similar picture is presented on the ESS9 (2018) and ESS6 (2012) tables. The overall number for all countries surveyed indicated no real change in attitudes over the six-year period (a 0.2% decline in attitudes across the 5-to-8 fields.).

The country selections performed here do indicate again positive results. Switzerland, France, the Netherlands, Ireland and Belgium all had clear shifts towards more positive attitudes towards agreeing that migrants help “make their country better to live in”.

The shifts in Ireland and the Netherlands broadly match up with these country's responses to earlier questions. The sharp 7.5% increase in France however is higher than it is in the preceding sections on migrants' contribution to the economy (5%) and culture (3%). Germany saw a negligible 0.2% drop, which is clearly better than the near 6% drop in attitudes concerning the cultural contribution. When compared to Germany's results across each of the four categories, the German picture is one of stability and little movement from a solidly high bar of positive attitudes.

Country	2018 ESS % within 5-To-8 answers	Increase/Decline From 2012
Bulgaria	42%	-17.8%
Switzerland	76%	+3.5%
Germany	65.5%	-0.2%
Ireland	66.9%	+10.6%
Netherlands	76.5%	+3.7%
Italy	46.9%	-5.8%
Hungary	66.9%	-15%
France	64.9%	+7.5%
Czechia	36.5	-9.2%
Belgium	69.4	+10.5 %

ESS 2018 table: distribution shifts - “5-to-8 squares”

Dataset: ESS9-2018, ed.1.1



Country	Austria	Belgium	Bulgaria	Switzerland	Cyprus	Czechia	Germany	Estonia	Finland	France	United Kingdom	Hungary	Ireland	Italy	Netherlands	Norway	Poland	Serbia	Slovenia
Immigrants make country worse or better place to live																			
Worse place to live	7.8	2.4	11.3	0.8	7.6	9.2	3.6	6.1	1.9	4.2	4.3	8.8	1.8	12.0	0.6	1.5	2.5	18.2	8.1
1	4.4	1.9	8.9	0.9	4.2	9.3	2.2	4.3	2.2	2.9	3.1	5.0	2.1	5.6	1.0	1.1	1.8	4.3	5.0
2	9.3	4.9	10.8	3.6	11.8	13.1	4.6	8.5	4.4	6.8	5.3	10.7	3.9	9.8	2.2	2.2	3.6	5.9	8.4
3	13.3	7.7	11.5	5.1	12.6	16.0	8.3	10.8	5.6	7.3	6.9	15.2	5.3	11.8	5.4	6.1	7.1	7.0	12.1
4	11.6	9.9	11.5	7.5	10.4	14.5	8.9	11.6	9.5	9.1	6.8	16.6	5.7	10.8	10.0	6.9	7.1	7.2	9.8
5	29.3	32.9	24.8	38.7	24.0	20.0	31.6	34.5	26.5	35.8	22.6	26.6	17.7	21.1	31.2	30.7	32.2	27.7	32.1
6	7.8	13.8	7.0	12.1	10.9	7.7	10.0	9.9	12.7	10.6	10.1	8.9	11.3	12.9	16.5	11.2	12.7	5.5	6.8
7	6.0	13.6	6.3	14.3	10.5	5.8	12.6	8.0	17.6	9.9	15.2	4.8	16.2	7.9	18.7	16.4	13.0	7.1	8.2
8	6.0	9.1	3.9	10.9	5.4	3.0	11.0	4.1	13.7	8.1	13.6	2.6	21.7	5.0	10.1	13.8	10.2	5.5	5.3
9	1.5	2.3	2.0	3.1	0.5	0.5	4.1	0.9	4.0	2.2	5.8	0.6	7.2	1.2	2.8	5.1	3.6	1.9	2.1
Better place to live	3.0	1.4	2.0	2.9	2.1	1.0	3.2	1.4	1.9	3.2	6.3	0.3	7.2	1.8	1.5	5.0	6.1	9.5	2.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=	2,413	1,749	1,807	1,477	762	2,304	2,329	1,867	1,735	1,955	2,170	1,555	2,177	2,667	1,634	1,387	1,371	1,849	1,293

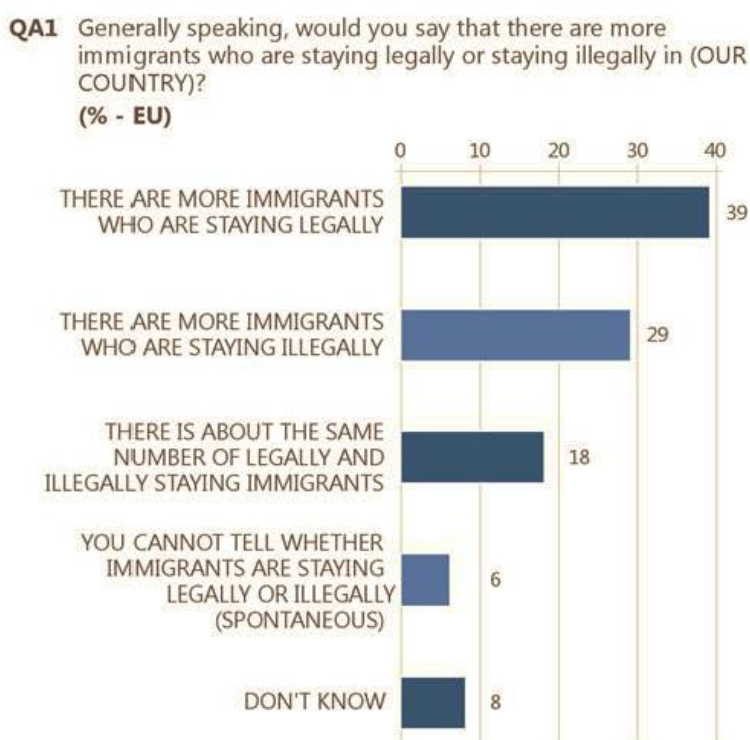
As with the previous uses of this “5-to-8’ squares shift” view, those countries that do not present any real change (up or down) are not given an arrow. For Q4 this only applies to Germany indicating again great stability in this country’s relatively high level of positive attitudes towards immigrants. The Netherlands and France see impressive increases but not as high as Belgium and Ireland, which had more room to grow from 2012). Again, Bulgaria, Czechia and Hungary saw big falls in positive attitudes towards immigration. All told, this confirms the east-west polarisation pattern described and seen in the previous three sections.

IV. Eurobarometer report

1. Integration of Immigrants in The European Union (2018)

It is clear that these categories are connected to a broader and overarching view of immigrants and immigration, so it is not surprising that we similar patterns of movement across the same countries in different surveys. There is a clear east-west pattern of polarisation. Why Italy is consistently breaking from this western Europe pattern requires more qualitative analysis of this country, which we shall see beneath. One might want to point to Italy's recent right-wing populist political drift and the rise of such parties to become governing parties. However, a similar emergence of such parties is evident, if less prominent, in most of western Europe too.

In the Netherlands, France and Germany, the rise in positive attitudes does conflict with the impression that these countries are in the throes of a populist, anti-immigrant moment too. Perhaps the political systems and media are significant in privileging more radical views in the public sphere, while the private one is more accommodating and personable? This is still probably the case but only up to a point. However, these numbers demonstrate that in Germany's case high pro-migrant attitudes are stable. In the Netherlands and France too, where far-right and populist parties have become increasingly prominent in the last 10 years or so, public opinion has been shown to be increasingly supportive of immigrants' roles in national cultural and economic life in these ESS surveys.



As noted earlier above, nearly 4 in 10 (37%) Europeans do not consider themselves to be particularly well informed about the issue of migration. This may be why a middling and ambivalent '5' (between the two extremes of '0' and '10') was selected more than any other option in the ESS surveys. This must therefore frame answers provided through surveys, whether the European Social Survey, Eurobarometer, or anything else.

The Eurobarometer survey - *Integration of Immigrants in The European Union* - indicates that nearly three in ten (29%) respondents do not know what proportion of their country's population consists of immigrants (i.e., persons born

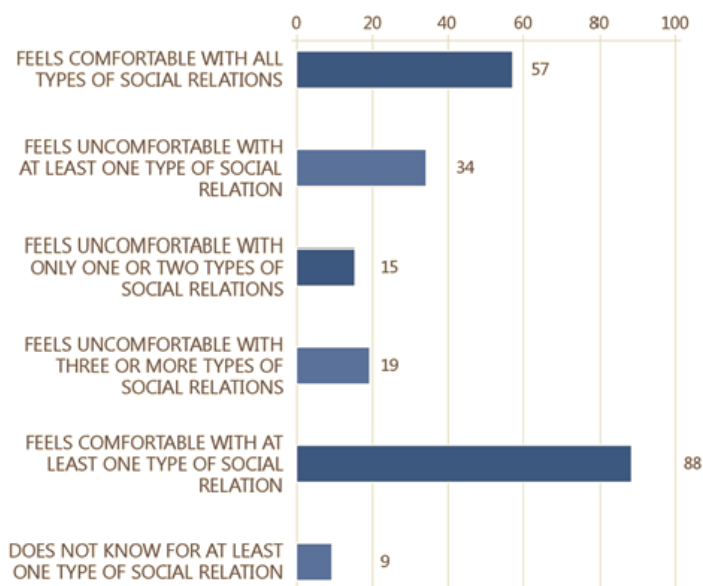
outside of the EU) (page. 6). The rest estimate something in the category options on the chart. Eurobarometer also asked Europeans if there are more illegal immigrants than legal immigrants in their country. Although only 14% said they 'don't know or you cannot tell', 39% said there were more staying legally than illegally (29% said the opposite). This still clearly implies a rise in positive attitudes, or at least less antagonistic, towards immigrants (figure X2, next page). But the emphasis on lack of knowledge however should still be noted.

The 2017 Eurobarometer reported that more than half of Europeans *feel comfortable with immigrants*, but also note that "this varies widely across countries" (page.10) confirming the east-west polarisation pattern noted from the ESS results.

When put together, the two sets of surveys from Eurobarometer and ESS point to two broad trends: **rising positive attitudes with some ambivalence**. However, *ambivalence laced with positivity rather than ambivalence laced with negativity* is certainly an improvement for the integration of immigrants in Europe and attempts to create improved narratives around them.

Another interpretation of the ESS data identified three groups of countries with different attitudes to migration. Public Opinion in the **Eastern European cluster** (e.g. Hungary, Czech Republic) was least favourable to immigration. In particular this interpretation highlighted how work skills were not favoured over religious background. This led the authors to conclude that there were stronger symbolic boundaries against Muslims in this cluster, with more coherent internal views between social groups. For the next group, the **Nordics** (SW & No), a favourable public opinion to migrants was accompanied by a lack of interest in the skills or religious backgrounds of migrants. Migrants were accepted for themselves. This differed to the **West European** group (Be, Fr, UK) which were more

QA6T Would you personally feel comfortable or uncomfortable having an immigrant as your...
(% - EU)

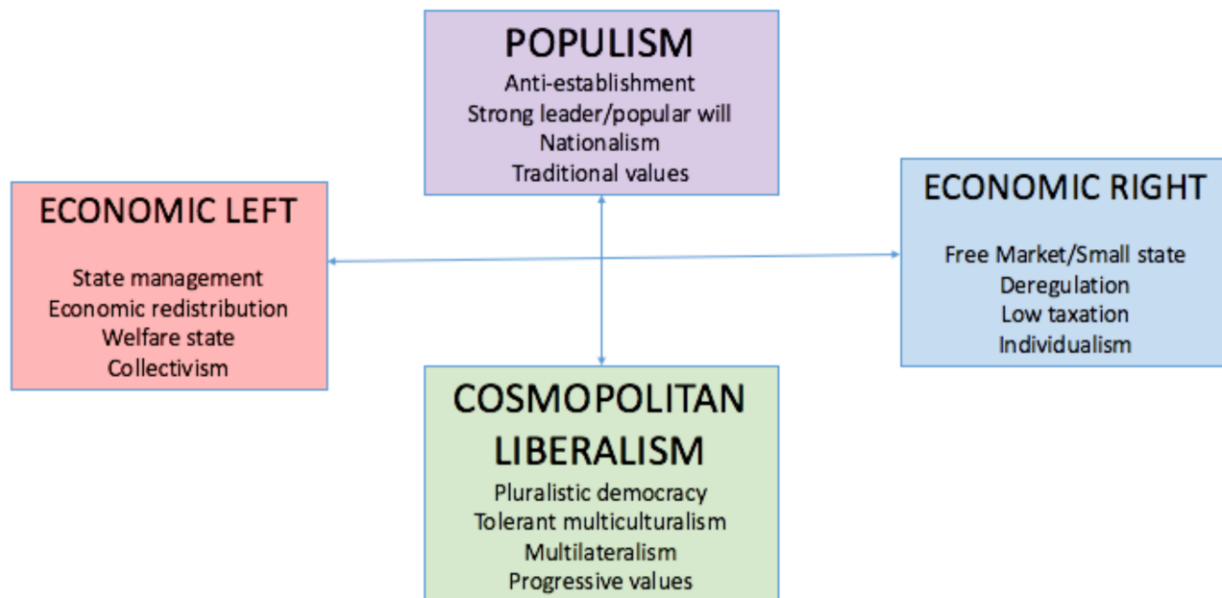


divided internally but placed the greatest emphasis on work skills as criterion for migrants, favouring Muslims over non-European migrants. Germany and Netherlands were seen as closer to the Nordic model while Spain and Portugal were locating closer to the Eastern European as these countries valued religious backgrounds more than skills (Heath & Richards 2019).

V. Ways of interpreting public opinion on immigration

We can see from the ESS survey and the OECD interpretation that public opinion is a complex issue. The numbers themselves tell a story but it is a simplistic one unless interrogated and interpreted with care. Opinions vary across countries and across time, while survey data points matter as do the way questions are phrased and data presented. The Euro barometer surveys were established in the early 1970s to capture social values and public opinion in relation to the EU in a systematic way⁶. It has been collecting data ever since and its founder, Ronald Inglehart, is still publishing impressive pieces. In 1977, his extraordinary book “Silent Revolution” identified that values in Europe were moving from materialist (ie focused on basic human material needs like food shelter security and jobs) to post materialist values that focused on the quality of life (happiness, nature, expressiveness and voice) (Inglehart 2015). Attitudes o European integration and migration have been at the core of these surveys for decades now. From this foundation a World Value Survey has also emerged that still produces useful data and easily useable findings that can help us to understand political opinion formation in a comparative context⁷.

For example, in the chart beneath Inglehart and Norris demonstrated that the shift from liberal cosmopolitan values (i.e., pro-immigration) to populist (anti) can be seen in a broader context of political change. Traditional left right politics (based on material, usually class based, redistribution) had been replaced by cosmopolitan liberalism (rights based and individual freedoms). BREXIT and Trump were both rejections of these changes (Inglehart & Norris 2016: 34):



⁶ <https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/survey>

⁷ <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/>

In other words, academic literature can help us to organise and interpret the raw data we see in surveys. Sometimes the data patterns seem to fit perfectly, sometimes less so. But it is always helpful and important to think about the different ways that public opinion on migration has been studied to help us to think critically about the numbers in front of us.

So what are the main ways that academics are talking about what influences public opinion on immigration in the EU today? In this section we review a limited list of some of the more important factors that are often seen as important in understanding attitudes to migration. The best of these arguments will look convincing but will still be only partial in their findings. All should provoke deeper thought when faced with simplistic “facts” about migration.⁸

⁸ Please see the reference list to this report for publication details of the papers cited. Many of these articles can be searched for and downloaded for free. Most authors would be thrilled if you emailed them and asked for a pdf copy.

2. Drivers of public opinion

Economic arguments are often implicit as well as explicit in migration debates (Cornelius & Rosenblum 2005). The idea that immigrants come to the EU to seek better paid work or access welfare benefits is straight out of the neo classical economic text book: it assumes that actors know what they want and act to maximize it. This also presents the idea that immigrants are challenging host citizens for scarce resources (another neo classical economics assumption) (Jaime-Castillo et al 2016), rather than contributing new skills, competitiveness, more demand and additional labor power (Menz 2016). Such ideas may present immigrants as a challenge to jobs or welfare services, or even to directly drive down working conditions (de Giorgi 2010) which may appeal to those experiencing economic insecurity (De Vries 2018).

As Ingelhart and Norris observe, old **ideas matter** and can generate protectionist and compensatory demands from some sections of the electorate (Finseraas et al 2017). How economic issues are presented is also a key element in the integration, or otherwise, of immigrants into labor markets (Schenner & Neergaard 2019). The representation of immigrants in the press – for examples as “refugees” or “migrants” – differentiates “legitimate” from “illegitimate” immigration and has been shown to create different orders of sympathy from the general public (De Coninck 2019). This means that the way that the media and politicians discuss migration is important in how it is received and even how events associated with migrants are received (Wallaschek 2019; Lee & Nerghes 2018; Bajomi-Lázár 2019).

Given the decline in turnouts in most developed democracies (Mair 2006) **political parties** could do well to court immigrant voters as a recent study (of Finland) showed that foreign born voters who were socially assimilated (eg married to native and with young children) were more likely to turn out to vote (Waas et al 2015). Indeed with naturalization, migrants views on welfare tended to converge with native populations on welfare. This extended to sharing chauvinist views on welfare access (Kolbe & Crepaz 2016; Andersen & Bjørklund 1990) and becoming more tolerant towards homosexuality (Röder Lubbers 2016). For the native voters, pre existing partisan orientations appear to condition voters, with contact with migrants reducing perceptions of threat for left wing voters but not right wing voters (Homola & Tavits 2018).

Public debates and **political party competition** often influence how welfare states might accommodate migrants (Bay et al 2013) or whether immigrants are understood to be a burden during a period of economic crisis (McMahon 2018). Past research has shown that it is the presence of far right political parties, rather than the power of left wing governments influences border policy (Morjé Howard 2010), an observation confirmed in more recent work (Vranceanu 2019). But despite the efforts of some populists to promote anti-immigration sentiment around specific events, like the New Year’s day assaults in Germany, public opinion has been shown to be resistant to such challenges (Czymara & Schmidt-Catran 2017).

Attitudes vary according to the securitization of immigration in a country which is effectively a **policy choice** (Malešič 2017; Cichocki & Jabkowski 2019) so the reception of representations of immigrants in politics and media is not as simple as words alone. Attitudes to authority matter (Tillman 2013) as does geography (Craika 2018) and socio-economic grouping, especially if defined in relation to the EU’s free movement of labour (Jeannet 2020). In

the same vein, promoting multi-cultural policies can improve attitudes to immigration especially in more educated sections of society (Hooghe & de Vroom 2015; Callens & Meuleman 2017).

Threat is a common framing rhetorical device to elevate public opinion against immigration. This might be by framing the Schengen Agreement as a threats to jobs (Karstens, F., 2019) or by referencing an external terrorist event (Böhmelt et al 2019). However, the perception of these threats is also likely to be influenced by the homogeneity of a society (Nussio, 2019). In many ways threat, like other forms of risk, is influenced by the quality of information available on immigration. As this has often been very poor in relation border management (Löfflmann & Vaughan-Williams 2018) perceived threats of immigration have been elevated (Basile & Olmastroni 2019).

Such risk-based assessments imply that people think rationally about immigration, which is not always the case. **Identity** politics also plays a central role in both EU support and the managing of migration policy (Börzel & Risse 2018, Conti et al 2019). Thus, group identity was seen to trump rational calculations in explaining the popular opposition to Turkish accession at the beginning of the century (McLaren 2007). While the colonial attitudes of the larger EU states have been explored since Ed Said's Orientalism (1978), the impact of colonialism on attitudes to migration plays out in interesting ways in smaller states like Latvia as well (Veinberg 2017). When it comes to welfare access, it is the foreignness of immigrants that makes them undeserving more than other criteria (Reeskens van der Meer 2019). Yet interestingly when people are asked to discuss their views on immigration in a public context, the tendency to formulate we/they is reduced and a more diplomatic non oppositional debate emerges (Mahendran, 2018).

VI. Country Reports

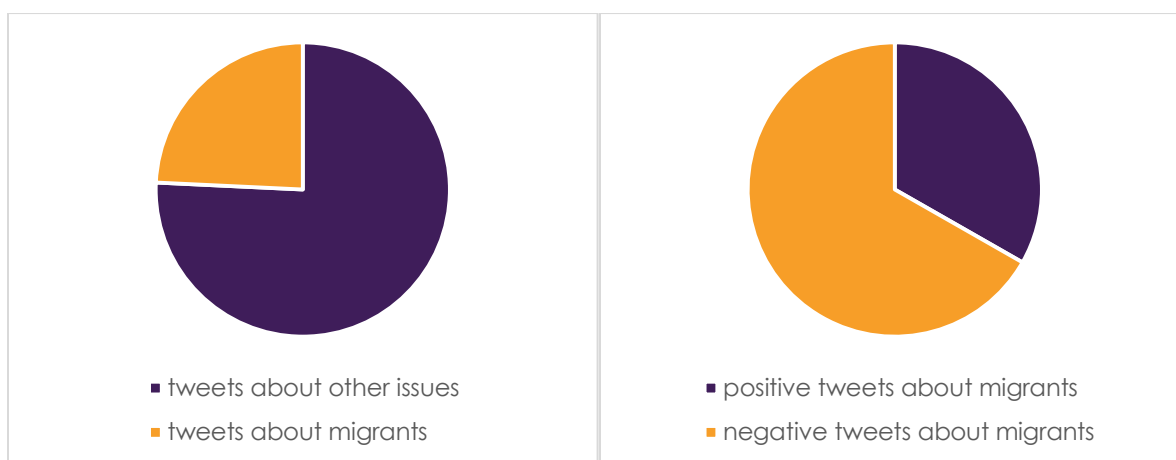
A number of country reports, written by partner organizations working with migrants in different member states, directly addressed public opinion. They did this using very different styles and methods. These are presented here with only slight edits as they represent the perspective of those deeply involved in the real world issues of migrant advocacy and public opinion. Combined with the data and literature above they illustrate the practical issues faced when challenging public opinion in the EU over migration.

1. Public Opinion on migration in Italy

a. Communication and social media

The theme of immigration is today one of the areas in which the problems of disinformation, fake news and hate speech are more evident. According to a survey by Amnesty International, 787 comments and declarations of incitement to hatred were recorded during the Italian election campaign of 2018, 91% of which focused on migrants. Among those most affected by online hatred are individuals or groups engaged in solidarity or humanitarian activities, Muslims, Jews, women and the Roma. A situation that also arises on Twitter, where 32% of negative tweets (messages) target migrants: that is to say, one hater out of three is unleashed against "the foreigner". The Report points out an entirely Italian phenomenon. In social media, one hater out of three is unleashed against the "foreigner". There is also a particular "critical relationship - at times violent - of some Italian Twitter users with Pope Francis, in a mixture of social, political and religious blame. Above all it is on the subject of immigrants, that Italian social media is to be considered a unique case in the world.

Tweets about migrants in Italy (survey period: march-may 2019) with voxdiritti.it



Associazione Carta di Roma: A Good Practice - Story About Communication⁹

The Rome Charter Association was founded in December 2011 to implement a specific protocol (CARTA DI ROMA) to produce correct information on immigration issues. It was signed by the National Council of Journalists (CNOG) and the National Federation of Italian Press (FNSI) in June 2008. The association works to become a stable point of reference for all those who work daily on the issues of the Charter. These include journalists and information operators in the first place, but also organizations and institutions, associations and activists who have long been committed to the rights of asylum seekers, refugees, minorities and migrants. The Association promotes a dialogue between MEDIA – CIVIL SOCIETY – ACADEMIC WORLD on the issues related to Carta di Roma protocol and correct information on immigration and refugees themes.

b. Highlights from analysis of information in 2018

The analysis was carried out on different media and communication tools

c. Newspapers and Press

The analysis of the press is composed by two in-depth analyzes

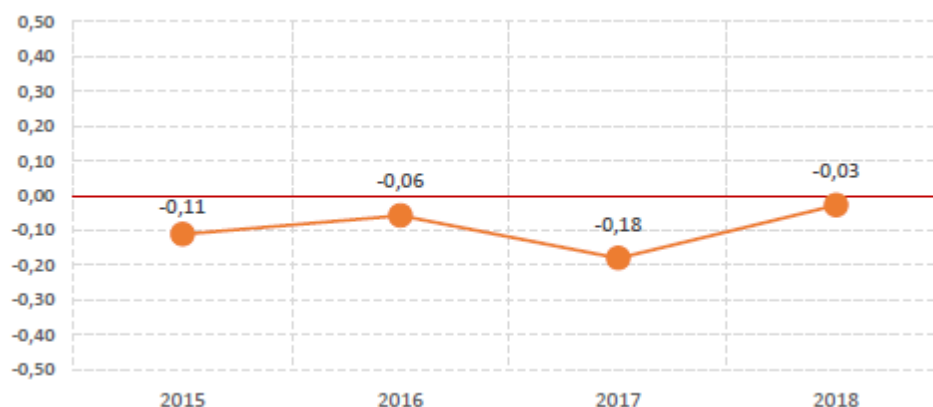
- 1.) analysis of the content in the first five pages of the Italian newspapers
- 2.) a lexical analysis of the titles of the press.

From the analysis made on the 5 newspapers that have written the greatest number of articles about immigration, there is a reduction of news dedicated to the subject compared to previous years. But this does not appear to be related proportionally to the significant diminution in landings of immigrants. The review from 2013 to 2018 shows that 2015 is the year that produced the highest number of titles, 19,185, equal to a daily average of 53 titles.

However, there is a common thread which is the idea of an endemic crisis, of a disturbing foreign invasion. This meaning can be found in the use of a lexicon that concentrates, albeit with some variation over time, always on stigmatizing and excluding terms (Libero with 251 titles / articles and Il Giornale with 190). A distinction appears between these two newspapers which are particularly interested and oppose immigration, and the other three part of the analysis (La Repubblica, Il Corriere della Sera and the Il Fatto Quotidiano), which instead follow a decreasing trend. There is therefore a drop in attention compared to previous years.

⁹ <https://www.cartadiroma.org/>

Alarmism coefficient in the headlines / articles of the front pages (comparison 2015-2018) with Carta di Roma

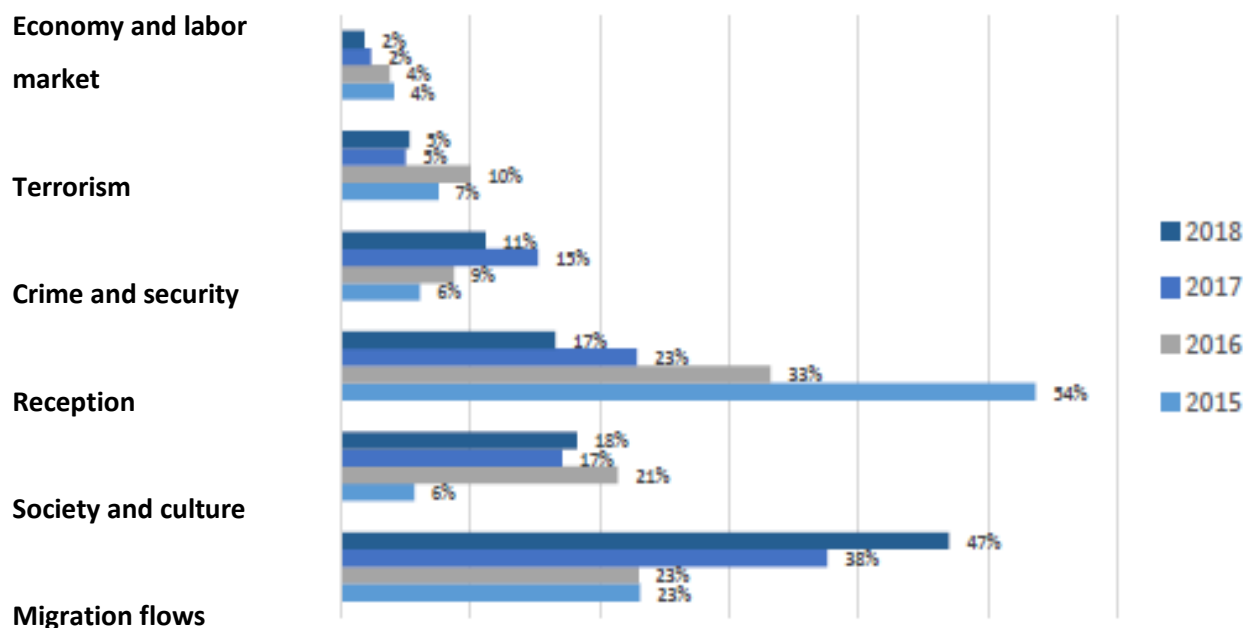


During 2018, the number of headlines dedicated to immigration in the 5 most relevant Italian newspapers was 834, an average of 83 per month. From the point of view of the topics covered by the journalistic narrative, there was a decrease in the newspapers in reception news (from 54% in 2015 to 17% in 2018) and a simultaneous increase in the space dedicated to migration flows (from 23% in 2015 to 47% of 2018). The space dedicated to issues concerning society and culture remains stable (18% in 2018), while there was a slight decrease in the coverage of facts regarding crime and security (from 15% to 11% of the total immigration news). In 2018, moreover, in the newspapers considered the news concerning migrants spoke of terrorism in 5% of cases, in line with the previous year, and of economy and labor only in 2%, a residual and declining figure compared to the previous 12 months.

However, the economic and demographic benefits that, progressively, migration brings to the country system were not developed leaving a unilateral and demonizing understanding of the phenomenon. In the 7 important national news programs examined, migration stories appeared very often: 4,068 news in 10 months (300 more than in the past) in 2017, a number equal to 10% of all services broadcast (up to 2016 the figure was around 5%). There were only 13 days in all of 2018 where there was not at least one report on the subject.

The ranking of the topics most closely connected with migration newscasts were first entry flows (38% of stories), then crime and security (32% of stories). Together, these themes occupied 70% of the television agenda, once again highlighting the link, that the media narrative feeds, between immigration, security and crime. This heavily influenced the representation of and collective imagination of immigrants. The themes of reception (15%), treatises follow especially in political debates, and in society and culture (9%), in which they included stories on the encounter between cultures, episodes of intolerance, etc.

Agenda on immigration issues in the first pages of five newspapers (2015-2018 comparison) of Carta di Roma



d. Main facts and keywords covered in 2018

- Arrival and shipwrecks of boats with migrants: the management of arrivals was linked to the fears connected to the migration phenomenon, especially as a threat to European stability and the supposed risks of health contagion.
- Link between immigration and criminality: terrorism, "invasion", degradation, the spread of disease and the threat to public order were the most used terms. The voice of crime and security was present in 11% of newspapers front pages.
- The Home Office Ministers were the protagonists of the press titles. In the six years analyzed, the ministers Alfano, Minniti and Salvini headed 739, 459 and 1,419 titles in the Italian press respectively.
- With the upcoming of the new "populist" government, the chronicling of arrivals, shipwrecks and tragedies at sea of the past years was replaced by the chronicling of containment, port closures, border control and political debate on flow management. The news on the immigration issue has decreased, pervasiveness has decreased on all media, and the opening articles of the newspapers have also decreased. The seizure of NGO ships as well as the closure of the ports and border disputes with nearby countries also reinforce the theme of the need for security against terrorism.
- The storytelling about reception and integration has changed according to the new political climate (see in October the arrest of the mayor of Riace). The agenda on immigration and integration issues shows a gradual decrease, from 2015 to 2018, with a simultaneous increase in the voice of migratory flows, which rose from 23% in 2015 to 47% of 2018. The stories of reception in the territories, both the positive ones of efficiency and collaboration between the institutions involved, and the more complex and conflicting ones, are progressively less and less covered by the news.

- The subjects of economics and labor linked to immigration were minimal, collecting only 2% of the news of 2018. The item "terrorism" was reported in 5% of the news and often the different newspapers make more or less explicit connections between it and immigration.
- The security question has gradually become the most important topic. From 2013 to 2018, the lexicon suggests images of an endemic crisis, initially humanitarian, subsequently unstoppable, political, systemic, of culture and values. The expressive power of this frame nourishes the need for protection from the threat, suspicion and hostility prevail over the cautious tolerance and outbursts of humanism of the first arrivals.

e. Television

The topic of immigration on the television was not that different to the print media. A search for substantive truth seems increasingly distant from what journalists actually do.

The quantitative and qualitative analysis was carried out on the prime-time newscasts of the seven generalist networks: TG1, TG2 E TG3 for Rai, TG4, TG5 and Studio Aperto for Mediaset and TgLa7 for La7 (for a total of 2128 editions analyzed in 2018). The analysis included a diachronic comparison from 2005 to 2018 and an in-depth analysis of the last year, from January to October of 2018.

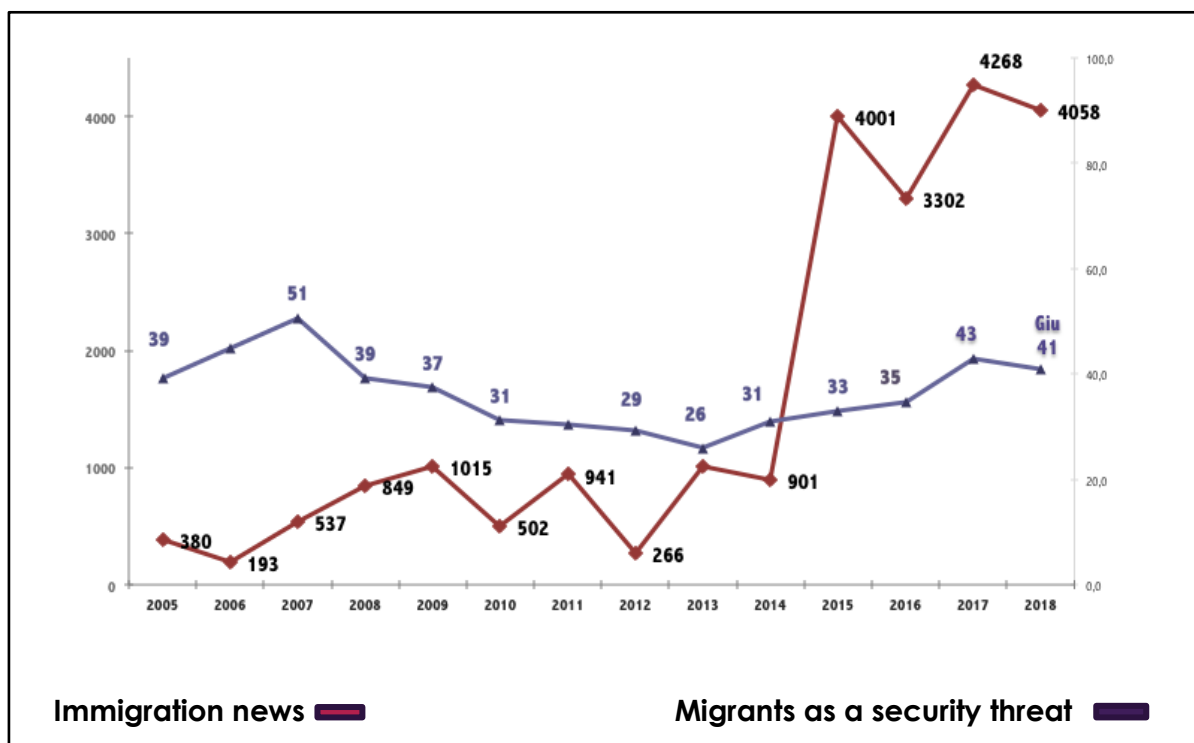
During 2018, 4,058 news items were dedicated to the theme of immigration in prime-time editions. The increase of the news was not directly proportional to the growth of Italians' perception of migrants as a threat to security and public order. The phenomenon maintains constant visibility in quantitative and qualitative terms. From this point of view, it should be emphasized that the protagonists, migrants and refugees, remain in the background: the main focus of the services is the report of the political positions, not only those relating to the Italian context but also those of the European and international arena.

The only cases in which attention seems to apply to individuals are those related to crimes committed by foreigners, where the shootings show faces and details of the authors, even if they are not necessary and against privacy rules.

This type of communication prejudice and confuses the semantic level of meanings: the word "clandestine" was used more and more, with an obvious negative and legally incorrect connotation, especially in relation to migrants who required international protection.

"Defending the frontiers, the security of citizens and public order" was a phrase often used in newscasts to frame the issue of security. It referred to internal protection from the threats of degradation and disorder associated with "foreigners" and external protection through the border closure.

Trends in immigration news and trend of citizens' perception towards immigrants as a threat to security and public order, Rai, Mediaset and La7 news prime-time edition, January 2005 - October 2018



f. Social media

The Associazione Carta di Roma report focused on Facebook pages of the newspapers, where there was even more prevalent hostility and disparaging language against migrants. This ranged from direct insults to the justification of ethnic based violence. The news related to the racist raid/shooting in Macerata presented the greatest number of comments. These expressed social alarm, and presented a competition between social groups in a fight for insufficient resources: a war between the poor, between us and them.

The social alarm, as well as the security emergency was a mitigating factor in these racist gestures. The comments on the postings on the Macerata shooting, highlighted some critical characteristics of the debate, especially as it developed on the occasion of the publication on the Facebook pages of the newspapers of contents related to events involving migrants.

In particular, the presence and permanence of an openly hostile and discriminatory language was present. The quality of language declined in various levels, ranging from insults (not addressed, it must be said, only against the category of migrants), to foul language, to the apology of violence against a group based on ethnicity.

Through social networks hate speech is conveyed and propagated in a rapid and widespread manner: the loss of mediated forms leads in fact to emphasize the propagation of less controlled expressive forms. Vox, the Italian Observatory on rights, has studied hate messages on Twitter during the election campaign for the 2019 European elections. Compared to the previous year, hate tweets against migrants are increasing by 15%, with migrants finishing in first place among the most affected social groups. According to the final report of the "Jo Cox" Commission on hatred, intolerance, xenophobia, and racism in Italy (2017), social media are full of insults, vulgarity, slander against migrants; their inferiority is not theorized at the scientific level, but only the negative aspects emerge, generally due to ignorance and disinformation. The tendency to make emotional appeals prevailed over reality.

Facebook, together with Microsoft, Twitter and YouTube, signed in May 2016 a Code of Conduct with the European Commission which provides for a more active commitment by large IT platforms to fight hate speech online. By subscribing to the code, Facebook is committed to implementing an effective system for reviewing comments reported by users as illegal or dangerous. Two years after the signing, an evaluation promoted by the European Commission has revealed that the IT companies have removed on average 70% of the contents reported and considered illegal and that in 80% of the reporting cases were examined within 24 hours, as per commitments.

The online hate speech grows in Italy as in Europe. So what are possible solutions? The last European elections of May 2019 took place after an electoral campaign that, in most countries, had migrants, migration and management of migration policies among the most recurrent themes. These debates were conducted with very aggressive tones and with a growing consensus in public opinion. Meanwhile, the right-wing populist forces of the whole Europe have used these same arguments to "normalize" certain behaviors or racist and xenophobic discourses. Shortly before the vote, on May 24, a report published by ISD (Institute for strategic dialogue) highlighted how the European context is marked and inexorably infused with hate speech online, identifying 365 pages, accounts and Facebook groups, over 1,350 Twitter accounts and more than 100 channels and YouTube videos that promote speeches by hatred, misinformation or extremist messages.

According to what was reported in the last focus edited by Lunaria for the site Cronache di ordinary racism ("Racism in 2018 between removal and emphasis", March 2019, available online), between January 1st and December 31st 2018, of the 628 cases of racism collected, 400 are related to verbal violence. Among these, 239 pertain to the sphere of racist propaganda, or speeches of hatred in the various declinations. The 81 cases of online hate speech stood out, spread mainly through social media. This data is actually very limited due to the difficulty of monitoring the situation. But these cases have fueled the fierce campaign of criminalization of solidarity with migrants. There is a specific political will to relaunch themes by online media to "artfully to raise the social alarm against migrants and asylum applicants.

2. Public Opinion on migration in Belgium

Ipsos made several surveys to learn Belgians' opinions concerning immigration. According to these surveys, made between 2011 and 2018, the share of respondents who think that immigration's impact on the country is positive has become continuously low though, never reaching above 16 percent. On a more positive note though, this peak was reached in the most recent survey, held at the end of 2018. Surveys from 2011 and 2013 saw considerable fewer positive responses of nine and eight percent respectively. After 2013, the share of respondents positive about immigration remained above ten percent in all years, until it reached its peak in 2018 (Statista, 2019).

3. Public Opinion on migration in Estonia

The **Estonian Constitution prohibits discrimination** based on nationality, race, colour, sex, language, origin, religion, political or other views, property or social status, or other grounds. This wide definition of discrimination has, however, been interpreted more restrictively in other Estonian laws. The Equal Treatment Act, which came into force in 2009, and transposes the two European Union equal treatment directives, prohibits discrimination on the grounds of ethnic origin, race or skin colour in all areas (employment, education, health care and social services, as well as access to goods and services), and on the grounds of beliefs, age, disability or sexual orientation, but only in the area of employment (UNHCR).

While it is difficult to measure the exact impact of these information days, it can be noted that **public attitudes towards refugees and asylum-seekers are generally less negative today as compared to 2015**. An opinion poll from January 2016 indicates that attitudes towards refugees in Estonia are slowly improving. Estonian experts consider that the growing support is due to better awareness and understanding of refugee issues. Nevertheless, 23 per cent of Estonian residents consider that refugees are the most serious social problem for Estonia. Importantly, these fears were expressed in March 2016, before the first arrivals of relocated refugees from Greece. 34 per cent of the women and 29 per cent of the men consider that people from different cultures should not be permitted to live in Estonia. 35 per cent of the women and 25 per cent of the men hold the position that Estonia is not capable of taking care of refugees and should therefore not accept any. 50 per cent of the respondents found that they would not like to have Muslims as their neighbours. 75 per cent would ban the use of burkas. In total, 795 persons responded to the survey questions (UNHCR).

Xenophobic attitudes expressed in the media, and also on the streets and in public places, negatively affect the integration environment. The support persons interviewed mentioned that they had encountered hate speech on the streets and in public transport. Some stakeholders mentioned that the refugees interviewed follow the public discussions, and said that they fear contacting Estonians because the latter might misconstrue their approach as hostile (UNHCR).

In 2016 another survey was carried out which showed that the general attitude of Estonian residents towards migration and refugees has significantly improved. A public opinion survey, which was commissioned by the Government Office and carried out by Kantar Emor, reveals that the **overall attitude of Estonian residents towards migration and refugees has significantly improved over the year**. A total of 75% of persons involved in the survey believe that people have the right to travel freely. In June 2015, the same opinion was expressed by 63% of those surveyed. A total of 56% of persons surveyed are in favour of accepting people in need; last year,

the same indicator was 43%. A total of 30% are extremely critical towards refugees; last year, the same figure was almost 40%. "The reasons for softening of attitudes and decrease in criticism is probably due to decline in emotionality with regard to this topic and the fact that the migration crisis is not reflected in the media so often anymore," Kantar Emor Survey Specialist Aivar Voog explains. "The sharp emergence of this topic last summer created an emotional shock in the residents of Estonia and this, in turn, amplified all kinds of fears."

The attitudes towards accepting refugees have not changed compared to the previous year. Over 90% of those surveyed consider it essential that **refugees should commence work and pay taxes**. Furthermore, refugees should accept the Estonian cultural norms, respect local legislation, and master the Estonian language. People also agree that Estonia should not accept people in search of a better life, but only victims of war and persecution. However, the percentage of those people who think that refugees should not receive any subsidies from the state has significantly decreased (from 34% to 26%) (Republic of Estonia Government).

In 2017 it was found out that Estonia ranks among the ten countries ranked **least accepting of migrants**. It appeared from the results of a survey conducted by polling agency Gallup. Estonia scored 2.37 out of a possible nine points in Gallup's new Migrant Acceptance Index, placing 9th from the bottom overall and one of ten countries that scored a 2.39 or lower. According to the survey, the country the least accepting of migrants is Macedonia, with a score of 1.47, followed by Montenegro, Hungary, Serbia, Slovakia, Israel, Latvia and the Czech Republic. Estonia, ranked 9th, is followed by Croatia with a score of 2.39.

Gallup pointed out that many countries on the front lines of the recent migrant crisis in Europe are among the least accepting countries in the world for migrants. Most of them located along the Balkan route that once channeled asylum-seekers from Greece to Germany. Israel, which has dealt with its own influx of asylum-seekers from Africa in the past decade, is the only non-European country that scored below 2.39 points. Gallup created the Migrant Acceptance Index to gauge people's acceptance of migrants based on increasing degrees of personal proximity. The index is based on three questions that Gallup asked in 138 countries in 2016 and the U.S. in 2017. Specifically, it asked people whether they viewed immigrants living in their country, an immigrant becoming their neighbor, and an immigrant marrying one of their close relatives as "a good thing" or "a bad thing," with a volunteered response "it depends" or "don't know" as the third option. The response "a good thing" was worth three points, a volunteered response of "it depends" or "don't know" was worth one point, and "a bad thing" was worth zero points (Vahtla, 2017).

The crisis and the reception of people who had been granted international protection divided the **public sphere of Estonia into two camps**. A study carried out by the Government Office in June 2015 showed that more people (42%) were against receiving people who had been granted protection than in favour of it (32%), and this antagonism was also expressed in social media. To express and explain opinions, Facebook communities called 'NO to Refugees' (over 18,000 likes) and 'Tolerant Estonia' (over 10,000 likes) were created. By the end of 2016, Estonia had received 77 persons under the European Agenda on Migration and the procedures planned in the *Relocation and Resettlement Action Plan* were implemented accordingly. Partners have also been found who will be providing the support services (health checks, support persons and translation services, teaching Estonian and finding accommodation) to the beneficiaries of protection and facilitating their adaptation. By the end of 2016,

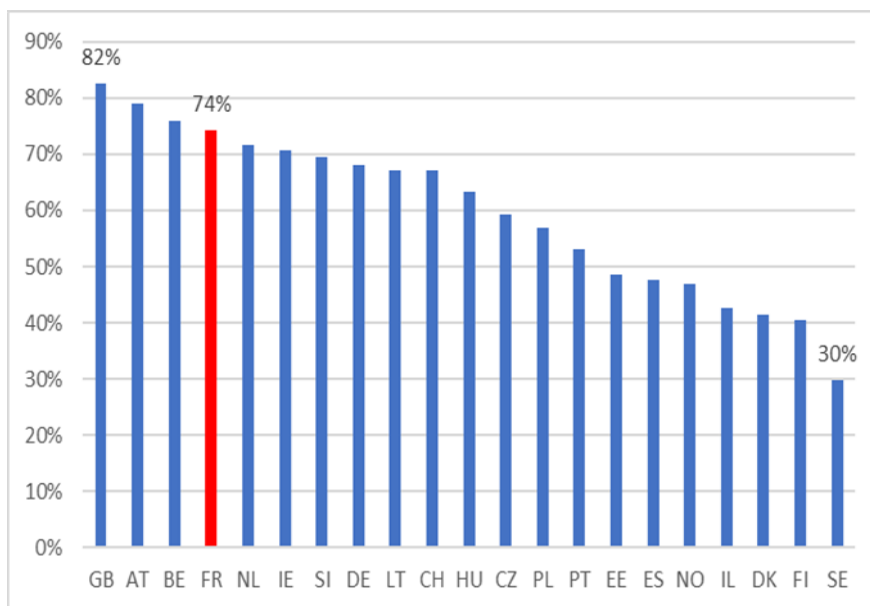
the attitude of the inhabitants of Estonia towards immigration and the beneficiaries of protection had also changed for the better. Fifty-six per cent (56%) of the people of Estonia were in favour of receiving people who are fleeing from war (Valdaru, Asari, Mälksoo, 2017).

4. Public Opinion on migration in France

Even though France has relatively negative attitudes to immigration when compared with other western European countries, attitudes towards immigration are becoming increasingly stable and more favourable. According to a Eurobarometer survey carried out in 2016, around 60 per cent of Frenchmen have negative attitudes towards non-EU immigrants while just over 20 per cent have negative attitudes towards EU immigrants, making France, amongst Western European countries, relatively positive towards European immigrants though relatively opposed to non-EU immigration. This relatively positive stance is largely because; the French sees immigration as a relatively unimportant issue affecting their country, considerably less so than other western European electorates. The recent uptick in perceived importance of immigration in almost all western European countries has been far less pronounced in France. Secondly, immigration has a historical importance for France. In the 1920s, France was ranked second (after USA) as the country with the highest share of immigrants, reaching 7% of total population. In the early 2000s, as most as 25% of the population has some immigrant background, from the first, the second or the third generation.

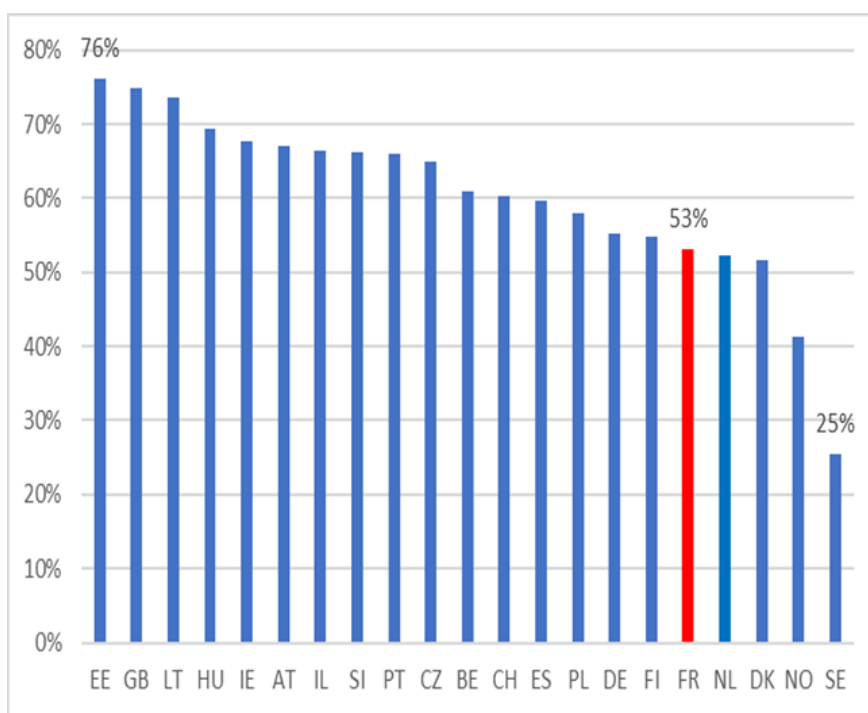
Composition of the immigrant population evolve immigration from Southern Europe, in particular from Italy and Spain, has been one of the main inflows since the late nineteenth, with some peaks such as the inflows of Spanish immigrants during the Spanish Civil War. A second wave of immigration from Southern Europe took place in the 1960s and the 1970s, with still an ongoing inflow from Portugal now. Immigration from Maghreb dates back to as early as the World War I, due to the replacement of the labor force in farms and arm industry. However, the main wave of immigration from this region took place after World War II. Immigration inflows come from three main countries: Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco. Immigration from Algeria boomed after World War II until 1958 and the Algerian civil war. Immigration from Morocco and Tunisia took place later in the 1970s.

French attitudes to the requirements of immigrants (ESS 2014)



The table above shows the percentage of population that believe it is very important that immigrants speak the country's official language. France ranks the third with 74 percent of the respondents believe that speaking French is a must for immigrants.

French attitudes to the requirements of immigrants (ESS 2014)



The table above shows the percentage of population that believe it is very important that immigrants have work skills needed in the country. France ranks 17th among the European Union countries that believe workers must be qualified. In general, with respect to other European countries, France positions itself as more welcoming than Eastern European countries but the French seem more concerned about the characteristics migrants have than fellow Western European countries. A distinctive trait of French attitudes seems to be the relatively lower concern for immigrants work skills. However, French respondents overwhelmingly believe that it is very important that immigrants speak French (74%). This seems to be in line with the importance that has been traditionally placed in France on cultural assimilation.¹⁰

5. Public Opinion on migration in Greece

Greek public opinion on migration is highly susceptible to manipulation for political reasons, while it has been considerably affected by the impact of the financial crisis on Greece. Here are some key findings from opinion poll surveys on migration over the recent years.

- Until the fall of 2014 the immigration issue was not yet on the public radar in G Public Opinion on migration in Greece. The dramatic increase of migrants' and refugees' influx of 2015 led to the increase of salience of migration in the public debate, until nowadays.¹¹
- In 2017, 58% of the Greek population thought that there were more immigrants staying illegally in Greece than those being legally in the country.¹²
- In 2017, over half of the Greek population considered migrants and refugees as more of a problem rather than an opportunity. On this perception, there have been significant differences between age and education cohorts. Younger respondents, and those who are better educated, are more likely to see immigration as more of an opportunity, while older respondents and those with lower levels of education are more likely to see it as more of a problem.¹³
- In 2017, nearly 25% of the Greek population thought that the media portrays immigrants too positively.¹⁴

Moreover, in 2017, the Greek research and policy institute diaNEOsis published a thorough survey, according to which:¹⁵

- 37.6% of the Greek population believed that migrants are "positive", whereas the corresponding figure for "refugees" reached 49.3%.
- 3 in 10 Greeks believed that "many Muslims" agree with jihadist terrorist attacks and that such a terrorist attack was likely to happen in Greece in the coming year.

¹⁰ James Dennison, Teresa Talò, "Explaining attitudes to immigration in France," (*EUI Working Paper RSCAS 2017/25*), 2-3.

¹¹ Birgit Glorius. 2018. *Public opinion on immigration and refugees and patterns of politicisation; Evidence from the Eurobarometer*. Available at http://ceaseval.eu/publications/06_Glorius_Public_opinion_on_immigration.pdf

¹² Eurobarometer. 2017. Available at <https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:TqpFvIrcUYcj:https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/ResultDoc/download/DocumentKy/82538+&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=gr>

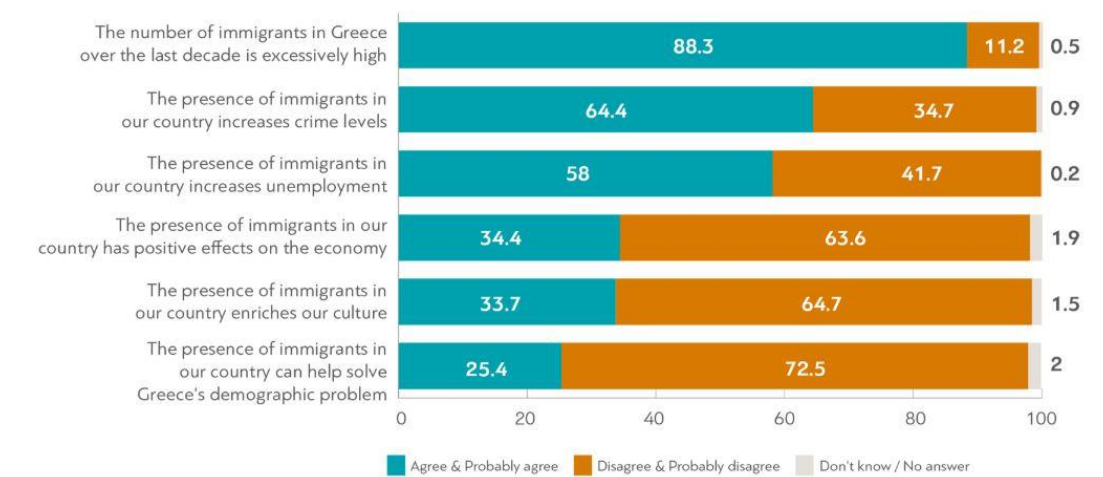
¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ diaNEOsis. 2017. What Greeks believe. Available at <https://www.dianeosis.org/en/2017/04/greeks-believe-in-2017/>

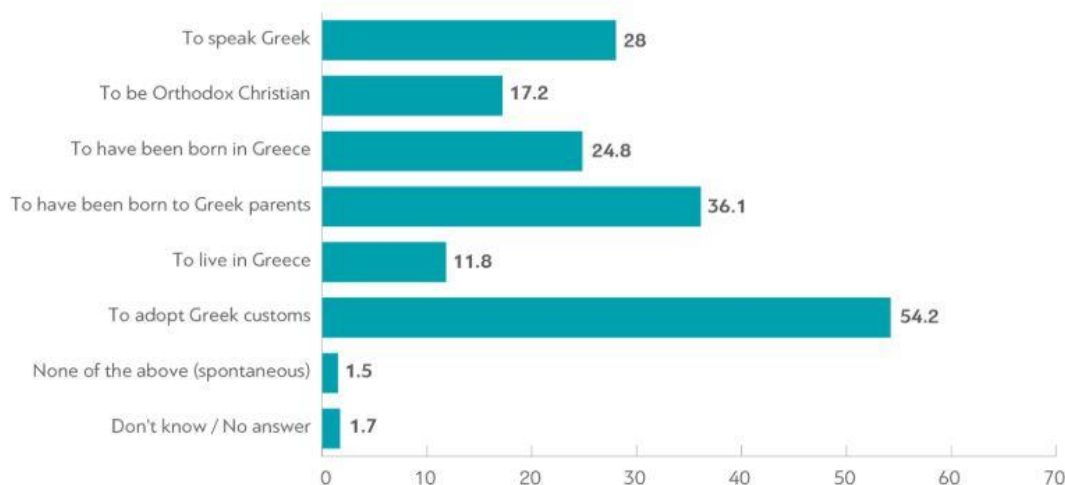
Graph 4 below presents other public opinion perceptions according to diaNEOsis' 2017 survey.

A13. On the issue of migration, I'd like you to tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with the following phrases...



Despite the cautious attitude towards immigration and immigrants, however, there was a very interesting result to the classic question “in your opinion, are you born Greek or do you become Greek?” (Graph 5). The public’s responses are divided: 47% reply that “you are born Greek”, whereas 48% believe that “you become Greek”, a rather unexpected result. The young, educated, the wealthy and those left of center of the political spectrum chose “become” in greater percentages. This interesting conclusion is underlined by the fact that, according to most respondents, it is necessary “to adopt Greek customs” for one to be considered “Greek”. This option was chosen by most Greeks as characteristic of a “Greek”, at a much higher percentage than those who chose “to have Greek parents” or “to be born in Greece”.

A33. In your opinion, which of the following are necessary for someone to be considered Greek? You may choose up to two answers. (multiple choice - up to two answers)

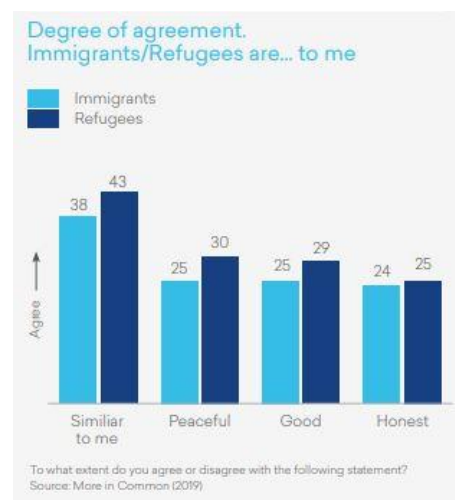


In 2018, 95% of the Greek population thought that additional measures should be taken to fight irregular immigration of people from outside the EU.¹⁶

In 2019, the More In Common organisation published the research “Attitudes towards National Identity, Immigration and Refugees in Greece”, which studied public perception by dividing the Greek population into different population segments according to their beliefs and values around issues of identity and belonging as well as their relationship to the outside world. These groups were placed on a spectrum between “open” and “closed” values:¹⁷

- Those in the “closed” groups (Nationalist Opponents and Alarmed Opponents) tend to have a narrower view of what it means to be Greek and are more hostile to migrants and refugees.
- Those in the “open” group (Greek Multiculturals) hold a welcoming attitude towards migrants, and are especially empathetic towards refugees.
- The three middle segments (Moderate Humanitarians, Instinctive Pragmatists and Detached Traditionalists) are marked by mixed attitudes, with each group having distinctive views such as concerns about economic insecurity, the preservation of cultural and religious identity or the need for security from outside threats. Some are distinctive for not having strong views on any of these issues.

In many cases, public perception in Greece concerning migrants and refugees seems to be rather negative. Only about 40% of Greeks feel that migrants and refugees are similar to them. Only one fourth of the Greek people describe migrants as “peaceful”, “good” and “honest”. Situation is slightly better when it comes to refugees, but still only a minority of Greeks seem to have a positive view on them (see Graph 6).



¹⁶ Eurobarometer. 2018. Available at

<http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:wsrTAKVhcikJ:ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/ResultDoc/download/DocumentKy/83551+&cd=2&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=gr>

¹⁷ More In Common. 2019. *Attitudes Towards National Identity, Immigration and Refugees in Greece*. Available at

https://www.thesocialchangeinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/0535-More-In-Common-Greece-Report_FINAL-2_web_lr.pdf

On the political level, the migrant and refugee crisis has become an issue of exploitation mostly by populist right to extreme right parties in Greece. This kind of political parties, like the populist-nationalist Greek Solution¹⁸ and the neo-Nazi Golden Dawn,¹⁹ present migrants and refugees as a menace to Greek society and as a threat to the economic prosperity, the safety and even the health of the Greek people. They point to the need of deporting as many TCNs as possible and refusing to accept new ones in Greece. Even though their electoral success is not impressive (in the last general elections the Greek Solution got 3.44% of the votes and secured 10 out of the 300 seats of the Parliament, whereas Golden Dawn took only 2.93% and did not elect any members in the new Parliament – a clearly poor result in comparison with the 6.99% of the votes and the election of 18 MPs in September 2015), when it comes to the migrant/refugee issues they seem to express a greater part of Greek public opinion than the one that actually votes for them. As in the case of many other EU countries, ultra conservative anti-migrant rhetoric has become common in public discourse.

6. Public Opinion on migration in Netherlands

Although most Dutch people are in favour of receiving refugees, some fear they bring about negative consequences. Over one-fifth (22 percent) of the population consider refugees as a threat to safety in the Netherlands.²⁰ However, this threat is not perceived by nearly half. A similar picture is observed in relation to the perception whether refugees pose a threat to the Dutch norms and values. Over one-quarter (27 percent) feel that refugees are a potential hazard in this respect; 45 percent do not believe they are.

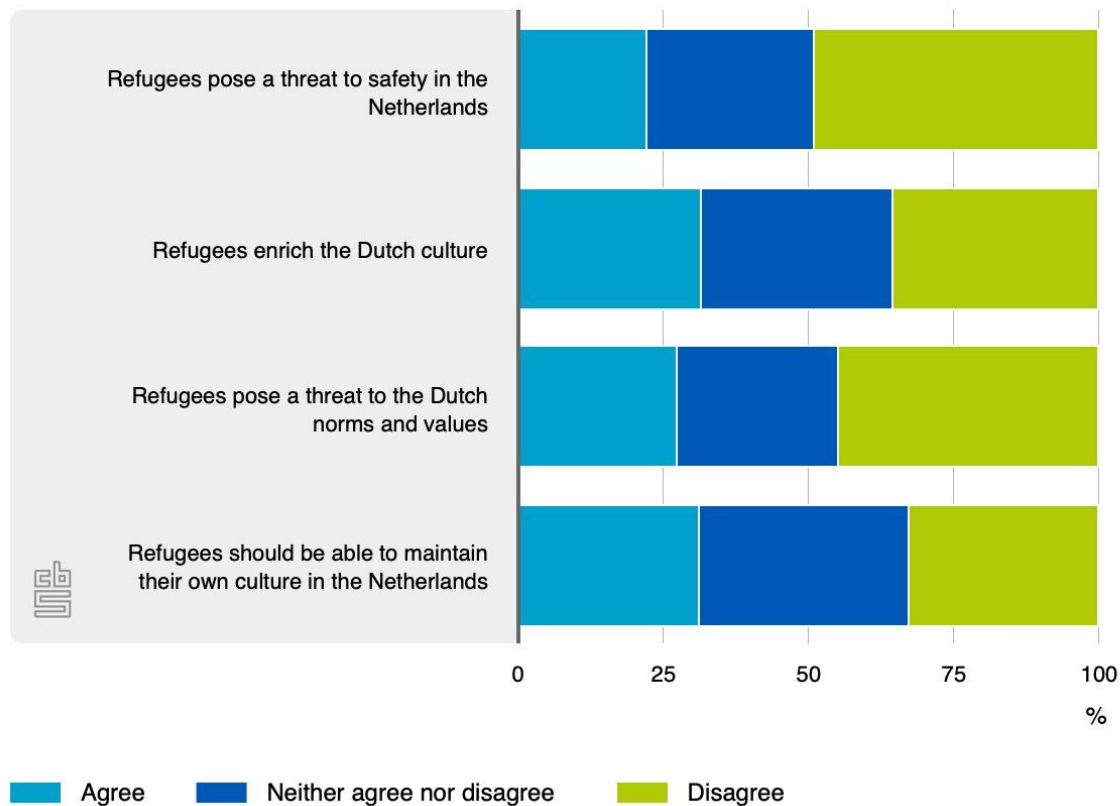
A greater division among Dutch residents is seen in the contribution refugees make to the Dutch culture: 31 percent say they enrich our culture and 36 percent believe they do not. In addition, 31 percent feel that refugees should be able to maintain their own culture, versus 33 percent of people who do not agree.

¹⁸ Greek Solution, https://elliniki-lisi.gr/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/programma.eliniki.lisi_.2019.v3.pdf.

¹⁹ Golden Dawn, "Political positions", <http://www.xrisiavgi.com/kinima/thesis>.

²⁰ <https://www.cbs.nl/en-gb/news/2018/13/most-dutch-people-in-favour-of-receiving-refugees>

Opinions on refugees, 2017



Political philosopher Tamar de Waal is worried that there's not enough attention for immigrants and their integration. She thinks that when their children grow up, Holland will face problems that are caused now because of that.²¹

Inclusion and exclusion

In the naming and recognizing the multi-cultural society there is an ongoing dialogue. Migrants and refugees are perceived in two different ways. On the one hand, they are pictured as a threat to Dutch society. Their culture is considered outdated, inferior to and incompatible with Dutch values. Often, this results in nationalist sentiments and aversion against the arrival of migrants in the Netherlands. On the other hand, refugees are perceived as poor, helpless and passive victims that are in desperate need of help. Since the so-called refugee crisis in 2015, this image has incited thousands of people to set up community initiatives to promote participation and inclusion of refugees in society.²²

²¹ <https://www.groene.nl/artikel/dit-komt-ons-duur-te-staan>

²² <https://imiscoephdblog.wordpress.com/2018/05/22/exclusionary-power-of-acting-normal/>

VII. Conclusions and Recommendations

Public Opinion is a nebulous voice that needs to be seen as one form of representation. While social media has dramatically increased the quantity of data points for capturing public opinion, the quality of these representations is much lower. We recommend using the large ESS and other surveys that have rigorous and transparent methodologies as the measure of public opinion.

While these large surveys are helpful, they also need considerable effort to interpret effectively and are vulnerable to misrepresentation. They present an invaluable reference point against which to challenge social and printed media and party-political representations of public opinion. There are also a wide range of different lines of inquiry that academic literature has developed tested and debated which may help us to interrogate patterns of data we can see.

What we do see is that, despite the rise in populist parties across many EU states, and the noise many of them create about immigration, the ESS survey does not indicate such a shift in public opinion. Our country case studies also indicate that the distance between public views and far right political elites is nothing like as close as these politicians would have us believe. Journalists in all the media are in a prime position to push back against these political misrepresentations and present realities that reflect the broader humanity of many citizens towards refugees and immigrants.

Where there is opposition to migration indicated in surveys there is work to be done to challenge the attribution of threat and fear with well researched and written stories. To do this there is a strong case for more sharing of migrant experiences and the development of skills to interpret data, examine how it relates to anti-immigrant rhetoric and to develop strategies that allow us to reassert the values that need to be reflected more frequently in debates over migration.

As a start we need begin by highlighting the wide range of arguments that we can use to interrogate the meaning of public opinion its use in political debates and the impact of a wide range of other factors in influencing its expression.

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