

## PART III

# Public Opinions and Immigration: Individual Attitudes, Interest Groups and the Media<sup>1</sup>

## Summary

With the growth and diversification of migration flows to OECD countries over the past 15 years, migration policies have been changing with increasing frequency and now occupy a prime place on the political agenda of many OECD countries. The shaping of migration policies is the result of a complex process in which public opinion and the various participants in the public debate play a significant role.

In the current economic crisis, associated as it is with a deterioration in the employment situation in most OECD countries, it seems particularly important to examine the determinants of public opinion about immigration. It is therefore necessary first, to gain a better appreciation of why and how different groups might influence migration policy and second, to understand more clearly the mechanisms that shape public opinion on this matter, so that policy makers might be better equipped to deal with any resurgence of hostility toward immigrants and immigration and the tensions it might spark.

The purpose of this study is to review the literature on public opinion about immigration, identify its main findings and present new ones derived from empirical analysis. The paper first seeks to define the concept of public opinion and give a comparative assessment of the differences in opinions about immigration internationally. It goes on to analyse the main determinants of individual opinions about immigration on the basis of surveys and polls. It then looks at the role of certain organised groups (trade unions, employers' associations, political parties, etc.) and the media.

## Introduction

Growing migration flows to OECD countries over the past 15 years have transformed several European countries of emigration into countries of immigration (Spain, Italy, Ireland, Portugal and Greece) and increased the number of countries of emigration. The changing situation has prompted more frequent shifts in migration policies. These policies, particularly where they concern labour migration and integration issues, are now at the top of the political agendas of many OECD countries.

The setting of migration policies is a complex process, in which public opinion and the different participants in the public debate (the media, trade unions, employers' associations, political parties, etc.) play a significant role. In the years preceding the economic crisis of 2008/2009, the steady improvement in the employment situation, indeed the emergence of shortages of manpower in some countries and sectors, had helped calm the debate on labour migration and reduce the weight of opinion opposed to increased immigration in many OECD countries. However, the current economic crisis threatens to revive opposition to immigration and foster anti-immigrant feelings. Concerns are again being expressed in some circles over what is seen as unfair competition from immigrants in the labour market. Managing these potential sources of social tension will present a serious challenge to governments of OECD countries, especially as prevailing

demographic trends will require many of them to reappraise the role of migration (particularly by job seekers) over the next few years.

It seems therefore adequate to first identify the factors that determine individual opinions about immigration in different sections of society. It will then be possible to help policy makers understand the mechanisms that drive public opinion on the subject and thus equip them to deal with any resurgence of hostile attitudes toward immigrants and the tensions such attitudes might spark.

The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature devoted to public opinion about immigration and present new empirical findings in this area. From an analysis of several opinion surveys taken between 2002 and 2008, it is possible for the first time to determine the role of individual characteristics both in shaping opinions about the economic and cultural consequences of immigration and in forming preferences over migration policy. In particular it reveals the importance of what people believe. This chapter also highlights the role played by various key players in the preparation of migration policies. In particular, it has become apparent that the way the media deal with migration issues has significantly changed over the past few decades, and that they now exert a major influence on public opinion. At the same time, the social partners have also modified their views on migration issues and now seek to play a more important role in reviewing and setting public policy in this area.

The study is organised as follows. Section 1 offers a definition of the concept of public opinion and considers how it might be measured (1.1). It goes on to give an overview of the differences in opinions on immigration in different countries, on the basis of which it identifies an initial set of stylised facts (1.2). Section 2 offers new empirical analyses of individual determinants of opinions about immigration. It focuses on the interaction between socio-economic factors and individual beliefs and seeks to assess the relative importance of the economic, cultural and political dimensions (2.1). The analysis also addresses the links between the social entitlements granted to immigrants and public preferences over migration policy (2.2). Section 3 looks at the role of organised interest groups, who lobby the general public as well as governments and politicians. Finally, Section 4 is devoted to the role of the media in shaping public opinion and conveying it to policymakers (4.1) and the role of beliefs about the economic and social consequences of immigration in the public debate (4.2).

## 1. Public opinion on immigration and migration systems

### 1.1. Public opinion about immigration: definitions and data sources

The study of public opinion cuts across several social science disciplines, particularly political science and sociology. It also touches more indirectly on economics. Given that each of these disciplines tends to focus on those aspects of public opinion that are closest to its field of interest, there is no single definition of public opinion as a concept.

Political science focuses on the role of public opinion in the political system and in the shaping of public policies. It therefore tends to regard public opinion as an *aggregation of individual opinions* on a particular matter of public interest, which are brought to light by surveys, among other things. In sociology, public opinion is seen more as *the product of a public debate*: public opinion manifests itself in the very process of interaction between participants in the debate but cannot be reduced to the individual positions expressed therein.

The notion of public opinion as the aggregation of individual opinions lends itself to the conclusion that public opinion emerges from rational choices made by individuals. On the other hand, the “sociological” approach insists on the role of public opinion as an instrument of social control, in the sense that its manifestation is seen as the outcome of a quest for national consensus.

In the framework of the rational choice model, it is common practice to rely on opinion polls or surveys to characterise and analyse public opinion on a broad range of social issues. Generally speaking, a set of questions are prepared in advance and put to a representative sample of individuals. Because the questions are based on *a priori* premises and the number of possible replies is limited, it is possible to gain an idea of the way opinions are distributed among the population. The most widely held opinions are then generally presented as a more or less accurate expression of majority opinion and, more generally, of the “popular will” (see Page and Shapiro, 1992).

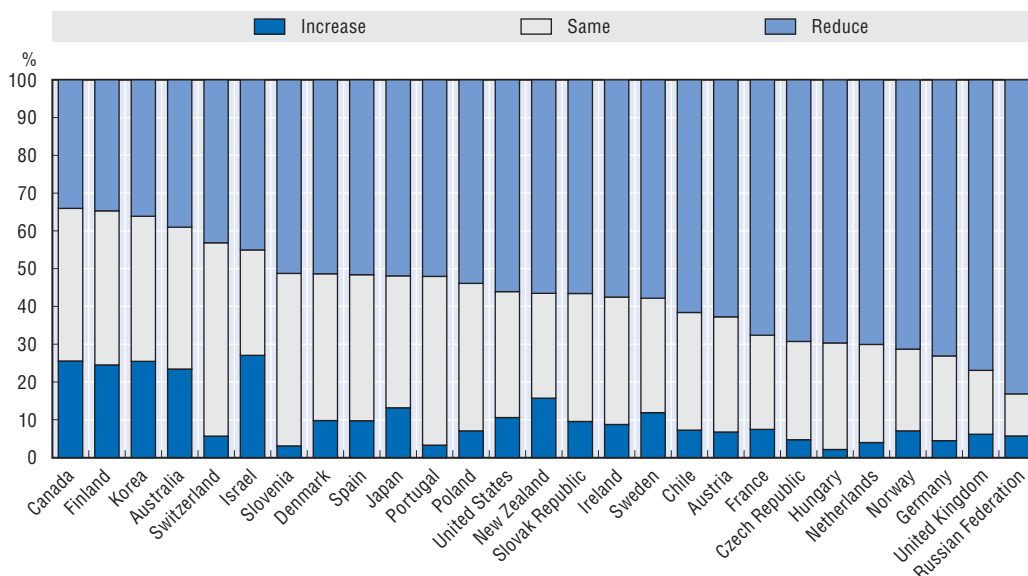
The value of opinion poll findings has been widely questioned, both from the technical standpoint (selection of samples, form of questionnaire) and in terms of the way responses are interpreted. Pierre Bourdieu (1973), for example, draws attention to three fundamental problems with interpreting survey results as a reflection of public opinion. First, he challenges the idea that every individual is in a position to form an opinion about every subject. It is assumed that they are and non-responses are therefore ignored, although their relative frequency among certain sections of the population strongly suggests that the capacity to form an opinion is indeed socially constructed. Second, Bourdieu questions whether all individual responses are equivalent. Different responses to questions are not necessarily based on commonly held criteria,<sup>2</sup> and it may therefore be inappropriate to regard an aggregation of individual opinions as representative of public opinion. Third, he argues that surveys are based on the assumption that there is an implicit consensus on social issues.

The abundant economic literature examining individual opinions about immigration and migration policies relies to a large extent on data from surveys of this type, and is therefore open to these criticisms. The empirical approach generally adopted in this literature consists in measuring the correlation between the degree of acceptance of immigration and selected individual characteristics (such as age, sex, or level of education) and thereby highlighting the role of certain economic or social-cultural determinants of opinion about migration (see Annex III.A1 for a detailed account of the different surveys). This literature, together with the findings of more recent surveys, will be presented in detail in Section 2. But first it seems useful to give a brief assessment of current opinion about immigration in the OECD countries.

### **1.2. Determinants of differences in opinions about immigration in different countries**


International opinion surveys reveal that average individual positions on the desired degree of openness to immigration differ significantly from one country to another. In most OECD countries a large proportion of respondents (often close to the majority) tended to come out in favour of strictly controlled or reduced immigration. The International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) of 2003 showed that this proportion exceeded 70% in the United Kingdom, Germany, Norway and the Netherlands but was less than 40% in Canada, Finland, Korea and Australia (see Figure III.1). Exactly the same diversity of opinions was revealed by other international opinion surveys, such as the European Social Survey (ESS), which focused on Europe, and the World Value Survey (WVS).

Figure III.1. **Proportions of respondents in favour of increasing, maintaining or reducing current immigration flows to their countries, 2003**



Note: Percentages do not take account of non-responses. Weighted data.

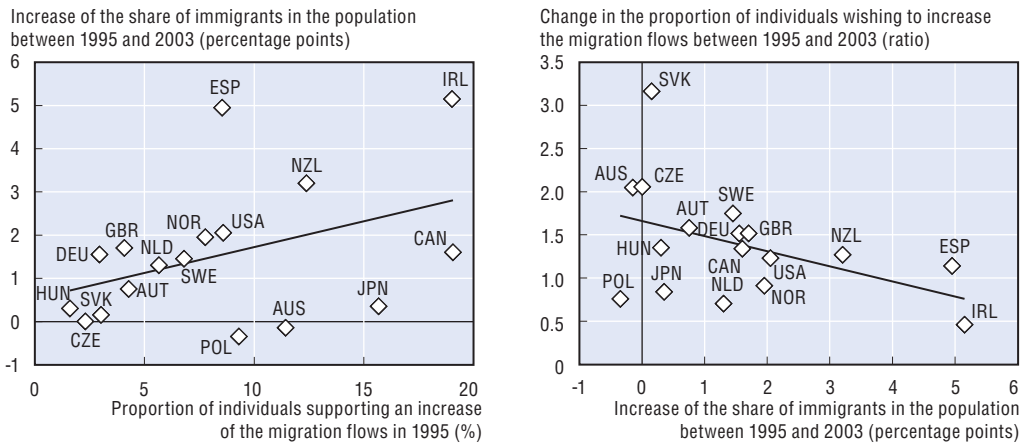
Source: International Social Survey Programme 2003.

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The differences in average opinion about immigration and migration policy can be attributed to many factors, which are not mutually exclusive. One of them has to do with the scale and dynamics of migration flows. If the immigrant population is perceived as being too large or if immigration has been rising during the period prior to the survey, for example, people may take a more negative view of immigration. Two interesting facts emerge from the findings of the 1995 and 2003 ISSP surveys, which cover a number of OECD countries. First, there is a fairly clear correlation between the proportion of individuals wishing to see an increase in migrant flows in 1995 and the rising proportion of immigrants in the population over the period 1995-2003. This relationship tends to suggest that there is a certain linkage between public aspirations and the growth in migration flows, although no causal relationship can be established. The rising migration over the period in question seems to have been accompanied by a fall in public support for increased migration flows. At least this is what can be inferred from the relationship between the changing proportion of immigrants in the population between 1995 and 2003 and the attitude of the population towards increased immigration, as shown in Figure III.2.

The features of the immigration system are another set of factors that may explain differences in average opinion about immigration from one country to another. They include the main channels of entry, the way immigrants are selected and the social and political entitlements granted to them. As to differences of opinion regarding different categories of immigrants, notably work seekers and refugees, two types of argument may prevail, one humanitarian and the other economic. As shown in studies by Mayda (2006) and O'Rourke and Sinnott (2006), public opinion is on average more favourable to refugees than to other immigrants (see Figure III.3). Bauer *et al.* (2000) nevertheless stressed that residents of countries that take in relatively more refugees and asylum-seekers may be more worried about the consequences of immigration than those of countries with a

Figure III.2. **Support for increased immigration in relation to the rising proportion of immigrants in the populations of certain OECD countries, 1995-2003**

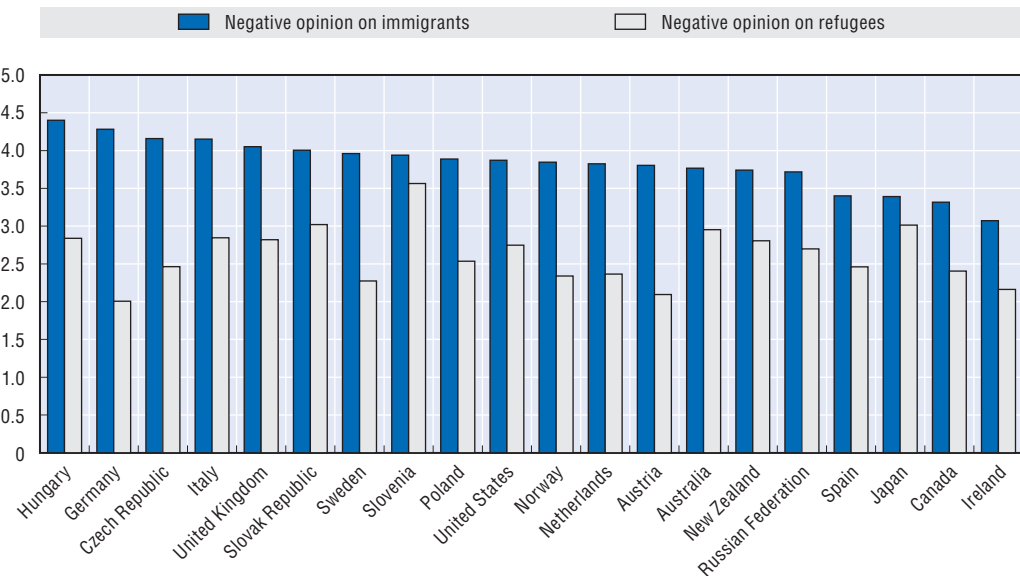


Note: Percentages do not take account of non-responses. Weighted data.

Sources: International Social Survey Programme, 1995 and 2003; United Nations, 2009, *International Migrant Stock: The 2008 Revision*.

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Figure III.3. **Average opinions on immigrants and refugees, 1995**



Note: This graph is based on data from the ISSP 1995 survey. Unfortunately, the ISSP 2003 supplementary questionnaire on national identity did not have a question on opinions about refugees. This graph was drawn up on the basis of two questions in the ISSP 1995 survey: “Should immigration be increased, kept at the same level or reduced?” and “Should refugees be authorised to stay in the country?” In both cases, a score above three indicated a desire for greater restrictions. Weighted data.

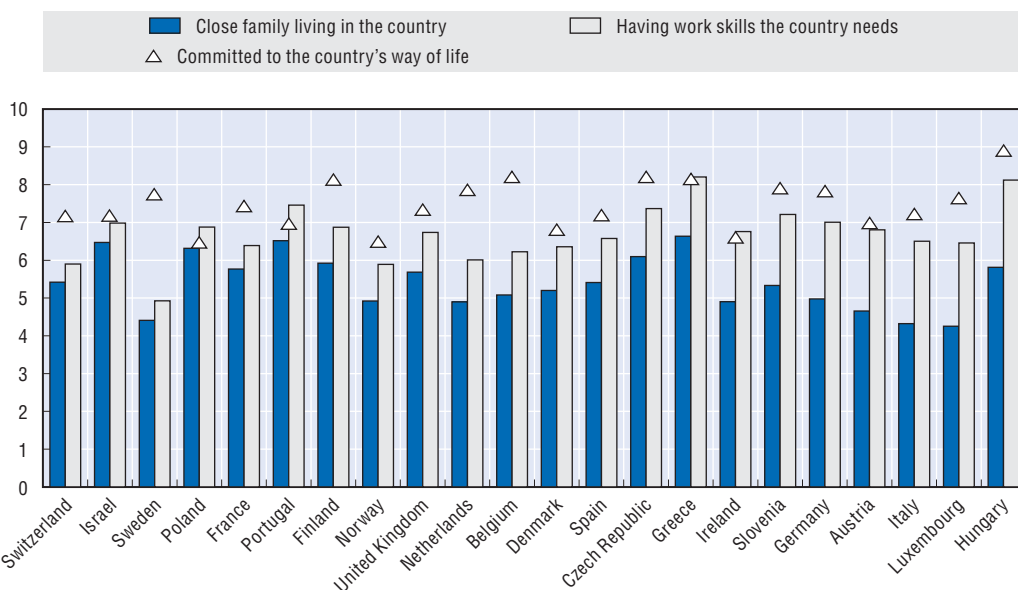
Source: International Social Survey Programme 1995.

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selective migration policy, perhaps because of the particular difficulties facing humanitarian migrants in terms of integration in the labour market and society of the host country.

Similarly, some opinion surveys have focused on the importance attributed by respondents to different criteria governing the admission of immigrants to national territory. One such survey was the ESS 2002. The possible criteria included having professional skills the country needed, having close family living in the country, and being committed to the country's way of life.<sup>3</sup> As Figure III.4 shows, respondents in all countries surveyed regard economic usefulness as a more important selection criterion than prior presence of family members. Moreover, commitment to the country's way of life is almost universally regarded as more important than the other two criteria. While the findings do not imply that respondents reject the idea of family immigration, they clearly indicate that they believe migrants who can contribute economically should have priority over family members, whose main reason for migrating is not necessarily to find work.<sup>4</sup> On this score Bauer *et al.* (2000) show that respondents are more favourable to immigration if immigrants are selected to meet the needs of the labour market. Generally speaking there is a fairly close correlation between the proportion of individuals, who feel that immigrants make a positive contribution to the economy and the balance of opinion in favour of immigration (see Figure III.5). But there are still quite significant differences from one country to another regarding the degree of importance to be ascribed to particular criteria. These are due largely to the historical background of immigration and the programmes designed to integrate immigrant workers and regulate migrant flows in accordance with the demands of the labour market (see Section 4.2 below).

Figure III.4. **Opinions on the importance of different selection criteria for immigration, 2002**

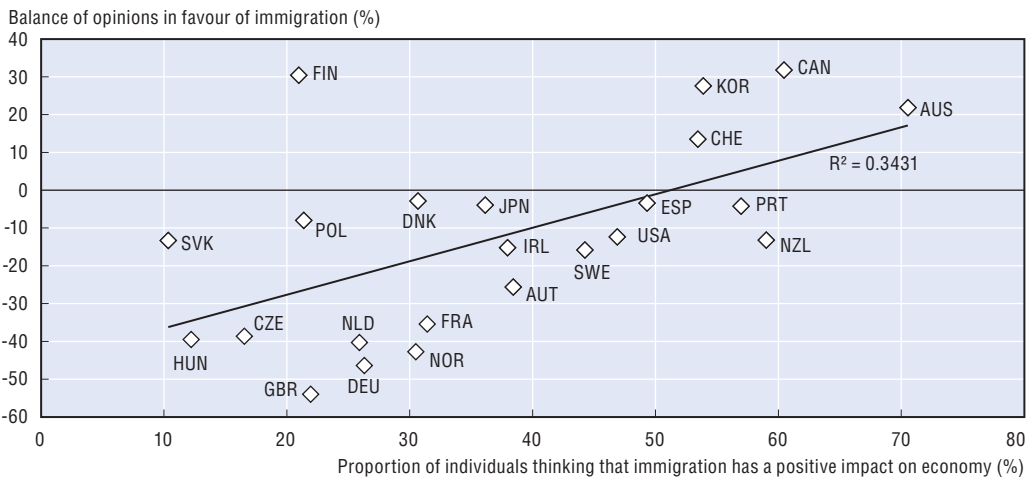


Note: A higher opinion score indicates that the criterion is deemed more important. Weighted data. Countries are ranked according to the difference between scores for criteria "Having work skills the country needs" and "Close family living in the country".

Source: European Social Survey 2002.


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Figure III.5. **Opinions about the impact of immigrants on the economy and balance of opinions in favour of immigration in certain OECD countries, 2003**



Note: The balance of opinion is the difference between the proportion of persons wishing to increase immigration or keep it steady and that of persons wishing to reduce it. Percentages do not take account of non-responses. Weighted data.

Source: International Social Survey Programme 2003.

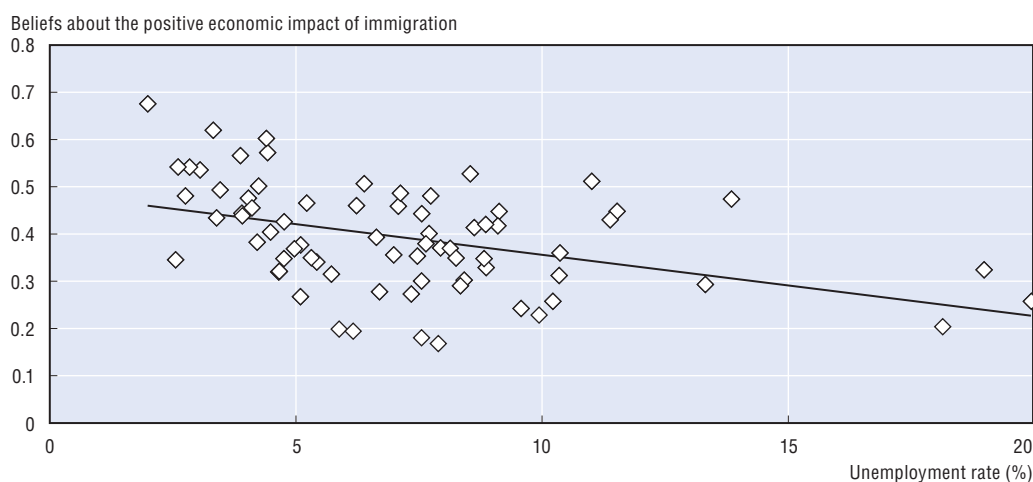
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The countries of origin of most immigrants, or at least the perceptions of residents of the country of destination in this regard, can also influence public opinion on immigration. The ESS 2002 survey revealed that preferences over the origin of migrants were based on two criteria: whether or not the country of origin was a European one and its standard of living. In all countries involved in this European survey the balance of opinion was more favourable to immigration from other European countries than from non-European ones, and this preference was particularly marked in Denmark, France, Finland and Norway. However, the opposite view prevailed in the Southern European countries and in the Czech Republic. In most countries, individuals expressed a preference for migration from richer countries, with the notable exceptions of Sweden, Norway, Switzerland and the Netherlands.

The economic climate is another factor in shaping attitudes towards immigration. In a study covering the EU15 countries over the period 1993-2000, Kessler and Freeman (2005) find that as the economic situation (represented by GDP and unemployment levels) deteriorates, opinion turns against immigration. Opposition to immigration peaked in the mid-1990s before subsiding in 2000. Wilkes et al. (2008) find the same result for Canada over the period 1975-2000. It should be noted, however, that the results of the latter, obtained over a lengthy assessment period, seem much more statistically sound than those of Kessler and Freeman, which were derived from far fewer observations and should therefore be viewed with caution. More recently, in the context of the current economic crisis, the *Transatlantic Trends Survey* (German Marshall Fund, 2009) shows that the proportion of people who regard inward migration as a problem rather than a potential asset has increased by more than four percentage points in the United States and the United Kingdom and by nine percentage points in the Netherlands. Analyses of the four ESS survey waves between 2002 and 2008 confirm that a deterioration in the economic situation, measured in terms of increased unemployment, has a negative influence on the perception of the way immigration affects the economy. This is the direction of the




Figure III.6. **Relationship between unemployment rate and beliefs about the positive economic impact of immigration**



Note: The “beliefs” variable is derived from replies to the question “Do you think immigration is good or bad for the economy?”.

Sources: European Social Survey 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008; OECD 2010, Annual Labour Force Statistics.

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relationship between the unemployment rate in European countries and the perceived effect of immigration on the economy, as described in Figure III.6. It should be noted that the temporal dimension has significantly greater explanatory power than the variability of the unemployment rate from one country to another.

To sum up, the previous analysis reveals a number of significant stylised facts. First, average opinion varies widely from one country to another: some countries are clearly more pro-immigration than others. It is not possible to explain these differences merely by pointing to different levels of exposure to immigration, although public opinion does to a certain extent seem to be influenced by trends in migratory flows. Secondly, opinion proves to be strongly influenced by the economic benefits of immigration and the willingness of immigrants to embrace the way of life of the host country. Despite the importance it attaches to humanitarian considerations, opinion actually takes a more cautious view of humanitarian or family migration than of labour migration. Thus, the findings show that respondents’ preferences reflect many different ways of viewing the matter and that opinion on immigration cannot be attributed to economic factors alone. Lastly, public opinion in most countries favours immigration from comparatively developed countries, and Europeans prefer immigrants to be from neighbouring countries.

As we shall see in the following section, opinions about immigration are clearly not homogeneous within countries and depend on many individual determinants.

## 2. Determinants of preferences over immigration

The recent academic literature, especially in economics and political science, has largely focused on analysing the determinants of individual preferences in migration policy, paying particular attention to the role played by perceptions of the economic effects of immigration and by concerns about the impact of immigration on the ways of life of local populations. At the same time, the factors that influence individual perceptions of the effects of migration and individual views on allowing entry to immigrants are either the

same or at least very closely related. In order to isolate the effect of individual characteristics on each of these variables it is therefore necessary to take account of the endogenous nature of beliefs about the impact of immigration. The following section presents an analysis of these interactions using data from the most recent surveys.

### **2.1. Socio-economic factors and individual beliefs: comparative importance of economic, cultural and political dimensions**

In dealing with the economic dimension, the literature has focused mainly on two issues: first, the impact of immigration on the national labour market; and second, the impact of new arrivals on public finances and social protection systems.

The arrival of immigrants on the domestic labour market may be seen by local workers as a source of new competition for available jobs. The actual threat of competition (which differs according to sector, level of education, etc.) has less influence on resident workers' opinions about immigration than the perceived threat.

Assuming imperfect substitutability between different types of labour, the structure of immigrants' qualifications is of crucial importance in understanding the impact of immigration on the labour market. Low-skilled native-born workers will face competition from low-skilled immigrant workers just as highly qualified native-born workers will have to compete with highly qualified immigrant workers.<sup>5</sup> Resident workers' individual opinions about immigration will consequently depend on their qualifications, and also on the nature of migration policy.<sup>6</sup>

As to the supposed implications for public finances, immigration could have two contradictory effects:

- A positive effect: the influx of immigrants, preferably with moderate or high qualifications, could provide an adequate solution to the growing problem of funding pay-as-you-go pension schemes presented by the ageing of the population in the developed countries.<sup>7</sup>
- A negative effect: low-skilled immigrants accompanied by their families may become net beneficiaries of the social protection system if, for example, they draw sickness and unemployment benefits or receive family allowances. In that case, immigration will aggravate the problem of funding pay-as-you go systems instead of remedying it.

There is no consensus in the academic literature on either of these two effects, and studies tend to find that immigration has a minimal or negligible impact on public finances (Rowthorn, 2008). However, it is the subjective perception of the effects (and not an objective assessment) that could lead individuals to come out for or against immigration.

Some theoretical analyses seek to understand how the potential impact of immigration on pay-as-you go systems can affect people's preferences over immigration, and to that end they usually take the "median voter" model used in political economics. The idea is simple: median voters benefit from social security and are consequently in favour of a generous pay-as-you go system, but they are also taxpayers and as such may worry about the impact of immigration on the amount they will have to pay. From a theoretical standpoint, Facchini and Mayda (2009) suggest that income is a key variable in determining preferences over immigration, given the supposed impact of the latter on the social protection system. However, the underlying analytical process is ambivalent. On the one hand, the impact of low-skilled immigration on the funding of social protection will be felt more by high earners, who are most likely to be paying higher income taxes. On the

other hand, if the level of funding remains the same, low-skilled immigration is liable to result in reduced benefits for native-born workers with low incomes.

Furthermore, it seems quite likely that preferences about immigration are influenced not only by economic factors but also by political and cultural attitudes, which may reflect a certain conservatism, an attachment to a certain idea of national identity, or in extreme cases xenophobic feelings towards immigrants.

Most of the empirical work that sets out to deal separately with the different roles played by economic factors and by political/cultural factors is faced with the problem of accounting for the influence of education in each case. As Hainmueller and Hiscox (2007) show with reference to the ESS 2002 (survey of EU countries), educational level is a key determinant of individual opinion about immigration, not only because it influences attitudes toward competition from immigrant workers in the job market but also because it reflects differences in cultural values. The most educated individuals are significantly more amenable to cultural diversity than the others. They are also more inclined to believe in the economic benefits of immigration.

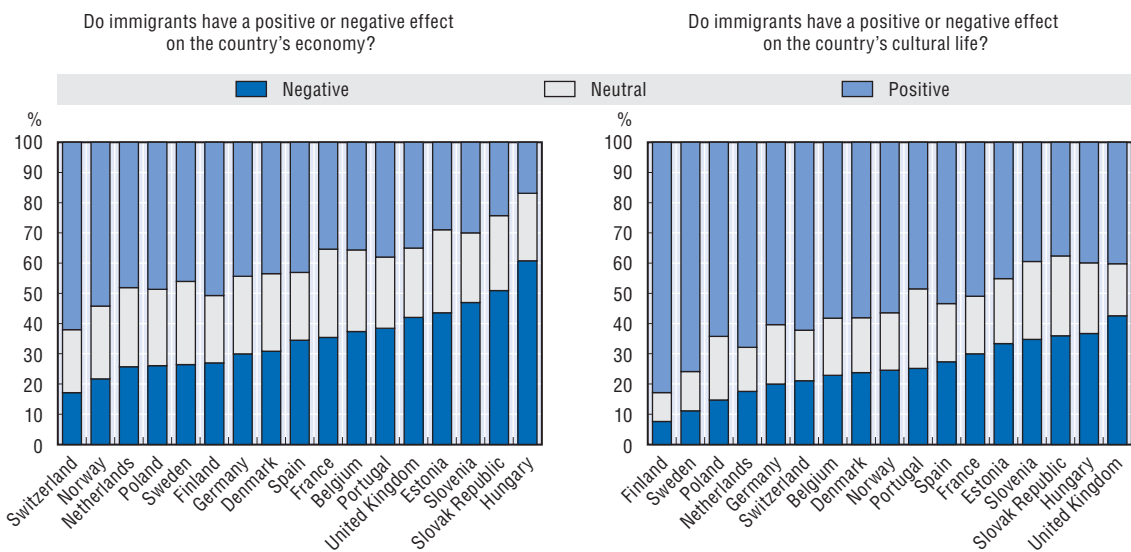
Moreover, given the normally very close correlation between education and income level, it is not always possible to give an accurate assessment of the specific effects of each one on the economic beliefs underlying preferences about immigration. Typically, if benefits are adjusted to balance the budget of the social protection system, those who are less educated and poorer are less favourable towards low-skilled immigration than others, for two reasons: because immigrants might replace them in the labour market, and because their presence might adversely affect the amount of benefit they receive. If, however, the balance is achieved by increasing taxes, rich, educated individuals will be ambiguous towards accepting low-skilled immigration: although they will benefit from the positive impact on the labour market, they will also face tax increases (see Facchini and Mayda, 2009). Empirical analysis is therefore faced with a twofold ambivalence. First, if taxation remains the same, expected impacts for a given educational and income level are identical, given that the correlation between the two variables makes it impossible to distinguish the specific effects of each one. Second, if social security payments remain the same, the effects of the “income” and the “level of education” variables are likely to cancel each other out. It is therefore empirically very difficult to maintain with any certainty that income or education exerts a clear influence in either case.

The two-stage empirical approach adopted in this chapter is intended to resolve a number of problems found in the literature to date. This approach first sets out to analyse the individual determinants of beliefs about the economic and cultural repercussions of immigration. It then goes on to analyse the influence of those beliefs on preferences over migration policy.


The **first-stage** estimate takes account of demographic variables (gender, age), political orientation, level of education (primary, secondary, higher), labour market (employed, inactive, unemployed), as well as variables that reflect the respondent's exposure or proximity to other types of people (rural or urban place of residence, national or foreign origin of respondent and his/her ancestors). The estimated specification also includes dummy variables by country and year to control for unobserved factors at national level (relating to migratory policies, social protection systems, standard of living, etc.) and at different times (economic shocks affecting all countries).

In the case of the ESS survey, which covers European countries only, the two dependent variables examined are the perceived consequences of immigration on the economy and its perceived consequences on the culture. They are graded from 0 (completely negative) to 10 (completely positive). Figure III.7 shows that average opinions tend to be more positive about the impact on the culture than about the impact on the economy. The estimate is based on a standard linear equation and includes three additional variables reflecting exposure to general information and political and social topics from various media (television, radio, the press, etc.). The role of these three instrumental variables in our two-stage procedure is to control the endogenous nature of beliefs underlying preferences over migration policy (see below).

Figure III.7. **Perceived impact of immigration on the economy and the cultural life, 2008**



Source: European Social Survey 2008.

StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/883173764572>

With the ISSP survey it is possible to extend the analysis to non-European OECD countries. In this survey, the two dependent variables addressed are opinions about the impact of immigration (favourable or unfavourable) on the economy and on cultural life. Because these are discrete variables, it is necessary to employ a non-linear Probit method of estimation. The explanatory variables are very similar to those used for ESS survey estimates.

The **second stage** of the empirical analysis focuses on the determinants of preferences about migration policy. The estimated equation takes account of all the explanatory variables from the first stage (with the exception of instrumental variables) as well as those representing beliefs about the impact of migrations. In the case of the ESS survey, the estimation takes account of the endogenous nature of these belief variables, replacing their observed values with predicted values derived from the first-stage estimates. This is not possible in the case of the ISSP survey, because of a lack of valid instruments for the first-stage estimation.

### 2.1.1. Overall analysis

Tables III.1 and III.2 present the results of estimates from the ESS and the ISSP survey, respectively. As far as possible, the variables used in the different surveys have been harmonised to facilitate comparison of the results (see Annex III.A1 for a breakdown of countries covered by each survey; see Annex III.A2 for similar results from the WVS survey). In order to highlight differences in the effects of explanatory variables from one country to another, Table III.3 presents the results of estimates for five European countries (France, Germany, Ireland, Spain and the United Kingdom), based on the four waves of the ESS survey, and for three non-European countries (Australia, Japan and the United States), based on the 2003 ISSP survey.

The **first stage** of the analysis reveals a close correlation between determinants of beliefs about the effect of migration, both in terms of its cultural as well as its economic impact (columns 1 and 4 of Table III.1 and columns 1 and 3 of Table III.2). In both cases, political convictions significantly influence the beliefs of respondents: the further they are to the right of the ideological spectrum, the more they see immigration as having a negative impact. It is interesting to note that this finding is significantly more marked with respect to the cultural impact. It should also be noted that the “political positioning” variable has no significant effect at all in Ireland or Japan, and no particular effect on perceptions of the economic impact in Australia or the United States. This is a remarkable finding, which probably reflects a certain consensus on the economic consequences of immigration among the different political parties of these countries. In France and Germany, on the other hand, political differences tend to polarise beliefs about immigration.

The effect of the gender variable differs, depending on the type of impact in question. It seems that women have a more negative perception than men of the impact of migration on the economy but not of its impact on culture.

The way in which age influences these beliefs also varies. The estimation based on the ESS survey shows that the oldest respondents have a more negative perception of the impact of immigration, both on the economy and on culture. As to the estimates from the ISSP survey, while they fail to show that age significantly affects beliefs about the impact of immigration on cultural life, they do indicate that its influence on beliefs about the impact on the economy is contrary to the findings of the ESS survey. These apparently contradictory results reflect the difficulties in the literature to offer a theoretically sound justification of the influence of age, although a certain number of empirical articles agree that older people have a negative perception of the impact of immigration.

The effect of the education variables is in line with expectations. Generally speaking, people with a higher level of education are more inclined to believe that immigration will benefit the economy and culture of their country (Tables III.1 and III.2). This finding seems very robust in all countries surveyed, with the exception of Japan (Table III.3). The individual’s employment situation also seems to be an important determinant. The unemployed have a far more negative perception of the impact of immigration than those in employment.<sup>8</sup> Being inactive, on the other hand, has no influence one way or another.

Respondents living in rural areas are more likely to believe that immigration will have a negative impact, whereas those who have themselves been migrants are more inclined to expect economic and cultural benefits from it.

Table III.1. **Determinants of beliefs about the impact of immigration and preferences over migration policy, ESS survey, 2002-2008**

Variables	First stage	Second stage		First stage	Second stage	
	Positive impact of immigration on economy	Migration policy and economic benefits of immigration		Positive impact of immigration on cultural life	Migration policy and cultural benefits of immigration	
		Similar immigration	Dissimilar immigration		Similar immigration	Dissimilar immigration
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Positive impact of immigration on the country's economy		-0.136*** (0.009)	-0.168*** (0.008)			
Positive impact of immigration on the country's cultural life					-0.146*** (0.008)	-0.175*** (0.005)
Ideological orientation left-right	-0.098*** (0.023)	0.003 (0.003)	0.014*** (0.002)	-0.163*** (0.029)	-0.008*** (0.003)	-0.001 (0.003)
Women	-0.284*** (0.028)	-0.024*** (0.007)	-0.044*** (0.008)	0.042 (0.064)	0.018** (0.008)	0.011* (0.006)
Age 25-34	-0.257*** (0.047)	0.039*** (0.011)	0.021* (0.012)	-0.212*** (0.058)	0.040*** (0.013)	0.021* (0.012)
Age 35-44	-0.230*** (0.034)	0.041*** (0.013)	0.034** (0.014)	-0.173*** (0.056)	0.047*** (0.015)	0.037** (0.016)
Age 45-54	-0.202*** (0.048)	0.055*** (0.015)	0.071*** (0.016)	-0.317*** (0.078)	0.032** (0.016)	0.039** (0.018)
Age 55-64	-0.361*** (0.063)	0.053*** (0.017)	0.095*** (0.014)	-0.574*** (0.085)	0.011 (0.021)	0.038* (0.020)
Age 65-74	-0.523*** (0.098)	0.078*** (0.014)	0.126*** (0.012)	-0.826*** (0.096)	0.014 (0.016)	0.046*** (0.014)
Age 75+	-0.536*** (0.059)	0.104*** (0.017)	0.156*** (0.011)	-0.922*** (0.094)	0.026* (0.015)	0.059*** (0.015)
Secondary education	0.382*** (0.054)	-0.039*** (0.008)	-0.013** (0.007)	0.411*** (0.088)	-0.021** (0.010)	0.007 (0.008)
Tertiary education	1.335*** (0.118)	-0.064*** (0.015)	-0.033*** (0.013)	1.389*** (0.173)	-0.023 (0.023)	0.014 (0.021)
Inactive	0.054* (0.033)	-0.006 (0.005)	-0.009 (0.009)	0.038 (0.028)	-0.005 (0.005)	-0.009 (0.008)
Unemployed	-0.381*** (0.106)	0.005 (0.005)	-0.023*** (0.007)	-0.235** (0.092)	0.018 (0.011)	-0.005 (0.012)
Rural areas	-0.205*** (0.044)	0.004 (0.006)	0.016** (0.007)	-0.229*** (0.068)	-0.003 (0.006)	0.006 (0.005)
Native-born with foreign-born parents	0.383*** (0.087)	-0.010 (0.019)	-0.006 (0.013)	0.463*** (0.060)	0.010 (0.016)	0.017 (0.011)
Foreign-born with foreign-born parents	1.100*** (0.102)	0.037* (0.021)	0.068*** (0.016)	0.960*** (0.143)	0.041 (0.028)	0.067*** (0.014)
Foreign-born with native-born parents	0.379*** (0.130)	-0.017 (0.028)	-0.028 (0.035)	0.389*** (0.131)	-0.001 (0.028)	-0.013 (0.035)
Exposure to general information, political and social TV shows	0.009 (0.019)			0.013 (0.018)		
Exposure to general information, political and social topics on the radio	0.055*** (0.021)			0.049*** (0.019)		
Exposure to general information, political and social topics on newspapers	0.203*** (0.024)			0.165*** (0.018)		
Observations	120 340	120 340	120 256	120 646	120 646	120 551

Note: \*\*\*, \*\*, \* represent significance levels at 1, 5 and 10%, respectively. Robust standard deviations in brackets, corrected for heteroscedasticity clustered by country. Maximum likelihood test for the joint estimation of first and second-stage equations. The Amamiya-Lee-Newey overidentification test for instruments does not reject the chosen instruments. The Wald test rejects at the 1% level the null hypothesis that the attitude variable is exogenous. For the second stage, the marginal effects are reported at the mean for the continuous variables. All regressions include dummy variables for country and year. The reference categories are: male, age 15-24, primary education, employed, urban environment, native-born with native-born parents.

"Similar immigration": immigration of an ethnic origin that is similar to the majority of residents.

"Dissimilar immigration": immigration of an ethnic origin that is different from the majority of residents.

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Table III.2. **Determinants of beliefs about the impact of immigration and preferences over migration policy, ISSP survey, 2003**

Variables	Beliefs	Migration policy	Beliefs	Migration policy
	Positive impact of immigration on economy	Wishing a reduction of immigration	Positive impact of immigration on cultural life	Wishing a reduction of immigration
	1	2	3	4
Positive impact of immigration on the country's economy		-0.334*** (0.017)		
Positive impact of immigration on the country's cultural life				-0.343*** (0.016)
Ideological orientation left-right	-0.037*** (0.008)	0.066*** (0.012)	-0.061*** (0.011)	0.061*** (0.010)
Women	-0.056*** (0.008)	0.006 (0.009)	0.016 (0.011)	0.028*** (0.008)
Age 25-34	0.000 (0.018)	0.007 (0.016)	-0.036** (0.018)	-0.004 (0.015)
Age 35-44	0.040** (0.019)	0.046*** (0.016)	-0.019 (0.021)	0.035** (0.016)
Age 45-54	0.081*** (0.020)	0.058*** (0.018)	-0.003 (0.018)	0.043** (0.017)
Age 55-64	0.097*** (0.027)	0.092*** (0.017)	-0.026 (0.026)	0.064*** (0.017)
Age 65-74	0.106*** (0.025)	0.091*** (0.020)	-0.011 (0.029)	0.065*** (0.019)
Age 75+	0.100*** (0.031)	0.113*** (0.026)	-0.052 (0.038)	0.078*** (0.027)
Secondary education	0.068*** (0.020)	-0.080*** (0.015)	0.070*** (0.016)	-0.076*** (0.012)
Tertiary education	0.155*** (0.018)	-0.182*** (0.014)	0.178*** (0.017)	-0.169*** (0.013)
Inactive	-0.003 (0.011)	0.004 (0.010)	-0.019 (0.012)	-0.004 (0.009)
Unemployed	-0.065*** (0.015)	0.036 (0.023)	-0.045** (0.019)	0.042** (0.020)
Rural areas	-0.038*** (0.009)	0.024*** (0.009)	-0.049*** (0.012)	0.022** (0.009)
Native-born with foreign-born parents	0.162*** (0.017)	-0.100*** (0.016)	0.150*** (0.014)	-0.106*** (0.014)
Foreign-born with foreign-born parents	0.266*** (0.033)	-0.222*** (0.037)	0.185*** (0.037)	-0.251*** (0.044)
Foreign-born with native-born parents	0.157*** (0.038)	-0.139 (0.086)	0.029 (0.058)	-0.192*** (0.072)
Observations	24 923	23 034	25 302	23 292

Note: \*\*\*, \*\*, \* represent significance levels at 1, 5 and 10%, respectively. Robust standard deviations in brackets, corrected for heteroscedasticity clustered by country. Maximum Likelihood Estimation. Marginal effects are reported at the mean for the continuous variables. All regressions include dummy variables for country. The reference categories are: male, age 15-24, primary education, employed, urban environment, native-born with native-born parents.

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Table III.3. **Determinants of beliefs about the impact of immigration and preferences about immigration policy, analysis by country**

	Positive impact of immigration on economy	Positive impact of immigration on cultural life	Ideological orientation left-right	Secondary education	Tertiary education	Inactive	Unemployed	Observations
<i>European countries (ESS 2002, 2004, 2006 et 2008)</i>								
<b>Germany</b>								
Positive impact of immigration on economy			-0.172***	0.248	0.994***	-0.027	-0.703***	9 573
Wishing a reduction of immigration	-0.149***		0.020**	-0.026	-0.054	-0.017	-0.011	9 557
Positive impact of immigration on cultural life			-0.244***	0.294	1.053***	-0.011	-0.393***	9 732
Wishing a reduction of immigration		-0.180***	-0.007	0.018	0.035	-0.010	0.012	9 713
<b>Spain</b>								
Positive impact of immigration on economy			-0.124***	0.497***	1.194***	0.130	-0.341**	5 442
Wishing a reduction of immigration	-0.100**		0.029***	-0.026	-0.139**	-0.007	-0.045	5 429
Positive impact of immigration on cultural life			-0.176***	0.336***	0.863***	0.061	-0.090	5 405
Wishing a reduction of immigration		-0.126**	0.018	-0.021	-0.122*	-0.007	-0.021	5 390
<b>France</b>								
Positive impact of immigration on economy			-0.150***	0.577***	1.691***	0.150*	-0.086	5 872
Wishing a reduction of immigration	-0.204***		0.006	-0.006	0.022	0.011	-0.020	5 897
Positive impact of immigration on cultural life			-0.247***	0.632***	1.818***	0.124	0.162	5 886
Wishing a reduction of immigration		-0.185***	-0.011*	0.001	0.031	-0.001	0.027	5 911
<b>Great-Britain</b>								
Positive impact of immigration on economy			-0.076***	0.341	1.579***	0.200**	-0.083	5 343
Wishing a reduction of immigration	-0.178***		0.020***	-0.153	-0.173	0.024	-0.085**	5 347
Positive impact of immigration on cultural life			-0.120***	0.085	1.544***	0.161*	0.081	5 347
Wishing a reduction of immigration		-0.178***	0.007	-0.153	-0.102	0.015	-0.043	5 355
<b>Ireland</b>								
Positive impact of immigration on economy			0.017	0.510***	1.438***	-0.031	-0.419*	5 293
Wishing a reduction of immigration	-0.133***		0.009*	-0.019	-0.047	-0.015	0.056	5 276
Positive impact of immigration on cultural life			0.012	0.561***	1.613***	-0.005	-0.143	5 259
Wishing a reduction of immigration		-0.143***	0.008*	0.003	-0.004	-0.014	0.082*	5 237
<i>Non-European countries (ISSP 2003)</i>								
<b>Australia</b>								
Positive impact of immigration on economy			-0.012	0.069**	0.126***	-0.021	-0.194**	1 985
Wishing a reduction of immigration	-0.400***		0.053***	-0.085**	-0.137***	-0.009	0.022	1 864
Positive impact of immigration on cultural life			-0.046***	0.103***	0.127***	-0.036	-0.115	2 013
Wishing a reduction of immigration		-0.396***	0.041***	-0.067*	-0.132***	-0.010	0.065	1 889
<b>United States</b>								
Positive impact of immigration on economy			-0.019	0.115**	0.237***	-0.018	-0.100	1 177
Wishing a reduction of immigration	-0.328***		0.060***	-0.023	-0.094	-0.000	0.106	1 073
Positive impact of immigration on cultural life			-0.053***	0.012	0.220***	-0.069*	-0.107	1 183
Wishing a reduction of immigration		-0.363***	0.045**	-0.038	-0.072	-0.033	0.110	1 076
<b>Japan</b>								
Positive impact of immigration on economy			-0.044	-0.023	0.052	-0.110***	-0.209***	880
Wishing a reduction of immigration	-0.188***		0.058*	-0.077	-0.163***	0.027	0.142	744
Positive impact of immigration on cultural life			-0.019	-0.068*	-0.002	0.007	-0.143***	872
Wishing a reduction of immigration		-0.252***	0.056*	-0.089*	-0.137**	0.036	0.145	743

Note: \*\*\*, \*\*, \* represent significance levels at 1, 5 and 10%, respectively. The significance is evaluated at the mean of robust standard deviations (not reported). The estimation methods, the variables included in the estimations and the reference categories are the same as for Table III.1 (European countries, ESS survey) and III.2 (non-European countries, ISSP survey), respectively. For the European countries: simultaneous estimation of the two equations; for the non-European countries, the estimation was done separately without taking into account the endogeneity of the attitude variables. In order to make the presentation as clear as possible, we only report the coefficients of key variables for determining attitudes and immigration preferences, namely: the type of attitude regarding the impact of immigration (on the economy or culture), the political orientation, the level of education and employment status. The other variables (see Tables III.1 and III.2) have also been included in the estimation.

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Lastly, two or three instrumental variables used in the estimates from the ESS survey are influential in shaping beliefs about the consequences of immigration for the economy and cultural life. It seems that exposure to radio programmes and newspaper or magazine articles on current political and social issues encourages belief in the benefits of immigration. More surprisingly, time spent watching television programmes on the same subjects has no significant influence on these beliefs.

The **second-stage** estimates are concerned with the determinants of preferences over migration policy (see columns 2, 3, 5 and 6 of Table III.1, and columns 2 and 4 of Table III.2). They are used first of all to determine the extent to which beliefs shape preferences over migration policy and then (in the case of the ESS survey) to distinguish between the variables' direct influence on preferences and their indirect influence, i.e. the influence mediated through beliefs.

An initial general overview of the results shows that these beliefs exert considerable influence, whichever survey is considered (including the *World Value Survey*, see Annex III.A2). The belief that immigration has a positive impact leads to a desire for more open migration policies. The influence appears to be rather more marked where the beliefs have to do with the impact on cultural life. Mayda (2006) and Facchini and Mayda (2008) have also shown that people are more willing to welcome immigrants if they believe that immigration has a positive impact on the host country's economy and culture. Malchow-Møller *et al.* (2008) pursue this analysis further, showing that individuals who believe that natives compete with immigrants in the labour market are significantly more opposed to immigration. Moreover, according to their analysis opposition to immigration is greater when the respondent is unemployed or living below the poverty threshold.

The ESS survey provides a means of distinguishing between preferences over immigration according to the type of migration in question, i.e. whether the immigrants are "of the same ethnic or racial origin as most of the resident population" or rather "of a different ethnic or racial origin from that of most of the resident population". When the migration policy applies to immigrants of a different ethnic origin from that of the majority, it seems that the effect of beliefs, whether about economic or cultural consequences, is much greater. These results show – and as far as we know the point has never been highlighted in previous work on the subject – that respondents demand more in terms of economic or cultural benefits from immigrants of a different ethnic origin than from those of a similar one.

The country analysis presented in Table III.3 confirms the robustness of this result. In European countries the influence of beliefs is greater in France, the United Kingdom and Germany (in descending order) than in Ireland or Spain. All things being equal, this implies that French, British and German natives demand greater benefits from immigration to accept a more open migration policy. Outside Europe, the English-speaking countries (Australia and the United States) are quite distinct from Japan, where beliefs have less influence in shaping preferences over migration policy.

Part of the influence of individual characteristics on preferences is actually mediated through beliefs about the impact of immigration. By analysing the coefficients from the second-stage estimation of the ESS, it is possible, for a given belief, to gain a more precise appreciation of the effect of individual variables on preferences about immigration.

Ideological orientation still exerts some direct influence on preferences over migration policy, much as it did in the first-stage estimation. If expectations over the economic or

cultural effect of migrations are controlled for, it emerges that, all else being equal, right-wing voters are less inclined to support an open migration policy. These findings are similar to those of *inter alia* Kessler and Freeman (2005), Mayda (2006), Facchini and Mayda (2008), Miguet (2008) and Malchow-Møller *et al.* (2008).<sup>9</sup>

The effects of gender are found to be much less clear-cut. In the case of the ESS survey, where the belief variable relates to the impact of immigration on the economy, it seems that women are on average more in favour of an open migration system, particularly if it is bound to favour migrants whose ethnic origin is different from that of the majority. But where the belief variable relates to the impact of immigration on cultural life, it seems that women are on average less in favour of an open migration policy. The estimate with data from the ISSP survey confirms this finding. The ambiguity of these results finds an echo in the literature, which has difficulty providing a coherent analysis grid for the potential effects of gender on attitudes towards migration policy.

The findings of recent literature present the same ambiguity. Bauer *et al.* (2000), O'Rourke and Sinnott (2006), Facchini and Mayda (2008), for example, fail to provide any illustration of a specific gender-related effect on attitudes to migration, whereas Mayda (2006), Hatton (2007), Malchow-Møller *et al.* (2008) conclude that women are less open to immigration than their male counterparts. Explicit control of the endogenous nature of beliefs on the impact of migration evidently fails to shed light on this matter and further analyses appear to be needed before a conclusion can be reached.

Regarding the impact of age, it is impossible to draw any conclusions one way or the other from the first-stage estimates. The second-stage estimate, however, reveals that age has a systematically negative effect on attitudes towards opening up to immigrants. In other words, for a given belief about the economic and cultural effects of migration, older people will be in favour of more restrictive migration policies. This finding is particularly apparent when the immigrants concerned are of a different origin than that of the majority (columns 3 and 6 of Table III.1). Empirical literature also finds that in most cases, older people have a more negative view of immigration (see Kessler and Freeman, 2005, Mayda, 2006, O'Rourke and Sinnott, 2006, and Malchow-Møller *et al.*, 2008). Facchini and Mayda (2008) confirm these findings for the year 1995, but not for 2003. While theoretical attempts to link the effect of age on people's opinions to economic concerns about immigration are not conclusive, we cannot exclude the possibility that the observed effect of age on individual opinions captures non-economic factors that have to do with political or cultural preferences.

The effect of education on preferences about immigration appears to be one of the most robust results, whichever survey is considered. By and large, more educated people are more in favour of an open immigration policy. This finding emerges for any belief variable in the case of the ISSP survey (and also the WVS survey, see Annex III.A2). In the case of the ESS, this finding is all the more telling in that it emerged despite controls on the effect of education on the perception of the economic impact of immigration. It must, however, be put into perspective, given that the effect of education on preferences over migration policies partly disappears when the perception of the cultural impact of immigration is controlled for (columns 5 and 6 of Table III.1).

Likewise, Daniels and Von der Ruhr (2003) show that skills level is a robust determinant of immigration policy preferences and that the least skilled workers are most inclined to favour restrictive policies. For her part, Mayda (2006) shows that in countries

where native-born workers are higher skilled than immigrants, skilled workers are more in favour of immigration, while unskilled workers will be opposed to it. O'Rourke and Sinnott (2006) corroborate these conclusions, as well as the theoretical predictions of Bilal *et al.* (2003) that growing income inequalities aggravate hostility towards immigrants. Lastly, Ortega and Polavieja (2009) build upon these findings by studying the link between the level of competition between native-born workers and immigrants in the labour market and attitudes towards immigration. They show that individuals employed in sectors where such competition is less pronounced are more supportive of immigration than others. Moreover, their estimates suggest that the protection provided by a qualification specific to each job is clearly different from that provided by level of education. These findings highlight the need to make more of the distinction between level of school/university education and level of skill required for a particular job in future research into migration policy preferences.

As to employment status, nearly all our findings tend to show that its effect on attitudes towards migration policy is actually mediated through the belief variable. The coefficients for the "inactive" and "unemployed" variables are most often insignificant, whichever survey or belief variable is considered. Two exceptions should be noted. First, in the ESS survey, the unemployed were on average significantly less hostile to immigrants of a different ethnic origin from that of the majority (but not to the others), which may at first sight seem counter-intuitive. Second, according to the ISSP survey, if the belief variable relates to impact on cultural considerations, the unemployed tend on average to support a more restrictive migration policy. These findings are consistent with those given above with respect to education, and more generally with those of Hainmueller and Hiscox (2007). The latter show that, while educational level (closely related to employment status) is a key determinant of individual opinion about immigration, the relationship between the two not only involves fear of competition from immigrants in the labour market, but also reflects differences in cultural values.

Regarding the variable on the respondents' place of residence, the findings tend to show that those living in rural areas are, all else being equal, more in favour of a restrictive migration policy. The effect is, however, greatly reduced in the case of the ESS when controlling for the endogenous nature of beliefs about the impact of migrations.

More generally, although along the same lines, people who have lived or have family roots abroad may be more open to other cultures and therefore more supportive of immigration. The first-stage estimate showed that such people have a more positive perception of the economic and cultural impact of migrations. In the case of the ISSP, the findings show that individuals who have been migrants in the past are also more supportive of an open migration policy. In some cases these findings are in sharp contrast with those of the second-stage estimate derived from the ESS. This discrepancy arises because the latter takes account of the endogenous nature of beliefs about immigration in its estimates, unlike other empirical studies in this area.<sup>10</sup> These findings thus give rise to two different interpretations. One is that former immigrants have an extremely positive view about the impact of immigration compared with other individuals exhibiting similar preferences over migration policy. The alternative interpretation is that former immigrants may on average be more hostile to immigration than other individuals with similar beliefs about the benefits of immigration. These results thus serve to qualify and refine those previously found in the literature (see Haubert and Fussel, 2006; Hatton, 2007, and Facchini and Mayda, 2008).<sup>11</sup>

## 2.2. The question of immigrants' access to social and political rights

Public preferences extend beyond the question of migration policy itself to that of the social entitlements immigrants might enjoy. This very sensitive issue is particularly important, in that it is related to the economic and fiscal impact of migration and hence to preferences over migration policy.

The most recent ESS survey (2008) has a special module on social services and benefits with questions on preferences about immigrants' access to social services. Table III.4 shows that in most of the countries surveyed, more than a third of respondents feel that immigrants' eligibility for social entitlements should be conditional upon their becoming citizens of the country or even that they should never be granted such eligibility. This proportion is particularly high (around 50% or even higher) in the Central European countries (Hungary, Slovenia and Poland), the Netherlands and Finland but is much lower in Portugal, Switzerland, Spain and France (30% or less). The Nordic countries (Sweden, Denmark and Norway) have the highest proportion of respondents in favour of granting social benefits to immigrants without requiring them to have paid social security contributions first. (In other words, immigrants should be allowed benefits as soon as they arrive or after a year's residence, whether they have worked or not.)

Table III.4. **Different countries' public opinion on conditions governing immigrants' eligibility to the same social entitlements enjoyed by those already resident in the country, 2008**

Per cent

	Without condition of contribution to the social protection system	After a year of contribution to the social protection system	Access restricted to the citizens or native-born only
Portugal	21	61	18
Switzerland	25	56	19
Spain	20	54	27
France	23	46	31
Sweden	36	32	32
Belgium	17	48	35
Germany	21	43	36
Denmark	30	32	38
Norway	26	34	39
Slovak Republic	12	48	40
United Kingdom	11	48	40
Finland	18	37	45
Netherlands	17	36	47
Poland	13	39	48
Slovenia	9	33	58
Hungary	5	30	65

Note: Data are from the ESS 2008 survey. The first column groups the categories "Immediately on arrival" and "After living in the country for a year, whether or not they have worked". The third column groups the categories "Once they have become a citizen" and "Never".

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Preferences about immigrants' right to benefit from a social protection system can generally be put down to individual characteristics. Table III.5 first of all shows, quite logically, that people who think immigrants are net beneficiaries of the social protection system are more hostile to the idea of them receiving social benefits, whether as a matter of course or even after they have worked and paid taxes for a year.

In the case of the United States, Ilias *et al.* (2008) also show that the perception of the cost of immigration is the main determinant of people's preferences in this matter. It seems, nevertheless, that the trade-off between immigration and social protection is not an issue in certain countries.

Table III.5. **Individual determinants of opinions about immigrants' eligibility for social benefits, ESS Survey 2008**

	When should access to social benefits be given to immigrants				
	Upon their arrival	After a year of residence, whether they have worked or not	After having worked and paid taxes during a year	After becoming citizens	Never
Net contribution of immigrants to the social protection system	0.017*** (0.001)	0.014*** (0.001)	0.015*** (0.001)	-0.034*** (0.003)	-0.012*** (0.001)
Ideological orientation left-right	-0.007*** (0.001)	-0.005*** (0.001)	-0.006*** (0.001)	0.013*** (0.002)	0.005*** (0.001)
Women	0.004*** (0.001)	0.003*** (0.001)	0.003*** (0.001)	-0.008*** (0.003)	-0.003*** (0.001)
Age 25-34	-0.014*** (0.004)	-0.012*** (0.003)	-0.015*** (0.005)	0.030*** (0.008)	0.011*** (0.004)
Age 35-44	-0.006 (0.005)	-0.005 (0.004)	-0.005 (0.005)	0.012 (0.011)	0.004 (0.004)
Age 45-54	-0.013** (0.005)	-0.011** (0.005)	-0.014** (0.006)	0.028** (0.012)	0.010** (0.004)
Age 55-64	-0.010* (0.005)	-0.009* (0.005)	-0.010* (0.006)	0.022* (0.012)	0.008* (0.004)
Age 65-74	-0.017*** (0.006)	-0.015*** (0.005)	-0.019** (0.008)	0.037** (0.014)	0.014** (0.005)
Age 75+	-0.014*** (0.004)	-0.012*** (0.004)	-0.015*** (0.005)	0.031*** (0.010)	0.011*** (0.003)
Secondary education	0.016*** (0.003)	0.013*** (0.002)	0.015*** (0.003)	-0.032*** (0.005)	-0.011*** (0.003)
Tertiary education	0.040*** (0.005)	0.030*** (0.003)	0.026*** (0.003)	-0.073*** (0.008)	-0.023*** (0.004)
Inactive	-0.008 (0.005)	-0.006 (0.004)	-0.007* (0.004)	0.015 (0.009)	0.005 (0.003)
Unemployed	-0.013* (0.007)	-0.011* (0.006)	-0.014* (0.008)	0.028* (0.015)	0.010 (0.006)
Rural areas	-0.016*** (0.004)	-0.012*** (0.003)	-0.012*** (0.004)	0.030*** (0.008)	0.010*** (0.003)
Native-born with foreign-born parents	0.015*** (0.001)	0.012*** (0.001)	0.011*** (0.001)	-0.029*** (0.003)	-0.009*** (0.001)
Foreign-born with foreign-born parents	0.062*** (0.012)	0.042*** (0.008)	0.022*** (0.002)	-0.099*** (0.015)	-0.027*** (0.005)
Foreign-born with native-born parents	0.036** (0.016)	0.026** (0.011)	0.018*** (0.002)	-0.062*** (0.023)	-0.018*** (0.006)
Observations	27 661	27 661	27 661	27 661	27 661

Note: \*\*\*, \*\*, \* represent significance levels at 1, 5 and 10%, respectively. Robust standard deviations in brackets, corrected for heteroscedasticity clustered by country. Maximum Likelihood estimation. Marginal effects are reported at the mean for the continuous variables. All regressions include dummy variables for country. The reference categories are: male, age 15-24, primary education, employed, urban environment, born in the country of parents who were also born in the country.

StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/884871447368>

Generally speaking, the people likely to be most dependent on social benefits more often wish to restrict immigrants' access to such benefits, probably because they feel they are in competition with them for such benefits. This seems to be the case of the elderly, for example, and, to a lesser extent, of the unemployed. In the case of the European Union, this finding has also been highlighted by Malchow-Møller *et al.* (2008), among others. In contrast, more educated people, who are less likely to receive a significant part of their income from the social protection system, are much more amenable to the idea of making immigrants eligible for benefits as a matter of course. Right-wing political sympathies are associated with the view that immigrants' entitlement to social benefits should be more restricted. On the other hand, living in a town or being of foreign origin is associated with a more liberal attitude.

The nature of the social protection system may also influence preferences about migration policy. Opinion surveys generally indicate that opposition to immigration is strongest in countries where the social security system is most protective and where the labour market is most rigid. From their examination of votes on immigration issues in the American Congress between 1979 and 2006, Milner and Tingley (2008) discover an interesting ambiguity. On one hand, representatives of states where public spending is high tend to be more pro-immigration; on the other hand, representatives from the wealthier districts within those same states tend to be more reluctant to accept immigration. Betts (2002) finds the reverse for Australia. To explain the falling-off of anti-immigration feelings between 1996 and 2001-2002,<sup>12</sup> she highlights the role of declining unemployment and also that of the legislative reform disqualifying immigrants from drawing social benefits upon their arrival. She also emphasises that Australians' subjective perceptions exaggerate actual cutbacks in social spending.

Gorodzeisky and Semyonov (2009) adopt a more general approach, maintaining that opinions hostile to non-European immigrants actually have two distinct origins: first, the refusal to grant these minorities access to national territory, and second, the refusal to grant them similar rights to the ones enjoyed by nationals. Their findings, based on the ESS 2002 survey, tend to show that the rejection to grant them equal rights is less marked than the rejection to admit them onto national territory. Echoing the previous findings on opinions about migration policy, the authors highlight the clear distinction between attitudes towards foreigners in general and attitudes towards ethnic minorities. Those expressing a preference for a restrictive migration policy are also more inclined to deny immigrants the rights enjoyed by the native-born population. Moreover, the authors show that women, older people, unemployed, and people on the right of the political spectrum tend on average to be less open to migration and more inclined to restrict social benefits for immigrants. In contrast, those with a higher level of education or a higher income are more favourably disposed towards migrants, whether in terms of allowing them onto national territory or granting them rights. It is an interesting fact that the section of the population that originates from non-EU countries also seems to lean more towards restricting the right of migrants either to enter national territory or to receive social benefits.

Lastly, it must be pointed out that Gorodzeisky and Semyonov (2009) take the notion of "rights" to refer to a "system of rights and privileges". This construction encompasses the notion of social entitlements (in the sense access to the social protection system) but goes much further. More than social rights, the question it raises concerns the political rights granted to the immigrant when he or she is granted citizenship.

### 3. Interest groups and their influence on migration policy

The above has mainly highlighted the role of perceptions about the costs and benefits of immigration for residents of the host country. It is natural, then, that people transmit their voices heard through the various channels available to them, whether these are labour unions, political parties, or other pressure groups. On a theoretical level, Freeman (2002) shows, for example, that immigration policy can be interpreted as the outcome of the struggle between pro- and anti-immigration lobbies.

Immigration offers capital holders (or employers) easier access to the labour they need and perhaps also an opportunity to cut staff costs (3.1). On the other hand, foreign workers are likely to be in competition with native-born workers in the labour market. In this context, the attitude of labour unions toward the issue of immigration is still ambiguous despite the considerable progress made in recent years (3.2). Other groups, such as religious organisations or immigrants' associations, generally speak out in favour of immigrants (3.3). These different pressure groups produce cleavages within political parties, which often transcend the right/left split (3.4).

#### 3.1. Employers' associations

"Immigration policy today is driven by businesses that need more workers – skilled and unskilled, legal and illegal." (Goldsborough, 2000)

Empirical studies of the impact which employers' associations may have on migration policies are relatively scarce (compared with those focusing on labour unions), and they relate mainly to the United States. Some of their findings are quite interesting. In a study that looked into the impact of lobbies on the shaping of immigration policies, Facchini *et al.* (2008) found that barriers to immigration are significantly weaker in sectors of activity where employers' associations are most influential. Their estimates suggest that a 10% hike in lobbying expenditure by groups of business leaders will spark an increase of 2.3% to 7.4% in the number of work visas issued for firms in the sector concerned. From the same perspective, Hanson and Spilimbergo (2001) show that controls at the Mexico-US border are less stringent when demand for workers rises in US border states. Indeed, as the economic situation improves for sectors that make substantial use of immigrant labour in the West of the United States, the intensity of controls at the Mexican border seems to relax significantly.

Comparing the situations in Germany, France and the United Kingdom, Menz (2007) notes that German and British employers are quicker to try to influence immigration policies in their favour. A consensus has emerged among German and British employers' associations that immigration is necessary to resolve labour shortages in certain sectors.

Employers' preference for labour immigration is also closely dependent on the structure of the economy in question. As the British economy has moved steadily into tertiary activities, employers have promoted policies that will favour the recruitment of foreign workers with the skills needed to meet shortages in engineering, information technology and finance. On the other hand, French businesses, less concerned with these labour market constraints, were until recently less inclined to weigh in on migration policies. German entrepreneurs, especially those in the metalworking sector, have given strong support to immigration of highly-skilled workers to reinforce their specialisation in high value-added products.

### 3.2. Labour unions

Labour union interest in migration policies is less clear-cut than that of employers' associations. A number of considerations might prompt unions either to welcome or to oppose immigrant workers. On the one hand, the unions may adopt a pro-immigration position to protect the weakest, reaffirm the international nature of the class struggle or, more pragmatically, increase their support base. On the other hand, the desire to protect local workers from downward pressure on wages caused by a rise in the number of job-seekers may make the unions hostile to immigration. This fundamental ambiguity explains the diversity and the occasional contradictions in the various studies on the subject, empirical and historical alike.

Of the studies that take a historical perspective, the majority focuses on the changing attitude of unions towards migrant workers over the course of time: broadly hostile to waves of immigration at first (Goldin, 1993), most of the big American and European unions ultimately opted to recruit immigrants as new members rather than keep trying to exclude them from the labour market (Haus, 1995; Watts, 2002). A few case studies shed light on the reasons for this shift.

Haus (1999) looks at the changing stance of unions in France from the interwar period to the end of the 20th century. Historically, French unions supported the restrictive immigration measures imposed in the 1930s, and then went on to oppose the *laissez-faire* policy introduced in the post-war period (the "glorious 30 years") to offset labour shortages in the construction and automotive industries, among others. On the other hand, since the 1980s and 1990s, the big labour confederations have consistently fought the immigration constraints imposed by successive French governments. Yet this does not mean that French unions have suddenly been seized with altruism. The Haus study in effect demonstrates that the unions are still very leery of open borders<sup>13</sup> and that they would be quick to oppose any *laissez-faire* policy like that of the post-war era. What has changed is the unions' perception of the government's ability to control migration flows effectively. According to the figures presented by Haus, French unions are convinced that official control over immigration flows, weak at the best of times, has been further undermined by globalisation, technical progress, and the shifting nature of the flows. The unions have therefore modified their position on immigration policy in light of their own interests. They argue that the restrictive policies of recent decades have not only failed to achieve their declared objectives of slowing arrivals and boosting departures, but are making it increasingly difficult for immigrants to obtain legal status. That situation leads automatically to a hike in the number of undocumented immigrants, and a concomitant drop in union membership. On a secondary note, Haus also shows that human rights considerations and the fear of being associated with extreme-right parties may also influence the posture of some labour federations.

Looking at Australian experience over the long period from 1830 to 1988, Quinlan and Lever-Tracy (1990) find the same shift in union attitudes, but with quite different motivations. While the Australian unions strongly supported the "White Australia" policy prevailing at the beginning of the 20th century, which led to exclusion of Asian immigrants, they gradually abandoned their anti-Asian bias after the Second World War and officially adopted an antiracist stance in the name of class solidarity and the integration of minorities. The motives of the Australian unions therefore seem quite



different from those of their French counterparts. Quinlan and Lever-Tracy offer four specific factors to explain this shift:

- *Structural changes in the Australian economy after the Second World War.* Rapid economic growth, associated with technical progress, generated new and higher-skilled job opportunities for native-born Australian workers. These opportunities were not open to immigrant workers because of the language barriers, the types of skills they possessed and the fact that their qualifications were not recognised.
- *Australia's shifting position in world trade.* While Australia had previously had a privileged trading relationship with Europe, progressive economic integration into the Asia-Pacific region has made Australians more receptive to Asian immigration.
- *The growing rejection of racism among parties of the left, with which the unions identify.*
- *The integration of immigrant workers and the resulting boost to union power.* This motivation is similar to that observed in France.

Can we conclude, then, that unions today are routinely pro-immigration and that they will therefore support more liberal migration policies? The empirical evidence for answering this question is far from clear. In the case of the United States, for example, Haus (1995) maintains that what he calls the “transnationalisation” of the labour market in the early post-war decades made the union constituency more diverse and international. As he sees it, this explains why the migration policies instituted in the United States during recent economic recessions have been much less restrictive than those of the 1920s and 1930s: the unions no longer have the same immigration preferences, and are now more interested in organising foreign-born workers. Yet Facchini *et al.* (2008) show that a 1% increase in the unionisation rate<sup>14</sup> leads to a cut of 2.6 to 10.4% in the number of visas issued in the sectors examined. With the current state of research in economics and sociology, ambiguity remains.

### **3.3. Non-governmental organisations**

Non-economic interest groups are also concerned about migration policy. Throughout history, associations of recently-arrived immigrants or those from the same country of origin have been aligned against patriotic or “nativist” organisations (Fuchs, 1990). Today, groups hostile to immigration invoke countries’ limited capacities to absorb newcomers and the threat immigration poses to national identity. At the other end of the spectrum is a vast array of civil liberties organisations that support pro-immigration policies (Schuck, 1998). Generally speaking, analysis of electoral returns in parliamentary votes in the United States and Europe quite clearly shows the influence of non-economic interest groups on immigration policy (Kesler, 1999; Money, 1999).

### **3.4. Political parties**

While the conventional right/left classification of political leanings seems to have little relevance to the question of immigration, we need to explain why immigration policies, although typified by some restrictions in recent years, have been relatively more flexible than might have been expected in light of historical precedent. This outcome is due primarily to the fact that the benefits of immigration are concentrated in the hands of a small number of powerfully organised stakeholders, while any costs of immigration are distributed over a much larger number of individuals, and its opponents are divided. For

this reason, Freeman (1995, 2001) sees immigration policy as the product of “client politics”, with policymakers being “captured” by pro-immigration groups.

Yet, some observers reject this interpretation of the discrepancy between public opinion as expressed in surveys (which show it to be largely hostile to immigration) and the policies actually pursued. In their study of British immigration policy, Stratham and Geddes (2006) find that pro-immigration groups are more visible than their anti-immigration counterparts.<sup>15</sup> On the other hand, their analysis shows quite clearly that pro-immigration lobbies do not have the power Freeman credits them with to influence government policies on immigration. On the contrary, governments do not seem to be greatly influenced by such lobbying when drawing up immigration policies, which, in the case of the United Kingdom, betray a restrictive bias.<sup>16</sup> Looking at the United Kingdom and Ireland, Smith (2008) notes that in recent years these two countries have taken in large numbers of migrant workers, primarily from new member countries of the European Union. Moreover, and in contrast to the majority of continental European countries, neither the United Kingdom nor Ireland has seen the emergence of powerful parties on the far right.<sup>17</sup> It is the conventional centre-right and centre-left parties, then, that have set policies designed to control migration flows and to integrate immigrants. The analysis argues that the differences between the two parties are essentially rhetorical: although the Conservative Party has often adopted a tougher tone on immigration, the policies of successive governments over the past 40 years have not been significantly different (Favell, 1998). This tendency to consensus is even more marked in Ireland, where the two main parties (the centre-left Fianna Fail and the Christian Democratic Fine Gael) are ideologically very close on this matter.<sup>18</sup> Smith (2008) suggests that the tendency to consensus in both countries is largely the result of two factors. First, the main governing parties all have a positive view of globalisation and its benefits. Second, at a time when extreme-right politics are marginalised, the political gains to be had from a more restrictive immigration policy are outweighed by the potential costs of alienating the centrist electorate. This study offers a striking contrast with France, for example, where the main party on the extreme right, the Front National, continued its steady electoral advances until 2002.

Breunig and Luedtke (2008) confirm the conclusion that immigration policy – or at least political parties’ immigration preferences – are largely independent of the left/right split. Their findings are particularly telling inasmuch as their analysis is based on a panel of 18 OECD countries<sup>19</sup> over the period 1987-1999. They suggest that the gap between public opinion, which is majoritarian against immigration, and the positions actually adopted by political parties can be explained by the strength of institutional checks on majoritarian sentiment. These institutional factors determine the leeway given to anti-immigration politicians, enabling them to make their voices heard and influencing the preferences of political parties towards embracing greater restrictions on migration flows or imposing more rigorous conditions for obtaining citizenship.<sup>20</sup> In systems where there are many such checks, political parties will be influenced more by actors in favour of immigration. If, on the other hand, majoritarian sentiment is less constrained, the positions of the parties will be decidedly more restrictive. The institutional checks suggested by the authors include:

- *Electoral rules*: if a country uses the proportional representation system, or if a party need only gain a low share of the vote to win a seat in parliament, extremist parties will do better.

- *The composition of the legislative body*: The political clout of majoritarian sentiment grows with the number of parties represented (a large number of small parties can exploit the immigration issue to attract voters), the degree of polarisation (an extremist party has more opportunities to exploit anti-immigration sentiment), and the size of the majority.
- *Vetoes on executive power*: Many such vetoes are available to the judiciary. Judicial review for the constitutionality of laws comes naturally into mind, but the role of the lower courts is also important, as they are more inclined to defend the rights of minorities and provide a platform for pro-immigration groups.

The empirical analysis provided by Breunig and Luedtke (2008) lends strong support to these theoretical intuitions. The authors also note that the major political parties of countries built by immigration (Australia, Canada or the United States) are on average more pro-immigration than those of the other countries examined.

#### 4. The role of the media and the weight of beliefs in shaping public opinion

Media influence on public opinion has been the subject of much research by political scientists and sociologists. A consensus has emerged that recognises the unifying impact of the media on public opinion and the consequent falling away of ethnic, geographic, and socio-economic differences. A number of studies have in fact shown that the media have served to weaken class sentiments (Butler and Stokes, 1974) and religious divisions (Mendelsohn and Nadeau, 1996), reduce commitment to political parties (Wattenberg, 1991), and more generally foster the emergence of a national public opinion (Shaw and Martin, 1992).

Associated issues relating to media coverage of immigration and migration policy have been addressed in numerous studies. Because of their wide-ranging social and political implications they also have been attracting constant media attention since the 1970s. A number of analytical studies have shown that growing commercialisation of the mass media networks has led them to adopt a routinely sensationalist approach to the issues, thereby reinforcing negative public perceptions (4.1). At the same time, the effect of beliefs (individual as well as collective) on the debate is by no means negligible, and consequently helps to shape individual opinions (4.2).

##### 4.1. From private views to public opinion: the role of the media in shaping a “public opinion” about immigration

Empirical analysis of media coverage of immigration-related issues relies for the most part on stories in the daily and weekly press and televised newscasts (*content analysis*), and in recent years has devoted more and more attention to the new media, particularly the Internet. Some studies have also been based on surveys of journalists, politicians and academics who deal with immigration issues. These studies generally focus on periods of peak media interest, *i.e.* when circumstances make the debate over immigration particularly intense.

Benson (2002) looks at the trend in French media coverage of immigration over the period 1973-1991. That period was marked by a clear shift in feelings about immigration, with altruistic concerns over the social suffering of immigrant workers being replaced by the politics of fear – fear over security problems in suburbs with a large share of persons of North-African origin, fear of resurgent right-wing extremism, fear that French culture was threatened by the failure to integrate immigrants effectively, and so on. At a time when the

growing commercialism of the media was a source of mounting concern (Bourdieu, 1996), many critics focused on the role of the media in manipulating public opinion and, ultimately, in distorting immigration policies. The increasing weight of advertising revenue in media firms' earnings has increased competition for a larger audience. This means that preference is given to news with a high emotional content and, more generally, that the facts are sensationalised. Immigration is a particularly promising subject for this type of journalism. Benson presents a rigorous empirical analysis of the question, which is not simply descriptive. He analyses stories carried in three leading national newspapers (*Le Monde*, *Le Figaro* and *Libération*) and on the evening news broadcasts of the two main TV channels with a view to measuring the degree of change or continuity in media coverage of immigration. The timeframe covered (1973-1991) saw several major changes in the media business, in particular the growing importance of advertising revenues for the big national dailies and the privatisation of the leading television channel in 1987. Benson identifies three "peak media attention" years for each of the three decades: 1973, 1983 and 1991.<sup>21</sup> He finds that the media attitude to immigration issues did indeed change over this time, with a narrowing of the ideological spectrum represented and increased sensationalism in the way information was dealt with. But the media's treatment of the issues was also marked by a degree of continuity. Benson explains that this relative stability is due to the role of the institutional constraints surrounding the media business, which Bourdieu (1996) calls the "journalistic field" and which can be summarised as the tacit "(ethical) rules of the game". This "field" generates powerful inertia effects on the treatment of news, and these effects, together with relative stability in state regulation of the media, have limited the repercussions of growing commercialism in the media and thus explain the relative continuity in media treatment of immigration over the period in question.

Benson and Saguy (2005) pursue and complete this study with a comparative analysis of media coverage in France and in the United States between 1973 and 1994. The media examined in the case of France are the same as those studied by Benson (2002). For the United States they are the *New York Times* and *Los Angeles Times* and the evening newscasts of the three main national networks. The analysis seeks to highlight the role of three factors in changing media coverage of immigration in the two countries:

- *Cultural contexts.* American and French news media coverage of immigration differs significantly, reflecting cultural differences. The French media are more likely than the American media to report on the social problems faced by immigrants and also on the cultural problems their differences pose for society. The US media will be more likely to report on fiscal problems created by immigration. The authors attribute these differences of the media approach to the different cultural contexts of the two countries, as there is no factual element relating to immigration that can explain them.
- *The legal and institutional environment.* Structural characteristics also go quite a long way towards explaining media attention to specific aspects of immigration. Thus, when the French government introduced policies to encourage cultural diversity in 1983, media coverage of immigration policy's impact on cultural diversity increased. In 1991, on the other hand, the political consensus was that integration of immigrants was preferable to multiculturalism. As a result, the number of stories stressing the positive aspects of cultural diversity fell to a quarter of what it had been eight years earlier, while more than a third of immigration stories addressed the problems caused by immigrants' cultural differences. Over the same period, the American media more often raised the issue of immigration within the context of the debate about discrimination: 18% of stories about

immigration adopted this perspective in the United States in 1986, compared with only 1% in France in 1983. A similar difference is observed in the 1990s, with 11% of stories taking this line in the United States in 1994, compared with 5% in France in 1991. The refusal to produce ethnic statistics in France, and the influence of affirmative action policies in the United States are two possible explanations for this difference in news treatment.

- *Journalism's relations with government and the market.* Perhaps because of the broad scope of French libel laws and restrictions on access to government documents, French media coverage of immigration is less likely than its American counterpart to go in for investigative reporting on the inner workings of government bureaucracies.

Other studies describe the impact on public opinion of the positions taken by the media on immigration issues. In the case of the United States, Akdenisili *et al.* (2008) analyse media coverage of immigration from 1980 onwards, but with a particular focus on the heated debates of 2006 and 2007 over the proposed reform of American immigration policy. The authors conclude that American public opinion about immigration reached an unprecedented degree of radicalism and assertiveness, which made it very difficult to find a political compromise in Congress. The study claims that this situation was the result of the increasing fragmentation of the media industry in the United States, which has seen the public moving away from the printed press and national evening TV newscasts towards cable channels, radio talk shows, and the Internet. This growing fragmentation of the industry has intensified competition for audience share. The old and new media alike are therefore more inclined to favour and highlight stories about the country's economic and social difficulties. They will focus on immigration if it can be linked to problems of crime, economic crisis, or violent political controversy. Politicians and immigrants themselves take centre stage, to the exclusion of other key players such as employers and workers. As these authors see it, the media's biased take on immigration fails to reflect the reality of a demographic phenomenon, which is not only massive but has been taking place for several decades, and for the most part legally.

From the same perspective, Tsoukala (2002) looks into the criminalisation of immigration in French, German, Italian and Greek news coverage during the 1990s. She observes that "far from reflecting reality, the media structures *one* reality, which ultimately helps to shape public opinion to varying degrees". While it is not directly determined by the media, public opinion "tends to be determined by the ideological frame of reference supplied by the media (Van Dijk, 1993)". The study itself is essentially a qualitative analysis of the content of the major national dailies, with occasional forays into the weekly press and television. According to Tsoukala, media coverage of immigration legitimises a general viewpoint that associates immigration with crime and urban violence. The author concludes that these media representations have led over time to a blurring of the distinction between illegal immigrants, legal immigrants, and second-generation immigrants, and also between foreigners and nationals of minority ethnic or religious origin.

Merolla and Pantoja (2008) study the matter from the standpoint of experimental economics, examining the influence of media perspectives<sup>22</sup> on the shaping of public opinion about immigration. The experiment consisted in taking a sample of students, dividing them into six groups and exposing each group to a different media presentation focusing on popular beliefs about immigration and its impact: i) the negative economic

impact; ii) the positive economic impact; iii) the positive social impact; iv) the negative social impact; v) the national security impact; and vi) no particular impact (control group). The results of the experiment show that, to varying degrees, each of these presentations is capable of influencing general feelings toward legal and illegal immigration and specific beliefs about the economic and social consequences of immigration.

#### **4.2. The role of beliefs in framing debate and shaping public opinion**

Many of the studies described above have stressed the importance of the media in shaping public opinion, in particular through their power to legitimise more general views on immigration. It seems useful, then, to look beyond the form and origin of these beliefs in order to gain a better understanding of the way they shape the political landscape and public opinion about immigration.

According to a number of studies, the strongly-held belief that relations between the native-born and immigrants are a “zero-sum game”<sup>23</sup> explains much of the hostility towards immigration and any form of solidarity with immigrants. Insofar as immigrants are perceived as potential competitors in the drive to acquire rare resources, helping them or letting their numbers increase can only serve to enhance their “market power” (see Esses *et al.*, 1998, 1999; Jackson and Esses, 2000). Esses *et al.* (2001) confirm and develop this finding in experimental studies in two Canadian universities. In another series of studies, conducted in Canada and the United States, the same authors re-examine the role of group competition for scarce resources and also consider the role of ethnic prejudice. The latter is broader than that of competition over resources, in that it has social and cultural dimensions. The analysis concludes that ethnic prejudice plays a fairly minor role in determining immigration attitudes, and that group competition for scarce resources in a zero-sum game provides the frame of reference in which public opinions are shaped.

Esses *et al.* (2001) go on to show that it is possible to modify people’s opinion of immigration by overturning the belief that inter-group relations are a zero-sum game with, for example, arguments and policies that promote a common sense of identity. This seems to highlight the need to shape or educate public opinion, and brings one back to the problem of the form and content of public discourse and its impact. According to Boswell (2009 a&b), the way migration policy issues are addressed and debated in the public arena is itself an essential issue within the wider context of immigration policy analysis.

As to the substance of the matter, Boswell (2009a) focuses on political parties’ use of expert knowledge as a way of legitimising their claims. To illustrate the point, she analyses the immigration debate in the United Kingdom between 2002 and 2004. Over this period, immigration policy issues were the subject of nine debates, three of which involved discussion of research findings (on the real level of immigration, the economic impact of immigration in the United Kingdom, and the impact of European Union enlargement on immigration from Central and Eastern Europe). The analysis of media coverage of these three events shows a clear tendency on the part of the media to exploit research in order to create an atmosphere of scandal around the government, which was described as incompetent when making political decisions in areas of risk. Boswell also shows that, while politicians are quick to invoke scientific research to legitimise their decisions, they generally doubt the ability of science to predict the outcomes of policies. This is what Boswell calls “a paradoxical disconnect between the ritualistic acceptance of technocratic modes of settlement and the limited authority of knowledge in settling disputes”.

Building upon her previous research, Boswell (2009b) examines the opposition between “technocratic” and “democratic” modes of resolving the immigration debate. “Technocratic” arguments, based on scientific research, focus the debate on the needs of the labour market rather than on cultural considerations. The outcome is often an approach that is more liberal and open to immigration. However, rival political parties and the mass media may resist this type of approach – which they regard as “elitist” and serving the needs of employers, or as being out of touch with people’s real concerns about immigration – and seek instead to move the debate to a less technocratic ground by emphasising the clash of interests or values. The author focuses primarily on two examples of debates about immigrants in search of work: one held in Germany between 2000 and 2003, and one in the United Kingdom between 2002 and 2004. During these periods, both countries were governed by centre-left parties inclined to introduce more liberal labour migration policies. Yet, the role of scientific research and the outcome of the debates diverged considerably. In the United Kingdom, the debate over immigration policies was based on technocratic considerations, and the three main political parties were in agreement in recognising the benefits of this kind of immigration for the British economy. In Germany, on the other hand, the government quickly foundered in its attempts to defend its immigration policy with economic arguments, while the opposition prevailed by invoking cultural issues. Boswell identifies two main factors behind this divergence: ideological differences and the collective memory of the results of previous migration policies. The author notes that Germans considered the temporary “guest worker” programmes of the 1960s to have been a failure, as many of those immigrants ended up settling in Germany permanently. The United Kingdom, however, had no memory of such a “failure”, and the bulk of immigration to Britain had come from Commonwealth countries. Generally speaking, countries where immigration policies are deemed to have “failed” (Germany, Denmark, France, Italy or the Netherlands) will be more likely to take a democratic approach to the debate. In contrast, countries with no such memory of “failed” immigration policy (Spain, Ireland, United Kingdom or Sweden) will consider the issue from a more technocratic standpoint.

## Conclusion

Generally speaking, and despite some notable exceptions in countries that were historically built on immigration and have selective immigration policies, opinion surveys in most OECD countries show that people tend to take a negative view of the economic and cultural impact of migrations and of policies designed to increase migratory flows. Opinions vary considerably from one country to another for reasons relating to the dynamics of these flows, the features of the immigration systems and the past experiences of countries in this area. Individual opinions also differ within the same country for a variety of reasons: economic, demographic, cultural or political. Although there is an empirical consensus on the impact of some of these factors, such as level of education or ideological orientation, the role of others is more uncertain and depends on the context. Moreover, interaction between these groups of explanatory variables also plays a role, which means that simple theoretical approaches will not necessarily account for the complexity of the determinants of individual opinions on immigration.

One of the main points to emerge from the preceding analysis is that beliefs about the economic and cultural impact of immigration significantly influence individual attitudes towards opening the borders to migrants. Public debate on the issues of immigration and

migration policy is still broadly determined by the way these issues are covered by the media and by the effects of a certain number of collective beliefs. Some media, in response to pressure from competitors, may convey a simplistic impression and only concern themselves with the more sensational aspects of the immigration issue. In this way they may help to reinforce prejudices, which are partly enhanced by the less favourable outcomes of past migration and integration policies.

Certain parts of the population are likely to adopt different positions on immigration, not only because of its distributive effects, but also because these groups are distinguished by the way they value cultural diversity, among other things. The point therefore is not so much to seek consensus in public opinion on immigration issues as to limit the effect of popular beliefs and misconceptions. In this context, the planned reforms of migration policies need to involve a radical effort to enhance public knowledge and understanding of migration, notably regarding its economic, social and cultural impacts.

If this objective is to be reached, it will be necessary to promote greater transparency over the scale of international immigration, facilitate access to the most up-to-date information, and improve procedures for comparing international migration statistics. There will also be a need for regular and open discussion with interest groups, which should be based on relevant research findings. Lastly, there will be a need for objective, in-depth coverage of the migration issue and a determination to resist the temptation to exploit this issue for political ends.

Moreover, this section only addresses the national dimension of the political economics of international migration. The possibility of reforming migration policies will also be greatly influenced or limited by international factors relating to commitments entered into by states, bilateral relations with the countries of origin (with which the host countries have strong historical and geographical ties), and multilateral negotiations. A more complete analysis of the relationship between these factors and the shaping of migration policies would be needed to gain a better understanding of the extent to which OECD countries are free to adapt their migration policies to meet the major demographic and economic challenges of the next decades.

## Notes

1. This document was drafted by Jérôme Héricourt (Maître de Conférences at the University of Lille 1) and Gilles Spielvogel (Maître de Conférences at the University of Paris 1), consultants to the OECD.
2. While some individuals will call upon their knowledge of political facts and form a judgment based on "rational" evaluation criteria, others will react in accordance with their "class ethos", a system of implicit values transmitted by the individual's social environment.
3. The other criteria were: having good educational qualifications; being able to speak the language of the country; coming from a Christian background; being white; and being wealthy.
4. This subject has also been addressed by some national opinion surveys. For example, the Australian Election Study (AES) of 2001 showed that the balance of opinion in favour of larger flows of skilled immigrants (41%) was much higher than that in favour of immigration of persons with relatives in the country (19%), revealing a clear preference for labour migration in Australia, as in European countries (Betts, 2002).
5. Empirical studies are divided on the subject. Whereas Borjas (2003) finds that immigration of low-qualified workers has a negative effect on salaries of workers already resident in the country, Card (2005) and Ottaviano and Peri (2008) find that the effects are minor and insignificant.
6. Using a similar theoretical approach, Bilal *et al.* (2003) study the impact of changes in the distribution of income on the attitude of households towards immigration of low-qualified



workers. They show that increased inequality of income is likely to lead to a radicalisation of attitudes towards this type of immigration.

7. It could of course be argued that the effect would only be temporary insofar as the immigrants, having come to the end of their working lives, would also receive pensions. But at the present time there is no reason to suppose that migration flows will dry up in years to come, and it is therefore quite conceivable that further generations of immigrant workers will come to the country and help fund pensions.
8. According to the country estimates, however, this is not the case in France, the United Kingdom and the United States (Table III.3).
9. It should be noted, however, that some studies highlight the importance of certain national peculiarities in this area. Ilias *et al.* (2008) show for example that, in the United States, mere membership of a political party may determine preferences over immigration, whereas identification with the right or left of the political spectrum has no impact.
10. In order to test this intuition, we drew up estimates for the ESS survey that were similar to those submitted for the ISSP survey. They clearly show that if the endogenous nature of beliefs is not taken into account, individuals who have themselves immigrated are in favour of an open migration policy.
11. However, the findings of O'Rourke and Sinnott (2006) with respect to countries covered by the ISSP survey are more nuanced. While they confirm that individuals who have never lived abroad tend on average to view immigration less favourably, their statistical findings regarding the role played by the "openness" variables (being born abroad, having foreign parents, etc.) are nevertheless ambiguous.
12. In 2001 and 2002, between 35 and 41% of Australians stated that immigration flows were too high, compared with 70% in the early 1990s.
13. The more recent furore sparked by the European services Directive (the "Bolkestein" Directive) offers a patent illustration of this restrictive bias. That directive sought to promote free movement of workers within the European Union by allowing them to be hired under the labour rules of their home country. The ensuing union-inspired uproar (which was particularly pronounced in France) put that directive on ice.
14. This variable is used, for want of a satisfactory alternative, as an approximation of union lobbying budgets.
15. Although it should be noted that this finding is not confirmed by the experience of other European countries where, on the contrary, anti-immigration groups seem more involved in the public debate.
16. At least until the Labour Party returned to power in 1997 and adopted a more liberal immigration policy than that of its Conservative predecessor.
17. Nevertheless, in the United Kingdom the right-wing British National Party managed to obtain two seats in the elections to the European Parliament in 2009 with a campaign largely focused on immigration issues.
18. Initially an emigration country because of its chronic state of underdevelopment, Ireland became an immigration country thanks to the rapid growth of its economy from the mid-1980s onward. Given the historical circumstances, the population has probably developed a favourable bias towards labour immigration. It is not excluded that the severity of the current recession will change attitudes.
19. Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States.
20. Immigration and citizenship policies have become progressively stricter in several European countries of the OECD in recent years (see OECD 2007 and 2008a), in parallel with the rising clout of anti-immigration sentiment in the political sphere and in public opinion (see Penninx, 2005 regarding the Netherlands).
21. These peak years are the ones in which the greatest number of immigration-related stories were found.
22. Subsequently referred to as "media treatment".
23. If immigrants obtain more, the native-born population is bound to have less. In this context, any policy that helps immigrants integrate and succeed economically will be seen as depriving the native-born.

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## ANNEX III.A1

*Presentation of Surveys*

The surveys used for the empirical analyses in Sections 1 and 2 are the four waves of the European Social Survey (see Table III.A1.1), all of the World Value Surveys taken after 1994 (see Table III.A1.2) and the 2003 International Social Survey Programme, which includes a special module on national identity (see Table III.A1.3).

**Table III.A1.1. European countries covered by the analyses based on the European Social Surveys**

	2002	2004	2006	2008
Austria	Yes	Yes	Yes	<i>No</i>
Belgium	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Czech Republic	Yes	Yes	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>
Denmark	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Estonia	<i>No</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Finland	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
France	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Germany	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Greece	Yes	Yes	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>
Hungary	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ireland	Yes	Yes	Yes	<i>No</i>
Italy	Yes	Yes	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>
Luxembourg	Yes	Yes	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>
Netherlands	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Norway	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Poland	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Portugal	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Slovak Republic	<i>No</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Slovenia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Spain	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sweden	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Switzerland	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
United Kingdom	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

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**Table III.A1.2. Countries covered by the analyses based on the World Value Survey**

	Years		Years
Australia	1995; 2005	New Zealand	1998; 2004
Canada	2000; 2006	Norway	1996; 2008
Czech Republic	1998	Poland	1997; 2005
Finland	1996; 2005	Slovak Republic	1998
France	2006	Slovenia	1995; 2005
Germany	1997; 2006	Spain	1995; 2000; 2007
Hungary	1998	Sweden	1996; 1999; 2006
Italy	2005	Switzerland	1996; 2007
Japan	2000; 2005	Turkey	1996; 2001; 2007
Korea	1996; 2001; 2005	United Kingdom	1998; 2006
Netherlands	2006	United States	1995; 1999; 2006

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**Table III.A1.3. Countries covered by the analyses based on the International Social Survey, 2003**

Countries covered by the analyses based on the International Social Survey Programme (2003)		
Australia		Netherlands
Austria		New Zealand
Canada		Norway
Czech Republic		Poland
Denmark		Portugal
Finland		Slovak Republic
France		Slovenia
Germany		Spain
Hungary		Sweden
Ireland		Switzerland
Japan		United Kingdom
Korea		United States

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Questions about individual opinions on immigration are differently formulated in different surveys. In the ESS, for example, the main question is worded as follows, and accompanied by the responses indicated:

To what extent should [country] allow people from [countries of origin] to come and live here?

- Allow many to come and live.
- Allow some.
- Allow a few.
- Allow none.
- Don't know.

In the ISSP 2003, the question most comparable to the ESS question on opinions about migration policy was:

Do you think the number of immigrants to [country] nowadays should be:

- Increased a lot.
- Increased a little.
- Remain the same as it is.

- Reduced a little.
- Reduced a lot.
- Do not know.
- Do not wish to answer.

The wording of the permitted responses might cast some doubt on how the answers to these questions should be interpreted. To what extent will individuals respond in the abstract or with reference to current policies in their own country? In the ESS, for example, we cannot tell whether people answering “none” are aware that a particular course of action is in practice impossible. Indeed, international conventions governing humanitarian migrations, or the fundamental right of family reunification recognised by all OECD countries, limit the discretionary aspects of migration policies for all categories except labour migration. The aforementioned surveys do not break down their questions into categories of immigration (in particular, discretionary *versus* non-discretionary).

These two examples also show, first, that the comparison or aggregation of individual responses relies heavily on the assumption that all persons interviewed will interpret the response alternatives in the same way and, second, that an inter-country comparison of responses to this question demands a degree of uniformity in the perception of these categories. Given the differences in migration systems and in the historical and cultural context surrounding immigration issues, it seems unlikely that this comparability hypothesis can be fully verified. Moreover, because international opinion survey questionnaires are harmonised, the questions they ask about immigration are not very specific and do not allow us to appreciate individual perceptions of particular migration policies in the countries surveyed.

Beyond these questions about the desired numbers of immigrants, some surveys also address individual perceptions of the economic, social and cultural impact of immigration.\* These questions can be used to refine the analysis of the determinants of opinions about immigration, for they can reveal those dimensions of public life about which individuals are most sensitive when discussing the subject.

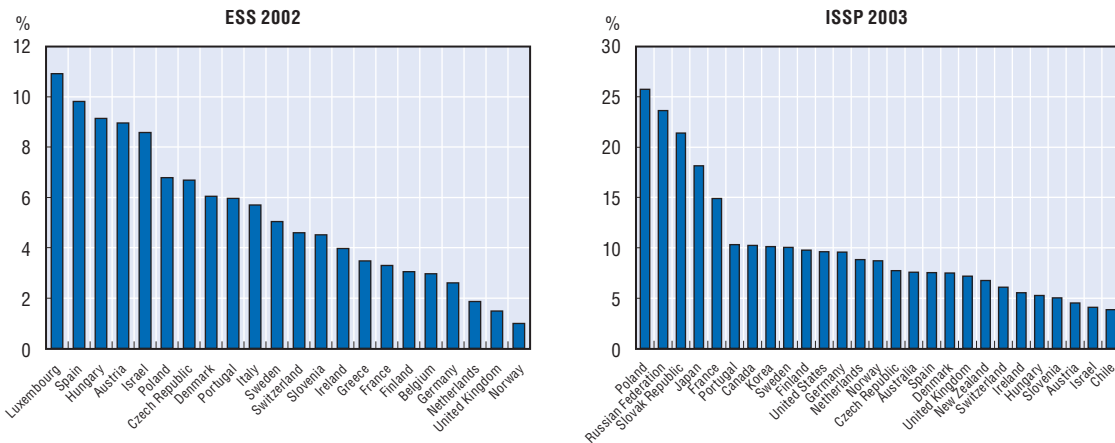
Because immigration, and more generally the question of accepting others, is such a sensitive issue, we may also wonder about the sincerity of the responses to these questions. Some individuals may not want to seem too hostile to immigration and will choose a neutral response or non-response, while others will be very forthright in stating extreme opinions which they cannot express in the voting booth. These biases may cancel each other out and reveal a trend that is close to “real opinion”, but will not necessarily do so, especially if they depend on individual characteristics that are not evenly shared among the population.

The non-response rate for these questions suggests people’s reluctance to express their opinion on the subject (see Figure III.A1.1). With the ESS 2002, the non-response rate was around 10% for Luxembourg and Spain, while it was below 2% for Norway and the United Kingdom. In the ISSP survey 2003, the non-response rate was much higher for

\* For example, the ESS 2002 asked the following questions: “Would you say it is generally bad or good for [country]’s economy that people come to live here from other countries?” “Would you say that [country]’s cultural life is generally undermined or enriched by people coming to live here from other countries?” “Are [country]’s crime problems made worse or better by people coming to live here from other countries?” Similar questions were posed in the ISSP survey 2003.


some countries, notably Poland, the Russian Federation and the Slovak Republic (around 20% or even higher). Depending on whether we interpret non-responses as “neutral” responses, reflecting indifference to the question or ignorance of the subject, the picture of public opinion emerging from the surveys will be quite different.

Figure III.A1.1. **Proportion of non-responses to questions about preferred trends in immigration flows**



Note: Weighted data.

Sources: European Social Survey 2002, International Social Survey Programme 2003.

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## ANNEX III.A2


*Determinants of Beliefs about the Impact of Immigration  
and Preferences about Migration Policy Based  
on the World Value Survey (WVS)*

In the case of the WVS, the two dependent variables considered are the desire for preferential treatment for native-born workers in the labour market (raising the idea of competition between locals and immigrants) and the acceptance of immigrants as neighbours (reflecting the cultural dimension). Here the binary nature of dependent variables leads us to favour an estimate employing the Probit model. In this survey, however, the available explanatory variables are limited to demographic, political orientation, education and work situation variables.

Table III.A2.1. **Determinants of beliefs about the impact of immigration and preferences about migration policy, WVS surveys, 1995-2008**

Variables	Beliefs	Migration policy	Beliefs	Migration policy
	Not in favour of national preference with respect to employment	In favour of strict limits or banning of work immigration	No aversion to having immigrants as neighbours	In favour of strict limits or banning of work immigration
	1	2	3	4
Not in favour of national preference with respect to employment		-0.208*** (0.034)		
No aversion to having immigrants as neighbours				-0.154*** (0.032)
Ideological orientation left-right	-0.021*** (0.004)	0.017*** (0.002)	-0.011*** (0.002)	0.018*** (0.002)
Women	0.011 (0.007)	0.009 (0.007)	0.011** (0.005)	0.009 (0.006)
Age 25-34	-0.027* (0.015)	0.020 (0.016)	-0.007 (0.006)	0.021 (0.017)
Age 35-44	-0.045*** (0.017)	0.029* (0.016)	-0.001 (0.005)	0.037** (0.016)
Age 45-54	-0.062*** (0.020)	0.031 (0.022)	-0.007 (0.006)	0.035* (0.021)
Age 55-64	-0.085*** (0.019)	0.045** (0.020)	-0.006 (0.008)	0.052*** (0.020)
Age 65-74	-0.112*** (0.018)	0.042*** (0.016)	-0.022 (0.017)	0.051*** (0.016)
Age 75+	-0.153*** (0.018)	0.051*** (0.018)	-0.052** (0.022)	0.069*** (0.020)
Secondary education	0.065*** (0.011)	-0.045*** (0.009)	0.042*** (0.014)	-0.049*** (0.012)
Tertiary education	0.199*** (0.020)	-0.155*** (0.012)	0.080*** (0.012)	-0.173*** (0.019)
Inactive	-0.005 (0.008)	-0.017* (0.009)	-0.004 (0.009)	-0.016* (0.009)
Unemployed	-0.034 (0.021)	0.026 (0.016)	-0.005 (0.009)	0.031 (0.020)
Observations	43 342	39 683	42 181	38 484

Note: \*\*\*, \*\*, \* represent significance levels at 1, 5 and 10%, respectively. Robust standard deviations in brackets, corrected for heteroscedasticity clustered by country. Maximum Likelihood Estimation. Marginal effects are reported at the mean for the continuous variables. All regressions include dummy variables for country and year. The reference categories are: male, age 15-24, primary education, employed.

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