

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

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What causes anti-immigrant sentiment?

- Economic and labor market factors?
- Cultural factors – security fears, loss of national identity, etc.?
- Education?
 - Hainmueller and Hiscox (2007, 2010): role of formal education; education conditions attitudes, builds preference for cosmopolitanism
 - But are the attitudes of the educated any different from the rest of us?

And note: debates are situated in a “bottom-up” understanding of attitude formation

Our paper: Entertain two claims

1. Effects of cues for trusted elite sources (“top-down”)
2. Issue dimensionality

Argument

Part A:

- “economics” vs. “culture” accounts of immigration issue glosses over point that it is *both*?
- Compared to policy attitudes more generally, multidimensionality of the issue means that attitudes on immigration are especially susceptible to issue framing by cues from trusted political elites

Part B:

- What about education as an anecdote for manipulation via elite cues?
- Are the highly-educated any better placed to cut through the dimensions?
 - No.
- Immigration’s multidimensionality means that everyone uses cues
 - The less educated use heuristics to substitute for a lack of information
 - The more educated use heuristics because they are cross-pressured

Data and Measures

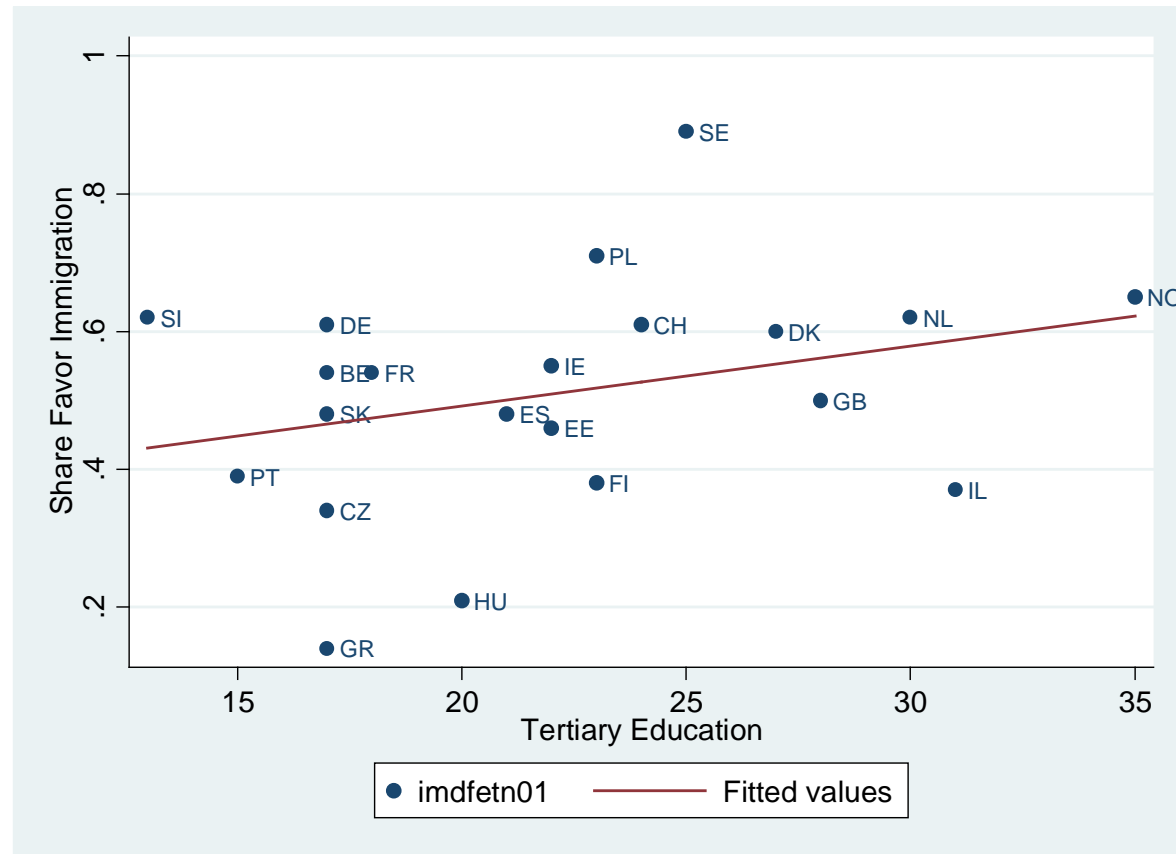
Public opinion: European Social Survey Round 5, 2010-2011

To what extent do you think [country] should allow people of a different race or ethnic group from most [country] people to come and live here?

Individual responses coded 1 for “allow many/some”, 0 for “allow few/none”

Figure 1. Tertiary Education and Immigration Preferences in 21 Countries

Correlation weak, around 0.20



Elite cues: original survey of party experts, 2009

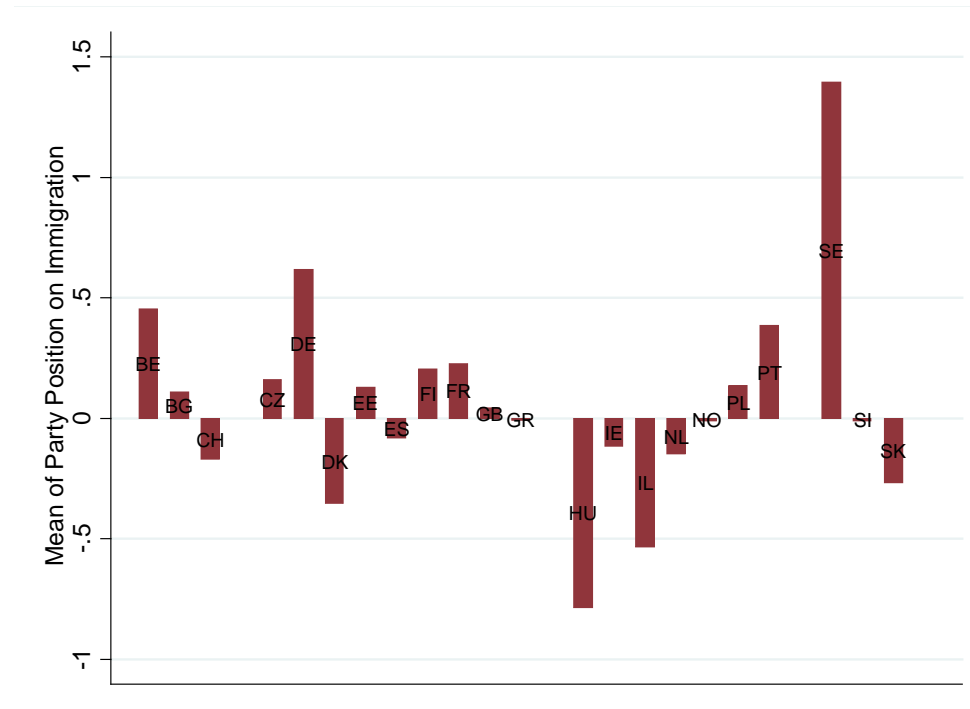
“Some political parties favour policies designed to help immigrants and asylum seekers integrate into the [Country] society. Other parties favour policies designed to help immigrants and asylum seekers return to their country of origin. Still others are located somewhere between these extremes. Using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

Mean responses coded from -5 to +5;

lower values indicate restrictionist positions (immigrants and asylum seekers should return to country of origin);

higher values for accomodationist positions (help immigrants and asylum seekers integrate).

Figure 2. Party Position on Immigration, country means



Party positions linked to individuals via partisan attachments (-5 to +5)
non-partisans coded 0

Key individual-level predictor: education

Individual-level controls

- labor skill
- unemployed
- union membership
- household income
- native
- age
- ethnic minority
- member of discriminated group
- left/right ideology
- urban/rural

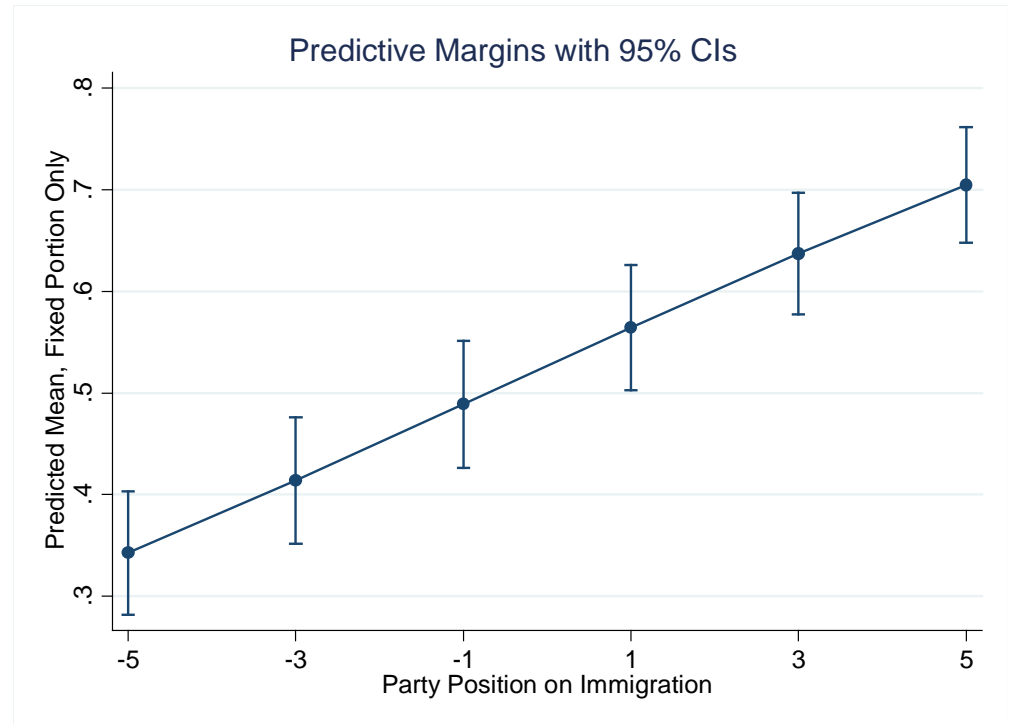
Country-level controls

- party polarization on immigration issue
- GDP per capita growth
- pct of population foreign born

Table 2. Effects of Party Cues on Attitudes toward Immigration

	Model 1	Model 2
Party Position	0.169 (16.26)**	0.050 (2.13)*
Education	0.183 (18.68)**	0.180 (18.43)**
Education x Party Position		0.031 (5.55)**
Polarization	-0.668 (2.72)**	-0.671 (2.72)**
controls not displayed		
<i>N</i>	26,200	26,200

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



Source: Figure produced from Table 2 Model 1 estimates.

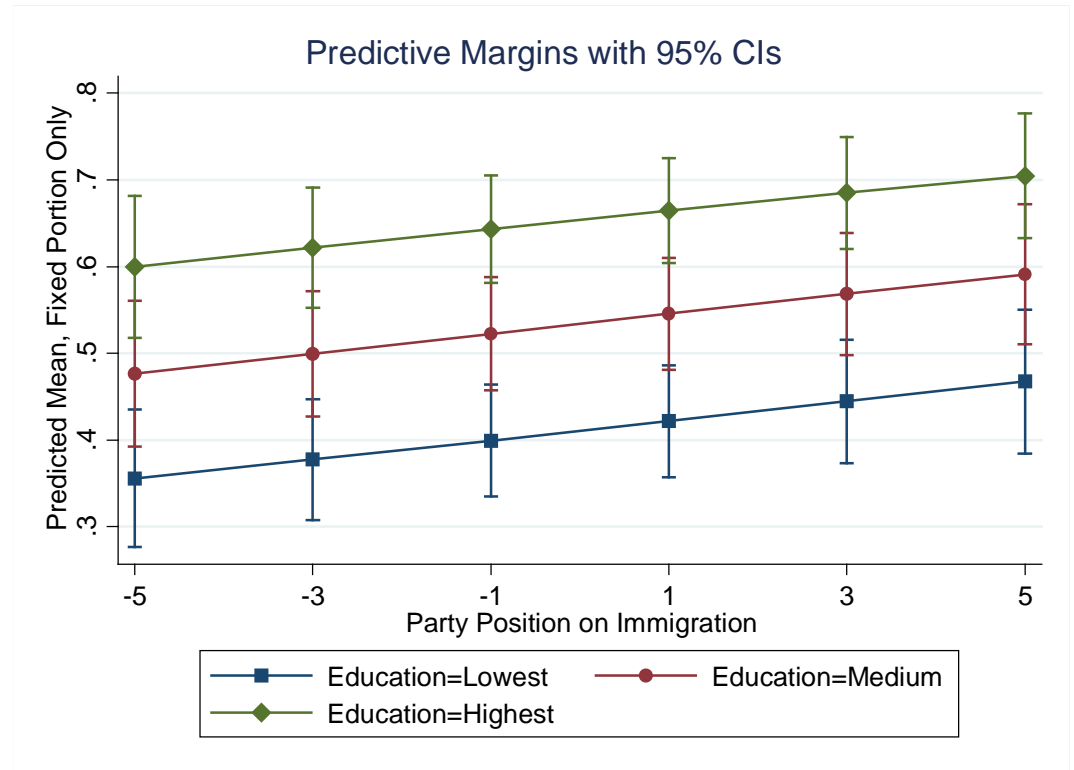
Do clite cues compensate for low education? No.

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Source: Figure produced from Table 2 Model 2 estimates.

Comparisons to “unidimensional” issues, redistribution and rights for gays and lesbians

Redistribution

Public opinion: Please say to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statement: “The government should take measures to reduce differences in income levels.”

Elite cues: “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.”

Rights for gays and lesbians

Public opinion: Please say to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statement: “Gay men and lesbians should be free to live their own life as they wish.”

Elite cues: “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.”

Coding same as above

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 x Party Position			0.057 (7.47)**	0.030 (3.54)**
<i>N</i>	22,854	22,701	22,854	22,701

Figure 6. Elite Cues on Income Redistribution

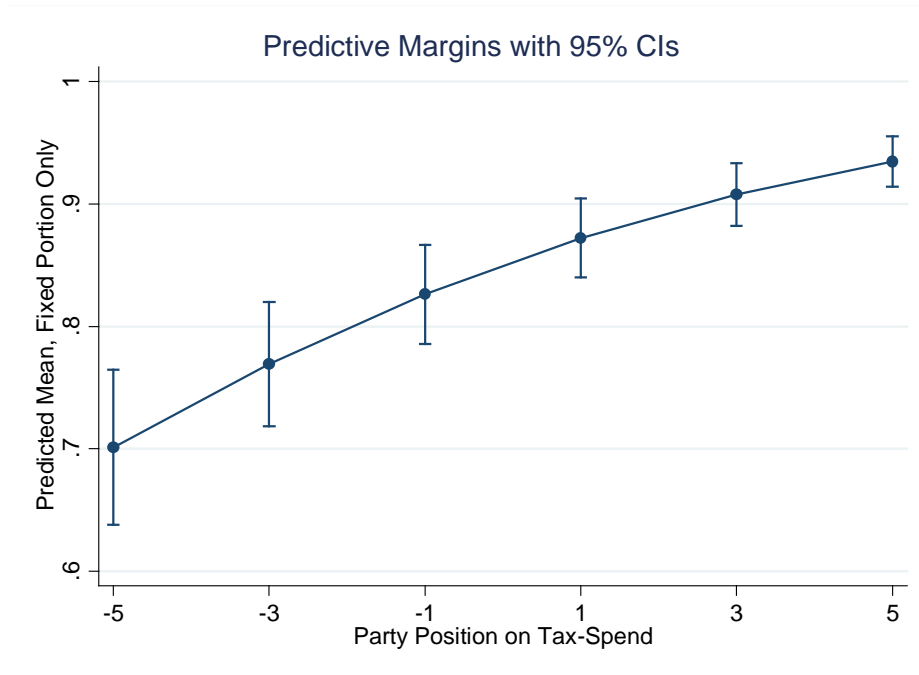
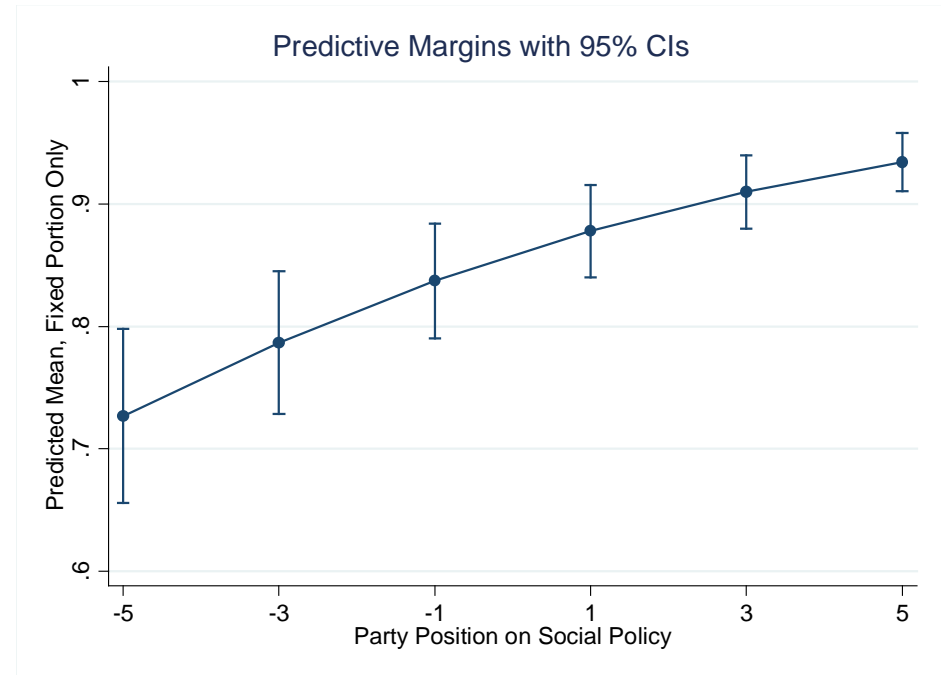


Figure 7. Elite Cues on Gay and Lesbian Issue



Influence of party cues not as strong as for immigration issue

Concluding remarks