

The Effect of Party Cues on Immigration Attitudes: A Cross-National Analysis

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Abstract. What causes anti-immigrant sentiment? This question has received a good deal of attention of late, and for good reason. Recent entries to the literature have highlighted the role of education as a factor in opinion formation on the matter of immigration. In contrast, researchers have questioned the relevance of economic and labor market factors. In this paper, we build on education-based accounts but add to this perspective a consideration of the effects of cues from party elites. We advance an argument that it is on expressly multidimensional issues, like immigration, in which cues provide the greatest payoff. On such issues, cues not only serve as an information substitute for the less educated, but equally assist cross-pressured individuals with a more sustained educational background. Analyses of an original dataset on elite cues, paired with data from the European Social Survey, generate results partially consistent with the argument.

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I. Introduction

What affects popular sentiment toward immigrants? In light of provisions for protection of human rights and civil liberties found in many western democracies, we might expect natives to be accommodating in their views toward immigrants. Yet restrictionist, anti-foreigner attitudes are high and appear on the rise, particularly in Europe. The bases for this sentiment are several. For one, natives often view foreigners as a threat on cultural and national identity grounds. Further, terrorist attacks during the first years of the 21st century—in Britain, Spain, the United States and elsewhere—did much to associate immigration in the public mind, often wrongly, with threats to national security.¹ And in the face of stubbornly high unemployment levels and stagnant growth in many immigrant-receiving countries, natives are more likely to view immigrants as deepening, rather than alleviating, economic and labor market pressures.² Such views point to a prevalence of restrictionist views on immigration among western publics.

Researchers have pointed to cross-pressures arising from this overlapping of cultural, security, economic, and other concerns as explanation for the underwhelming nature of reform outcomes on matters citizenship, asylum, and immigration policy. But where analyses of elite-level contestation emphasize how cross-pressured actors approach policymaking (e.g., Bullock 2011; Jeong 2013; Levendusky 2010; Meguid 2008), research on public attitudes toward immigration has done little to address the complex nature of just what it means to be pro- or anti-immigration. Debates focus instead on the specific motivations which, at heart, shape mass sentiment. On this score, many assert that opposition to non-natives is mainly economic, be it in the form of labor market competition (Dancygier and Donnelly 2012; Mayda 2006; Scheve and

¹ According to a 2009 Eurobarometer survey, almost a half of European publics agree that the presence of immigrants leads to insecurity.

² The 2009 Eurobarometer survey also shows that a half of Europeans feel that the presence of immigrants increases unemployment levels.

Slaughter 2001) or of general perceptions of economic insecurity and uncertainty (Citrin and Sides 2008; Mughan and Paxton 2006). In contrast, others maintain non-economic factors are paramount for understanding opinion on immigration. Among such are racial or ethnic prejudice, religious differences, and cultural threat (Chandler and Tsai 2001; Dustmann and Preston 2000; Sniderman and Hagendoorn 2007).

Debates between the material and psychological bases of anti-immigrant opinion overlook individuals' cognitive barriers to constructing meaningful and consistent opinions. Recent research demonstrating an independent effect of education on immigration sentiment provides something of a corrective (Coenders et al. 2008; Hainmueller and Hiscox 2007; Hello et al. 2002). Hainmueller and Hiscox (2007), for example, show that higher levels of formal education are associated with higher levels of support for immigration in Europe. The authors reason that those with more education are more accommodating toward immigrants due mainly to the values and beliefs (e.g., anti-racist, pro-cultural diversity) which are part and parcel of exposure to the wider range of views that comes with formal education. In doing so, Hainmueller and Hiscox provide a way to make sense of weak and inconsistent connections between income, employment, and other material factors on immigration sentiment.

That said, education-based accounts like Hainmueller and Hiscox's (2007) are similar to the more conventional economic- and culture-based accounts in at least one respect: all constitute "bottom-up" perspectives. Natives' views on immigration are said to be formed chiefly via personal experiences, be they experiences in the labor market, degree of exposure to individuals from diverse cultures, or academic experiences giving rise to a more liberal, more acceptant set of values.³

³ In this sense, it we might view education's influence on immigration attitudes as working through a cultural values path than through a political sophistication path.

In this paper, we argue that preference formation on multifaceted issues like immigration is not so straightforward. As brought to the fore in recent debates on amnesty, citizenship, and preferences for skilled of labor, immigration rates as a multidimensional issue *par excellence*. It is both economic and cultural. Given these multiple and cross-cutting paths, even the most informed may need more than personal experience to form stable opinions. Accordingly, we maintain that a “top-down” approach is necessary to make sense of mass preferences. Compared to policy attitudes more generally, attitudes on immigration stand to be especially susceptible to issue framing by way of cues from trusted political elites. Further, immigration’s multidimensionality means that cues should be employed both by individuals with a great deal of education, who are cross-pressured, as well as the less-educated, who rely on such heuristics to substitute for a lack of information.

To test our argument, we pair an original data set of elite positions with public opinion data from twenty-two European countries. At this point in the project our findings remain preliminary. Initial results, however, indicate that elite preferences on immigration have a strong effect on the attitudes of their supporters in the electorate. Pro-immigration policy positions by parties positively affect mass opinions with respect to allowing immigrants to come and live in the country and opinions with respect to immigrants’ effects on economic, cultural, and social life. Results further show that, contrary to the conventional wisdom, cues on immigration are used as much if not more by those with higher levels of education. Lastly, analyses of mass opinions on a pair of other issues—income redistribution and rights for gays and lesbians—reveal that party cues exert a stronger effect for immigration than on opinions in these “unidimensional” issues.

Study findings suggest several implications. First, our research shows that formation of individual attitudes over policy is not only a “bottom-up” process, as much of existing literature maintains, but it is also “top-down.” More importantly, which of these two processes exerts greater influence depends on whether the issue is single- or multi-faceted in nature. For multifaceted issues, that is, those which individuals’ interest in several issue dimensions could often be conflicting, people are more likely to make use of elite cues. In contrast, when concerns shaping the boundaries of the issue are limited, people might feel less need to rely on elite cues. Finally, our research also brings sheds light on the motivations underlying elite behavior. While some have argued that influence of political elites, and of political parties in particular, has decreased, our study shows that parties as elite opinion leaders still matter.

Section two provides a brief overview of current work on immigration attitudes. Drawing on work from elite cues and partisan heuristics, we then develop our argument in section three. We point out that public opinion research in general—though not research on immigration *per se*—has made the case that such “top down” factors are important. Section four introduces our data and measures, while section five presents our statistical models of the determinants of individual immigration attitudes (ESS data analysis). In a penultimate section, we augur our basic finding by modeling the bases of popular attitudes on a pair of other issues: income distribution and stance on gay/lesbian lifestyle. The final section concludes.

II. Explaining Attitudes toward Immigration

What explains anti-immigrant sentiment? Answers to this question are wide-ranging. Theories of labor market competition predict that individuals will oppose immigration of workers with skills similar to their own but support immigration of workers with different skill

levels (Scheve and Slaughter 2001; Mayda 2006). Results of these studies find that opposition to immigration among natives in affluent western democracies is negatively associated with education level. This effect of education on immigration attitudes, whereby the more educated are more acceptant of immigrants, has proven to be a robust finding (Quillian, 1995; Coenders, Lubbers and Scheepers, 2008; Chandler and Tsai, 2001; but also see Jackman, 1973; 1978). Insomuch as education correlates with occupational skill, this finding has been taken as evidence that economics affects immigration preferences, with those with elementary skills sets most opposed to immigrants coming from abroad and into direct competition with them in labor markets.

Others are critical of models coming out of labor-market competition. In a pair of important papers, Hainmueller and Hiscox argue that the observed relationship between education and attitudes is not economics-based. Their analysis of European Social Survey data indicates that people with higher levels of education and occupational skills are more likely to favor immigration regardless of the immigrants' skill attributes (Hainmueller and Hiscox 2007). The absence of discernible labor market effects may be attributable to the notion that effects of income and unemployment on immigration in European countries are generally quite small, as economists have shown. In a second piece, Hainmueller and Hiscox (2010) draw on experimental evidence to eschew the educational proxy and test the labor-market competition by comparing respondents' attitudes toward high- and low-skilled immigrants directly. They find that natives' skill level has no bearing on preferences for high- or low-skilled immigrants: low skilled migrants receive less support from native-born individuals regardless of the latter's own position in the labor market.

Hainmueller and Hiscox’s finding that support for *all* immigration increases with the respondent’s education level, or skill set, is consistent with arguments that anti-immigrant (and anti-integration) beliefs are framed by deep-seated cultural and ideological factors (Quillian 1995; Chandler and Tsai 2001; Coenders et al. 2008; McLaren 2003). Of interest, then, is why formal education matters. For Hainmueller and Hiscox (2007), the link between education and immigration attitudes is driven by differences in terms of cultural values and beliefs, with educated individuals being more likely to view cultural diversity as beneficial. That is, education has a “liberalizing effect,” which works through a variety of channels, including “broader knowledge, increased reflexivity, a more critical stance, greater personal and familial security, substantial exposure to foreign cultures, higher acceptance of diversity, [and] the generation of cosmopolitan social networks” (Ceobanu and Escandell 2010, 319).

So while debate persists with respect to the specific mechanism by which it is linked to immigration attitudes, most agree that additional years of education in some fashion blunts the salience of basic fears and threats associated with immigrants, refugees, and foreigners. In what follows, we adopt a decidedly different tact; rather than reasoning from the bottom-up—in terms of formal education’s “positive externalities”—we posit a path for attitude formation on the multifaceted issue of immigration which is “top-down.”

III. Making Sense of a Multidimensional Issue: Elite Cues as a Resource for Attitude Formation

We concur with recent work on the importance of education as an aid for understanding individual preferences for immigration. However, differing from current research, we assert that education alone is not sufficient. Education only takes one so far, we reason, is because of the

multidimensional nature of immigration politics. On the one hand, it carries economic consequences. By affecting the supply of labor, immigration amplifies conflicts between workers and employers as well as between import-competing and sheltered industries. On the other hand, immigration bears on issues of national identity, culture, and ethnicity. This multidimensionality, as others have pointed out, is a major reason why views on immigration are difficult to parse out (Burns and Gimpel 2000; Chandler and Tsai 2001; Mayda 2006, among others). The issue's *multidimensional nature* means forming opinions on immigration thus is made more difficult because one's belief system with respect to one set of ideals, such as economic equality, may be in conflict with beliefs pertaining to another area, like law and order. Developing internally consistent beliefs on immigration requires individuals to have resources to cut through these the bundle of different policies associated with the issue.

Education provides such a resource, but it is not the only such resource. Environmental factors matter as well. Public opinion research emphasizes the importance of cues from opinion leaders. For example, Zaller's (1992) influential Reception-Acceptance-Sampling (RAS) model posits that a person's expressed opinions about a topic are a sample of the messages about that topic that the person has recently received and accepted. The probability of receiving a specific message on a topic is a function of the frequency with which the message is voiced and the individual's level of sophistication or awareness. To Zaller, public attitudes on complex issues (e.g., foreign policy) are heavily influenced by how elites frame or prime the issue. Selective report and strategic manipulation about the causes and consequences of certain issues by political elites, communicated through the media, provide elites a degree of latitude to shape mass opinion.

The influence of elite cues for attitude formation is related to the nature of information processing. There exist two primary modes of information processing: systematic and heuristic. Systematic information processing requires considerable effort to search for details and facts about an issue. It also requires in-depth thinking and evaluation of information attained. In comparison, heuristic information processing is more passive: individuals rely on salient cues or information shortcuts that are given externally. Not surprisingly, researchers maintain that, unless they have very strong motivation, individuals are more likely to rely on heuristic information processing (Chaiken and Ledgerwood 2012). Elite messages are thought to be processed heuristically (Converse 2000; Kam 2005).

It is widely thought that the less sophisticated and the politically less aware are more reliant on an elite-based heuristic party cues (Kam 2005). And individuals possessing higher levels of education tend to be less reliant on these short-cuts. This is not to say, however, that preferences among the educated are necessarily informed only or even mostly through systematic information processing. In fact, connections between policy attitudes and elite positions may be *stronger*, rather than weaker, among high sophisticates (Zaller 1994; McLaren 2001). Even those otherwise skeptical of the role of party influence on mass opinion in general (e.g., Bullock 2011) acknowledge that on multifaceted or less familiar issues like immigration elite cues may be more important than policy information. On the one hand, the less educated rely on cues from trusted (partisan) sources to compensate for a dearth of knowledge on the issue; that is, from not being sufficiently exposed to the issue to make judgment.

Since immigration is multifaceted, the highly educated segment of the public stands to be as much, if not more, in need of guidance from a trusted source than do the less educated. The reason is that individuals, and particularly the educated, have difficulty through reasoning along

to craft consistent opinions on multidimensional issues. Compared to their less sophisticated peers, the highly educated are more likely to receive cross-pressured signals on multidimensional issues. For example, the knowledge of how immigration harms low-wage workers gives impetus for anti-immigrant attitudes. At the same time, the knowledge of how immigration creates a more open, more cosmopolitan society suggests a positive link between education and pro-immigrant views. Under such cross-pressure, cues from a trusted source can make all the difference. Party cues, therefore, are influential not only as a kind of information substitute for the less educated but also as a kind of “tie-breaker” for the educated, cross-pressured, members of the citizenry.

In short, the complexity of the immigration issue is such that attitude formation requires resources above and beyond those signaled by income levels or placement in national labor markets. The turn toward culture, values, and particularly education as drivers of immigration opinion provides much promise in understanding popular support for immigration reform. But while education may shape individuals’ belief and value system, education attainment itself neither motivates individuals to actively pursue systematic information processing nor provides individuals with information shortcut they can rely on to make judgment about the immigration issue. Thus, we argue that regardless of levels of education or political awareness, attitude formation with respect to immigration requires individuals to draw on cues from party elites.

The above discussion implies a pair of expectations. First, we expect that party cues matter: individuals are more likely to oppose (support) immigration when party elites adopt restrictionist (accommodationist) positions toward immigrants. Second, we expect the effect of party cues on immigration attitudes to be stronger for those with high levels of education compared to the less educated.

IV. Data and Measures

To test these arguments/hypotheses, we combine cross-national data on popular attitudes with measures of party preferences on immigration. The public opinion data come from Round 5 of the European Social Survey (ESS). Surveys were administered during 2010 and 2011 in 22 European countries: Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.⁴ The surveys number approximately 2000 randomly-sampled respondents per country. They provide a great deal of variation across social, economic, and of utmost interest here, political/political contexts.

The surveys contain a three items tapping attitudes toward immigrants. After asking respondents “to what extent do you think [country] should allow people of the same race or ethnic group as most [country] people to come and live here?” the ESS asks “How about people of a different race or ethnic group from most [country] people?” and, thirdly, “How about people from the poorer countries outside Europe?”⁵ These last two, pertaining to people of a different race or ethnic group and to people from poorer countries outside Europe, are well-suited for an analysis of attitudes towards immigrants. The first taps sentiment toward the other, in cultural terms; the second enables us to examine more economic- and labor market-oriented bases of anti-immigrant attitudes.⁶

⁴ There are others included in the ESS. These are those for which we have data.

⁵ These three correspond to the variables IMSMETN, IMDFETN, and IMPCNTR.

⁶ In contrast, the item on “people of the same race or ethnic group” gets at neither of these issues. This distinction, not surprisingly, is reflected in the responses: 64% of respondents overall say they would allow (many/some) immigrants of the same race or ethnic group as the majority to come and live in the country, compared to 48% for immigrants of a different race/ethnic group and 43% with respect to immigrants from poorer, non-European countries.

Both items ask respondents to select among “allow many to come and live here,” “allow some,” “allow a few,” and “allow none.” Following previous analyses of the ESS data, in the analyses below we collapse this four category response set into a dichotomy such that “allow many/some” is coded 1 and “allow a few/none” is coded 0 (Dancygier and Donnelly 2012; Hainmueller and Hiscox 2007).⁷ Country means on these indicators are reported in Table 1, along with macro measures of educational attainment (the percent of individuals attaining tertiary education) and income (GDP per capita). Means are ordered according to accommodationist (pro-immigrant) sentiment.⁸ At first blush, there appears little relationship between attitudes toward immigrants and educational attainment or, for that matter, income. Correlations with education and the two immigration measures, while positive, are weak in magnitude ($r = 0.30$ and $r = 0.22$; see also Figure 1). The same is true for income and immigration attitudes ($r = 0.28$ in both cases).

<Table 1 and Figure 1 about here>

The key predictor is a measure of elite positions on the immigration issue. Despite growing interest in effects of elite cues on attitudes toward immigrants (e.g., Wessels 1995; Lahav 2004; McLaren 2001; Brader et al. 2008), we are aware of no study which empirically models elite influence directly. Rather, existing work tends to employ partisan attachments or political discussion as proxies.⁹ We overcome these limits of existing studies by directly measuring party stance on immigration issues and incorporating it with individual party identification to examine effects of elite influence on public attitude toward immigration. We do

⁷ As sensitivity checks, we also discuss results from analyses of the items with their four-category response options (see below). Finally, note that a small number of individuals gave don’t know responses (3.5% overall for “different race/ethnic group” and 3.8% for “poorer countries”). We code these cases as missing.

⁸ Country means for the two immigration attitudes measures are highly correlated ($r = 0.97$).

⁹ While not examining immigration *per se*, a partial exception here is DiGiusto and Jolly’s (2008) study of xenophobic attitudes in France. They find that party cues have a positive effect on culturally- and racially-charged indicators of opinions toward foreigners. Party cues have no effect, however, on the more broadly-framed item regarding whether “there are too many immigrants in France.”

so by employing data from an original expert survey conducted by the authors (Vowles *et al.* 2010). The survey of national party experts from 39 countries was carried out during the first half of 2009. Checks of measurement validity and reliability indicate that items match up well against other similar indicators of elite positions generated from party manifestos, mass assessments, and other surveys of experts.¹⁰

The item for elite preferences on immigration is as follows:

“Some political parties favour policies designed to help immigrants and asylum seekers integrate into the [Country] society. Other parties favour policies designed to help immigrants and asylum seekers return to their country of origin. Still others are located somewhere between these extremes. Using these criteria, please indicate where the parties are located on questions of immigration policy, where 0 indicates strong preferences for helping immigrants and asylum seekers integrate into society and 10 indicates strong preferences for helping immigrants and asylum seekers return to their country of origin.”

We take the mean expert response to this item as our indicator of immigration position for each of the parties across the 22 countries in the data set. To match with the mass opinion measure we recode this measure on a scale of -5 to +5 such that lower values indicate anti-immigrant positions (i.e., preferences for returning to countries of origin) and higher values accomodationist positions (i.e., preferences for helping them integrate). Figure 2 displays country means on this measure.

<Figure 2 about here>

In the analyses below, we match these elite positions with the mass public by way of partisan attachments. That is, we assign individuals the score on party position equal to that of

¹⁰ For more information on measurement validity and reliability, and to access the data, see <http://dvn.iq.harvard.edu/dvn/dv/thellwig>.

the party they “feel closer to” than all other parties. Individuals who do not identify with any party are coded as 0.

Informed by existing studies, models include a battery of individual-level controls. These include education, labor skill, unemployment, union membership, household income, native, age, ethnic minority, member of a group discriminated against in a country, ideological stance (left-right), residency of urban city or rural area. We also control for factors at the country-level which might sway opinions on immigration. These variables include party polarization on immigration issue, GDP per capita growth, and population of foreign born.

V. Analyses

In the analyses that follow, we focus on attitudes toward immigrants from a different race or ethnic group from the majority; we note where instances where results differ using the “poorer countries outside Europe” item. We specify three sets of models: a baseline model which examines party elites’ influence on immigration attitudes, a model that examines the conditioning effect of education interacted with party elites’ position, and a model that examines the conditioning effect of party polarization interacted with party elites’ position. The dependent variable is individuals’ attitude toward immigrants from a different race or ethnic group of majority. Models are estimated using hierarchical logistic regression. Parameter estimates are reported in Table 2.

<Table 2 about here>

Model 1 results reveal three findings of interest. First and foremost, results are consistent with our argument that individuals are more likely to oppose (support) immigration when party elites adopt restrictionist (accommodationist) positions toward the issue. The coefficient on *Party*

Position is statistically significant and signed in the expected positive direction. As Figure 3 shows, when party elites take the extreme anti-immigration position (-5), the predicted probability of individuals to support immigration is only about 34%. However, when party elites take the extreme pro-immigration position (5), the predicted probability doubles to about 71%. Second, consistent with the growing conventional wisdom, we find that formal education exerts a positive influence on pro-immigrant attitudes. Education is positively associated with attitude toward immigration (Hainmuller and Hiscox 2007; Quilian 1995; Coenders et al. 2008; Chandler and Tsai 2001). And third, results show that party polarization on the immigration issue matters. The negatively signed coefficient on *Polarization* implies that as party elites' position on immigration is more polarized, individuals tend to have more negative view toward the issue. This might be because as disagreement among party elites on immigration gets more intense, the issue becomes more salient drawing higher public attention to this issue, activating heretofore latent attitudes.¹¹

<Figure 3 about here>

Some argue that reliance on elite cues for constructing policy attitudes is greatest among low sophisticates and those with less education (Kam 2005). We probe this claim in Table 2 Model 2 by interacting our measure of elite cues, *Party Position*, with *Education*. The unconditional coefficient on the interaction term is in the same (positively signed) direction as the parameter on *Education*. This fails to support claims that heuristics are used disproportionately by those with fewer resources, at least in the form of formal education. Figure

¹¹ Apart from these main findings, we note that results are broadly consistent with existing research on the predictors of attitudes towards immigrants. Individuals with high skills are more likely to view support greater immigration. Union members, on the other hand, are less likely to support immigration. Estimates also indicate that ideology matters, with those on the left being more favorable toward immigration (Raijman and Gorodzeisky 2008). While micro-level economic conditions such as unemployment and household income have statistically significant effect on immigration attitude, macro-level economic conditions such as GDP per capita growth do not have any statistically significant effect.

3 graphs the predicted probability of pro-immigrant attitudes for three different education levels—less than secondary, upper tier secondary completed, and tertiary completed—as party positions range from strongly anti-immigrant (*Party Position* = -5) to strongly pro-immigrant (*Party Position* = 5). The figure shows that although individuals with higher level of education tend to be more pro-immigration in general, the near-identical slopes for all three levels of education indicate that party cues affect individual attitude towards immigration regardless of education level.

<Figure 4 about here>

The last model in Table 2 examines conditioning effects of party polarization interacted with party position on immigration issue. While party polarization itself has negative effects on individuals' immigration attitude, the effects of the interaction between polarization and party positions are positive. This implies that negative effects of party polarization on immigration attitude attenuate as individuals increasingly receive party elite cues that are more favorable towards this issue. Thus, even for a case where party polarization is very high—by itself exerting a negative impact on attitudes toward immigrants—favorable changes in party elites' position increases favorable individuals' immigration attitude. For instance, when the degree of party polarization is about 3.26, a shift in party position from the extreme negative (-5) to the extreme positive (5) value increases the predicted probability of individuals' attitude to favor immigration from 70% to 80% (see Figure 5).

<Figure 5 about here>

In sum party cues do shape immigration attitude of individuals. In both cases, our main hypothesis that people tend to be more pro-immigration (anti-immigration) when party elites' position on immigration is restrictionist (accommodationist) is confirmed (Model 1). Results show

that more multidimensional and ambivalent the issue looks to individuals, the more individual opinions are shaped by cues from party elites.

VI. Exploring Issue Type: Single-faceted versus Multidimensional

We have argued that cues from party elites matter for mass attitudes on the immigration issue; further, the reason they matter is due in large part on the multi-faceted nature of the issue itself. Findings reported in the previous section provide evidence that elite cues help explain popular sentiment. Yet arguably they do not provide sufficient evidence as to why cues matter. This section attempts to do so by looking more closely at the roll of issue dimensionality. We do this by examining two additional issue attitudes for which we have measures, income redistribution and attitudes towards gays and lesbians. These two are attractive for our purposes since on their face, each is more unidimensional than multifaceted. The first, income redistribution, relates chiefly to equality concerns while the second, freedom of expression by gays and lesbians, mainly taps a non-economic values dimension. The uni-dimensional nature of these the income redistribution and gay-lesbian issue means that we should expect individual reliance on cues to be relatively weak—relative, that is, to the effect of party cues in the case of mass attitudes on immigration.

To investigate this claim, we estimate two additional models using the same ESS and expert survey data as above. In the first case the dependent variable is preferences for redistribution; in the second, we model attitudes toward gays and lesbians. For the case of income redistribution, the dependent variable is produced from the survey item “please say to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: The government should take measures to reduce differences in income levels.” In similar fashion, attitudes towards gay

and lesbians are measured by asking respondents whether they agree or disagree that “Gay men and lesbians should be free to live their own life as they wish.” In both instances, respondents agreeing with the statement are coded 1 and others are assigned a code of 0.¹²

We pair these with appropriate party cues measures from the survey of political experts. As a proxy for elite positions on redistribution, we use party scores on a tax-spend scale. The item reads

“...we would like to ask you about fiscal policy. Some political parties feel it is important for the government to provide many more services even if it means an increase in spending. Other parties think the government should provide fewer services even in areas such as health and education in order to reduce spending. Still others are located somewhere between these extremes. Using these criteria, please indicate where the parties were located at the end of 2008 on questions of tax and spend.

We make the assumption that preferences for raising taxes and increased spending on services is highly correlated to (nearly identical to) preferences for the government to take measures to reduce differences in income levels. To match with the attitudes towards gays and lesbians item, we use the following from the expert survey:

“Another way parties are sometimes classified is in terms of their views on social policy. Some parties favour liberal policies on matters such as abortion, homosexuality, and euthanasia. Other parties oppose these policies. Others are located somewhere between these extremes. Using these criteria, on the scale below please indicate where the parties are located on questions of social policy.

We acknowledge that the item combines the concept of interest, homosexuality, with two others, abortion and euthanasia. With the items for mass attitudes and elite preferences at hand, the remaining variables in the model are identical to those in from Table 2 Model 1.¹³

¹² Specifically, responses of “agree strongly” and “agree” are coded zero. Responses of “disagree strongly,” “disagree,” and “neither agree nor disagree” are coded 0. As with immigration attitudes, don’t knows responses and refusals are omitted from the analyses (these amount to only 1.5% of cases for the redistribution question and 4.1% for the gay and lesbian issue).

¹³ The only exception is that we have yet to code up the polarization variable for these two issues.

Table 3 reports results in four model specifications. The first two models are purely additive specifications where education level, elite cues, and the remaining covariates are specified as directly influencing public opinion. The dependent variable in Model 1 is income distribution; in Model 2 it is attitudes towards gays and lesbians. On both issues, respondent education levels appear to make a difference: the negative coefficient on *Education* in Model 1 indicates that those with more years of education are less likely to favor government policies to redistribute income. In Model 2, the positively signed coefficient on education implies that the more educated are more likely to support freedoms for gays and lesbians.¹⁴

<Table 3 about here>

Further to our expectations, the first pair of models also shows that cues from party elites have a positive and statistically significant effect when it comes to opinion formation on income distribution and on attitudes toward gays and lesbians. But while cues from a trusted source may always be useful, our argument is that they are all the more essential for multidimensional issues. Thus, we expect that party cues on the immigration, an issue with (explicitly) economic and cultural dimensions, should have a stronger impact than they do for the unidimensional issues of income distribution and gay rights. As a check of this, Figures 6 and 7 graph the predicted probabilities across the range of party cues for preferences for redistribution (Table 3 Model 1) and attitudes towards gays and lesbians (Table 3 Model 2), respectively. Compared to the stark effects of party cues on immigration attitudes shown in Figure 3, probabilities reported in Figures 6 and 7 reveal only mild substantive effects arising from elite cues on the issues of redistribution and gay rights. On immigration, affiliation with a restrictionist anti-immigrant

¹⁴ Other covariates in the model generally deliver the expected results. For example, high skilled respondents are less likely to support efforts to redistribute income while union members are more apt to favor such policies. We note that coefficients on *Household Income* are in directions opposite of expectations, which may be due to a coding error. We will revisit this in subsequent versions.

stance predicts a probability of support of .34 compared to a .71 for partisans of accommodationist, immigrant-accepting parties. This 37 percent shift produced by party cues is much greater than that produced by comparable party positions on redistribution (.93 - .71, or 22%) and on gay and lesbian issues (.93 - .73, or 20%).

<Figures 6 & 7 about here>

The remaining pair of models in Table 3 examines whether elite cues have a modifying effect on education's influence on opinion. If cues are relied upon more strongly by low sophisticates (as an information substitute), then we should expect a *Party Position x Education* to carry a negative coefficient, indicating that those scoring low on Education are more likely to use the cue. However, if it is the case, as with immigration, that cues are disproportionately used among the highly educated, then we would expect the interaction term to be positively signed. This is indeed what we find. However, just as the case with immigration, the substantive effects of this interactive specification are not overwhelming.

VI. Concluding Remarks

What determines individual attitudes on immigration? This paper has sought an answer to this question. Building on existing work, it identifies education as a key factor. The more educated do tend to adopt more favorable views toward immigrants. Education, however, is not a panacea when it comes to dampening the rise in anti-immigration sentiment in Europe. We have argued that when it comes to multidimensional issues like immigration, education is a necessary but not sufficient attribute for understanding preferences. The reason is that multidimensionality creates cross-pressured publics, causing them to rely more on cues from trusted elite sources.

Appendix: Reanalysis of Table 2 with Attitudes toward immigrants from poorer countries outside Europe as dependent variable

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Party Position	0.168 (16.27)**	0.021 (0.87)	0.048 (0.57)
Education	0.155 (15.99)**	0.151 (15.48)**	0.154 (15.84)**
Education × Party Position		0.038 (6.87)**	
Polarization	-0.684 (2.73)**	-0.688 (2.73)**	-0.702 (2.73)**
Polarization × Party Position			0.040 (1.18)
Unemployment	-0.097 (1.92)	-0.096 (1.90)	-0.101 (1.96)*
Labor Skill	0.136 (4.01)**	0.137 (4.03)**	0.135 (3.96)**
Union Member	-0.065 (2.07)*	-0.066 (2.10)*	-0.064 (2.05)*
GDP per capita Growth	0.119 (2.19)*	0.119 (2.19)*	0.119 (2.14)*
Foreign Born Population	0.010 (0.45)	0.010 (0.44)	0.010 (0.45)
Household Income	-0.030 (5.22)**	-0.030 (5.25)**	-0.030 (5.31)**
Gender	-0.040 (1.47)	-0.036 (1.31)	-0.037 (1.35)
Age	-0.009 (9.85)**	-0.009 (9.89)**	-0.009 (9.88)**
Minority Ethnic Group	-0.103 (1.50)	-0.100 (1.46)	-0.076 (1.10)
Discriminated Group	0.061 (1.06)	0.060 (1.04)	0.065 (1.12)
Native	-0.347 (6.66)**	-0.354 (6.79)**	-0.336 (6.44)**
Left-Right	-0.087 (12.69)**	-0.086 (12.48)**	-0.086 (12.19)**
Residency	-0.040 (3.47)**	-0.040 (3.48)**	-0.039 (3.37)**
_cons	3.675 (3.78)**	3.691 (3.79)**	3.725 (3.74)**
lns1_1_1:_cons	-0.417 (2.66)**	-0.415 (2.65)**	-2.416 (10.64)**
lns1_1_2:_cons			-0.392 (2.50)*
<i>N</i>	26,161	26,161	26,161

Cells report parameter estimates from a hierarchical linear model with a logistic link; t-statistics in parentheses. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

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Table 1. Immigration Preferences

Country	Different Race/Eth Group ¹	Poorer Countries ¹	Tertiary Education ²	GDP/capita ³
Sweden	0.89	0.87	25	40891
Poland	0.71	0.71	23	18988
Bulgaria	0.67	0.59	na	12612
Norway	0.65	0.62	35	58957
Slovenia	0.62	0.54	13	27961
Netherlands	0.62	0.53	30	42546
Germany	0.61	0.59	17	38289
Switzerland	0.61	0.57	24	45368
Denmark	0.60	0.49	27	38747
Ireland	0.55	0.52	22	38163
France	0.54	0.46	18	35223
Belgium	0.54	0.53	17	39759
United Kingdom	0.50	0.44	28	38463
Slovak Republic	0.48	0.47	17	20805
Spain	0.48	0.49	21	30816
Estonia	0.46	0.32	22	19097
Portugal	0.39	0.38	15	22583
Finland	0.38	0.28	23	36375
Israel	0.37	0.30	31	29325
Czech Republic	0.34	0.33	17	25486
Hungary	0.21	0.16	20	18360
Greece	0.14	0.12	17	28436

Cases weighted by *dweight*

1. Source: European Social Survey Round 5
2. Source: OECD *Education at a Glance 2012*, Table A1.3a. Population who has attained tertiary education in year 2010.
3. Source: Penn World Tables, GDP/capita measured in purchasing power parity in current international dollars for year 2010.

**Table 2. Effects of Party Cues on Attitudes toward Immigration
(Dependent Variable: Attitude towards Immigrants from Different Race or Ethnic Group)**

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Party Position	0.169 (16.26)**	0.050 (2.13)*	0.054 (0.84)
Education	0.183 (18.68)**	0.180 (18.43)**	0.182 (18.57)**
Education × Party Position		0.031 (5.55)**	
Polarization	-0.668 (2.72)**	-0.671 (2.72)**	-0.684 (2.74)**
Polarization × Party Position			0.042 (1.62)
Unemployment	-0.118 (2.40)*	-0.117 (2.38)*	-0.121 (2.43)*
Labor Skill	0.195 (5.76)**	0.196 (5.78)**	0.193 (5.69)**
Union Member	-0.072 (2.29)*	-0.072 (2.31)*	-0.071 (2.26)*
GDP per capita Growth	0.073 (1.37)	0.073 (1.38)	0.073 (1.36)
Foreign Born Population	0.008 (0.38)	0.008 (0.38)	0.009 (0.40)
Household Income	-0.047 (8.22)**	-0.047 (8.25)**	-0.047 (8.24)**
Gender	-0.004 (0.15)	-0.000 (0.02)	-0.001 (0.04)
Age	-0.006 (6.72)**	-0.006 (6.72)**	-0.006 (6.80)**
Minority Ethnic Group	0.045 (0.65)	0.048 (0.69)	0.054 (0.78)
Discriminated Group	-0.007 (0.12)	-0.008 (0.14)	-0.005 (0.09)
Native	-0.342 (6.48)**	-0.348 (6.59)**	-0.338 (6.40)**
Left-Right Ideology	-0.085 (12.33)**	-0.084 (12.19)**	-0.082 (11.73)**
Residency	-0.059 (5.08)**	-0.059 (5.10)**	-0.059 (5.05)**
_cons	3.639 (3.82)**	3.645 (3.82)**	3.683 (3.81)**
lns1_1_1:_cons	-0.437 (2.79)**	-0.435 (2.78)**	-2.882 (9.73)**
lns1_1_2:_cons			-0.423 (2.70)**
<i>N</i>	26,200	26,200	26,200

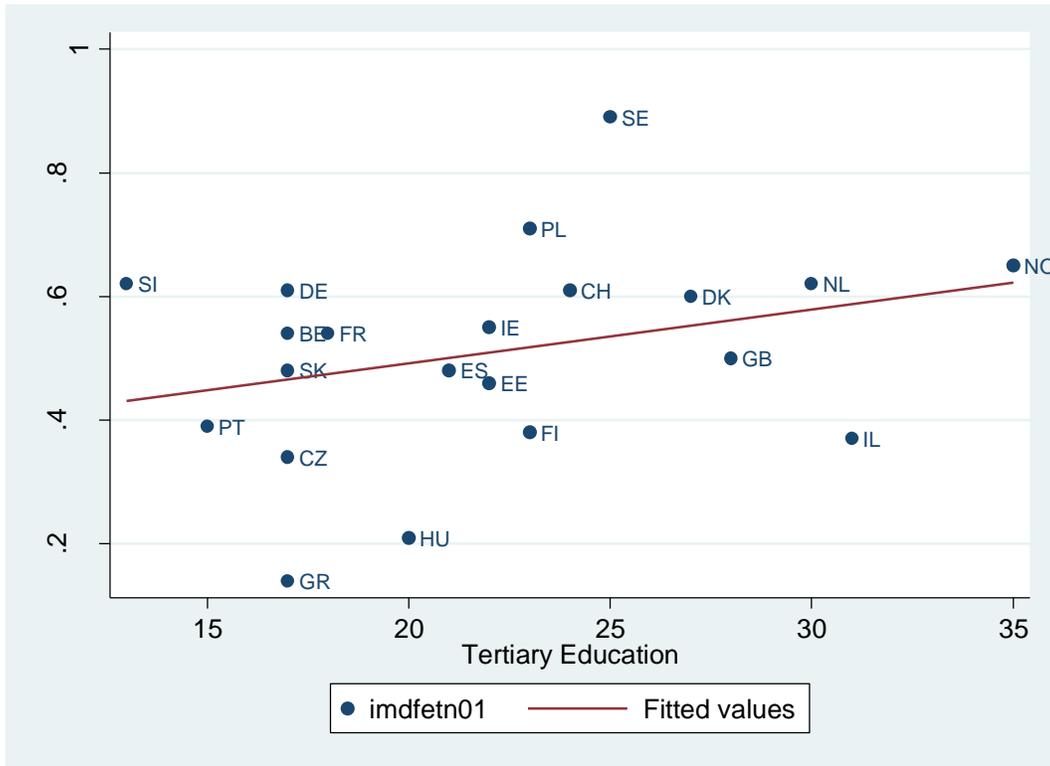
Cells report parameter estimates from a hierarchical linear model with a logistic link; t-statistics in parentheses. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

Table 3. Effects of Party Cues on Other Issues

	Model 1 DV: Income Redistribution	Model 2 DV: Gay and Lesbian	Model 3 DV: Income Redistribution	Model 4 DV: Gay and Lesbian
Party Position on Tax-Spend	0.196 (12.42)**		-0.044 (1.24)	
Party Position on Social Issue		0.181 (11.83)**		0.074 (2.18)*
Education	-0.117 (8.71)**	0.169 (11.03)**	-0.112 (8.30)**	0.172 (11.18)**
Education × Party Position			0.057 (7.47)**	0.030 (3.54)**
Unemployment	0.089 (1.84)	-0.094 (1.61)	0.090 (1.86)	-0.094 (1.59)
Labor Skill	-0.372 (7.80)**	0.034 (0.64)	-0.373 (7.82)**	0.034 (0.64)
Union Member	0.285 (6.36)**	-0.056 (1.19)	0.286 (6.37)**	-0.054 (1.14)
GDP per capita Growth	0.014 (0.26)	0.012 (0.18)	0.013 (0.23)	0.012 (0.19)
Foreign Born Population	-0.003 (0.12)	0.061 (2.19)*	-0.003 (0.14)	0.060 (2.17)*
Household Income	0.097 (11.99)**	-0.086 (9.87)**	0.097 (12.04)**	-0.087 (9.91)**
Gender	-0.329 (8.41)**	-0.417 (9.94)**	-0.323 (8.24)**	-0.413 (9.84)**
Age	0.005 (4.08)**	-0.006 (4.89)**	0.005 (4.08)**	-0.006 (4.87)**
Minority Ethnic Group	0.182 (1.71)	-0.621 (6.90)**	0.169 (1.59)	-0.621 (6.89)**
Discriminated Group	-0.044 (0.53)	-0.219 (2.65)**	-0.042 (0.50)	-0.217 (2.63)**
Native	0.249 (3.45)**	0.601 (8.10)**	0.239 (3.29)**	0.597 (8.05)**
Left-Right Ideology	-0.187 (17.55)**	-0.050 (5.14)**	-0.184 (17.20)**	-0.050 (5.22)**
Residency	0.051 (3.10)**	-0.077 (4.40)**	0.049 (2.99)**	-0.078 (4.46)**
_cons	2.032 (3.91)**	2.861 (4.57)**	1.981 (3.80)**	2.856 (4.55)**
lns1_1_1_cons	-0.359 (2.26)*	-0.161 (1.02)	-0.355 (2.24)*	-0.157 (1.00)
<i>N</i>	22,854	22,701	22,854	22,701

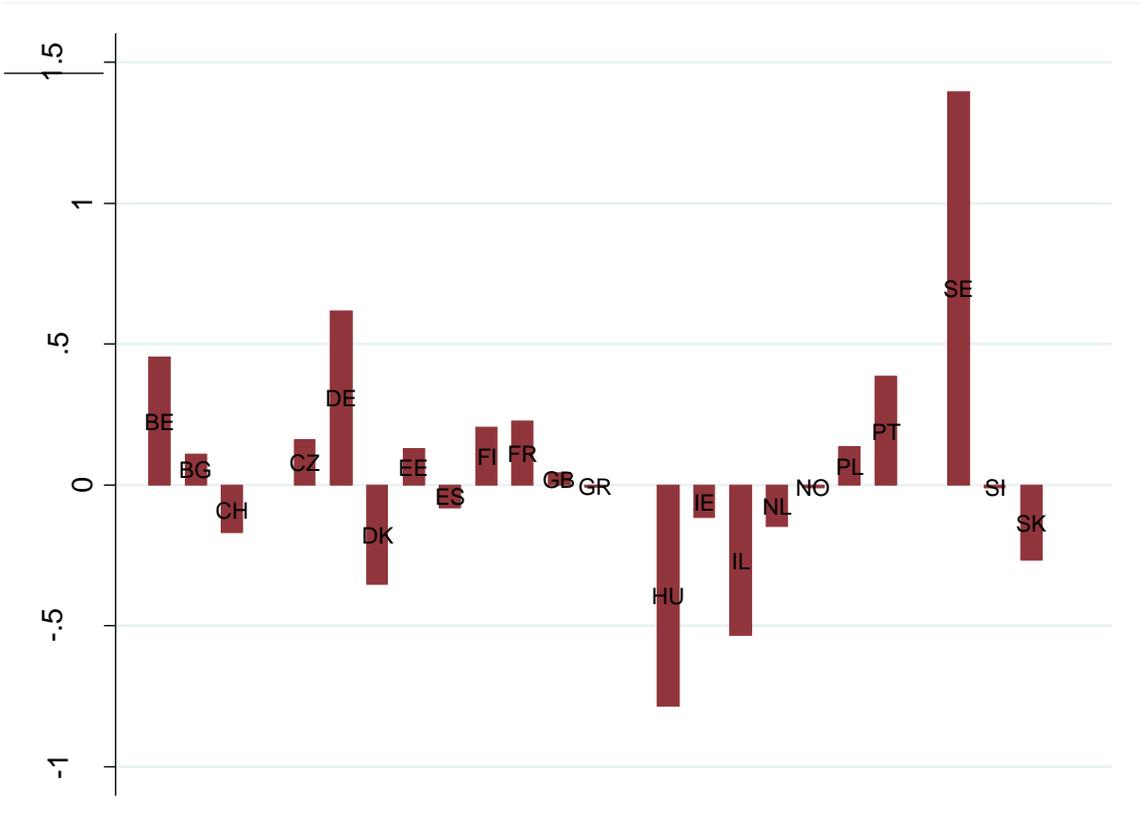
Cells report parameter estimates from a hierarchical linear model with a logistic link; t-statistics in parentheses. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

Figure 1. Tertiary Education and Immigration Preferences in 21 Countries



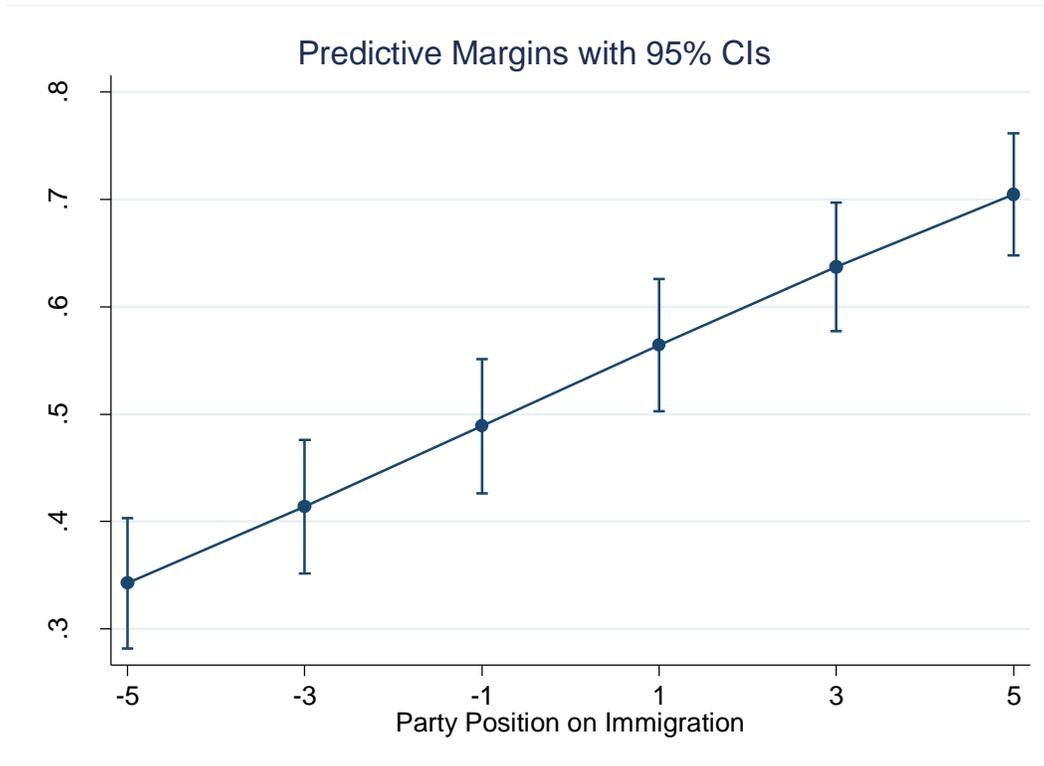
Source: See Table 1. P-value of slope is 0.19.

Figure 2. Party Position on Immigration, country means



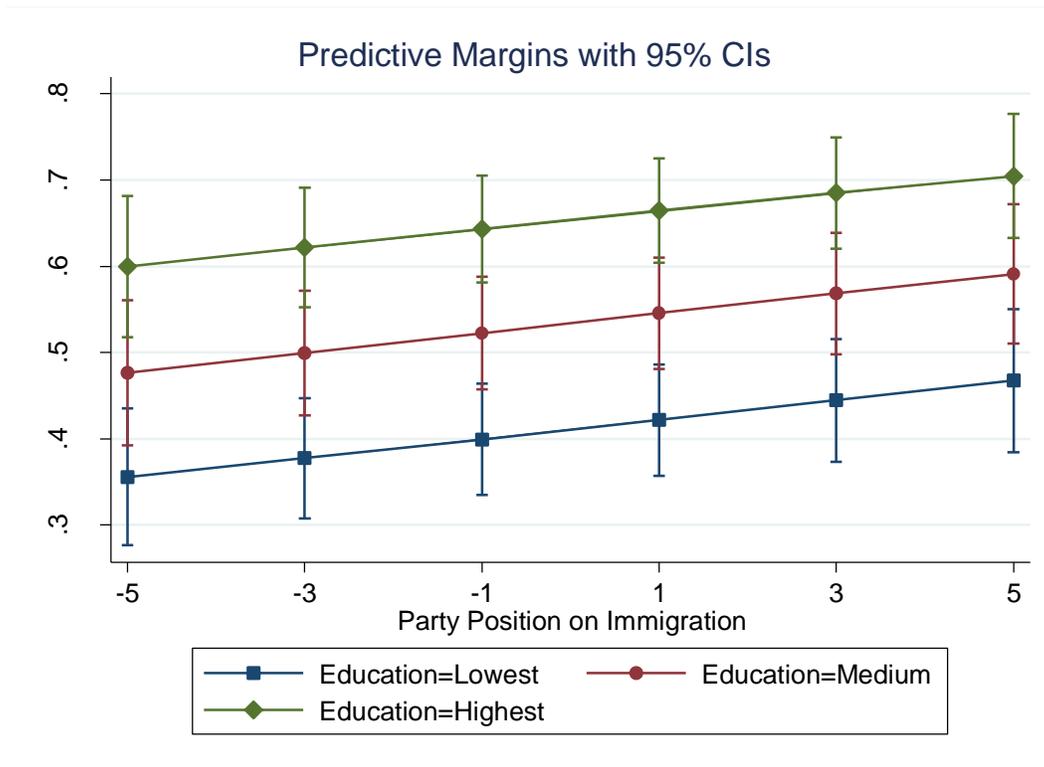
Source: Vowles et al. (2010), calculated as described in the text

Figure 3. Effects of Party Elite Cues on Individuals' Attitude towards Immigration



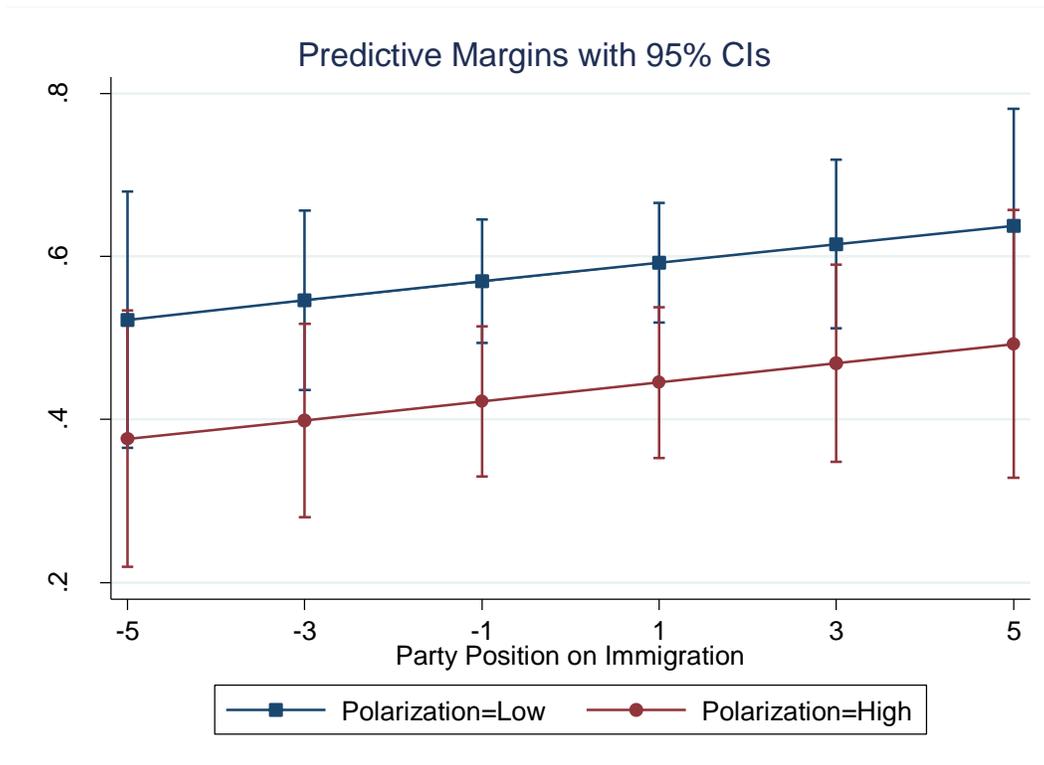
Source: Figure produced from Table 2 Model 1 estimates.

Figure 4. Conditioning Effects of Education Interacted With Party Position on Immigration Issue



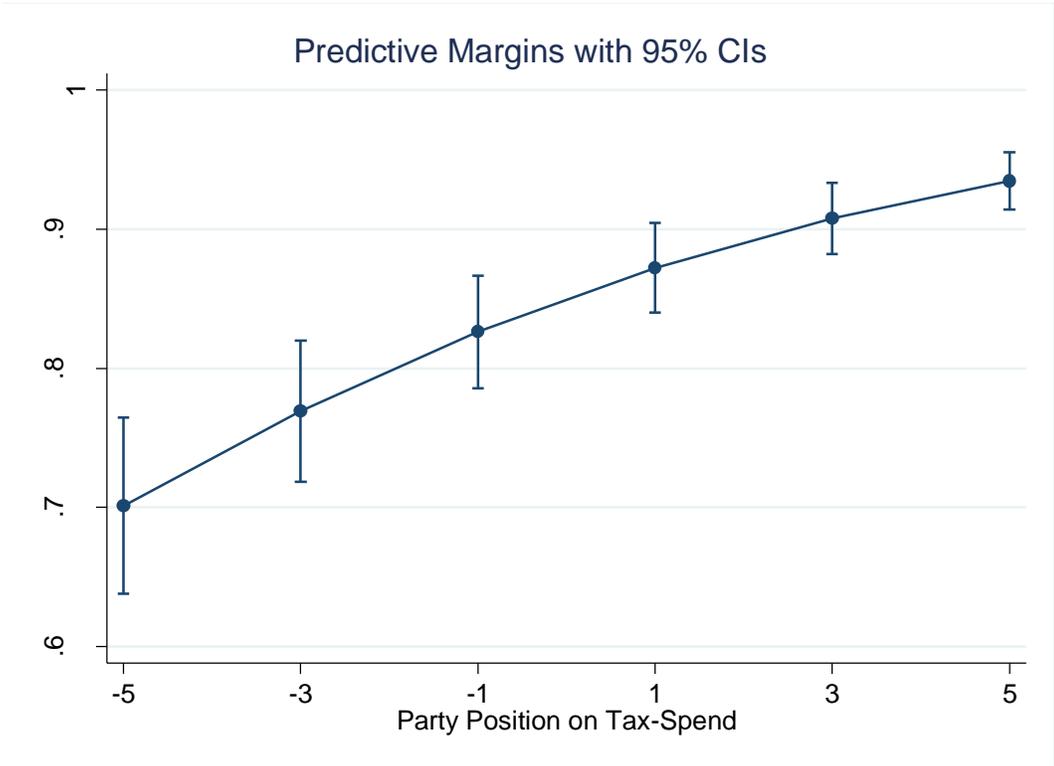
Source: Figure produced from Table 2 Model 2 estimates.

Figure 5. Conditioning Effects of Party Polarization Interacted With Party Position on Immigration Issue



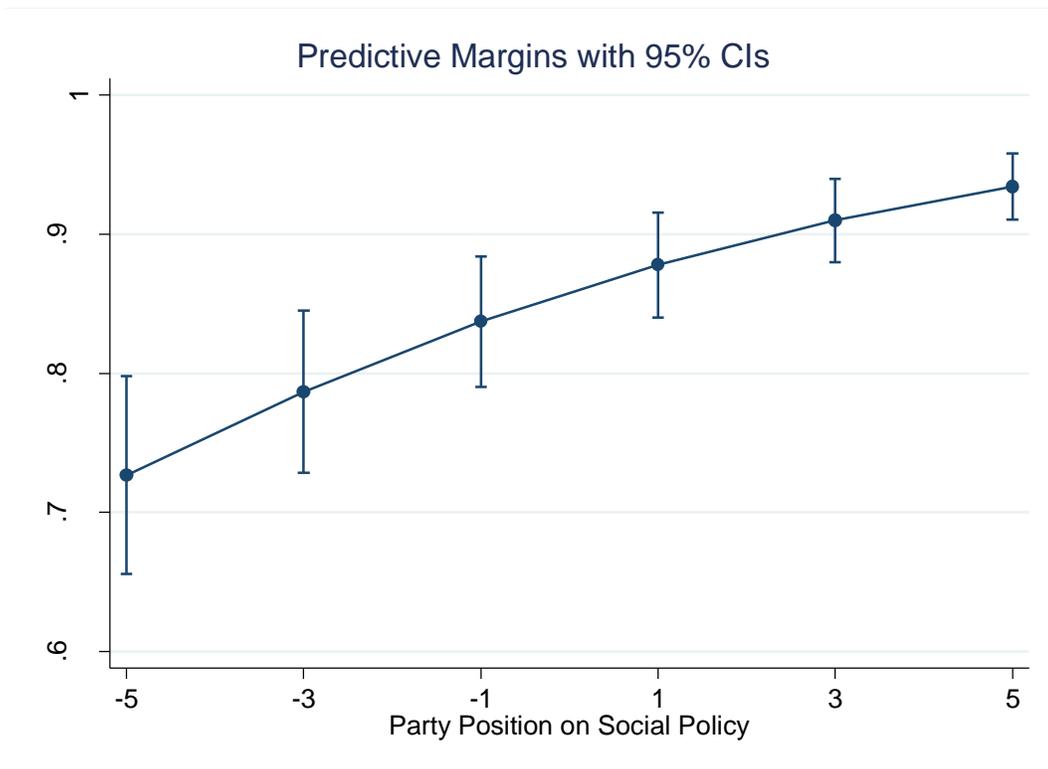
Source: Figure produced from Table 2 Model 3 estimates.

Figure 6. Elite Cues on Income Redistribution



Source: Table 3 Model 1 estimates

Figure 7. Elite Cues on Gay and Lesbian Issue



Source: Table 3 Model 3 estimates