



Cause for concern? The impact of immigration on political trust

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policy network paper

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The research programme "Immigration and political community: the impact of immigration on political trust" is kindly supported by the

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Abstract

This paper explores the extent to which public concern about immigration affects trust in politicians and political institutions. The study uses the four rounds of the European Social Survey (2002-2009) to explore the relationship between public attitudes to immigration and public attitudes to politicians and political institutions. It controls for other possible factors affecting levels of political trust, including both characteristics of individuals that may influence attitudes, and national-level conditions such as the economic situation and the composition of the government. The findings indicate that concern about the effects of immigration have an impact on trust in politics: if citizens' perception of the effects of immigration is negative, they are less trusting of the institutions of the political system and of politicians. Interestingly, perceptions of immigration are shown to be very weakly related to actual levels of immigration. The study further finds that quality of governance and the nature of integration policy influence the extent to which concerns about immigration affect political trust. The paper contains a theoretical discussion of the findings, including the possibility that immigration leads to a perceived weakening of cultural connections, with consequences for the political system.

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This research is partly funded by British Academy Research Development Award 52926. Earlier drafts of this paper have been presented at the Annual Conference of the Elections, Public Opinion and Parties subgroup of the Political Studies Association, September 12-14, 2008, Manchester, UK and the American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, 1-4 September 2010, Washington, DC. The author thanks David Art, Harold Clarke, Steve Fielding, Achim Goerres, and other conference participants for helpful comments on this paper. The author also thanks Zeynep Ozkurt for assistance with data collection, as well as Anita Hurrell and Elena Jurado of Policy Network for invaluable advice on the paper.

Contents

1	Introduction	4
2	Immigration and political trust: theory and propositions	6
3.	Methods, data and findings	11
4.	Conclusion	18
	Appendix: Measurement of variables	20
	References	36

1. Introduction

In the decades since the end of the Second World War, one of the most pressing and divisive issues that has come to dominate the political agenda in Western democracies is immigration, with most European publics expressing unease with immigration to their countries. In many of these countries, concern about immigration has clear consequences, in terms of the rise of far-right anti-immigration parties and the incorporation of these parties into coalition governments in some cases, or the adoption of increasingly restrictive immigration policies by centre-right governments in response to far-right popularity in others (see Howard 2010). This paper contends that an overlooked consequence of high levels of concern about immigration is higher levels of distrust in politics. While many analyses of support for the far-right point to a confluence of anti-immigration and anti-system attitudes in explaining such support, no analyses thus far have examined the possibility that concern about immigration may be more than just coincidentally related to distrust in politics.

This paper begins by briefly discussing the focus of the analysis—distrust in politics. It then outlines why it is expected that concern about immigration is likely to be related to political trust, and discusses how several country-level variables such as levels of migration, far-right popularity, quality of governance, and migrant integration policies are likely to affect this relationship. The empirical section of the paper begins by illustrating differences in levels of political trust cross-nationally and then illustrates the relationships being investigated at the country-level. After this, the hypotheses proposed in the previous section are tested on the four waves of the European Social Survey. While the main proposition of this paper—that concern about immigration is associated with distrust in politics—is supported by the evidence, the findings regarding the effects of levels of migration and far-right parties are rather surprising, while those for integration policy and governance quality are as predicted in the propositions.

Political trust

Political trust is crucial to effective policymaking (Mishler and Rose 1997; Keele 2007; Barber 1998; Scholz and Lubell 1998; Scholz and Pinney 1995; Chanley, Rudolph and Rahn 2000), compliance with government regulations (Levi and Stoker 2000: 491; Tyler 2001; Braithwaite and Levi 1998; Hetherington, 1998; Scholz 1998; Scholz and Lubell 1998; Marien and Hooghe 2011) as well as engagement in civically moral behaviour (Letki 2006). Political trust is also thought to be crucial to the representative relationship that lies at the heart of most democratic regimes (Bianco 1994; Mishler and Rose 1997, 2001; Braithwaite and Levi 1998). Thus, understanding the causes of political trust is important. What do we mean by ‘political trust’ or ‘distrust’, though?

For some scholars, expressions of trust in political institutions are declarations that on average the agents operating within those institutions will prove trustworthy (Levi 1998: 80) or that the democratic institutions serve to select relatively trustworthy agents (Brennan 1998; Pettit 1998). Miller and Listhaug argue that political trust “reflects evaluations of whether or not political authorities and institutions are performing in accordance with normative expectations held by the public...an expression of trust in government (or synonymously political confidence and support) is a summary judgment that the system is responsive and will do what is right even in the absence of constant scrutiny” (1990: 358).

Also of relevance here is Easton’s (1957, 1965) distinction between diffuse and specific system support. Easton conceptualises diffuse support as a deep-seated set of attitudes toward politics and the political system that is relatively impervious to change. This is similar to Almond and Verba’s

(1963) notion of affective support. We might also think of it as the general legitimacy of a political system or political institutions. On the other hand, specific support is related to the actions and performance of government or political elites. The assumption is that short-term policy failures should not directly erode diffuse regime support or support for the political community as a whole.

While this conceptual distinction may seem fairly clear, measuring diffuse versus specific support for the political system is less than straight-forward. When we ask citizens whether they have trust or confidence in their national parliaments, presidencies, or governments, are we measuring their attitudes to the current set of leaders and policies or more general orientations to these institutions and elites? This very question, of course, sparked a debate in the 1970s over how to interpret increasing levels of expressions of distrust in politics in the U.S. (Arthur Miller 1974a, 1974b; Citrin 1974). More recently, comparative analyses of survey questions on attitudes to government indicate that while there is overlap in individual-level perceptions of current authorities and attitudes to other aspects of the political system—e.g., its institutions—perceptions of institutions appear to be empirically distinct from perceptions of current government officials (Dalton 2004: 58-60; Klingemann 1999).

This paper is especially concerned with general orientations to political institutions and elites, and assumes—based on these comparative analyses—that indicators of trust and confidence can validly tell us something meaningful about these general orientations. Given that such items are, in fact, likely to tap into both types of support, in order to try to eliminate the likelihood that the findings solely pertain to specific support, I do two things. First, I investigate multiple indicators of political trust to determine how generalised the findings are across targets of trust. The indicators of political trust analysed here refer to parliament, politicians, the police and legal system. We would not necessarily expect the predictors of trust in each of these to be similar unless they were all tapping into general system support. Thus, if concern about immigration predicts trust in all of these institutions, this could be taken as one indicator that the relationship may not necessarily be limited to specific support. Second, I control for known predictors of specific support. After controlling for the known predictors of specific support, it is expected that any remaining covariance (once these predictors are included in the model) is likely to tell us something about diffuse support, although it must be acknowledged that the findings may ultimately refer to both specific and diffuse support.

2. Immigration and political trust: theory and propositions

This section outlines the main theoretical expectations for the impact of immigration on political trust and develops a list of specific propositions to be tested in the empirical section of the paper.

Concern about immigration

Most scholars would argue that modern states—particularly modern European states—were built upon notions of shared identity and values. Some scholars believe that the creation of common identity resulted from modern advances in transportation and printing, both of which were fairly important for the creation of a common language, which is, in turn, important for the articulation of common values across a large territory (Anderson 1991). Others believe there may have also been an active attempt on the part of state leaders to construct such an identity (Gellner 1983; Hobsbawm 1992). Still others contend that common identity across large territories originates from a primordial human need for connection, and that modernization produced a transposition of notions of family (and particularly super-family) onto others living within the state territory (van den Berghe 1978). Many of these theories imply a considerable amount of artificiality in the construction of national identities.

Anthony Smith, however, contends that although the creation of the modern nation-state was made possible by economic and bureaucratic modernisation (and particularly one key component of modernisation—mass education), ‘the presence of a core ethnies around which strong states could be built’ made the creation of nations possible (Smith 1991: 61). That is, such states have been built around shared cultural heritage and norms. Evidence also indicates that these identities, including their civic, ethnic and cultural components, are still extremely relevant to citizens of European countries (Schulman 2002). Moreover, research on social identities has long pointed to the conclusion that identities—even artificially constructed laboratory-based identities—are meaningful to individuals because they contribute positively to self-esteem and self-image and because they help to provide clarity in a complex, confusing world (Tajfel 1970; Turner 1982, 1985; Turner et al. 1987, 1994). The inference is therefore that long-established identities like national identities are even more relevant and powerful, no matter how artificial they may appear to the outside observer.

It may be unclear to many citizens how to reconstruct identity to incorporate newcomers

Immigrants pose clear threats to these identities by bringing with them seemingly different values and ways of life; they are also perceived to threaten the economic resources of fellow countrymen and women (Sniderman, Hagendoorn and Prior 2004; Quillian 1995; Fetzer 2000). Particularly in European countries, where the main myths of identity have not tended to include the myth of being accepting of migrants (compared to the myths of identity in the United States, for instance¹), it may be unclear to many citizens how to reconstruct identity to incorporate newcomers. Newcomers who may be perceived as holding extremely different values from those of natives—Muslim migrants vis-à-vis a predominantly secular Britain or France, for instance—may be particularly difficult to reconcile with existing national identities. In short, the concepts of nationhood and citizenship draw dividing lines between natives and newcomers and foster fear of those with whom we do not share a common identity (Huysmans 1995: 60).

1. It must be noted that even in the U.S. there tend to be perceived limitations regarding who are acceptable migrants, as the long-running modern debates about migration from Mexico have indicated (and previous debates about migrants from Ireland, Italy, Poland and many other countries indicate—see Simon 1993).

The difficulty of coming to terms with new migrants, in turn, has potential implications for political systems. Political systems are thought to be prone to failure if individuals in the system are not ‘sufficiently oriented toward one another’ and willing to support the existence of a group of individuals who can negotiate and settle differences (Easton 1957: 391; Rustow 1970; David Miller 2006). Some research into social capital has already come to the conclusion that immigration and multiculturalism may create problems for the former of these conditions (i.e., orientation toward one another), although it must be noted that the evidence is somewhat mixed (Anderson and Paskeviciute 2006; Alesina and La Ferrara 2000; Costa and Kahn 2003; Stolle, Soroka and Johnston 2008; Letki 2008; Hooghe et al. 2009; Sturgis et al. 2010).

Immigration, and more specifically, *perceptions* of migration, may also create problems for the latter—the willingness to support the existence of a group of individuals who can engage in policymaking—and reduce willingness to support the institutions through which these groups of elites govern. This is because feelings of disunity are not likely to apply solely to feelings of citizens for one another but are also likely to stretch to feelings about the elites in this community and the way the community is governed as well. Indeed, evidence indicates that individuals tend to feel increasingly less favourable towards using the institutions of the state to reduce poverty and provide welfare as a result of perceptions of cultural differences between groups who access these services (Gilens 1999; Habyarimana et al. 2007). Moreover, it has been argued that many European democratic political systems have been layered onto pre-existing cultural connections (Smith 1991: 12); a perceived weakening of these cultural connections because of immigration is also likely to subsequently weaken attachment to this political system.

Even more specifically, the effect of concern about immigration on political trust is likely to operate through perceptions of blame. Many of those most concerned about immigration are likely to consider how this situation has arisen. While some may be unclear as to who is to blame for immigration to their countries, many others with strong concerns about immigration are likely to perceive the levels of immigration as a failure on the part of national institutions and politicians to protect the national community, including the identity and economic resources of that community. That is, fears related to immigration are likely to lead individuals to contemplate who and what is to blame for this situation, which leads them, in turn, to conclude that national politicians and political institutions have failed to protect the national community, with protection of national community being one of the basic key functions of national politicians and institutions. Therefore, these fears ultimately lead to a perception that ‘political authorities and institutions are [not] performing in accordance with normative expectations’ (Miller and Listhaug 1990: 358; material in brackets added by the author), or rather to distrust.

When individuals perceive that immigration has threatened the community, the institutions that govern them are likely to be called into question

Overall, many theories conclude that immigration creates widespread concern about political and social community and about social identities (Sniderman, Hagendoorn and Prior 2004; Lahav 2004; Ivarsflaten 2005; Gibson 2002; Fetzer 2000; Espenshade and Calhoun 1993). Moreover, under pre-mass-immigration conceptualisations of national identity, the institutions through which elites governed the national polity were designed to govern and adjudicate between members of the national community. When individuals perceive that immigration has threatened that community the institutions that govern them are likely to be called into question. That is, those most attuned to the effects of immigration on the national community may question the extent to which national political institutions exist to represent a national citizenry. Moreover, it is likely that individuals

specifically blame their political elites and institutions for allowing large-scale migration in the first place and thus hold these elites and institutions in contempt as a result. While some of the prior research discussed above hints at the connection between immigration and perceptions of political systems, there is not yet an investigation of this relationship. The analysis here takes a step towards filling this gap.

Levels of migration

Although the above argument pertains to perceptions of migration, the model below also incorporates an investigation into the potential effects of levels of migration to the country on political trust, and the effects of migration on the relationship between concern about immigration and political trust. Based on the above discussion, it is expected that countries that have experienced higher levels of longer-term migration would contain the least trusting citizens. Moreover, it is possible that the relationship between concern about immigration and political trust is stronger in countries where actual levels of migration have been higher.

However, it must also be noted that while some research finds an association between levels of migration or percent foreign and perceptions of migration in the late 1980s (Quillian 1995), and this persists into the 1990s, by 2000, percent foreign was no longer associated with anti-immigration sentiment (Semyonov, Raijman, and Gorodzeisky 2006). Also of importance to note is that perceptions of levels of migration are very weakly related to actual levels of migration (Sides and Citrin 2007). Thus, although this paper investigates the potential effect of these levels on political trust, I ultimately argue that it is perceptions of migration that are most crucial.²

The far-right and the immigration-trust linkage

As mentioned above, far-right parties have been on the rise in great part because of anti-immigration sentiment. Ivarsflaten (2008), for instance, finds that the key factor uniting successful right-wing parties in Europe is mobilisation of anti-immigration sentiment. Many of these same parties also attempt to mobilise hostility to 'the political class'. Thus, it is possible that (a) distrust in politics is higher where far-right parties have managed to successfully wage such campaigns and (b) the relationship between concern about immigration and distrust in politics is mediated by the mobilising ability of far-right parties. That is, the relationship between concern about immigration and political distrust may be stronger where the far-right has been more successful.

Moreover, having a far-right party in the governing coalition may impact this relationship as well. Once such a party becomes a participant in government, it becomes more difficult for it to make a case against the political class. In addition, it is possible that citizens with strong concerns about immigration will feel more confident that such concerns will be met with what they perceive as appropriate migration policies (i.e., because a strong anti-immigration party is in power). For both of these reasons, the relationship between concern about immigration and political distrust may be weaker in places where the far-right is in government than where it is not.

Quality of governance

As will be discussed further below, the multivariate analyses in this paper incorporate several control variables which have been found to be related either to attitudes to government generally, or to attitudes to government officials, or government institutions. I highlight one of these key variables here. One of the main findings in recent analyses of attitudes to government institutions has been

2. It is also worth noting that the above-mentioned studies that examine the relationship between multiculturalism or immigration and feelings of community (particularly interpersonal trust) fail to take into consideration the weak correspondence between actual circumstances and perceptions of these circumstances. That is, this may explain many of the null findings in this literature.

that the functioning of political institutions has strong bearing on how individuals perceive those institutions (Rohrschneider 2005; Anderson and Tverdova 2003). In particular, corruption, absence of the rule of law, poor public service provision, inefficient bureaucracy, and institutional instability are likely to mean that these are the main focus of negative perceptions of institutions at the individual-level, with immigration having less bearing on these perceptions. Where institutions are strong—i.e., there is little corruption, there is respect for the rule of law, public service provision is strong, and bureaucracy is efficient—some citizens may believe that part of the reason these institutions work so well is precisely because they are built upon strong cultural norms and connections. Such individuals, in a sense, are likely to feel that they have something important to protect and worry about the effect of immigration on the cultural foundations on which the institutions are built. Indeed, research indicates that cultural concerns tend to be stronger than other concerns such as economic ones in perceiving immigration and immigrants (Sniderman, Hagendoorn and Prior 2004; Sides and Citrin 2007). The individuals who are most worried about immigration in these countries are thus likely to specifically blame elected institutions and politicians for allowing immigration in the first place and distrust these institutions and officials as a result. These individuals may also feel that unelected institutions—particularly the legal system—are failing to protect the political institutions and cultural community and thus distrust these institutions as well. On the other hand, in countries where political institutions are weak, individuals may feel that there is very little about these institutions that is threatened by immigration since they are already fairly poor in the first place. That is, I expect the relationship between concern about immigration and distrust in politics to be weaker in countries where political institutions are weaker—i.e., there is more corruption, rule of law is weak or non-existent, public service provision is poor, bureaucracy is inefficient, and institutions are not very stable.

Migrant integration policy

Migrant integration policy itself is also likely to affect the relationship between political trust and concern about immigration. Weldon (2006) has established that such policies have an impact on attitudes to migrants. I hypothesise that migrant policies mediate the effect of concern about immigration on perceptions of political institutions. Specifically, individuals with strong concerns about immigration who live in countries where policy is more immigrant-friendly (that is, in countries with migrant policies that make it easier for immigrants to become fully functioning members of the polity) are likely to distrust government and government institutions at high levels; similarly, for individuals who are not worried about the impact of immigration on their national communities but who live in fairly restrictive environments when it comes to the treatment of immigrants, distrust in institutions is also likely to be relatively high because these policies are out of line with the respondents' own views of the appropriate treatment of immigrants.

Propositions to be investigated

Proposition 1

Individuals expressing most concern about the impact of immigration on the national community will be most distrusting of politicians and political institutions.

Proposition 2

Individuals living in countries with higher long-term immigration will be the most distrusting of politicians and political institutions (linear effect); in addition, individuals who live in countries with

higher levels of long-term immigration and who are most concerned about migration will be the most distrusting of politicians and political institutions (interactive effect).

Proposition 3

Individuals living in countries with a strong far-right presence will be most distrusting of politicians and political institutions (linear effect); in addition, the relationship between concern about immigration and political distrust will be stronger in countries where there is a strong far-right presence (interactive effect).

Proposition 4

Where the far-right is in government, the relationship between concern about immigration and political distrust will be weaker.³

Proposition 5

For individuals living in countries with poorer governance, immigration will be less important in predicting trust in politicians and institutions than it is for those living in countries with better governance.

Proposition 6

Those who are most concerned about immigration and are living in a country with immigrant-friendly policies will be least trusting of politicians and political institutions.

Note that the measurement of all variables is discussed in the Appendix.

3. Note that I have also investigated the impact of having centre-right governing coalitions on the relationship between concern about immigration and political trust, but the effect did not even achieve statistical significance and so discussion of this analysis is omitted from this paper.

3. Methods, data and findings

These propositions are investigated using a combination of bivariate and multivariate analyses. In the bivariate analysis, the relationship between the two key variables of interest (i.e. concern about immigration and political trust) is examined using the Pearson correlation coefficient - a statistical method designed to measure the strength of the association between two variables. This bivariate technique is first applied to individual-level data; that is, examining the relationship between concern about immigration and political trust across individuals in a country: are individuals who are more concerned about immigration also more distrusting of political institutions and politicians? Next, the bivariate technique is applied at the country-level by taking the average level of concern about immigration and the average level of political trust in each country and plotting these averages against each other.

However, bivariate analyses are rather simple tests which do not take into account important factors, such as the socio-economic status of respondents, that may also have a bearing on levels of political trust. Multivariate analyses, which examine the relationship between political trust and a wide range of factors (listed further below), are therefore also used in this study to try to 'control for' the influence on political trust of potential variables other than concern about immigration. These other factors include both individual and country-level components. The individual-level components are derived by asking individual survey respondents questions on trust in political institutions, on general unhappiness, perceptions of government performance, etc. Factors operating at the country-level include actual numbers of immigrants to a country, the economic situation in a country, or the quality of national governance, etc.

Concern about immigration and political trust are related to one another in most of the countries

The data used in these methods is drawn from the European Social Survey, Rounds 1 to 4.⁴ This survey measures cross-national levels of political trust via an 11-point scale presented to respondents after the following statement was put to them: 'Using this card, please tell me on a score of 0-10 how much you personally trust each of the institutions I read out. 0 means you do not trust an institution at all, and 10 means you have complete trust. [country]'s parliament? the legal system? the police? politicians?'. The coding for these items was reversed so that high values represent higher levels of distrust.

Countries with relatively low levels of distrust, i.e. high levels of trust, include Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland. Countries with higher levels of distrust, i.e. lower levels of trust, are the Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Portugal and the UK. Figure 1 in the Appendix at page 29 illustrates the cross-national differences in levels of distrust in the different institutions and in politicians for the most recent round of the ESS (2008-09). Also illustrated in the graphs are the differences in distrust across various institutions, with distrust in parliament higher on average than distrust in legal systems, which is higher than distrust in the police. Distrust in politicians is at roughly similar levels to, or even slightly higher levels than, distrust in parliament. These patterns are replicated across all of the ESS participant countries.

The main individual-level variable of interest, concern about immigration, is constructed by combining three immigration-related items into a single index. The wording of these items was as follows: Would you say it is generally bad or good for [country]'s economy that people come to live here from other countries? Please use this card. Bad for the economy (0), Good for the economy

4. Fieldwork for Round 1 was conducted in 2002-2003, for Round 2, in 2004-2005 (except in Italy, where it was conducted in early 2006), for Round 3, in 2006-2007, and for Round 4, in 2008-2009. The survey is available at <http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/>.

5. The Pearson correlation coefficient has a mathematical range of -1 to +1. The closer the coefficient gets to 1 (or -1), the stronger the association between the variables. As a very basic rule of thumb for public opinion data, correlations of around 0.25-0.35 are considered to be moderate and correlations higher than 0.35 are thought to indicate a fairly strong relationship.

(10). And, using this card, would you say that [country]'s cultural life is generally undermined or enriched by people coming to live here from other countries? Cultural life undermined (0), Cultural life enriched (10). Is [country] made a worse or a better place to live by people coming to live here from other countries? Please use this card. Worse place (0), Better place (10).

Concern about immigration and political trust

The results of the bivariate analysis indicate that concerns about immigration and political trust are related to one another in most of the ESS countries, and for multiple indicators of political trust. Table 1 in the Appendix at page 25 provides the Pearson correlation coefficients for the indicators of political trust and concern about immigration for the most recent round of the ESS (Round 4, 2008-09). For distrust in parliament, the correlation in Norway is a fairly powerful 0.44 and in the UK, 0.39; for distrust in the legal system, the higher correlations are for Belgium (0.35) and Netherlands (0.40). For distrust in the police, Belgium and the Netherlands again have the highest correlations (0.26 and 0.30), while for distrust in politicians, the correlations are 0.33 for Sweden and 0.38 for Norway. Correlations are quite weak, however, in Slovakia and Greece for distrust in the police and in Poland for distrust in politicians.⁵

The varying size of these bivariate correlations, however, would seem to indicate that while strongly related to one another in many countries, there is far from an automatic confluence of these two attitudes—that is, they are not tapping into an identical anti-system construct or ideological predisposition. This will be discussed further in the context of the multivariate analyses below.

At the country level, the relationship between concern about immigration and political trust is very strong. Figure 2 in the Appendix at page 30 illustrates the relationship between concern about immigration and political distrust at the country level, for all four rounds of the ESS. Figure 3 in the Appendix at page 31 illustrates the relationship for Round 4 (in case the country-level clustering is driving much of the powerful relationship in the multi-round analysis).

Some may contend that this strong relationship is likely to be an artifact produced by other variables; for instance, that respondents in some countries may simply be more likely to be pessimistic, generally unhappy, etc., that negative perceptions of institutions and of immigrants may be argued to fit together into one ideological perspective, or that the far-right has played some role in helping citizens to connect these ideas to one another. The latter possibility is controlled for via incorporation of far-right mobilisation effects into the multivariate model below. The other of these critiques will be addressed by using individual-level control variables, to be discussed below. For now, I will address these critiques by considering the relationship between concern about immigration and distrust of the European Parliament.

The European Parliament appears in the series of trust items examined in the European Social Survey. If the immigration and distrust items were simply capturing general unhappiness, dissatisfaction, pessimism, etc., it would be expected that concern about immigration would be just as strongly correlated with distrust of the European Parliament as it is to distrust of national institutions and politicians. Indeed, some might argue that the relationship between concern about immigration and distrust of the European Parliament should be even stronger than the relationship between concern about immigration and distrust of national institutions because negative attitudes to immigrants are generally correlated with negative attitudes to the European Union (de Vreese and Boomgaarden 2005; McLaren 2002). However, the evidence suggests this is not the case. Figure 4 in the Appendix at page 32 illustrates that the relationship between concern about immigration and distrust in the

European Parliament is far weaker than the relationship between concern about immigration and distrust of national institutions and politicians.

Thus, I take this as initial support of Proposition 1: concern about immigration appears to be strongly associated with distrust specifically in national political institutions and politicians.

Multivariate analyses

The multivariate analyses conducted in this paper incorporate controls for variables that have been shown to be related to political trust or government support in existing literature. An attempt is made to control for the following variables:

Economic performance. Echoing the major 1980s and 1990s electoral studies' refrain, 'It's the Economy, Stupid', and drawing on Easton's model of the political system in which (perceived) outputs of the system are likely to produce short- and long-term effects on perceptions of the system as a whole, many researchers have pointed to the role of economics in explaining differences in individual-level and aggregate-level perceptions of political institutions. Thus an economy that is performing poorly or perceptions that the national economy or one's own personal economic circumstances are declining (or are likely to decline) have all been argued to affect attitudes to political institutions, at least in the short-term (Clarke, Dutt and Kornberg 1993; Newton 2006; Anderson and Guillory 1997; Cusack 1999; Kornberg and Clarke 1992; Listhaug 1995; Listhaug and Wiberg 1995; Lockerbie 1993; Weil 1989; Citrin and Green 1986; Arthur Miller 1983; Chanley, Rudolph and Rahn 2000; Hetherington 2006; Mishler and Rose 1997; Markus 1988).

Perceptions of the functioning of political institutions. If governments are perceived to be fair and open, if politicians can be held accountable, and if individuals perceive governments to be performing well along various policy dimensions, individuals are more likely to trust (Miller and Listhaug 1990, 1999; Weil 1989; Weatherford 1992; Evans and Whitefield 1995; Mishler and Rose 1997, 2001; Newton 2006). Thus, levels of trust in politics are likely to be connected to the manner in which institutions function and whether citizens perceive governments to be performing well.

Social capital. Scholars have more recently linked distrust in politics to social capital, including voluntary and other informal participatory networks and interpersonal trust, although at the individual-level, the connection between interpersonal trust and political trust is still unclear: research from the U.S. indicates a reciprocal relationship, research from Central and Eastern Europe points to the conclusion that trust in institutions may, in fact, produce higher levels of interpersonal trust, and early research from Western Europe finds no connection between interpersonal and political trust at the micro-level (Brehm and Rahn 1997; Mishler and Rose 2005; Newton 1999), while more recent analysis from European democracies finds a relatively strong relationship between these variables (Zmerli and Newton 2008). This paper does not attempt to analyse the causality of this relationship, but simply introduces controls for social capital in the multivariate models below.⁶

Winner effect. Analyses also point to the effects of being electoral 'losers'—i.e., voting for a party that fails to get into government—and indicate that electoral losers may lose some degree of confidence in the political system, at least in the short-term (Anderson and Guillory 1997; Anderson and LoTempio 2002; Anderson and Tverdova 2001; Clarke and Acock 1989; Whiteley and Seyd 1998). I incorporate a control for this variable as well.

6. Note that previous drafts of this paper included voluntary participation as an indicator of social capital, but the relationship between this variable and political trust was consistently insignificant, so this draft substitutes another indicator later added to the social capital construct in Putnam's (2001) *Bowling Alone*, socializing with friends.

Other potential proxies. The models also control for voting for a far-right party in the most recent general election, left-right self placement, general unhappiness, and dissatisfaction with life. Taken together, these variables are likely to be strong proxies for potential automatic correlation between concern about immigration and political distrust. Reported unhappiness and dissatisfaction with life are likely to capture the potential individual-level pessimism mentioned above, a general attitude which may make respondents more likely to feel negatively both about immigration and about political institutions and politicians. Left-right self-placement is likely to capture the potential ideological confluence between political dissatisfaction and hostility to immigration, with those on the far-right being more negative about political institutions and politicians and about immigration.

Finally, those who actually voted for the far-right are, of course, very likely to be hostile to immigration and to politics because of ideas stoked by far-right party rhetoric. Thus, any relationship between concern about immigration and distrust in politics that remains after including all of these controls is the relationship taking into account these potential causes of spuriousness—general pessimism, automatic ideological confluence of these two ideas, and individual-level support for the far-right. The analysis further incorporates country-level data on the mobilising effect of far-right parties, thus controlling for this potential source of spuriousness.

Concern about immigration has a statistically significant effect on distrust in politics

The analysis further controls for household income, membership of an ethnic minority group, age, education and gender.

It is expected that with many predictors of specific support included in the model—particularly winning and losing, perceptions of government performance and perceptions of the economy—at least some of the remaining covariation between concerns about immigration and political trust will be connected to more general orientations towards the political system and will not be solely limited to attitudes towards the current government.

Multivariate analysis of the ESS⁷

The results of the multivariate analysis indicate that, after controlling for fairly powerful predictors of distrust in politics, concern about immigration has a statistically significant effect on distrust in politics. Table 2 in the Appendix at page 26 reports the coefficients for the model that only includes individual-level variables. It shows maximum effects of 1.4, 1.1 and 1.2 on the 11-point measures of trust in parliament, politicians and the legal system, respectively. That is, those who are most concerned about immigration on average have a score that is 1.4 points higher on the 11-point scale of distrust in parliament, 1.1 points higher on distrust in politicians and 1.2 on distrust in the legal system. The maximum effect of concern about immigration on trust in the police, however, is only 0.50, a considerably weaker effect.⁸

Other relatively strong effects include dissatisfaction with the country's economy, interpersonal trust and dissatisfaction with the health and education systems in the country. Indeed, dissatisfaction with the country's economy and interpersonal trust each have stronger effects than concern about immigration across all four indicators of political distrust. The strength of the latter two variables, dissatisfaction with the health and education systems, is roughly similar to that of concern about immigration, or even stronger in the case of trust in the police. For instance, those who are most dissatisfied with the country's economy on average score 2.4 points higher on distrust in parliament and 2.3 points higher on distrust in politicians than those who are most satisfied, with weaker effects

7. To correct for potential clustering at the country- and survey-round levels, the analysis is conducted using hierarchical linear modeling (see Steenbergen and Jones 2002; Raudenbush and Bryk 2002 or Snijders and Bosker 1999), with individuals nested within countries, which are, in turn, nested within survey round.

8. Note that the bivariate effects were far stronger. For instance, the maximum effect of concern about immigration on trust in parliament was 2.9, for trust in politicians, 2.4, for trust in the legal system, 2.7 and trust in the police, 1.6. For the technical details of the analysis see McLaren (2010), pp. 22-24.

on distrust in the legal system and police. Similarly, those who are most distrusting of other people have a score on distrust in parliament that is 1.9 points higher than those who are least distrusting, with similar effects for distrust in politicians, the legal system and the police.

Although not the strongest effect in the model, concern about immigration is far from being the weakest either. Amongst the weaker effects in the model are dissatisfaction with one's personal income, the winner effect, voting for a far-right party in the most recent general election, left-right self-placement, frequency of meeting with friends, general unhappiness, dissatisfaction with life, household income, membership of an ethnic minority group, age, education and gender. For instance, the score on distrust in parliament for electoral winners is only 0.40 lower than for electoral losers (that is, winners are slightly less distrusting than losers), while those who voted for a far-right party are only 0.38 higher (on average) on distrust in parliament. Comparatively, these effects are far weaker than those for concern about immigration.

In short, the impact of concern about immigration is moderate but far from weak compared to other predictors that were expected to have powerful effects on political distrust.

Perhaps more interesting is that concern about immigration continues to display a significant relationship with political distrust after controlling in particular for unhappiness, life dissatisfaction, voting for a far-right party and left-right self-placement. This is important because the latter two variables capture some of the ideological confluence of the two issues of immigration and distrust that have been witnessed in many European countries and the former two capture general pessimism. That is, even after taking into account this potential automatic correspondence via voting for the far-right and via left-right self-placement, as well as pessimism, attitudes to the economy and attitudes to government provision of health and educational services, the effect of concern about immigration on political trust remains.

Negative perceptions of immigration appear to stem from something other than actual levels of immigration

Including country-level predictors

Very few of the country-level predictors hypothesised to have an effect on political distrust have a significant effect on political distrust at the $p \leq 0.05$ level. Please see Table 3 in the Appendix at page 27.

Quality of governance. The World Bank Governance score measuring governance quality (please see the Appendix at page 23) in the case of trust in the police achieves significance at this level, and the better the governance ranking according to the World Bank Governance score, the lower the level of distrust in the police. In general, though, it appears that political distrust may not be related to governance quality, in contrast to Rohrschneider's (2005) findings.

Levels of migration. Cumulative inflows of immigrants in the four years before the survey (please see the Appendix at page 22) have a significant effect on distrust in the legal system at the $p \leq 0.05$ level, and using a standard of $p \leq 0.10$, have an impact on distrust in the police, with higher numbers of immigrants being related to slightly higher levels of distrust, as predicted. Higher numbers of immigrants do not appear to have a significant effect on trust in parliament or politicians.

It should be noted that actual levels of immigration are very weakly related—or even negatively related—to perceptions of immigration and this is true in the ESS data set used here. That is, negative

9. The Pearson's r between concern about immigration and average migration to the country for the four years prior to the survey is -0.56 and -0.42 for Rounds 1 and 2 respectively, and -0.13 and -0.14 for Rounds 3 and 4 respectively, with only the Round 1 correlation achieving statistical significance at the $p \leq 0.05$ level.

perceptions of immigration appear to stem from something other than actual levels of immigration to the country (see also Sides and Citrin 2007).⁹

Migrant integration policy. The Migrant Integration Policy Index, measuring how immigrant-friendly national policies are (please see the Appendix at page 24) is also significantly related to distrust in parliament at the $p \leq 0.05$ level and to distrust in the legal system at $p \leq 0.10$, although with opposite effects: more immigrant-friendly policies are associated with slightly higher levels of distrust in parliament but slightly lower levels of distrust in the legal system. My main hypothesis for this variable was an interactive one, however, so we return to this variable below.

Economic circumstances. As noted above, perceptions of the country's economic circumstances are strongly related to distrust. However, actual circumstances appear not to be. In general, there is little support here for the arguments of previous research connecting actual economic circumstances to perceptions of the political system. It should be noted that these findings mirror other comparative research on voting behavior and government support (Lewis-Beck 1990). Neither of the economic indicators achieves statistical significance at the $p \leq 0.05$ level, but GDP/capita does so at $p \leq 0.10$ for distrust of politicians, with higher levels of GDP/capita being associated with slightly lower levels of distrust.

The far right. Somewhat surprisingly, neither the popularity of far-right parties in the country nor having a far-right party in the governing coalition appears to have an impact on distrust in politics, based on any of the indicators of the latter. Thus, the individual-level connection between concern about immigration and political distrust is also not necessarily mobilised by the far-right and again seems to stem from other sources. Additionally, having a far-right party in government appears to have no impact on political trust. As with the immigration policy argument, though, my hypothesis regarding the far-right in government was interactive, so we revisit this below.

Interactive effects

The final set of tests involved investigating each of the interactive effects discussed above—i.e. how concern about immigration might interact with cumulative inflows of migrants, with far-right popularity, with having a far-right party in the coalition, with quality of governance and with immigrant integration policy. Only the interactive effects for the latter two variables achieved even basic statistical significance (at the $p \leq 0.05$ level, that is), and so I report only these below, rather than also reporting the coefficients for the statistically insignificant interactions. However, the importance of these 'non-findings' should be noted before discussing the significant interactions.

Thus it is the *perception* of immigration rather than the reality that matters in predicting political trust

First, although concern about immigration is clearly related to political distrust, this does not appear to depend on actual levels of immigration to the country. Thus it seems to be the perception of immigration rather than the reality that matters in predicting political trust. Second, the relationship between concern about immigration and distrust exists regardless of whether there is a strong far-right presence in the country or not, and having a far-right anti-immigration party in government also appears to have no mediating effect on the relationship between concern about immigration and political distrust.

The interactive terms for governance quality and integration policy do achieve statistical significance at the $p \leq 0.001$ level, with the exception of governance quality in the case of distrust in the police, as indicated in Table 4 (please see the Appendix at page 28). Figures 5 and 6 illustrate these interactions (please see the Appendix at page 33-34).¹⁰ First, Figure 5 indicates that where governance is relatively poor, concern about immigration still has an effect on political distrust but it is weaker, except in the case of trusting the police, where the relationship is identical regardless of governance quality. However, it should be noted that the starting value for distrust in the police is higher in countries with poorer governance, and this is also true for all indicators of distrust. As argued by Rohrschneider (2005), it is very likely that it is precisely because of poor government institutions that distrust is generally higher in these countries. In countries where governance is of a high quality, the effect of concern about immigration on distrust is generally even more powerful (for distrust of parliament, politicians, and the legal system, that is).

As discussed above, it is possible that in these countries people who are concerned about immigration actually worry about the impact

In countries where governance is of a high quality, the effect of immigration on distrust is generally even more powerful

of immigration on their traditionally strong political institutions, and in turn feel less trust in these institutions and in politicians because of their perception of the impact of immigration on the socio-political community as a whole. Also, as noted above, the starting values on distrust (the y-intercept) for countries with poorer governance scores are higher, providing more support for Rohrschneider's (2005) arguments regarding the quality of governance affecting perceptions of political institutions than was the case for the non-interactive models. Based on the non-interactive models, this effect appeared to generally fail to meet minimum requirements for statistical significance, though, and it was only with the introduction of the interaction with concern about immigration that the effect of governance quality became evident. That is, it seems that amongst the ESS countries, the impact of governance may be mediated by concern about immigration—where people were more concerned about immigration, the quality of governance matters very little in terms of predicting political trust, in that political distrust is fairly high when concern about immigration is high regardless of governance quality. On the other hand, when individual-level concerns about immigration are low, governance quality has an impact on political trust. These effects are illustrated in Figure 5. This, in essence, turns the original argument on its head somewhat—when people are concerned about immigration, this is predominantly what explains their distrust in politics (*vis-à-vis* governance quality, that is); when they are not very concerned about immigration, they focus on other factors when considering their feelings about politics, with those living in countries with poor governance feeling more distrusting than those living in places where governance quality is high.

In countries where the policies towards immigrants are more immigrant-friendly, the impact of concern about immigration is stronger than in countries where migrant policies make it harder for immigrants to work, become citizens, etc. This is indicated in Figure 7 in the Appendix at page 35. Thus, for those most concerned about immigration, the 'lenient' policies toward migrants may be leading to higher levels of distrust in institutions and politicians. Where policies are not immigrant-friendly, these appear to temper the effect of concern about immigration, at least in the cases of distrust in politicians, the legal system and the police. For distrust in parliament, the effect of concern about immigration is fairly similar across levels of integration policy, with those feeling the most concerned being the most distrusting of parliament, regardless of the migrant policies in the country, although the slope is still steeper where migrant policies are more immigrant-friendly.

10. The 10th and 90th percentile values for governance quality and for the Migrant Integration Policy Index have been chosen to illustrate these effects.

4. Conclusion

This paper has argued that one of the potential consequences of concern about immigration is negative perceptions of political institutions and politicians and that this relationship is not simply spurious and is not simply a result of far-right rhetoric, pessimism, etc. Instead, the construction of the modern European state, with its emphasis on common culture and identity, seems to have made it difficult for many citizens in these states to reconcile the functioning of their national political systems with the incorporation of newcomers who are perceived not to share the same culture and values and who are perceived to be having a negative impact on the economic prospects of fellow countrymen and women. That is, concern about immigration is not simply 'accidentally' related to political distrust but is likely to be one of the causes of the latter. Thus, the potential consequences of concern about immigration are very serious indeed. That the effects appear for elected officials and an elected institution (parliament) as well as unelected branches of the political system, particularly the legal system, provides some indication that these effects may not be limited solely to blame of the current government of the day, but instead may pertain to more general system support.

The results of the analysis also indicate that where governance is of good quality and migrant policies make it relatively easy for migrants to become fully functioning members of the polity, the connection between concern about immigration and distrust is even stronger. In the case of governance quality, individuals living in countries with poor governance are likely—not surprisingly—to use this as one of their main criteria for evaluating their political institutions and politicians, with concern about immigration exercising a weaker effect. Where governance is good, though, this is likely to mean (a) that individuals may focus on other factors when evaluating the political system and (b) that they feel they have outstanding-quality institutions that must be preserved and protected. For some, immigrants are a clear threat to these outstanding institutions and so concern about immigration seems to lead individuals in these countries to hold less trust in these institutions and in politicians, presumably at least in part because they are perceived to be failing to protect the polity from the negative effects of immigration. As discussed above, another way of looking at this relationship is that when concern about immigration is high, governance quality matters less in predicting distrust, but when concern about immigration is low, governance quality becomes more of a focus of attention for distrust, illustrating even further the predominance of concern about immigration as a key explanation for individual-level variation in political trust.

In the case of immigrant-friendly government policies, clearly those who have less negative views of immigrants and immigration feel far less distrust in

Those who have less negative views of immigrants feel far less distrust in their political systems and in politicians

their political systems and in politicians than those who are strongly concerned about immigration and live in these same sorts of countries. That is, while such policies are clearly pleasing—or at least acceptable—to a range of individuals and this, in turn, produces positive orientations to the political system and politicians, it also alienates respondents who are concerned about immigration and are likely to feel that the national immigrant-friendly policies are unacceptable. Moreover, countries that adopt less immigrant-friendly policies appear to be able to temper the effects of concern about immigration, and this brings some positive returns in terms of slightly lower levels of political distrust. Thus one important avenue for further research is an investigation of the impact of integration policy change on attitudes to immigration and on political distrust.

Also of interest here are the non-findings, particularly for the Level 2 variables. Namely, levels of immigration and far-right mobilisation have limited effects on the relationship between concern

about immigration and political trust. Indeed, levels of migration may be unrelated (or even negatively related) to concerns about immigration, indicating that these negative perceptions about immigration are a result of other factors. Perhaps equally surprising is that the relationship between concern about immigration and political distrust exists regardless of the presence or absence of powerful far-right parties, lending further support to the argument of the paper, which is that Europeans generally have fears about the impact of immigration on their national communities and that in many cases, this weakens their feelings of connectedness to their political systems and elites. Moreover, this relationship does not necessarily appear to be stoked by the far-right, nor is it determined by levels of immigration to the country.

The effect of reduced trust, in turn is potentially very serious, in that positive orientations towards political systems make governance possible. That is, the perceived threat posed by immigration presents the prospect of weakened governments and governance because of this increasing disconnectedness between elites and institutions on the one hand and citizens on the other.

“Closing the gates” would not solve the problem raised by this paper

While the most immediate response to the argument and findings presented here may be the simple one of ‘closing the gates’, such a solution would not solve the problem raised by this paper. Whether European citizens like it or not, most European countries have become—or are rapidly becoming—countries of immigration and closing the gates would have no impact on the millions of immigrants and their families and descendants who are already in these countries and consider them to be their homes. Thus, perhaps an alternative solution is to revisit the construction of national identities, with the aim of more clearly establishing what national identity comprises and where the millions of foreigners living within European countries fit within this construct. Some European countries appear to have tried to do this via immigrant-friendly policies, but the findings here indicate that these may be creating a backlash amongst some citizens, raising the important question of what the appropriate balance ought to be in terms of the treatment of newcomers to society. At the very least, it must be recognised that immigration may be having long-term, unanticipated consequences for the functioning of political systems, which seem to require more open debate and discussion.

Appendix: Measurement of variables

Level 1 variables

Distrust in politics

Using this card, please tell me on a score of 0-10 how much you personally trust each of the institutions I read out. 0 means you do not trust an institution at all, and 10 means you have complete trust. Firstly...READ OUT [country]'s parliament? the legal system? police? politicians? The coding of these items was reversed such that high scores represent distrust.

Concern about immigration

Would you say it is generally bad or good for [country]'s economy that people come to live here from other countries? Please use this card. Bad for the economy (0), Good for the economy (10). And, using this card, would you say that [country]'s cultural life is generally undermined or enriched by people coming to live here from other countries? Cultural life undermined (0), Cultural life enriched (10). Is [country] made a worse or a better place to live by people coming to live here from other countries? Please use this card. Worse place (0), Better place (10). The coding of all three of these items was reversed and the items were combined into a single index, with values ranging from 0 to 10. Inter-item correlation (Pearson's r) ranged from 0.58 to 0.65. Note that these items were chosen because they are the ones available across all four rounds of the ESS. However, the items appear to capture the main relevant concerns related to immigration—economic and identity concerns (Sniderman, Hagendoor and Prior 2004), plus the more general worries about the impact of immigration on the country.

Perceptions of economic performance

Unfortunately, the ESS does not contain the array of indicators necessary for distinguishing between pocketbook versus sociotropic and retrospective versus prospective economic evaluations, so we rely on the following two indicators of perceptions of economic performance:

On the whole how satisfied are you with the present state of the economy in [country]? Extremely Dissatisfied (0), Extremely satisfied (10) The coding of this item was reversed such that high values represent dissatisfaction.

Which of the descriptions on this card comes closest to how you feel about your household's income nowadays? Living comfortably on present income(1) Coping on present income(2) Finding it difficult on present income(3) Finding it very difficult on present income(4).

Perceptions of government performance: dissatisfied with health services

Still using this card, please say what you think overall about the state of health services in [country] nowadays? Extremely bad (0) Extremely good (10). The coding of this item was reversed such that high values represent dissatisfaction.

Perceptions of government performance: dissatisfied with education system

Now, using this card, please say what you think overall about the state of education in [country] nowadays?

Extremely bad (0) Extremely good (10). The coding of this item was reversed such that high values represent dissatisfaction.

Social capital: interpersonal (dis)trust

A8 CARD 3: Using this card, generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people? Please tell me on a score of 0 to 10, where 0 means you can't be too careful and 10 means that most people can be trusted. A9 CARD 4: Using this card, do you think that most people would try to take advantage of you if they got the chance, or would they try to be fair? Most people would try to take advantage of me (0) Most people would try to be fair (10). A10 CARD 5: Would you say that most of the time people try to be helpful or that they are mostly looking out for themselves? Please use this card. People mostly look out for themselves (0) People mostly try to be helpful (10). The coding of all three of these items was reversed and the items were combined into a single index, with values ranging from 0 to 10. Inter-item correlation (Pearson's r) ranged from 0.48 to 0.58.

Social capital: frequency of meeting with friends

Using this card, how often do you meet socially with friends, relatives or work colleagues? Never (1) Less than once a month (2) Once a month (3) Several times a month (4) Once a week (5) Several times a week (6) Every day (7). The coding of this item was reversed such that high values represent rarely meeting with friends.

Winning and losing

Respondents who claim to have voted for a party that was in government at the time of the survey were given a code of 1; those who voted for parties not in the government were coded 0. Note that in a handful of the counties, elections were held in the midst of the ESS fieldwork. If the government changed after these elections, then winning and losing parties subsequently changed for the purposes of coding this variable, as appropriate.

Voted for far-right (anti-immigration) party in last general election

Information regarding which parties held opposition to immigration as one of their key party platforms in each country and for the various years of the ESS was compiled as discussed below, and respondents who claim to have voted for one of these parties in the most recent general election before the conduct of fieldwork were given a code of 1; everyone else was given a code of 0. If, as was the case in a few countries, an election was held in the midst of the ESS fieldwork, the relevant election used for this coding changed, as appropriate.

Left-right self-placement

In politics people sometimes talk of "left" and "right". Using this card, where would you place yourself on this scale, where 0 means the left and 10 means the right?

Other controls

Unhappiness: Taking all things together, how happy would you say you are? Please use this card. Extremely unhappy (0) Extremely happy (10). The coding of this item was reversed such that high values represent unhappiness.

Dissatisfied with life: All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole nowadays? Please answer using this card, where 0 means extremely dissatisfied and 10 means extremely satisfied. Extremely dissatisfied (0) Extremely satisfied (10). The coding of this item was reversed such that high values represent dissatisfaction.

Household income: Using this card, please tell me which letter describes your household's total income, after tax and compulsory deductions, from all sources? If you don't know the exact figure, please give an estimate. Use the part of the card that you know best: weekly, monthly or annual. Note that in the Cumulative Round 1-3 file, this variable is coded on a twelve-point scale, where in Round 4, it is on a 10-point scale. To provide better comparability, the variable has been standardized such that respondents' scores represent the distance of their income categories from the mean value of the survey.

Minority status: Do you belong to a minority ethnic group in [country]? (0 if no, 1 if yes)

Age: In what year were you born?

Education: What is the highest level of education you have achieved? (0= Not completed primary education; 1= Primary or first stage of basic; 2= Lower secondary or second stage of basic; 3=Upper secondary; 4=Post secondary, non-tertiary; 5=First stage of tertiary; 6=Second stage of tertiary).

Gender: coded by interviewer.

Level 2 variables

Cumulative inflow of migrants 4 Years before survey divided by average population size

These data are available from the OECD (<http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?datasetcode=MIG>) and are national estimates, generally based either on population registers or residence permit data. See the above link for extensive discussion of this indicator. Although I would have liked to have included an indicator of longer-term migration—e.g., over the past 40-50 years, systematic data for this is unavailable, particularly for CEE countries. Note that I have also investigated the effect of percent foreign population—which may be a better indicator of longer-term migration—on distrust and on the relationship between concern about immigration and distrust and the effect is similar to that reported here. In addition, the correlation between percent foreign in the population and inflows of migrants for the past four years is strongly correlated, at 0.90 (Pearson's correlation coefficient).

Far-right popularity

This was measured by the percent of the popular vote going to a party that has opposition to immigration as one of its main platforms in the national election preceding the fielding of the ESS questionnaire. Information about party platforms was generally obtained from multiple online election resources, as well as annual reviews of elections in the European Journal of Political Research.

The full list of far-right parties and percentages of votes received in the year before each ESS fieldwork is available from the author, as is the full list of sources used.

Far-right in the governing coalition

Governing coalition information was obtained from multiple online election resources, as well as annual reviews of elections in the European Journal of Political Research. If any of the parties deemed to hold opposition to immigration as one of its main platforms was included in the governing coalition, the country-year was coded 1; otherwise, a code of 0 was given.

Quality of governance

To measure overall quality of governance, I rely on the World Bank Governance Indicators, which are based on surveys of household and firm respondents, experts working in the private sector, NGOs and public sector agencies (Kaufmann, Kraay and Mastruzzi 2009: 4). Kaufmann, Kraay and Mastruzzi (2009: 6) define governance

as the traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised. This includes the process by which governments are selected, monitored and replaced; the capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement sound policies; and the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them.

The six dimensions of governance corresponding to this definition that they measure are:

1. Voice and Accountability, which measures “perceptions of the extent to which a country’s citizens are able to participate in selecting their government, as well as freedom of expression, freedom of association, and a free media” (Kaufmann, Kraay and Mastruzzi 2009: 6).
2. Political Stability and Absence of Violence which measures “perceptions of the likelihood that the government will be destabilized or overthrown by unconstitutional or violent means, including politically-motivated violence and terrorism” (Kaufmann, Kraay and Mastruzzi 2009: 6).
3. Government Effectiveness which measures “perceptions of the quality of public services, the quality of the civil service and the degree of its independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the government’s commitment to such policies” (Kaufmann, Kraay and Mastruzzi 2009: 6).
4. Regulatory Quality which measures “perceptions of the ability of the government to formulate and implement sound policies and regulations that permit and promote private sector development” (Kaufmann, Kraay and Mastruzzi 2009: 6).
5. Rule of Law which measures “perceptions of the extent to which agents have confidence in and abide by the rules of society, and in particular the quality of contract enforcement....” (Kaufmann, Kraay and Mastruzzi 2009: 6).
6. Control of Corruption which measures “perceptions of the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain, including both petty and grand forms of corruption, as well as ‘capture’ of the state by elites and private interests” (Kaufmann, Kraay and Mastruzzi 2009: 6).

These indicators are strongly correlated with one another, with a minimum Pearson's r of 0.60 for the period analyzed in this paper, with an average inter-item correlation of 0.80 and Cronbach's alpha of 0.94. I thus combine the six indicators by taking the average score across all six for each country and each year. Note that while the Rule of Law item may appear to contain elements of the dependent variable, I include it in the index because it captures a fairly key component of quality of governance—perception of contract enforcement. I have recomputed the analyses below with this item omitted from the index but the results are very similar to those reported below. Note that Rohrschneider (2005: 862) has conducted extensive validation of several components of this index and found them to be related to Transparency International corruption perception scores, with the number of European Court of Human Rights judgments against a country, and with public perceptions of the conduct of elections in a country.

Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX)

MIPEX measures policies to integrate migrants in 25 EU Member States and three non-EU countries using over 140 policy indicators to create a multi-dimensional picture of migrants' opportunities to participate in European societies. In every country, a national correspondent scored each indicator based on the country's policies as of 1 March 2007. These scores were then peer-reviewed by a second correspondent. Both are leading independent scholars or practitioners of migration law in their country. MIPEX uses the term 'migrants' to refer to Third Country Nationals legally residing in an EU Member State. It does not generally refer to refugees or asylum seekers, irregular migrants, EU citizens exercising their free movement rights or EU citizens with immigrant origins. MIPEX covers six policy areas which shape a migrant's journey to full citizenship: labour market access, family reunion, long-term residence, political participation, access to nationality, and anti-discrimination. For the analysis here, these indicators have been combined into a single index (average inter-item correlation is 0.45, Cronbach's alpha is 0.81, and all items load onto a single factor in a principal components analysis). See <http://www.integrationindex.eu/> (last accessed 9 August 2010) for further information.

Note that because our measure of migrant integration policy represents integration policy as at 2007 (see the Appendix), we re-investigate the relationship between this variable and concern about immigration and political trust for the final round of the ESS only and the relationship between this variable and political trust for Round 4 observations is identical to that reported here.

Economic conditions

GDP/Capita, measured using the average OECD GDP/capita as the base is available from <http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=NAG>, and Unemployment rate in the year before the survey were both obtained from the OECD, available at <http://titania.sourceoecd.org/vl=3262696/cl=11/nw=1/rpsv/factbook2009/06/02/01/index.htm>.

TABLE 1: Political distrust and concern about immigration, Pearson correlation coefficients

	Parliament	Legal System	Police	Politicians	N
Belgium	0.30	0.35	0.26	0.26	1760
Switzerland	0.27	0.27	0.17	0.20	1819
Czech Republic	0.21	0.16	0.15	0.21	2018
Germany	0.29	0.26	0.15	0.26	2751
Denmark	0.29	0.34	0.18	0.19	1610
Spain	0.21	0.20	0.08	0.24	2576
Finland	0.33	0.30	0.21	0.26	2195
France	0.20	0.25	0.05*	0.15	2073
UK	0.39	0.31	0.23	0.32	2352
Greece	0.18	0.10	0.02 ^{NS}	0.19	2072
Hungary	0.23	0.25	0.23	0.23	1544
Netherlands	0.34	0.40	0.30	0.33	1778
Norway	0.44	0.33	0.21	0.38	1549
Poland	0.12	0.16	0.13	0.03 ^{NS}	1619
Portugal	0.17	0.13	0.13	0.16	2367
Sweden	0.32	0.28	0.23	0.33	1830
Slovenia	0.24	0.21	0.17	0.18	1286
Slovakia	0.07	0.08	0.08	0.05	1810

Note that all correlations are significant at $p \leq .01$, except where otherwise noted.

*Significant at $p \leq .05$

^{NS} Not Significant

Based on Round 4 of the European Social Survey

TABLE 2: Distrust politics, individual-level model

	Parliament			Politicians			Legal System			Police		
	b	SE	p	b	SE	p	b	SE	p	b	SE	p
<u>Level 1 variables</u>												
Concern about Immigration	0.14	0.00	0.000	0.11	0.00	0.000	0.12	0.00	0.000	0.05	0.00	0.000
Dissatisfied with country's economy	0.24	0.00	0.000	0.23	0.00	0.000	0.18	0.00	0.000	0.12	0.00	0.000
Dissatisfied with personal income	0.03	0.01	0.001	0.04	0.01	0.000	0.02	0.01	0.008	0.01	0.01	0.126
Dissatisfied with health system	0.11	0.00	0.000	0.11	0.00	0.000	0.12	0.00	0.000	0.12	0.00	0.000
Dissatisfied with education system	0.11	0.00	0.000	0.11	0.00	0.000	0.14	0.00	0.000	0.14	0.00	0.000
Interpersonal distrust	0.19	0.00	0.000	0.21	0.00	0.000	0.20	0.00	0.000	0.19	0.00	0.000
Frequency of meeting friends	0.00	0.00	0.998	-0.01	0.00	0.016	-0.01	0.00	0.051	-0.02	0.00	0.000
Winner effect	-0.40	0.01	0.000	-0.32	0.01	0.000	-0.12	0.01	0.000	-0.16	0.01	0.000
Voted for far-right party in last general election	0.38	0.03	0.000	0.29	0.03	0.000	0.47	0.03	0.000	0.20	0.03	0.000
Left-right scale	-0.03	0.00	0.000	-0.03	0.00	0.000	-0.02	0.00	0.000	-0.04	0.00	0.000
Unhappiness	-0.01	0.00	0.001	-0.02	0.00	0.000	0.01	0.00	0.194	0.05	0.00	0.000
Dissatisfaction with life	0.01	0.00	0.007	0.00	0.00	0.839	0.03	0.00	0.000	0.06	0.00	0.000
HH income (standardized)	-0.05	0.01	0.000	-0.01	0.01	0.059	-0.06	0.01	0.000	-0.02	0.01	0.001
Member of ethnic minority group	-0.05	0.03	0.047	-0.06	0.02	0.022	0.05	0.03	0.066	0.23	0.03	0.000
Age	-0.00	0.00	0.021	-0.00	0.00	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.000	-0.01	0.00	0.000
Education	-0.09	0.00	0.000	-0.02	0.00	0.000	-0.08	0.00	0.000	0.01	0.00	0.009
Female	0.04	0.01	0.000	-0.11	0.01	0.000	-0.04	0.01	0.001	-0.16	0.01	0.000
<u>Level 2 variables</u>												
Cumulative inflows of migrants 4 years before survey (OECD)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Far-right party popularity	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Far right in govt	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
World Bank Governance Indicators	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Migration Policy (MIPEX)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
GDP/Capita	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Unemployment	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
<u>Interactions</u>												
Concerned about Immigration*World Bank Governance Indicators	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Concerned about immigration*Migration Policy (MIPEX)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Intercept	1.93	0.09	0.000	2.00	0.08	0.000	1.18	0.08	0.000	1.46	0.07	0.000
Level 1 Variance	0.22			0.18			0.38			0.33		
Level 2 Variance	3.88			3.50			4.35			4.34		

Level 1 N=157,296; Level 2 N=82; Level 3 N=4; statistics were computed using HLM software.

TABLE 3: Distrust politics, Level 1 and Level 2 predictors in the model

	Parliament			Politicians			Legal System			Police		
	b	SE	p	b	SE	p	b	SE	p	b	SE	p
<u>Level 1 variables</u>												
Concern about Immigration	0.14	0.00	0.000	0.11	0.00	0.000	0.12	0.00	0.000	0.05	0.00	0.000
Dissatisfied with country's economy	0.24	0.00	0.000	0.23	0.00	0.000	0.18	0.00	0.000	0.12	0.00	0.000
Dissatisfied with personal income	0.03	0.01	0.001	0.04	0.01	0.000	0.02	0.01	0.008	0.01	0.01	0.136
Dissatisfied with health system	0.11	0.00	0.000	0.11	0.00	0.000	0.12	0.00	0.000	0.12	0.00	0.000
Dissatisfied with education system	0.11	0.00	0.000	0.11	0.00	0.000	0.14	0.00	0.000	0.14	0.00	0.000
Interpersonal distrust	0.19	0.00	0.000	0.21	0.00	0.000	0.20	0.00	0.000	0.19	0.00	0.000
Frequency of meeting friends	0.00	0.00	0.956	-0.01	0.00	0.013	-0.01	0.00	0.048	-0.02	0.00	0.000
Winner effect	-0.40	0.01	0.000	-0.32	0.01	0.000	-0.12	0.01	0.000	-0.16	0.01	0.000
Voted for far-right party in last general election	0.38	0.03	0.000	0.29	0.03	0.000	0.47	0.03	0.000	0.20	0.03	0.000
Left-right scale	-0.03	0.00	0.000	-0.03	0.00	0.000	-0.02	0.00	0.000	-0.04	0.00	0.000
Unhappiness	-0.01	0.00	0.001	-0.02	0.00	0.000	0.01	0.00	0.196	0.05	0.00	0.000
Dissatisfaction with life	0.01	0.00	0.007	0.00	0.00	0.840	0.03	0.00	0.000	0.06	0.00	0.000
HH income (standardized)	-0.05	0.01	0.000	-0.01	0.01	0.080	-0.06	0.01	0.000	-0.02	0.01	0.002
Member of ethnic minority group	-0.05	0.03	0.048	-0.05	0.02	0.023	0.05	0.03	0.063	0.23	0.03	0.000
Age	-0.00	0.00	0.023	-0.00	0.00	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.000	-0.01	0.00	0.000
Education	-0.09	0.00	0.000	-0.02	0.00	0.000	-0.08	0.00	0.000	0.01	0.00	0.008
Female	0.04	0.01	0.000	-0.11	0.01	0.000	-0.04	0.01	0.001	-0.16	0.01	0.000
<u>Level 2 variables</u>												
Cumulative inflows of migrants 4 years before survey (OECD)	0.00	0.00	0.717	0.01	0.00	0.111	0.01	0.01	0.037	0.01	0.00	0.099
Far-right party popularity	0.00	0.01	0.776	-0.01	0.01	0.510	0.01	0.01	0.338	0.01	0.01	0.312
Far right in coalition	-0.27	0.23	0.239	-0.19	0.19	0.332	-0.35	0.27	0.198	-0.24	0.25	0.335
World Bank Governance Indicators	0.06	0.21	0.772	-0.04	0.18	0.828	-0.39	0.25	0.126	-0.60	0.23	0.012
Migration Policy (MIPEX)	-0.01	0.00	0.040	0.00	0.00	0.629	0.01	0.01	0.070	0.00	0.01	0.566
GDP/Capita	0.00	0.00	0.903	-0.01	0.00	0.091	-0.01	0.00	0.224	-0.01	0.00	0.161
Unemployment	0.02	0.02	0.422	0.01	0.02	0.631	0.03	0.02	0.272	-0.02	0.02	0.274
<u>Interactions</u>												
Concerned about Immigration*World Bank Governance Indicators	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Concerned about immigration*Migration Policy (MIPEX)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Intercept	2.42	0.43	0.001	3.45	0.37	0.000	1.16	0.51	0.099	2.60	0.47	0.002
Level 1 Variance	0.20			0.15			0.30			0.25		
Level 2 Variance	3.89			3.50			4.35			4.34		

Level 1 N=157,296; Level 2 N=82; Level 3 N=4; statistics were computed using HLM software.

TABLE 4: Table 4: Distrust politics, governance and migrant policy interactions in the model

	Parliament			Politicians			Legal System			Police		
	b	SE	p	b	SE	p	b	SE	p	b	SE	p
<u>Level 1 variables</u>												
Concern about Immigration	-0.07	0.01	0.000	-0.11	0.01	0.000	-0.08	0.01	0.000	-0.07	0.01	0.000
Dissatisfied with country's economy	0.24	0.00	0.000	0.23	0.00	0.000	0.18	0.00	0.000	0.12	0.00	0.000
Dissatisfied with personal income	0.03	0.01	0.000	0.04	0.01	0.000	0.02	0.01	0.003	0.01	0.01	0.121
Dissatisfied with health system	0.11	0.00	0.000	0.11	0.00	0.000	0.12	0.00	0.000	0.12	0.00	0.000
Dissatisfied with education system	0.11	0.00	0.000	0.11	0.00	0.000	0.14	0.00	0.000	0.14	0.00	0.000
Interpersonal distrust	0.19	0.00	0.000	0.21	0.00	0.000	0.20	0.00	0.000	0.19	0.00	0.000
Frequency of meeting friends	0.00	0.00	0.996	-0.01	0.00	0.020	-0.01	0.00	0.061	-0.02	0.00	0.000
Winner effect	-0.40	0.01	0.000	-0.31	0.01	0.000	-0.11	0.01	0.000	-0.16	0.01	0.000
Voted for far-right party in last general election	0.34	0.03	0.000	0.26	0.03	0.000	0.45	0.03	0.000	0.20	0.03	0.000
Left-right scale	-0.03	0.00	0.000	-0.04	0.00	0.000	-0.02	0.00	0.000	-0.04	0.00	0.000
Unhappiness	-0.01	0.00	0.005	-0.02	0.00	0.000	0.01	0.00	0.088	0.05	0.00	0.000
Dissatisfaction with life	0.01	0.00	0.004	0.00	0.00	0.710	0.03	0.00	0.000	0.06	0.00	0.000
HH income (standardized)	-0.05	0.01	0.000	-0.01	0.01	0.241	-0.06	0.01	0.000	-0.02	0.01	0.002
Member of ethnic minority group	-0.04	0.03	0.075	-0.05	0.02	0.035	0.05	0.03	0.045	0.23	0.03	0.000
Age	-0.00	0.00	0.051	-0.00	0.00	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.000	-0.01	0.00	0.000
Education	-0.08	0.00	0.000	-0.01	0.00	0.003	-0.07	0.00	0.000	0.01	0.00	0.002
Female	0.04	0.01	0.000	-0.11	0.01	0.000	-0.03	0.01	0.002	-0.16	0.01	0.000
<u>Level 2 variables</u>												
World Bank Governance Indicators	-0.70	0.13	0.000	-0.71	0.12	0.000	-0.95	0.16	0.000	-0.60	0.15	0.000
Migration Policy (MIPEX)	-0.01	0.00	0.006	-0.01	0.00	0.008	0.001	0.01	0.851	-0.01	0.00	0.153
<u>Interactions</u>												
Concerned about Immigration*World Bank Governance Indicators	0.10	0.01	0.000	0.07	0.01	0.000	0.06	0.01	0.000	-0.01	0.01	0.351
Concerned about immigration*Migration Policy (MIPEX)	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.000	0.000
Intercept	3.57	0.26	0.000	4.43	0.23	0.000	2.38	0.51	0.099	2.66	0.29	0.000
Level 1 Variance		0.20			0.15			0.31			0.26	
Level 2 Variance		3.87			3.49			4.34			4.34	

Level 1 N=157,296; Level 2 N=82; Level 3 N=4; statistics were computed using HLM software.

Figure 1. Distrust politics Round 4 of European Social Survey

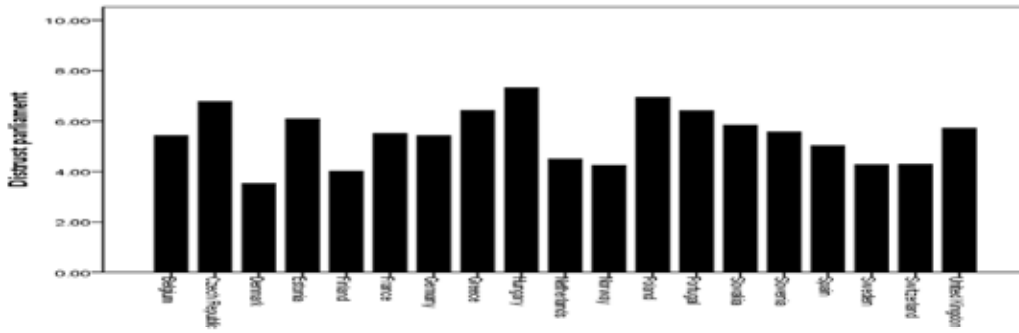


Figure 1a

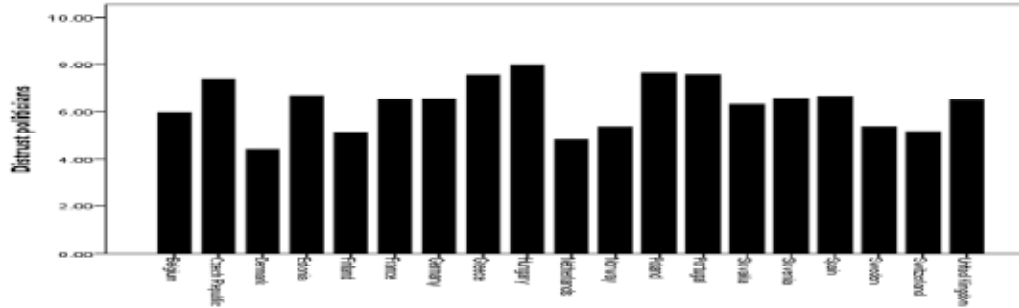


Figure 1b

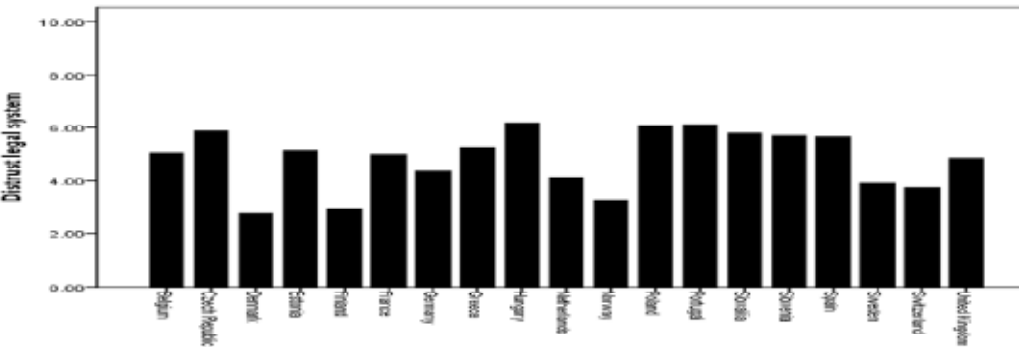


Figure 1c

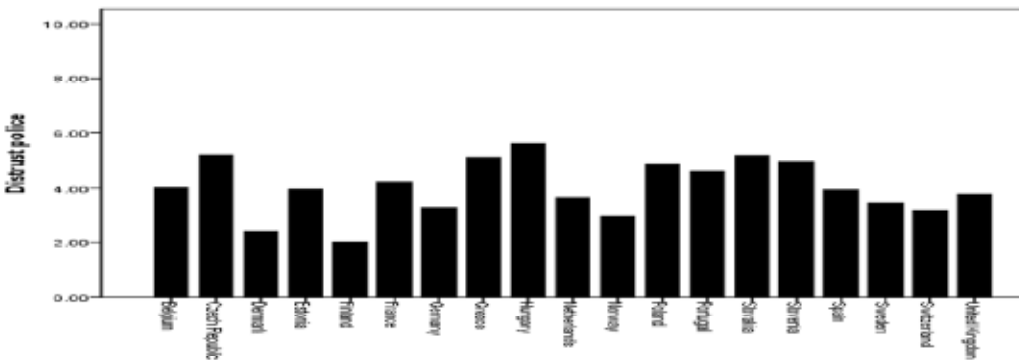


Figure 1d

Figure 2. Political distrust and concern about immigration

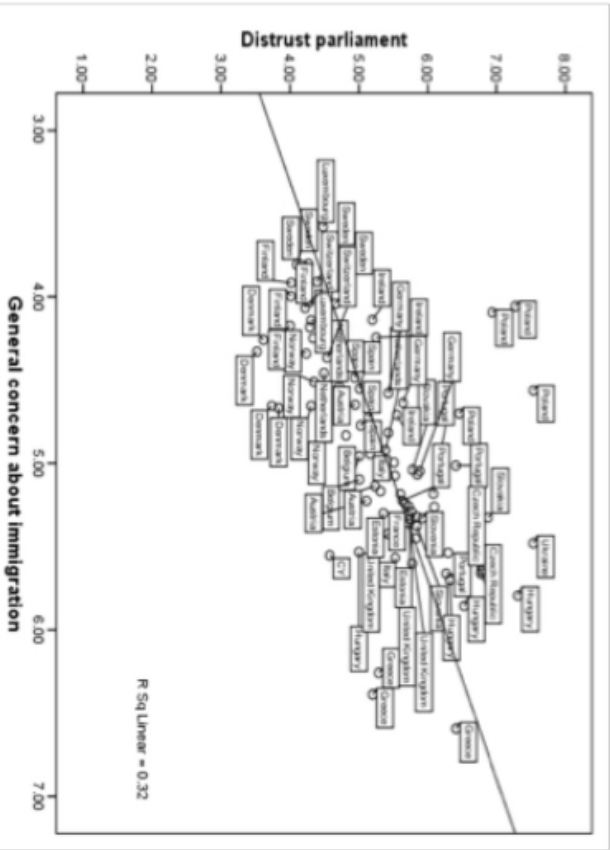


Figure 2a. Distrust parliament

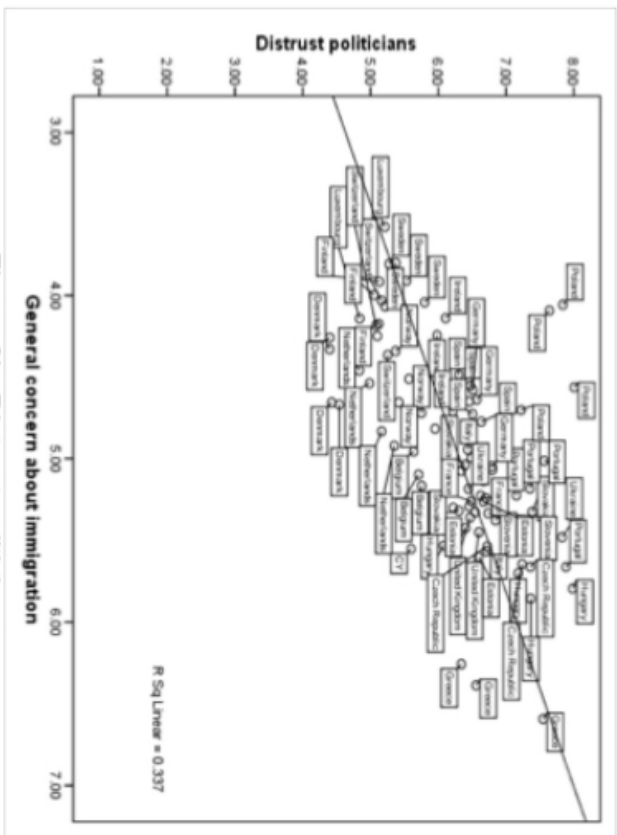


Figure 2b. Distrust politicians

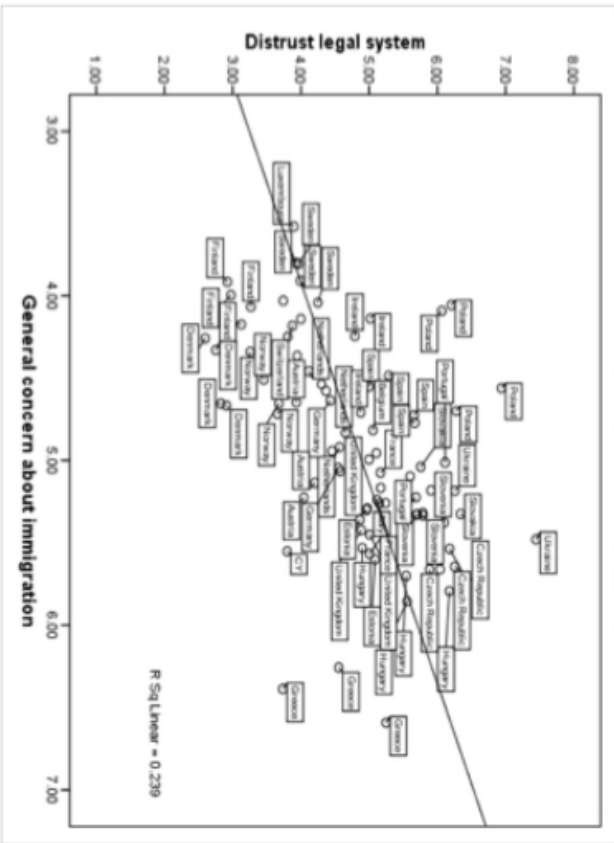


Figure 2c. Distrust legal system

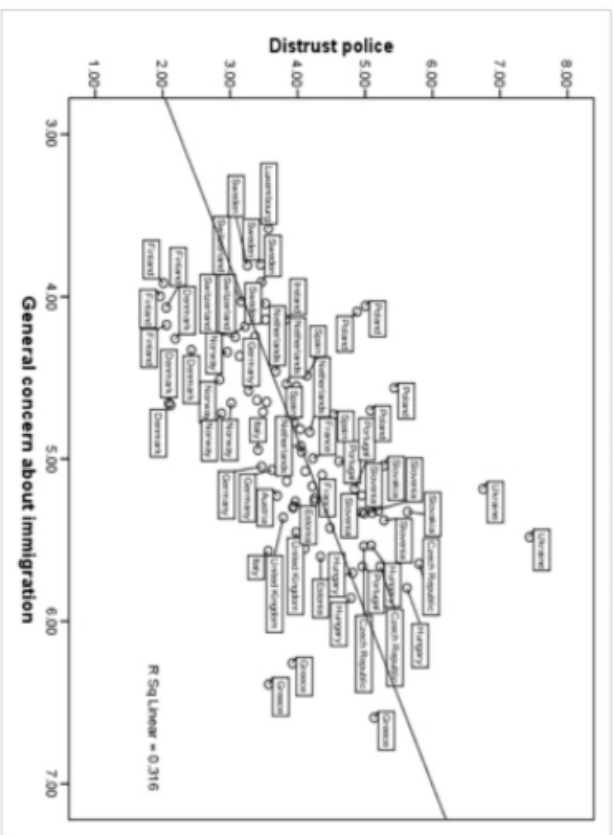


Figure 2d. Distrust police

Note: Data are based on all four rounds of the European Social Survey, aggregated to the country level.

Figure 3. Political distrust and concern about immigration, Round 4 only

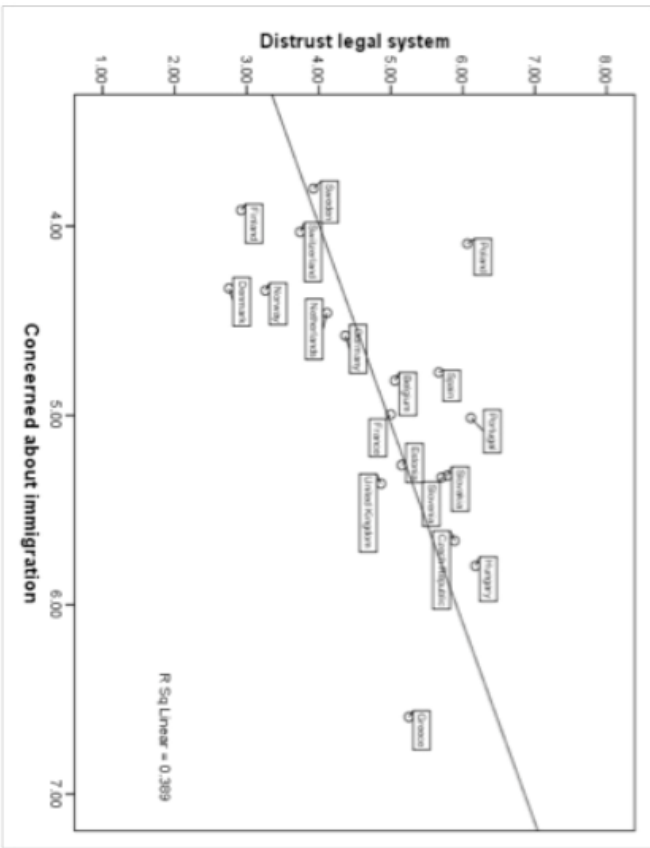


Figure 3c. Distrust legal system

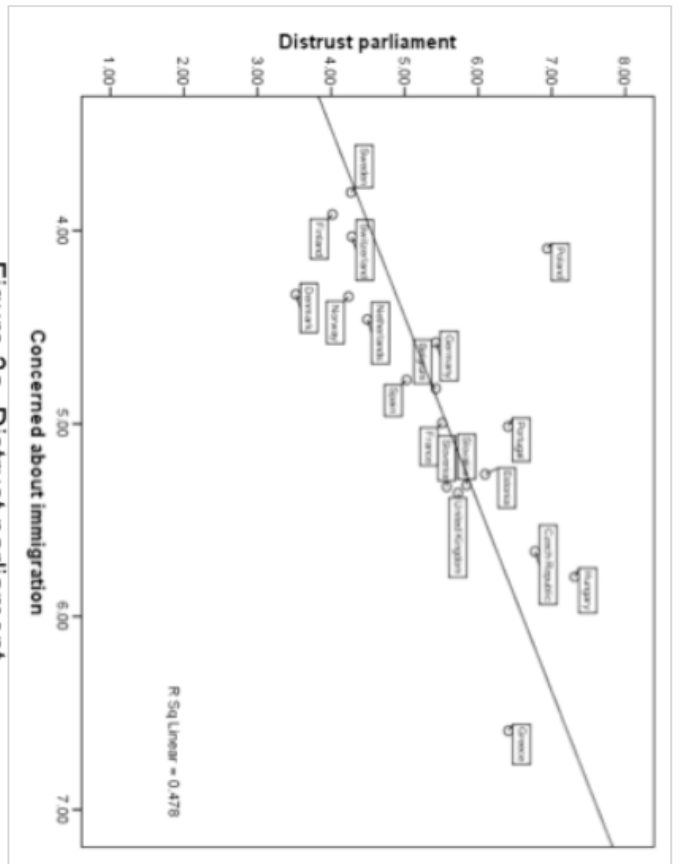


Figure 3a. Distrust parliament

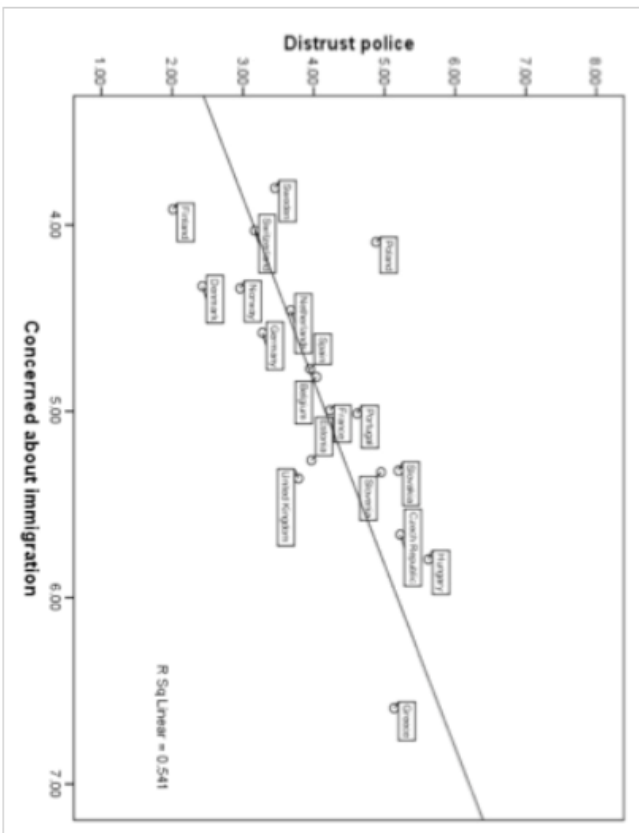


Figure 3d. Distrust police

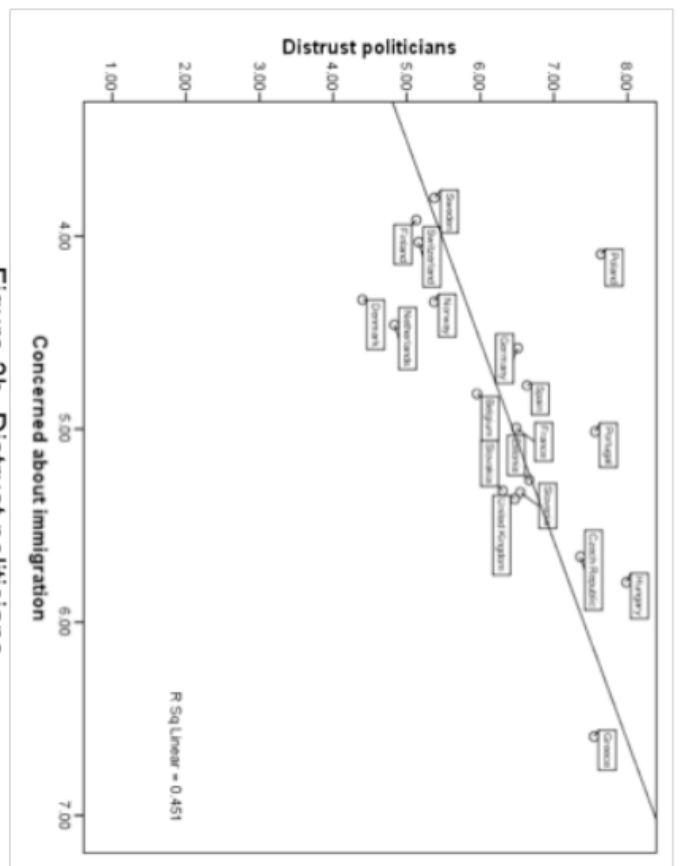


Figure 3b. Distrust politicians

Note: Data are based on all Round 4 of the European Social Survey, aggregated to the country level.

Figure 4. Distrust European Parliament and concern about immigration

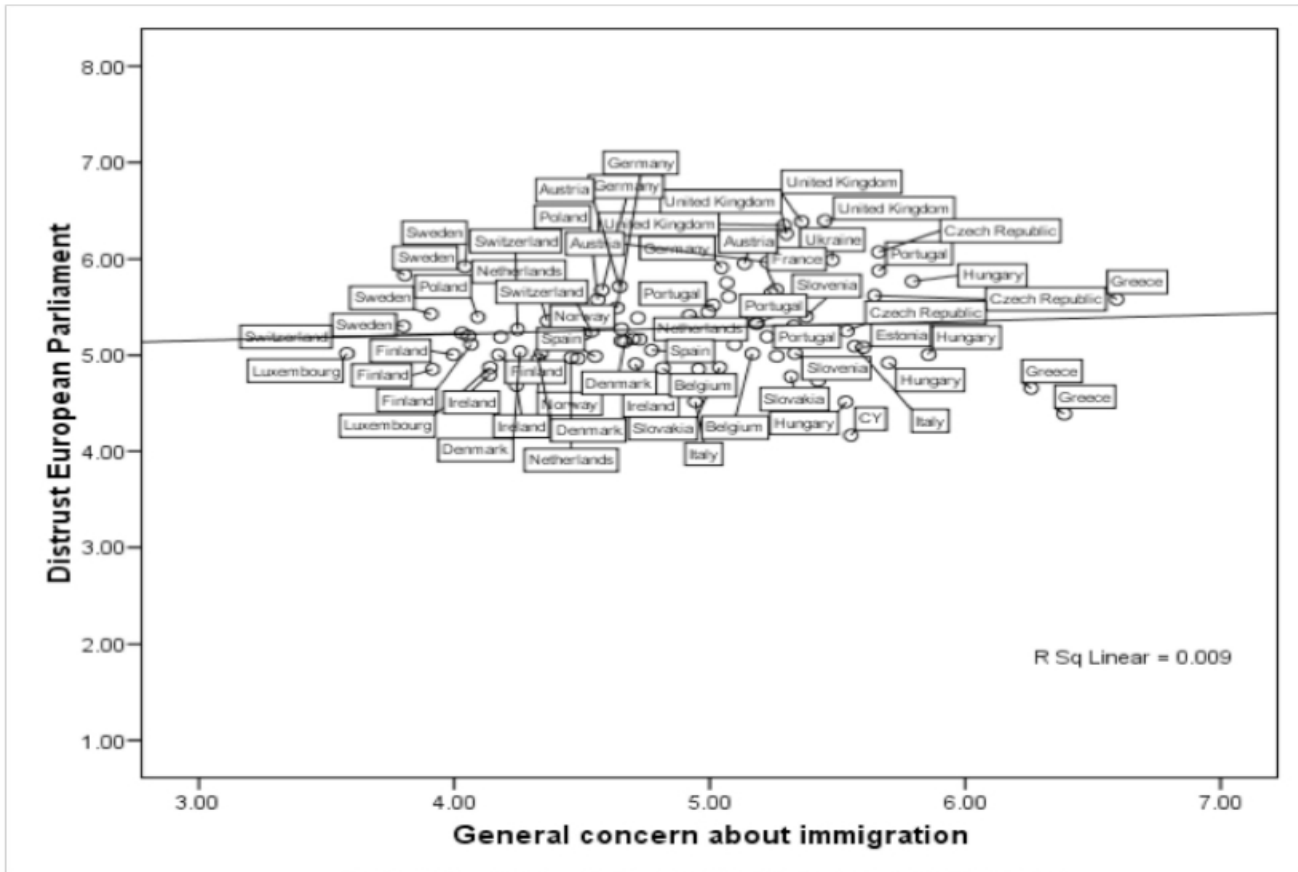


Figure 4a. Distrust European Parliament (4 Rounds)

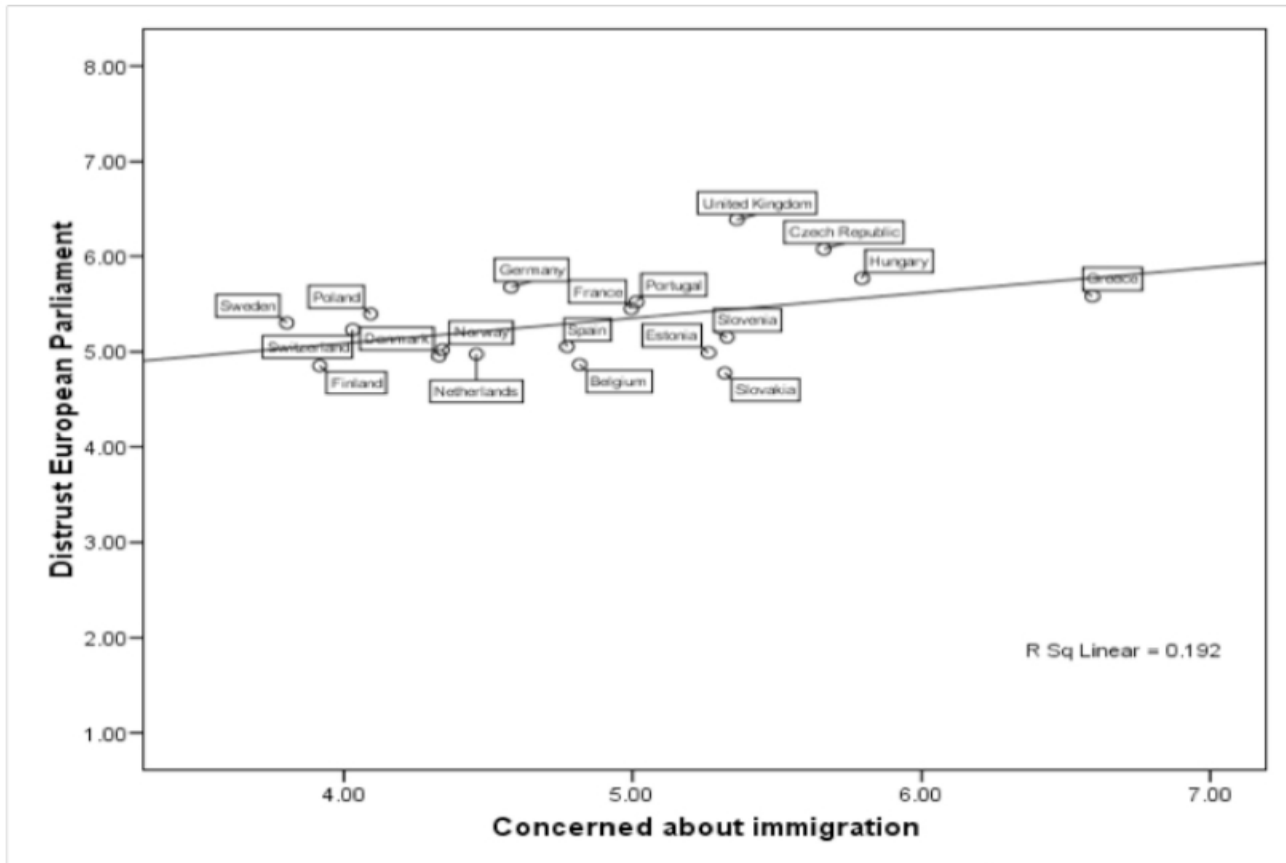


Figure 4b. Distrust European Parliament (Round 4 Only)

Note: Data are based on the European Social Survey, aggregated to the country level.

Figure 5. Concern about immigration and governance quality, interactive effects

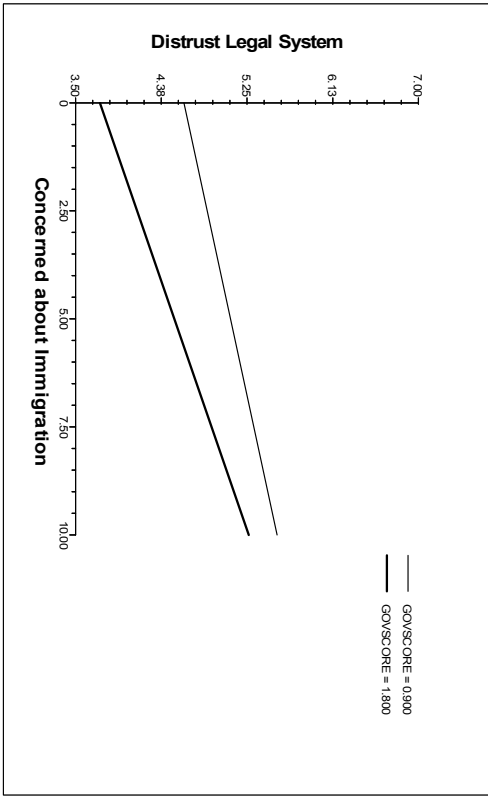


Figure 5c

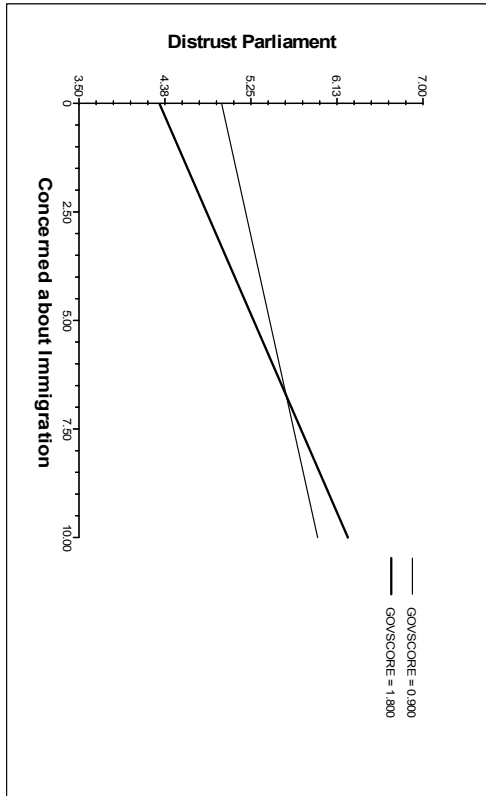


Figure 5a

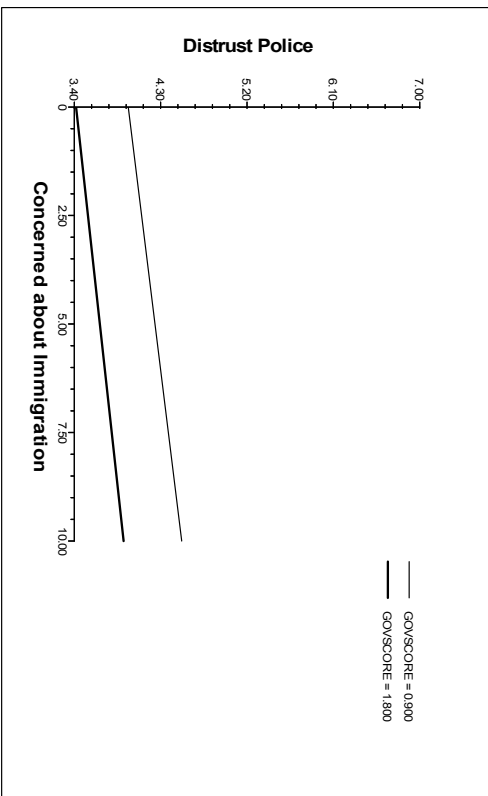


Figure 5d

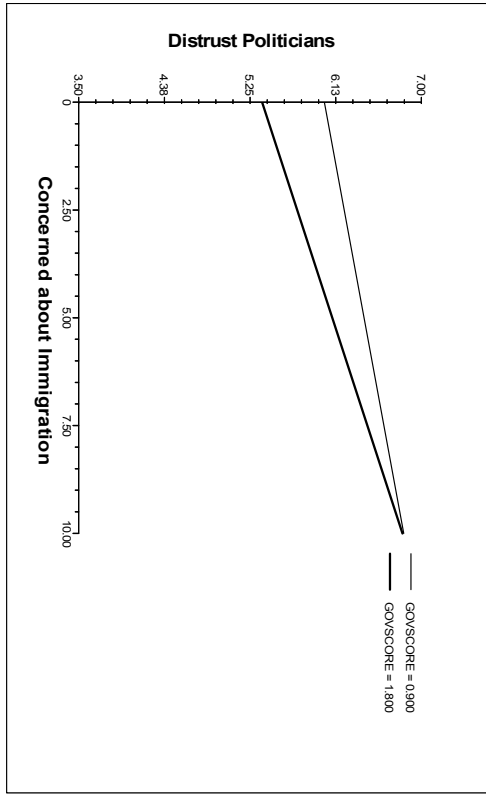


Figure 5b

Figure 6. Concern about immigration and governance quality, interactive effects (another perspective)

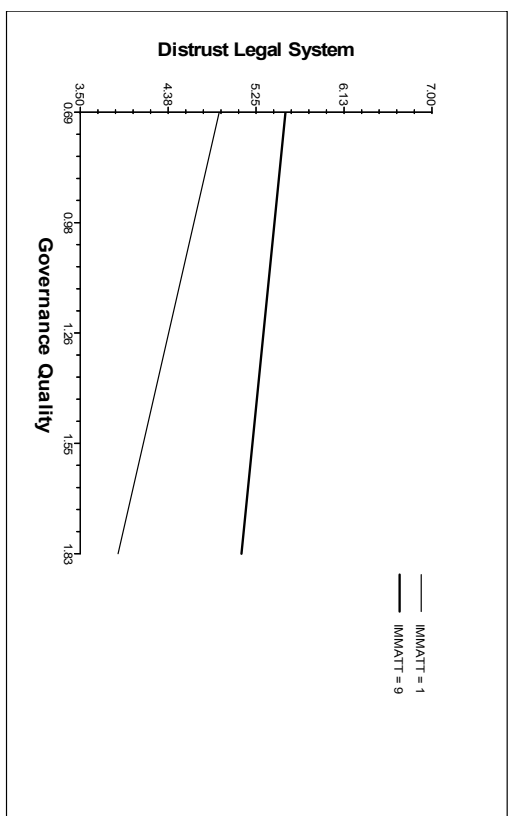


Figure 6c

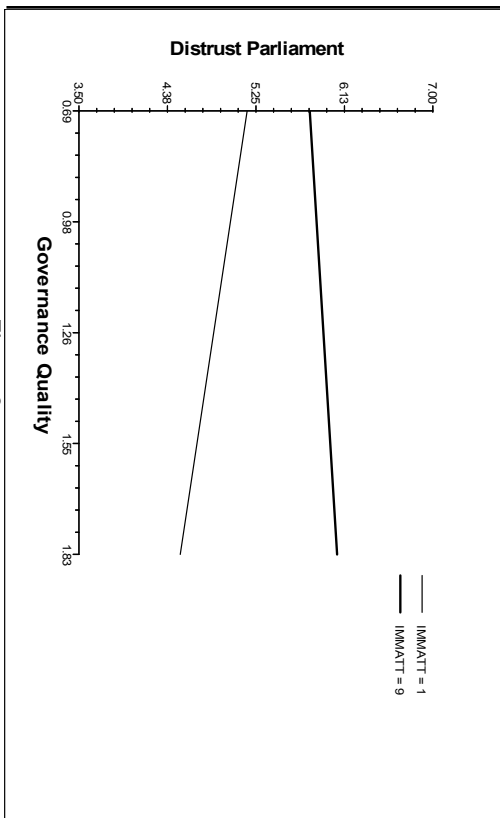


Figure 6a

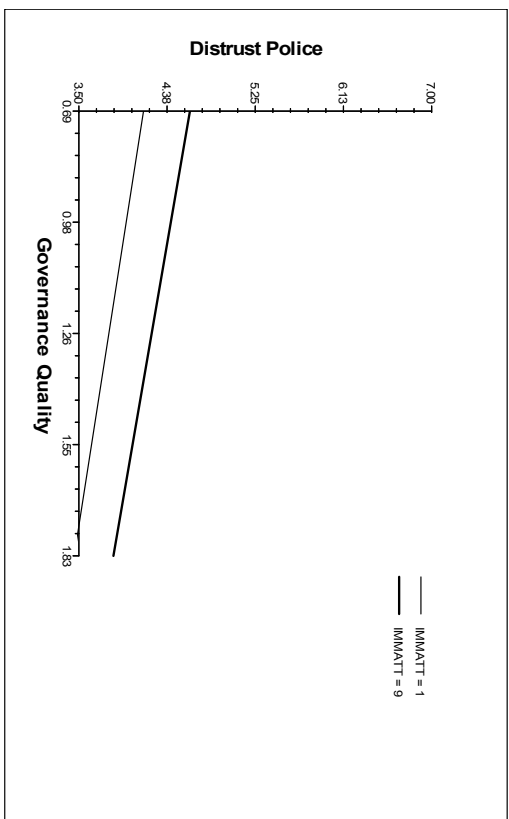


Figure 6d

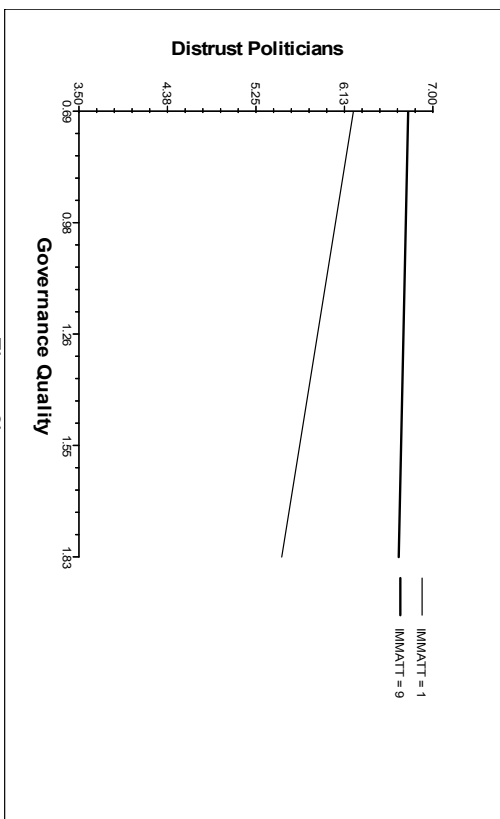


Figure 6b

Figure 7. Concern about immigration and migrant integration policy, interactive effects

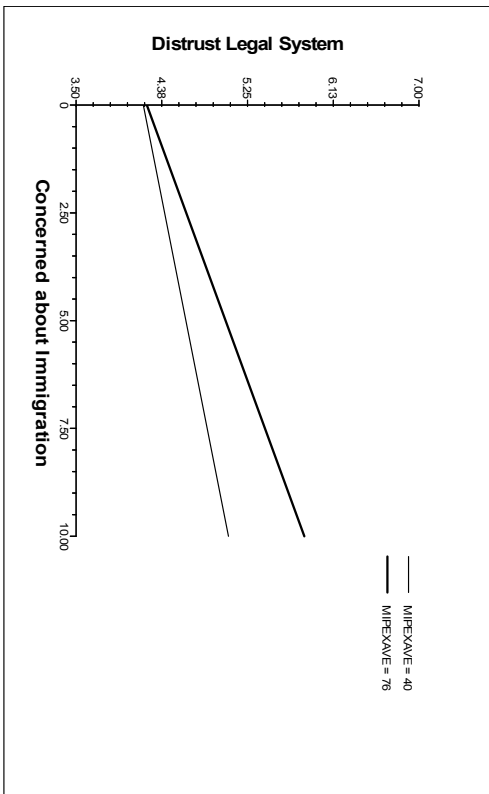


Figure 7c

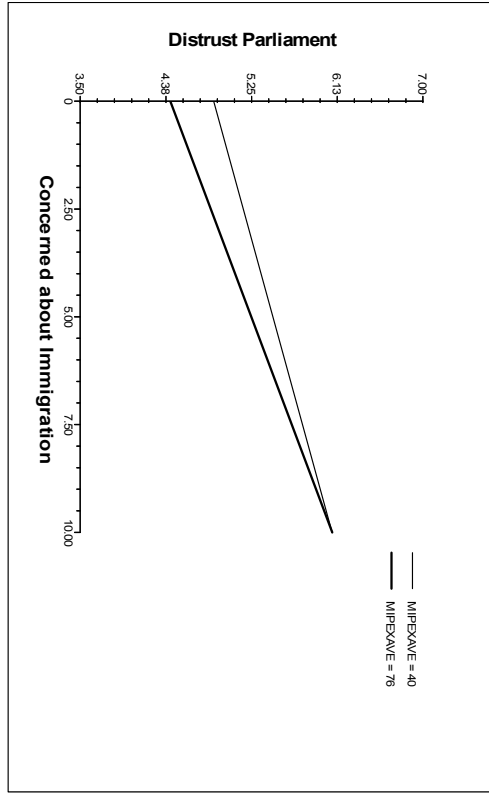


Figure 7a

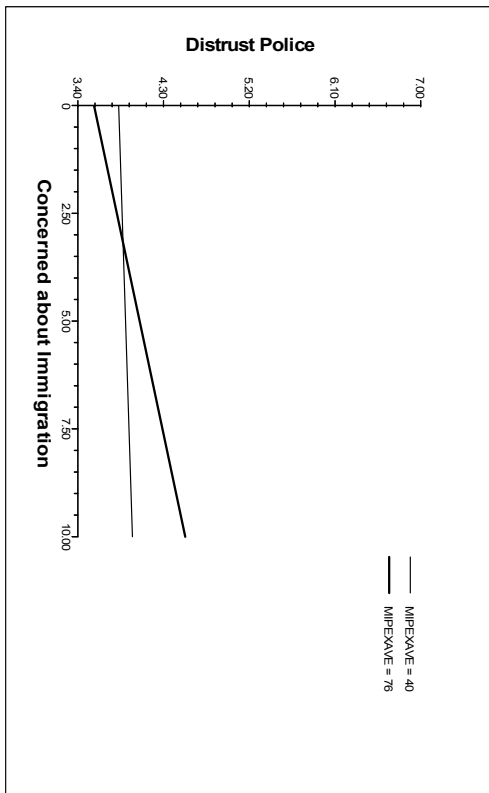


Figure 7d

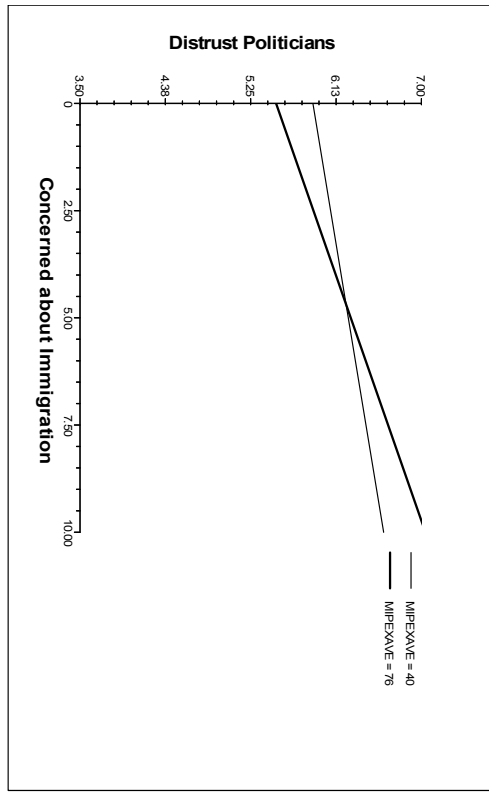


Figure 7b

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