



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

MASTER THESIS IN
EUROPEAN STUDIES

Political Influence and Anti-Immigrant Attitudes

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Spring 2015
Words: 12 694

ABSTRACT

The study explores the mediating effects of political influence in the form of political articulation, e.g. the ‘political message’ on individual-level data measuring the effects of the level of ‘security’ and ‘vulnerability’, within a given socio-economic characteristic (household income, education and employment status) on the effects on anti-immigrant attitudes. Asking the following research question: *Does the effect of socio-economic characteristics on anti-immigrant attitudes depend on the level of political articulation (on the issue of immigration)?*

The study employs a multi-level cross-national random effects model, with up-to-date individual-level and country-level observations, controlling for interaction effects. Results are discussed within the theoretical framework of the theory of elite discourse, which suggest that the effect of the political message on anti-immigrant attitudes is magnified through political elite discourse.

Results indicate that political articulation mediates the effects of vulnerability on anti-immigrant attitudes. Individuals considered ‘secure’ harbor more while individuals considered ‘vulnerable’ harbor less anti-immigrant sentiments as political articulation increase. Future studies should continue to explore the mediating effects of political articulation on the effects of individual-level characteristics on anti-immigrant attitudes to establish a better understanding of how anti-immigrant attitudes are formed and hopefully prevented within the political context.

Keywords: Political Articulation, Socio-Economic Characteristics, Anti-Immigrant Attitudes, Theory of Elite Discourse, Multi-Level, Cross-Sectional, Interaction, Immigration.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CMP – COMPARATIVE MANIFESTOS PROJECT

ESS – EUROPEAN SOCIAL SURVEY

EU – EUROPEAN UNION

OECD – THE ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

USA – UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The work presented in this thesis builds on the work of previous scholars on anti-immigrant attitudes. Mainly with regard to their methodological approach, material sources and results, in order to add to the accumulation of new data and knowledge within the research field. The study would not have been realized without the invaluable data gathered from the European Social Study and the Comparative Manifestos Project.

I would also like to recognize the great support and expert knowledge I received from my supervisor Georgios Xezonakis, it has helped me greatly in the design of this study. His pedagogical approach and guidance along the way have helped me to learn enormously about the process and importance of research. Special thanks is also awarded to Andrea Bohman whose work has been the inspiration for the study, your support in the research process have provided invaluable insight. Finally I would like to thank my friends and colleagues whom have all contributed with comments and improvements to this study.

I hope that the reader of this thesis finds the content as inspiring as I have found the works of other scholars within the research field.

1. INTRODUCTION

With the increased electoral success of the extreme right the immigration issue has become an increasingly politicized issue all across Europe. Attributed by some, based on OECD data, to an increased flow of foreigners into countries of the EU during the 1990s and 2000s that accounted for a net immigration exceeding the natural population growth. A development that even surpassed the USA, with regard to the size of the proportional foreign-born population, a country renowned for its open immigration policy (Gang et al., 2013, p. 177). Other scholars characterise it as a result of making the issues of national belonging and not belonging more salient in the political arena. This results in tighter immigration laws, a more hostile exclusionist rhetoric and support for anti-immigrant policies (Bohman, 2011, p. 457). At a time, when the demography of the native populations of European countries rapidly decline (Sides and Citrin, 2007), mainly remedied by an increased level of immigration.

The study explores how the level of political influence in the form of political articulation mediates the effects of the socio-economic characteristic on anti-immigrant attitudes. Asking the following research question: *Does the effect of socio-economic characteristics on anti-immigrant attitudes depend on the level of political articulation (on the issue of immigration)?*

The aim of the study is to explore the mechanisms behind the effects of political articulation on anti-immigrant attitudes. Previous research on anti-immigrant attitudes has focus on a number of individual or contextual factors but only a few have invested time in the effects of political influence and with interaction on socio-economic characteristics.

The study employs a multi-level cross-national random effects methodological approach, with up-to-date individual-level and country-level observations, controlling for interaction effects. Results are discussed within the theoretical framework of the theory of elite discourse, which provides a solid foundation for the analytical discussion.

2. OUTLINE

The thesis is structured into seven main parts: In the first section the thesis presents an introduction followed by the second section, which presents an outline of the study. Moving on to section three of the study it presents the research problem accompanied by the research question and the approach in which the study aim to test the effects of political articulation on the effects of the socio-economic characteristics on anti-immigrant attitudes. The research review in section four allows the reader to gather insight into the research field and reflection on why this study has set out to answer the proposed research question. The theory of elite discourse, which guides the analytical discussion, is presented in section five followed by section six which explains the research design and the operationalization of the variables. Results are presented in section seven accompanied by the analytical discussion and in section nine the study presents the concluding remarks while elaborating on its strengths and weaknesses. For those that have been taken in by the content of this study and wish to build on the current literature within the research field the study presents its recommendations in its very last paragraphs.

3. THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

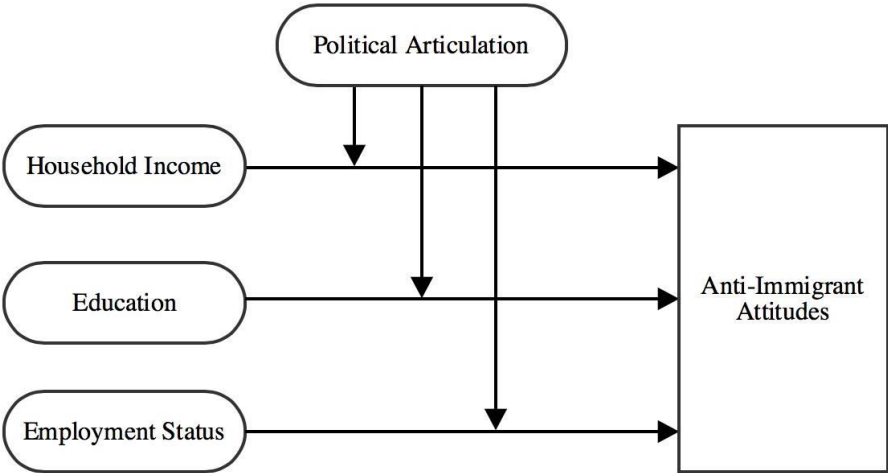
3.1 THE CASE AND RESEARCH QUESTION

While previous studies on the effects of political articulation on anti-immigrant attitudes have successfully explored the effects of a general degree of political party articulation; the effects of *who* the sender of the political message is, with regard to political party; and if features of the individual recipient of the political message (self placement on a political scale) has an effect on the formation of anti-immigrant attitudes (Bohman, 2011). The mechanisms behind the effects of political articulation on anti-immigrant attitudes still remain largely unexplored.

Previous studies on anti-immigrant attitudes have determined that the degree of ‘vulnerability’ amongst individuals within the native population plays a large role in the formation of anti-immigrant sentiments and especially with regard to the socio-

economic context (Kunovich, 2004). It is therefore reasonable to assume that the political association, with regard to the ideology, of the recipient of the ‘political message’ might not be ‘telling the whole story’. Mediated by political articulation, the level of ‘security’ or ‘vulnerability’ in individual experiences with regard to its socio-economic characteristics might provide a more elaborate explanation for increased anti-immigrant sentiments. This study sets out to explore this gap in the research literature and investigates the mediating effects of political articulation on the effects of the socio-economic characteristics on anti-immigrant attitudes. The study asks the following research question: *Does the effect of socio-economic characteristics on anti-immigrant attitudes depend on the level of political articulation (on the issue of immigration)?*

Figure 1: The Mediating Effects of Political Articulation



3.2 THE APPROACH

To be able to provide an answer to the proposed research question the study employs a multi-level cross-sectional random effects model, controlling for interaction effects to test the following hypotheses on three operationalized socio-economic characteristics (household income, education and employment status):

H_{1A}: Political articulation accelerates the effects of vulnerability on anti-immigrant attitudes.

H_{1B}: Political articulation decelerates the effects of vulnerability on anti-immigrant attitudes.

H₂: Political articulation decelerates the effects of security on anti-immigrant attitudes.

4. RESEARCH REVIEW

4.1 VULNERABILITY VS. SECURITY

Research on anti-immigrant attitudes has generated a vast body of literature exploring a wide spectrum of perspectives that focus on causes, effects and prevention. Established explanations for anti-immigrant attitudes have, amongst others, revolved around the perception of an increased exposure to vulnerability amongst the native population associated with immigration (Quillian, 1995; Bauer et al., 2000; Kunovich, 2004; O'Rourke and Sinnott, 2006; Semyonov et al., 2006; Sides and Citrin, 2007; Semyonov et al., 2008; Hjerm, 2009; Gang et al., 2013). One of the most salient perceptions of increased exposure to vulnerability is concerned with an increased level of crime as a result of increasing levels of immigration (Sides and Citrin, 2007; Semyonov et al., 2008). Another is concerned with increased competition on the labour market due to increased amounts of low skilled instead of high skilled labour flooding an already competitive labour market (Bauer et al., 2000; Kunovich, 2004; O'Rourke and Sinnott, 2006). Third, as a country's national economic conditions deteriorate it tends to increase anti-immigrant attitudes amongst members of the native populations. As immigrants are perceived to be the cause of such circumstances and branded the scapegoats for such circumstances (Quillian, 1995; Kunovich, 2004; Semyonov et al., 2006; Hjerm, 2009; Gang et al., 2013).

Some studies also indicate that with increased levels of immigration the preferences amongst the members of the native population tend to support an increased demand for government expenditures. This according to previous studies signal that increased levels of immigration is associated with increased levels of vulnerability (or perceived vulnerability). A perception that according to the native population should be met by increased levels of government expenditures to compensate (Sides and Citrin, 2007;

Eger, 2010; Brady and Finnigan, 2014). Finally, some studies have focused on the effects of increased levels of immigration on anti-immigrant attitudes, with regard to the loss of national and European languages as well as culture and religion. This as the population becomes more heterogeneous, with individuals that originate from non-European countries. Studies also show that this is one of the most potent political issues as to the formation of anti-immigrant attitudes. As societies become increasingly more heterogeneous this results in increased levels of anti-immigrant attitudes due to an increased lack of social coherency (Ivarsflaten, 2005; Citrin and Sides, 2007; Sides and Citrin, 2007).

Although most studies set out with different aims most end up drawing the same conclusion, the existence of a clear hierarchy with regards to the perception of deservingness amongst the citizens of European welfare states (Van Oorschot, 2006). Where, "...contexts that produce a real or perceived struggle over scarce resources are more likely to produce a threat situation" (Hjerm, 2009, pp. 57-58), resulting in increased levels of anti-immigrant attitudes. While the perceptions mentioned above are associated with the direct effects of conditions related to society in general, this study focuses on how political articulation mediates the effects of 'vulnerability' or 'security' in the socio-economic sense on anti-immigrant attitudes.

4.2 POLITICAL PARTIES

Previous studies that have explored how the political context affects anti-immigrant attitudes have mainly focused on the rise and presence of xenophobic radical right populist parties (Van der Brug and Fennema, 2003). Exploring the voting behaviour of voters from the perspectives of protest, ideological and pragmatic votes and why an increased number of votes cast for xenophobic political parties (Van Der Brug et al., 2000). Results suggest that votes cast for xenophobic parties are more likely in countries under either economic or social stress (Semyonov et al., 2006; Semyonov et al., 2008); in a situation when the socio-cultural dimension challenges the economic cleavages dimension (Semyonov et al., 2006); where the more the mainstream right-wing parties are positioned to the right on the left-right political scale, suggesting that the right-wing party provides a legitimizing effect of policy positions of the extreme

right (Arzheimer and Carter, 2006). Furthermore, votes tend to be cast for the xenophobic parties when the established parties adjust and adopt policy proposals that the radical right populist parties previously propagated, in conjunction with using similar frames and xenophobic rhetoric and when radical right populist parties successfully link anti-immigration frames with other issues of high political salience (Rydgren, 2003).

The electoral success of these extreme right parties hinges on three important aspects; first, until immigration policy no longer is perceived as a salient political issue and 'owned' by the anti-immigrant parties these parties will be successful. Second, it is crucial for anti-immigrant parties to present themselves with a clear ideological profile in order to make their stance on other issues become more credible and salient. Finally, after the anti-immigrant party has established its position, to the very right of the political spectrum, its electoral success is to a large extent dependent on the competing parties also positioned on the right (Van der Brug and Feenama, 2003).

It is under these conditions that xenophobic political parties "...create a social climate conducive to an increase in negative attitudes towards foreign populations" (Semyonov et al., 2006, p. 445). Previous studies suggests that this 'social climate' contributes to the perceptions or misconceptions of the size associated with the foreign population. Affecting how increased levels of xenophobic attitudes associated with the increase of right wing ideological parties to a lesser extent 'levels off' compared to before (Semyonov et al., 2006, p. 445).

Furthermore findings suggest that political parties only influence anti-immigrant sentiments if cultural (nationalist) rather than classical racist (biology/race) ideas are conveyed (Wilkes et al., 2007, p. 836). Taken together with the finding that political articulation originating from a traditional left- or right-wing party tend to generate higher levels of anti-immigrant attitudes than that by other political parties. This suggests that ideology at the individual-level functions as a mediating factor connected with a legitimizing effect of the traditional political parties (Bohman, 2011). Highlighting the rhetoric associated with nationalistic ideas and values rather than the

rhetoric associated with racist ideas and values as the culprit for rising anti-immigrant sentiments across Europe.

4.3 IMMIGRATION AND INTEGRATION POLICIES

Results from other studies also suggest that the design of the immigration policy is important explanatory factor with regard to changing anti-immigrant attitudes. As the design of current immigration policies suggest a priority to certain groups of people, varying between countries (Hjerm, 2007). This in combination with an integration policy that meets the priorities of the immigration policy allows some countries to more rapidly accumulate higher levels of human capital. Due to the fact that the sending and receiving countries share similar schooling systems, language and culture, which allows for higher levels of assimilation into the receiving countries, labour market (Bauer et al. 2000). Suggesting that the country of origin and the motive behind the decision to immigrate plays a large role in labour market success of immigrants. While this might be beneficial to the native populations of the receiving country this might lead to a stricter policy on immigration and integration that in turn affects the natives' attitudes towards immigrants (Bauer et al. 2000).

The implications of this suggest that policy-makers' concern with re-election might affect the design of the immigration policy to further perpetuate a worsening situation even further or shift the focus to salient issues as they take voters feelings caused by immigration into consideration (Bauer et al. 2000). This re-election factor may result in an immigration policy that is more tailored towards the labour markets needs in order to increase the popularity of the government (Bauer et al. 2000). A result of how the political context with regards to the saliency of other attitudes are politically articulated is that it tends to make people "...think of themselves as a members of a collective with certain interests..." (Svallfors, 2007, p. 214). Further emphasising the idea of 'us' vs. 'them'.

While evidence seems to suggest that the politicians seem to adhere to their self-interests of re-election, findings also suggest that the nature of the asylum debate comes to a large extent politically from the top down and not as a response from a

mobilised public pressure (Statham, 2003). This indicates that the normative limits to the public's understanding of the issues related to asylum and immigration is set by the perceived policy position of the government. This means that it is the governing party/parties that set the limits of the debate and could essentially steer the debate in either a positive or negative direction, allowing civil society, in support of asylum and immigration, to become more legitimized (Statham, 2003).

4.4 VISIBILITY OF IMMIGRATION

Other studies emphasize that the level of visibility of anti-immigrant elites affects those individuals who feel generally vulnerable. In the way that they are less inclined to welcome immigrants in countries where anti-immigrant elites are highly visible compared to countries where no such elites are present (Ivarsflaten, 2005). The relationship "...perceived problem and preferred solutions" (Ivarsflaten, 2005, p. 39) is reinforced by the political elites in order for those individuals that feel more insecure to consider closing the country's borders in order to remedy the perceived problem. This is done, by linking a general feeling of insecurity and fear with the presence of immigrants (Ivarsflaten, 2005).

Such feelings of vulnerability tend to be associated with increased competition, where people that directly compete or have competed with immigrants in the labor market to the extent that it affected their income harbor more anti-immigrant sentiments (Gang et al., 2013). Studies also found that when the proportion of foreign-born population interacts with negative economic contexts, the results are increasingly higher levels of anti-immigrant attitudes. Due to the perception, that immigrants increase competition for shared resources they also become associated with the cause and tend to become the scapegoats for an economic downturn, whilst education attainment is found to be a strong antidote to such sentiments (Hjerm, 2009). Furthermore, evidence also suggests that poor economic conditions within a country tend to 'wash away' any beneficial effects of status and therefore causes not only the disadvantaged social groups but also the advantaged to feel threatened by immigrants (Kunovich, 2004). At the same time the disadvantaged groups tend to become less anti-immigrant as the economic conditions worsen. There are a number of explanations for this outcome. First, that the

reaction of the disadvantaged as the economic conditions become worse is turned into despair rather than anti-immigrant sentiments. Second, the anger is redirected towards the economic and political elites rather than towards the immigrants, increasing class-consciousness. Third, it is thought that with worsening economic conditions immigrants would fall further behind native workers, decreasing the threat of immigrants competing for limited shared resources (Kunovich, 2004).

Beyond the economic situation evidence suggests that the absolute size of the racial or immigrant group, relative to the native population and perceived, have an effect on the public's perception of intergroup relations and thus articulation of prejudicial attitudes, an effect that declines with economic prosperity (Quillian, 1995; Semyonov et al., 2008), where negative views towards the foreign-born population are more likely to originate in socio-economically vulnerable parts of the population and those that hold conservative ideologies concerned with the national, cultural and ethnic homogeneity of the state (Semyonov et al., 2008).

This has created, what some studies suggests, a “democratic deficit” between the public opinion, who wants less immigrants (associated with increased vulnerability) and the dominant view of political elites, who sees more favorably on immigrants as they are considered the solution to a sustainable welfare state (Howard, 2007; Citrin and Sides, 2007). As seen by the way liberal immigration policies are facilitated by institutional arrangements which limits the power of the people as the people want a generous welfare state but not the means by which to fund it in the future, immigrants (Citrin and Sides, 2007).

5. CONTRIBUTION

5.1 TO THE RESEARCH FIELD

Although previous studies have found that structural macro-level conditions influence anti-immigrant attitudes (Bohman, 2011; Scheepers et al., 2002 Semyonov et al., 2006), previous studies have not devoted enough attention to explore the effects of political articulation. Previous studies on the effects of political articulation have

established that there exists a direct relationship between political articulation and anti-immigrant attitudes. This relationship indicates that an increase in political articulation results in an increase in anti-immigrant attitudes. Furthermore, studies have also explored this relationship with regard to the effects of ‘who’ the sender of the political message is, with regard to political party. This has revealed that individuals’ attitudes towards immigrants are dependent on the choices made by the traditional right and left parties rather than those of the extreme right. Especially in the way these traditional parties decide to act, what rhetoric they choose to apply and how they respond to the presence of anti-immigrant parties (Bohman, 2011). Finally, studies have also shown that the individual recipient of the political message (self-placement on a political scale with reference to the political party that is articulating) has an effect on the formation of anti-immigrant attitudes. Indicating that when political parties on the left and in the center of the political right-left scale “...convey ideas traditionally associated with the extreme right, it has a greater enhancing effect on anti-immigrant attitudes among left-leaning compared to right-leaning individuals” (Bohman, 2011).

While the exploration of the effects of political articulation on anti-immigrant attitudes has covered some ground in previous studies the mechanisms behind the explanation have not yet been fully explored. Although previous results suggest that an individual’s ideology plays a role in how the political message is interpreted and the potential for change, resulting in increased levels of anti-immigrant sentiments (Bohman, 2011), it is still the only individual characteristic that has been explored in previous research on the mediating effects of political articulation. In light of this a number of previous studies have recommended that future studies explore the effects of labour market position, education, and income that to an extent comprise the socio-economic context (Bohman, 2011; Kunovich, 2004; Semyonov et al., 2008). Taken together with other recommendations for future studies such as on the interaction between individual and group-level factors and why they affect prejudice (Quillian, 1995), where research on the conceptions and misconceptions of immigration are relevant (Semyonov et al., 2006), and that social status might explain the mechanisms behind the effect of political articulation on anti-immigrant attitudes (Kunovich, 2004).

This study aims to explore gap in previous studies in the form of the missing link that is represented by the effect of political articulation on the individual socio-economic characteristics on anti-immigrant attitudes as recommended in previous studies. In order to identify how the effect of elite discourse in the form of political articulation mediates the effect of vulnerability and security in these socio-economic characteristics on anti-immigrant attitudes. In exploring this gap in the current research literature this study aims to expand the theoretical understanding of the mechanism associated with the individual level socio-economic characteristics behind the established relationship, between political articulation and anti-immigrant attitudes. In doing so, the study expands the theoretical discussion to include the theory of elite discourse while at the same time using up-to-date observations as it explores the mediating effects of political articulation on the effect of these socio-economic characteristics on anti-immigrant attitudes.

5.2 TO THE SOCIETY

As with all research it is important that results also translates into practical use in the form of knowledge and advise for participants within society. As one of the most salient issues in European politics it is important to identify the causes for anti-immigrant attitudes in order be able to remedy the problems that this causes for European integration, both from a political and economic perspective and especially in relation to how socio-economic contexts, where increased anti-immigrant attitudes may surface (Ceobanu and Escandell, 2010).

The contribution from this study to the society is a better and deeper understanding of how political articulation affects anti-immigrant attitudes as it mediates the effects of ‘vulnerability’ or ‘security’ on anti-immigrant attitudes. Investigating the effects of political articulation also provides a better understanding on how anti-immigrant attitudes are formed, which should translate into an improved capacity within societies approach to confront the spread of xenophobia in light of worsening socio-economic conditions and in times of great interdependence on the external partners found in the EU and other organisations.

5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Previous studies on the effects of political articulation on anti-immigrant attitudes (Bohman, 2011) have applied one of the most salient theoretical framework within this area of research on anti-immigrant attitudes is the theory of group threat. It was first published by Herbert Blumer in 1958 (Blumer, 1958) and his contribution to the research field have founded the basis for much of the reasoning with regard to conflicts amongst and between social groups (Bobo and Hutchings, 1996; Scheepers et al. 2002; Wagner et al., 2006; Schlueter and Wagner, 2008; Meuleman et al. 2009; Hjerm, 2009).

The main argument of the theory is that prejudice is a collective process where a sense of group position is formed instead of seen as an individual feeling and experience (Blumer, 1958). In 1996, Bobo and Hutchings extended Blumer's theory to a multiracial theory of group threat, where the theory not only focuses on a dominant and a subordinate social group but the position of all social groups within a society (Bobo and Hutchings, 1996). While the theory of group threat has provided numerous studies with a theoretical explanation to the cause of anti-immigrant attitudes it has not been able to explain all aspects of the phenomenon (Kunovich, 2004; Hjerm, 2009). This study builds on previous work and introduces the theory of elite discourse (Van Dijk, 1995) to explain how political articulation mediates effects of vulnerability and security in the socio-economic contexts on anti-immigrant attitudes. As political articulation presents itself as elite discourse it is especially interesting that no previous study on political articulation have applied the theory of elite discourse

5.1 THEORY OF ELITE DISCOURSE

The theory of elite discourse is emphasised by the special role of the “elites”, which is known for being a vague concept but will in this study be defined as those groups in the socio-political power structure “...that develop fundamental policies, make the most influential decisions, and control the overall modes of their execution”, e.g. “government, parliament, directors or boards of state agencies, leading politicians,

corporate owners directors and managers, and leading academics” (Van Dijk, 1995, p. 4).

The theory identifies these elites by their role in public discourse, where they “...initiate, monitor, and control the majority and most influential forms of institutional and public text and talk” (Van Dijk, 1995, p. 4). Essentially these elites have the power and ability to change the agenda in public discourse and opinion making as they control the means for such change. With preferential access to mass media and the power to prepare and issue reports the power of the elite is considered a function of their “...access to, and control over, the means of symbolic reproduction in society, that is public discourse” (Van Dijk, 1995, p. 4).

Through public discourse the elites have direct access to the minds of the public and the ability to influence the public with their values, opinions and beliefs in a much more effective way than other social groups, while at the same time marginalise or suppress the alternatives not considered in the interests of the elites. This is also true in terms of ethnic affairs, both in terms of race and other social group affiliation like European vs. non-European (Van Dijk, 1995, p. 5).

It has been determined that elite discourse plays a fundamental role in the ethnic consensus, in other words, the consent to participate in domination (to be in the in-group instead of the out-group). Elite racism and nationalism in this form has in modern times taken the form of subtle or indirect discrimination through either action or discourse. Enacted when elite interests, e.g. cultural beliefs, political power, etc. are threatened. As these elites openly deny racism or nationalism the actions or discourse related to such forms it is difficult to contest and oppose. This in conjunction with the fact that some elite groups engage in active antiracism reveals a heterogeneous elite and elite racism (Van Dijk, 1995, p. 5).

There exist several different types of elite discourse and elite racism in, media politics, corporate business and academia, which all are, interconnected and where the media tend to be present in all combinations (Van Dijk, 1995, p. 5). This study focuses on

political elite discourse as the study deals with the mediating effect of political articulation on the effect of ‘vulnerability’ or ‘security’ on anti-immigrant attitudes. In most Western countries exist complex political structures where political power involved with immigration or ethnic affairs is found in different areas of the political sphere, depending on the country of observation but most manage these affairs in local or national governments. That is, elected bodies in the form of either parliament or city councils, which govern all aspects of the preparation, decision and provision of the fundamental decisions connected with “...migration, settlement, special employment schemes, housing programs, health care, education, or minority groups or immigrants and regulation of ethnic relations through laws against discrimination” (Van Dijk, 1995, p. 15).

Such decisions are regulated by laws and general principles, which have been thoroughly discussed and prepared throughout the entire political hierarchy connected with different elected bodies. Where political communication and discourse have been crucial in several of the relevant stages of the decision process, influenced by public opinion, hearings, advice from experts, committees, organisations or institutions, decisions of political parties, opinions and actions from minority groups and facts of the socioeconomic situation amongst other things (Van Dijk, 1995). With this heterogeneity of sources of influence in mind the study will limit its scope of political discourse to political parties that are members of the national legislature.

The theory of elite discourse does not differentiate between different types of elite discourse but emphasis that political discourse holds the same level of impact on attitudes as other forms. Within the scope of this study it is reasonable to assume that all politicians are citizens of European countries with similar class, cultural and educational background as the citizens they represent. At the same time voters, are citizens of European countries, considered to be members of the in-group, most politicians will think of the interest of their voters. Their decisions will therefore favour their citizens and members of the out-group if also the members of the in-group are favoured. Important to stress here is that excluding discourse is not just restricted to the extremist right on the political left-right scale, ‘moderate’ conservatives as well

as socialists may also make negative remarks about immigrants and minorities if there are electoral advantages (Van Dijk, 1995).

5.3 THEORETICAL EXPECTATIONS

The theoretical expectations in this study, with regard to the theory of elite discourse are as follows. First, political elites within the national parliaments are interested in the prosperity of their citizens within the context of the country they govern. Second, it is reasonable to assume that these political elites are also interested in re-election to be able to continue to govern the country in accordance with the values and ideas that their political ideology reference (Bauer et al. 2000). This implies that political parties want to be visible in the political debate with political articulation that relate to problems and solutions associated with the challenges that the country and its population faces in order to gain greater electoral support in elections. Third, as political elites have preferential "...access to, and control over, the means of symbolic reproduction in society, that is public discourse" (Van Dijk, 1995, p. 4) they have, with the use of elite discourse, the power to magnify whether or not an issue is a threat in the eyes of specific parts of the electorate. As the issue is magnified through elite discourse, it becomes more salient in the national political debate, highlighting challenges to the national way of life in the eyes of specific social groups (socio-economically vulnerable or secure).

In the case of anti-immigrant attitudes this is done, by linking a general feeling of insecurity and fear with the presence of immigrants (Ivarsflaten, 2005). Simultaneously emphasizing to the electorate the relationship "...perceived problem and preferred solutions" (Ivarsflaten, 2005, p. 39). It is, theoretically, in this way that political parties try to win increased support from the electorate. Introducing issues that are can be considered threats to the national way of life for specific parts of the electorate and presenting their policy proposals as the solution. Fourth, Through public discourse the elites have direct access to the minds of the public and the ability to influence the public with their values, opinions and beliefs in a much more effective way than other social groups, while at the same time marginalise or suppress the alternatives not considered in the interests of the elites (Van Dijk, 1995, p. 5). Fifth,

political elites will make decisions in favor of what they believe is in the best interests of their citizens while taking their political ideology into consideration, any deviation from this would result in the risk of being voted out of office in the next election. Sixth, increased levels of political articulation in the form of nationalistic renditions of the positive effects of the national way of life and that which threaten this reality, set in a European context, will through the interpretation with regard to the characteristics of the socio-economic context, increase tensions between the in-group (natives) and the out-group (immigrants). The theoretical expectation allows the study to propose the following research hypothesis:

H_{1A}: Political articulation accelerates the effects of vulnerability on anti-immigrant attitudes.

Whilst previous research and the theoretical expectations indicate that it is reasonable to assume that H_{1A} holds true, there are also indications that the reverse is also plausible (Brady and Finnigan, 2014). As the vulnerable group becomes larger and the level of vulnerability increases while at the same time the political the immigration flows increase it is reasonable to assume that the issues of the vulnerable socio-economic group receives increased representation within the political parties of the national parliament (i.e. an increase in political articulation). With increased representation of the vulnerable group in the national parliament previous studies have shown that it is highly likely that this would result in an increased level of government expenditure to compensate for the increased level of vulnerability (Brady and Finnigan, 2014). If this sort of compensation takes place it is reasonable to assume that political articulation might decelerate the effect of vulnerability on anti-immigrant attitudes (since in effect it is an indicator of representation on a salient issue). This allows the study to also propose the following research hypothesis:

H_{1B}: Political articulation decelerates the effects of vulnerability on anti-immigrant attitudes.

With an increased demand for an increased level of government expenditure it is reasonable to assume an increased level of income redistribution to fund these

politically induced expenditures. This in the form of taxation that most likely would be proportionally higher for the socio-economically secure group of society. As highly educated individuals have invested both time and money on education in order to secure a high-level job and ensure a high household income. It is reasonable to assume that increased levels of income redistribution due to increased levels of immigration could be seen as a threat to the national way of life of members of the secure group. This would increase tensions between members of the socio-economically secure in-group (natives) and the out-group (immigrants). It is therefore reasonable to assume that members of the socio-economically secure group also would be threatened by increased political articulation related to increased immigration. As increased immigrations flows becomes associated with increased levels of government expenditures funded through increased taxation of members of the socio-economically secure group, (through a more polemic political elite discourse). That magnifies the issue of immigration as a threat to the economic situation and makes the issue more salient in the political debate. This allows the study to propose the following research hypothesis:

H₂: Political articulation decelerates the effects of security on anti-immigrant attitudes.

6. RESEARCH DESIGN

6.1 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The study adopts a quantitative methodological approach where the most comprehensive method available to test the theoretically derived hypotheses is with the use of a multi-level cross-sectional random effects model, using interaction terms to test the hypotheses. The main unit of analysis is at the individual level and the second unit of analysis is at the country level. The study initially presents the relationship between independent variables and the dependent variable with the use of bivariate regressions. Once these bivariate relationships have been explored the study step-by-step constructs the full model. Finally the full model is used to control for

interaction effects from the operationalized variable political articulation on the effects of ‘vulnerability’ or ‘security’ on anti-immigrant attitudes.

6.2 DELIMITATIONS

Due to limitations with regard to data collection the scope of the the study is limited to the following 27 countries: Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Cyprus, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Russia and Ukraine. In order to ensure that the study captures the opinions of the natives’ any individual not born in the countries used is removed¹. For the sake of this study they are considered a part of the foreign-born population as previous studies have designed their studies in this way. The individual-level data is collected from the year 2012 as this allows the effect of the country-level data (political articulation) to take effect in the minds of the individuals and in their given socio-economic characteristic that they find themselves in, one year after the articulation. Although labour market position focus on whether an individual works in a high skilled or low skilled occupation (Kunovich, 2004), this study will focus on the traditional definition associated with socio-economic characteristics, which is whether or not an individual is employed or not, due to limitations with regard to both time and available data.

6.3 DATA COLLECTION

The study makes use of data from two different sources as it operationalizes its variables, the European Social Survey (ESS) and the Comparative Manifestos Project (CMP). The two datasets provide a solid foundation for the study’s analysis and ability to answer the posed research question. The data used in the study from both datasets are considered to have both a high reliability and high validity due to the way the data have been collected and due to the fact that these datasets have been extensively used by researchers within the research field that this study finds itself.

¹ Although some foreign-born individuals within the countries included in the study might not be considered a part of an consciously immigrating population, due to their young age when first immigrating to the country.

The ESS is a biannual academically driven cross-national survey, across more than 30 variously participating European countries that have produced seven rounds, 2001-2014 (ESS, Countries by Round, 2015-04-15). The main purpose of the ESS is to measure attitudes, beliefs and behaviour patterns of different populations across Europe (ESS, About, 2015-04-14). With the key aim to implement high quality standards in its methodology it upholds the highest level of quality in its measurements (ESS, Methodological Overview, 2015-04-14) The data from this dataset used in the study originate in round 6 collected in 2012, constructed of 54 673 individual level cases across 29 countries (European Social Survey, 2012).

As political saliency of a specific issue is hard to measure across both Europe and across time the study draws on data from party manifestos as previous studies have done (Bohman, 2011; Netjes and Binnema, 2007; William 2010). The CMP deals “...with different aspects of political party performance as well as the structure and development of party systems”, “...based on quantitative content analyses of parties’ election programs...” (CMP, 2015-04-15, p. 1). A comprehensive dataset currently constructed of data collected across 53 countries, 977 political parties and 663 elections and across the time period 1920 to 2013 where the unit measured are political parties at national elections (Volkens et al. 2014 (Documentation) p. 2). The data used in this study covers 27 countries during the time period 2001-2011.

6.4 OPERATIONALIZATION

6.4.1 DEPENDENT VARIABLE

6.4.1.1 ANTI-IMMIGRANT ATTITUDES

The study operationalizes, as several other studies in various combinations, ‘anti-immigration attitudes’ using six survey questions as indicators, where the respondent places itself in accordance with its beliefs (Sides and Citrin, 2007; Citrin and Sides, 2007; Hjerm, 2007; Davidov et al., 2008; Semyonov et al., 2008; Meuleman et al., 2009; Bohman, 2011; Gang et al., 2013; Bohman and Hjerm, 2014). The survey questions used in the study all originate from round 6 of the ESS conducted in 2012 across 27 countries.

The six variables used in this study are:

1. Would you say it is generally bad or good for [country]'s economy that people come to live here from other countries? (The variable is measured on a scale from 0 to 10, where bad equals 0 and good equals 10).
2. Would you say that [country]'s cultural life is generally undermined or enriched by people coming to live here from other countries? (The variable is measured on a scale from 0 to 10, where undermined equals 0 and enriched equals 10).
3. Is [country] made a worse or a better place to live by people coming to live here from other countries? (The variable is measured on a scale from 0 to 10, where worse equals 0 and better equals 10).
4. Allow many/few immigrants of same race/ethnic group from majority? (The variable is measured on a scale from 1 to 4, where allow many equals 1 and allow none equals 4).
5. Allow many/few immigrants of different race/ethnic group from majority? (The variable is measured on a scale from 1 to 4, where allow many equals 1 and allow none equals 4).
6. Allow many/few from poorer countries outside Europe? (The variable is measured on a scale from 1 to 4, where allow many equals 1 and allow none equals 4).

In order to measure anti-immigrant attitudes the six variables are merged into an additive and standardized index with a range between 0 and 100, where low values indicate low levels of anti-immigrant attitudes and high values indicate high levels of anti-immigrant attitudes. As the study tested the reliability and robustness of the index the Cronbach's Alpha was determined to be 0,885 and well within acceptable parameters (Semyonov et al., 2008; Bohman, 2011; Bohman and Hjerm, 2014) (for more descriptive statistics on the anti-immigrant index please go to the appendix and figure 5).

6.4.2 INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

Within previous research, household income, education and employment status have all been determined to have an effect on anti-immigrant attitudes (Quillian, 1995; Hello et al., 2002; Kunovich, 2004; Semyonov et al., 2006; Wilkes et al., 2007; Hjerm, 2007; Semyonov et al., 2008; Hjerm, 2009; Herreros and Criado, 2009; Gang et al., 2013; Bohman and Hjerm 2014). As a result the study operationalizes ‘security’ and ‘vulnerability’ in the form of socio-economic characteristics with the use of household income, education and employment status.

6.4.2.1 HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Higher levels of household income tend to result in lower levels of anti-immigrant attitudes, explained by the decrease in vulnerability that this reflects (Hello et al., 2002; Hjerm, 2007; Semyonov et al., 2006; Wilkes et al., 2007; Semyonov et al., 2008; Hjerm, 2009; Herreros and Criado, 2009). That is, as an individual’s household income increases it becomes less threatened by immigrants. This suggests that those individuals with a low level of household income are considered more vulnerable from a socio-economic perspective. The variable household income is operationalized as the survey question ‘*Household’s total net income, all sources*’ found in the ESS dataset. The variable is constructed into a categorical scale standardized for the specific characteristic of household income in each country included in the survey. Measured on a scale from 1 to 10, where the respondent where asked to describe their household's total income, after tax and compulsory deductions, from all sources, where low household income equals 10 and high household income equals 1. The variable is a good measure for ‘security’ and ‘vulnerability’ as it measures to which percentile of household income an individual places it-self in. This as previous research has emphasised that the more the vulnerable individuals within the in-group have to compete or already have competed with an out-group for a limited amount of resources, harbours more anti-immigrant sentiments (Gang et al., 2013).

6.4.2.2 EDUCATION

Higher levels of education tend to result in lower levels of anti-immigrant attitudes as observed in a number of previous studies, something considered to be explained by the liberalising effect of education (Hello et al., 2002; Kunovich, 2004; Hjerm, 2007;

Semyonov et al., 2006; Wilkes et al., 2007; Semyonov et al., 2008; Hjerm, 2009; Herreros and Criado, 2009; Gang et al., 2013; Bohman and Hjerm 2014). It can therefore be expected that higher levels of education should reduce anti-immigrant attitudes. The variable education is operationalized as the survey question '*Years of full-time education completed*' found in the ESS dataset. The variable is constructed as a continuous scale and measures the total number of years of full-time education an individual has completed with a range of between 0 and 51 years in this study the scale was inverted which means that an increase in the variable education equal a decrease in number of years of education, where 0 years of education equals 51 and 51 years of education equals 0. The variable is a good measure for vulnerability as it measures to which level of education an individual have attained. Its reasonable to expect that less educated individuals from the in-group is more exposed to competition with individuals from the out-group with regard to low-skilled jobs than those with higher levels of education that are able to obtain high-skilled jobs, not available to the out-group due to lack of education. Furthermore previous research also emphasis the way education transmit tolerance values (Hello et al., 2003) therefore its also reasonable to expect that more years of education also exposes the individual more to these values and to not harbour anti-immigrant sentiments.

6.4.2.3 EMPLOYMENT STATUS

An increase in the level of unemployment tend to result in higher levels of anti-immigrant attitudes suggesting that higher unemployment rates are related to higher levels of anti-immigrant sentiments within countries as seen in previous studies (Semyonov et al., 2006; Wilkes et al., 2007; Semyonov et al., 2008; Hjerm, 2009; Herreros and Criado, 2009; Gang et al., 2013). As in previous studies (Bohman, 2011) the variable employment status is operationalized as a combination of the two survey questions '*Doing last 7 days: unemployed, actively looking for job*' and '*Doing last 7 days: unemployed, not actively looking for a job*' found in the ESS dataset. This allows the study to measure the employment status regardless of if the individual is actively looking for a job or not. The variable is coded as a 'dummy' variable where 0 equals 'employed' and 1 equal 'unemployed'. The variable is a good measure for 'security' or 'vulnerability' as employment tend allows for access to a number of opportunities in society not available to unemployed individuals. It is reasonable to

assume that competition over a scarce opportunity to become employed should result in tensions and increased levels of anti-immigrant attitudes.

6.4.3 INTERACTION VARIABLES

6.4.3.1 POLITICAL ARTICULATION

The study operationalizes ‘political influence’ as ‘political articulation’, which “...refers to how images and views conveyed by political representatives” (Bohman, 2011, p. 457). Instead of analysing journalistic articles, debates or speeches of representatives from the political parties the study drawing on Margaret Gilbert’s theory of plural subjects (Gilbert, 1993, pp. 705-706). The theory allows us to perceive party manifestos, as joint decisions, that can be considered as a contract amongst a plural number of subjects stating a specific course of action. Party manifestos are established in an official setting, a party convention or congress, where open negotiations result in official decisions. Although all members of a political party might not agree with the content of the party manifesto, joint decisions require joint commitments to the agreed course of action, deviation from the agreed content must be justified (Bohman, 2011, pp. 462-463). This is therefore a better measure of political articulation than other measures as it provides a stable measure across space and time.

The study draws data from the CMP dataset to construct the variable ‘political articulation’ but since there is no comprehensive data on political articulation that explicitly deals with ‘immigration’, the study for that reason mainly focus on negative articulation that concern immigrants and immigrants presence. That is why political articulation is operationalized by the variable ‘*National way of life: positive*’ (per601), a variable previously used for the same purpose by other scholars (Netjes and Binnema, 2007; William, 2010; Bohman, 2011). As a variable that captures and defines nationalistic articulation with a focus on establishing the national identity, this variable functions as an indirect measure of political articulation on immigration. It measures “...the degree to which political parties seek to differentiate the national in-group from those *not* defined as nationals” in an *exclusive* manner while at the same time defines the national ‘we’ in an *inclusive* manner to establish a national identity.

This implies the existence of *in* and *out*-groups in society where political representatives are set out to define and ‘nationality’ of the country (Bohman, 2011, p. 463).

Even though some countries tend to be more inclusive of immigrants and newcomers, immigrant groups are often associated with negative dimensions of national belonging (O’Rourke and Sinnott, 2006, p. 857). Furthermore, de Figueiredo Jr and Elkins in an article from 2003 establish that “...a social dominance orientation (that is, an inclination toward hierarchy-enhancing attitudes) relates more strongly to nationalism...” (de Figueiredo Jr and Elkins, 2003, pp. 175) and “feelings of nationalism are inherently comparative and, almost exclusively, downwardly comparative. Some theorists conceive of this distinction as one of competition: the patriot is non competitive and the nationalist competitive” (de Figueiredo Jr and Elkins, 2003, pp. 178). Furthermore it is also established that “...nationalism is strongly associated with hostility toward immigrants...” (de Figueiredo Jr and Elkins, 2003, pp. 186).

The variable ‘*National way of life: positive*’ measures “favourable mentions of the manifesto country’s nation, history, and general appeals...” which include: “Support for established national ideas; General appeals to pride of citizenship; Appeals to patriotism; Appeals to nationalism; Suspension of some freedoms in order to protect the state against subversion” (Volkens et al. 2014 (Documentation), p. 16). The measurement of the variable is one of percentage for how salient the issue is in the party manifesto compared to other issues (Bohman, 2011, p. 463). This provides the study with a more stable measurement across both time and space than other measurements on political articulation.

The study constructs, as other scholars have done, a national mean for the period 2001-2011, standardized for both the number of political parties and elections during this period. The index constructed measures the “...proportion of references as a proxy for the space devoted to these issues in the national political arena, in general or by certain categories of parties. The higher the country value on this indicator, the more emphasis is put on the issue” (Bohman, 2011, p. 463). In order to take into

consideration the party characteristics the index is constructed to only include parties that have seats in the parliament. This allows us to better compare the measurements across countries and their specific parliamentary contexts; done by multiplying the total share of seats each political party hold (representational strength) with the manifesto articulation (Bohman, 2011, 464) (for more descriptive statistics on the political articulation index please go to the appendix and figure 6). The interaction is constructed multiplying the constructed variable political articulation with each of the main independent variables (household income, education and employment status (Bohman, 2011; Bohman and Hjerm, 2014).

6.4.4 CONTROL VARIABLES

6.4.4.1 GENDER

Gender has been used as a control variable in a number of previous studies on anti-immigrant attitudes as results have suggested that men hold more anti-immigrant attitudes than women (Hello et al., 2002; Wilkes et al., 2007; Hjerm, 2007; Hjerm, 2009; Bohman and Hjerm 2014; Semyonov et al., 2006; Semyonov et al., 2008). In terms of group threat, males are predicted to be more threatened than females, due to increased competition on the labour market and the existing gender divisions (Hjerm, 2009). Although, it needs to be said that results also suggests that gender do not have an important role in explaining anti-immigrant attitudes as the average difference in xenophobia between the recorded genders might be a result of the large n population (Hjerm, 2007). The variable gender is operationalized as the survey question '*Gender*' found in the ESS dataset. The variable is constructed as a 'dummy' variable where 0 equals 'female' and 1 equals 'male'.

6.4.4.2 IDEOLOGY

Previous studies suggests that individuals that places themselves more to the right on the left-right political scale tend to hold higher levels of anti-immigrant attitudes (Semyonov et al., 2006; Wilkes et al., 2007; Semyonov et al., 2008; Herreros and Criado, 2009). It can therefore reasonably be expected that the more right-wing individual are the more anti-immigrant sentiments they also hold. The variable ideology is operationalized as the survey question '*Placement on left right scale*'

found in the ESS dataset. The variable is measured on a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 equals 'left' and 10 equals 'right'.

6.4.4.3 DOMICILE

A number of studies also suggest that domicile, or in other words the place of residence, being in a large city or on a farm hold relevance to explaining anti-immigrant attitudes, where those living farther out of the larger cities tend to hold more anti-immigrant sentiments than those living in or closer to large cities (Scheepers et al. 2002; Semyonov et al., 2008). The variable domicile is operationalized as the survey question '*Domicile, respondent's description*' found in the ESS dataset. The variable is measured on a categorical scale of 1 to 5 where 1 equal a big city, 2 equal the suburbs or outskirts of big city, 3 equal a town or small city, 4 equal a country village, 5 equal a farm or home in countryside.

6.4.4.4 INTEREST IN POLITICS

Previous studies have also identified that the less an individual is interest in politics the more they tend to harbour higher levels of anti-immigrant attitudes (Bohman, 2011). The variable interest in politics is operationalized as the survey question 'how interested in politics' found in the ESS dataset. The variable is measured on a categorical scale of 1 to 4 where 1 equal very interested, 2 equal quite interested, 3 equal hardly interested and 4 equal not at all interested.

6.4.4.5 AGE

Previous studies have identified that as individuals become older this also tend to result in higher levels of anti-immigrant attitudes suggesting that the older you become the more anti-immigrant sentiments you harbour (Hello et al., 2002; Wilkes et al., 2007; Semyonov et al., 2008; Hjerm, 209; Herreros and Criado, 2009). The variable age is operationalized as the survey question '*age of respondent, calculated*' found in the ESS dataset. The variable is constructed as a continuous scale and measures the age of the respondent in total number of years, between the ages of 15 and 103.

7. RESULTS

7.1 THE BIVARIATE MODELS

The results of the bivariate models are shown in table 1 and functions as a baseline for the analysis of the results in the multi-level models shown in table 2 and interaction models found in table 3. As can be observed in table 1, the results of the bivariate models confirm our expectations of the direct relationships between the dependent variable and the independent variables except for gender, which is insignificant when expectations were that it would be significant and show that males hold more anti-immigrant attitudes than females. Worth mentioning, is that as expected political articulation is insignificant in the bivariate model due to the proposition that the effect of political articulation on anti-immigrant attitudes is dependent on interpretation within a given individual-level characteristic.

Furthermore, results indicate that the lower amount of household income an individual earn the more anti-immigrant sentiments the individual harbours. The fewer years of education an individual have completed the more anti-immigrant sentiments the individual harbours. Unemployed individuals compared with employed individuals harbour more anti-immigrant sentiments. The more to the right on the political left to right scale an individual places it-self the more anti-immigrant sentiments the individual harbours. The further outside a city and the more it lives on a farm an individual lives the more anti-immigrant sentiments it harbours. The less interested an individual is in politics the more anti-immigrant sentiments it harbours. The older an individual becomes the more anti-immigrant sentiments it harbours.

Table 1: Bivariate Models. The Effect of Political Articulation, Socio-Economic and Socio-Demographic Characteristics on Anti-Immigrant Attitudes

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Anti-Immigrant Attitudes ((Low) 0-100 (High))	Model	Model	Model	Model	Model	Model	Model	Model	Model
Household Income ((High) 1-10 (Low))	1.2781*** (0.0412)								
Education ((High) 0-51 (Low))		1.3048*** (0.0262)							
Employment Status ((Employed) 0-1 (Unemployed))			2.4320*** (0.3828)						
Political Articulation ((Low) – (High))				0.0843 (0.0613)					
Gender ((Female) 0-1 (Male))					0.1596 (0.2062)				
Ideology ((Left) 0-10 (Right))						0.8091*** (0.0469)			
Domicile ((City) 1-5 (Farm))							1.4132*** (0.0858)		
Interest in Politics ((Very) 1-4 (Not))								4.0830*** (0.1179)	
Age (15-103)									0.1624*** (0.0056)
Constant	40.0727*** (1.7686)	-2.2961 (1.9463)	47.6096*** (1.7820)	45.4262*** (2.4449)	47.7411*** (1.3325)	43.1518*** (1.7447)	43.7247*** (1.7305)	37.1163*** (1.4006)	40.0188*** (1.7367)
Observations	33,582	40,614	40,885	40,885	40,871	36,290	40,784	40,757	40,810
Number of Groups	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27
R ² (within)	0.0278	0.0576	0.000986	0	1.57e-05	0.00814	0.00663	0.0285	0.0205
R ² (between)	0.0435	0.133	0.00603	0.0704	0.447	0.0162	0.0805	0.416	0.0792
R ² (overall)	0.0291	0.0630	0.00127	0.0119	0.000258	0.00632	0.00220	0.0485	0.0200

Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

7.2 THE FULL MODEL

Table 2 shows that the relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable change as the study step-by-step adds new variables and construct the full model. The models in table 2 are additive models, without interactions. The results of the direct effect of the socio-economic characteristics, household income, education and employment status all perform as expected although employment status only becomes significant in the full model once the study controls for age. The more vulnerable (less household income, less years of education and unemployed) an individual is the more anti-immigrant sentiments it harbour's. This remains true throughout the construction of the full model, where the study also control for age and employment status becomes significant. The results confirm that vulnerability in individual-level socio-economic characteristics play a major role as determinants for anti-immigrant attitudes.

Political articulation becomes significant as it is included into the construction of the full model and performs as expected, with reference to previous studies. As the amount of political articulation increase anti-immigrant attitudes increase. The effect of political articulation on anti-immigrant attitudes is initially quite strong and stays strong throughout the build-up to the full model where it reports a strong coefficient at a significant level of 95 per cent when all variables are included. The results of the control variables measuring the socio-demographic characteristics show that all variables perform as expected reporting significant results throughout the build-up of the full model. Individuals that are male tend to harbour more anti-immigrant sentiments than those that are female. Those that place themselves more to the right on the political left-right scale tend to harbour more anti-immigrant sentiments than those placing themselves more to the left. Those that live in a big city tends to harbour less anti-immigrant sentiments than those that live on a farm or in a home in the countryside. Those that are not interested in politics at all tend to harbour more anti-immigrant sentiments than those that are very interested. The older an individual is the more it harbours anti-immigrant sentiments than those that are younger.

Table 2: Multi-level Models. The Effect of Political Articulation, Socio-Economic and Socio-Demographic Characteristics on Anti-Immigrant Attitudes

Anti-Immigrant Attitudes ((Low) 0-100 (High))	(1) Model	(2) Model	(3) Model	(4) Model	(5) Model	(6) Model	(7) Model	(8) Model	(9) Model
Household Income ((High) 1-10 (Low))	1.2781*** (0.0412)	0.7179*** (0.0429)	0.7081*** (0.0436)	0.7086*** (0.0436)	0.7202*** (0.0438)	0.7660*** (0.0447)	0.7598*** (0.0448)	0.7175*** (0.0444)	0.5655*** (0.0450)
Education ((High) 0-51 (Low))		1.1703*** (0.0303)	1.1716*** (0.0303)	1.1716*** (0.0303)	1.1693*** (0.0303)	1.1325*** (0.0308)	1.1006*** (0.0312)	0.9686*** (0.0314)	0.8382*** (0.0320)
Employment Status ((Employed) 0-1 (Unemployed))			0.5438 (0.4157)	0.5458 (0.4157)	0.5141 (0.4159)	0.6616 (0.4351)	0.6381 (0.4351)	0.1671 (0.4317)	1.5267*** (0.4358)
Political Articulation ((Low) – (High))				0.0979* (0.0562)	0.0985* (0.0507)	0.0924* (0.0516)	0.0953* (0.0526)	0.0916** (0.0456)	0.0912** (0.0434)
Gender ((Female) 0-1 (Male))					0.5887*** (0.2198)	0.4208* (0.2240)	0.3893* (0.2241)	1.0938*** (0.2241)	1.2362*** (0.2231)
Ideology ((Left) 0-10 (Right))						0.8519*** (0.0491)	0.8463*** (0.0491)	0.8367*** (0.0488)	0.8267*** (0.0485)
Domicile ((City) 1-5 (Farm))							0.6207*** (0.0947)	0.5483*** (0.0940)	0.5002*** (0.0935)
Interest in Politics ((Very) 1-4 (Not))								3.2522*** (0.1351)	3.8050*** (0.1377)
Age (15-103)									0.1239*** (0.0067)
Constant	40.0727*** (1.7686)	-1.5388 (2.0031)	-1.5785 (1.9834)	-4.3553* (2.5006)	-4.6276** (2.3087)	-7.8919*** (2.3544)	-8.4605*** (2.3907)	-11.3485*** (2.1457)	-12.9285*** (2.0730)
Observations	33,582	33,449	33,449	33,449	33,443	30,383	30,340	30,275	30,245
Number of Groups	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27
R ² (within)	0.0278	0.0696	0.0696	0.0696	0.0698	0.0808	0.0825	0.0997	0.110
R ² (between)	0.0435	0.153	0.151	0.235	0.232	0.209	0.203	0.293	0.333
R ² (overall)	0.0291	0.0736	0.0736	0.0907	0.0906	0.0960	0.0972	0.123	0.135

Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

7.3 THE INTERACTION MODELS

The study turns to testing my hypotheses by examining the interactions between political articulation and the effect of socio-economic characteristics (household income, education and employment status) on anti-immigrant attitudes. Before the interactions are presented it can be observed that throughout all three, interaction models in table 3, the study reports a strong direct effect of household income, education and employment status on anti-immigrant attitudes. This effect (the main effect) is the effect recorded when political articulation is at zero and should not be interpreted in a similar way with the effects described above for all three variables. Nevertheless, the effects of the socio-demographic characteristics remain the same as seen in the full model in table 2.

7.3.1 POLITICAL ARTICULATION AND HOUSEHOLD INCOME

As the study presents model 1 in table 3 it reports that the interaction between household income and political articulation is significant, suggesting that as political articulation increases it has a mediating effect on the effect of household income on anti-immigrant attitudes. Figure 2, plots this effect for ease of interpretation. The figure suggests that in contexts with low political articulation the less vulnerable you are the more pro-immigrant attitudes you hold. Alternatively the more vulnerable you are the more anti immigrant attitudes you hold. However as political articulation increases the effect of vulnerability on attitudes towards immigrants seems to be decreasing and as the 95 per cent confidence interval suggest from a point on it disappears. This suggests that there is not much of a difference between the more and less vulnerable groups in contexts with high political articulation.

As the study tests the three hypotheses on the socio-economic characteristics 'household income', starting with H_{1A} . The study confirms the null hypothesis H_{1A0} and rejects the alternative hypothesis H_{1A} . Political articulation does not seem to accelerate the effects of vulnerability on anti-immigrant attitudes. Moving on to the second hypothesis H_{1B} : The study rejects the null hypothesis H_{1B0} and confirms the

alternative hypothesis H_{1B} . Political articulation decelerates the effects of vulnerability on anti-immigrant attitudes. As the study moves on to the third and final hypothesis H_2 : The study rejects the null hypothesis H_{20} and confirms the alternative hypothesis H_2 . Political articulation decelerates the effects of security on anti-immigrant attitudes. Of course, one should note that it is not clear from these data which of the two hypotheses has it. The effects that we observe here could plausibly to any of the two, quite distinct, hypotheses.

7.3.1 POLITICAL ARTICULATION AND EDUCATION

As the study presents model 2 in table 3 it reports that the interaction between education and political articulation is significant, suggesting that as political articulation increases it has a mediating effect on the effect of education on anti-immigrant attitudes. Figure 3, plots this effect for ease of interpretation. The figure suggests in contexts with low political articulation the less vulnerable you are (taking education this time as an indication of vulnerability) the more pro-immigrant attitudes you hold. Alternatively the more vulnerable you are the more anti immigrant attitudes you hold. However as political articulation increases the effect of vulnerability on attitudes towards immigrants seems to be decreasing suggesting again that at higher levels of political articulation there is not much of a difference between the more and less vulnerable groups in contexts with high political articulation.

As the study tests the three hypotheses on the socio-economic characteristic 'education', starting with H_{1A} . The study confirms the null hypothesis H_{1A0} and rejects the alternative hypothesis H_{1A} . Political articulation does not seem to accelerate the effects of vulnerability on anti-immigrant attitudes. Moving on to the second hypothesis H_{1B} : The study rejects the null hypothesis H_{1B0} and confirms the alternative hypothesis H_{1B} . Political articulation decelerates the effects of vulnerability on anti-immigrant attitudes. As the study moves on to the third and final hypothesis H_2 : The study rejects the null hypothesis H_{20} and confirms the alternative

hypothesis H₂. Political articulation decelerates the effects of security on anti-immigrant attitudes. Of course once again, one should note that it is not clear from these data which of the two hypotheses has it. The effects that we observe here could plausibly to any of the two, quite distinct, hypotheses.

7.3.1 POLITICAL ARTICULATION AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS

As the study presents model 3 in table 3 it reports that the interaction between employment status and political articulation is insignificant, suggesting that as political articulation increases it has no mediating effect on the effect of employment status on anti-immigrant attitudes. Figure 3, plots this insignificant effect for ease of interpretation. The figure suggests that political articulation does not affect the effect of an individual that becomes unemployed or employed. As political articulation increases the hypothesised effects of employment status on anti-immigrant attitudes is not significant as the 95 per cent confidence intervals suggest.

As the study tests the three hypotheses on the socio-economic characteristic 'employment status', starting with H_{1A}. The study confirms the null hypothesis H_{1A0} and rejects the alternative hypothesis H_{1A}. Political articulation does not accelerate the effects of vulnerability on anti-immigrant attitudes. Moving on to the second hypothesis H_{1B}: The study confirms the null hypothesis H_{1B0} and rejects the alternative hypothesis H_{1B}. Political articulation does not decelerate the effects of vulnerability on anti-immigrant attitudes. As the study moves on to the third and final hypothesis H₂: The study confirms the null hypothesis H₂₀ and rejects the alternative hypothesis H₂. Political articulation does not decelerate the effects of security on anti-immigrant attitudes.

Table 3: Interaction Models. The Effect of Political Articulation on the Effect of Socio-Economic Characteristics on Anti-Immigrant Attitudes

Anti-Immigrant Attitudes ((Low) 0-100 (High))	(1) Model	(2) Model	(3) Model
Household Income ((High) 1-10 (Low))	0.7988*** (0.0622)	0.5725*** (0.0450)	0.5657*** (0.0450)
Education ((High) 0-51 (Low))	0.1344*** (0.0400)	0.2957*** (0.0628)	0.0922** (0.0363)
Employment Status ((Employed) 0-1 (Unemployed))	0.8290*** (0.0321)	0.9628*** (0.0420)	0.8389*** (0.0320)
Political Articulation ((Low) – (High))	1.4685*** (0.4357)	1.5359*** (0.4356)	1.8852*** (0.5931)
Gender ((Female) 0-1 (Male))	1.2163*** (0.2231)	1.2453*** (0.2231)	1.2381*** (0.2232)
Ideology ((Left) 0-10 (Right))	0.8262*** (0.0485)	0.8246*** (0.0485)	0.8265*** (0.0485)
Domicile ((City) 1-5 (Farm))	0.5298*** (0.0937)	0.5117*** (0.0935)	0.5001*** (0.0936)
Interest in Politics ((Very) 1-4 (Not))	3.7933*** (0.1377)	3.7939*** (0.1377)	3.8085*** (0.1377)
Age (15-103)	0.1251*** (0.0067)	0.1231*** (0.0067)	0.1239*** (0.0067)
Household Income*Political Articulation	-0.0079*** (0.0015)		
Education*Political Articulation		-0.0054*** (0.0012)	
Employment Status*Political Articulation			-0.0151 (0.0170)
Constant	-14.0164*** (1.9436)	-17.7120*** (2.3421)	-12.9971*** (1.8430)
Observations	30,245	30,245	30,245
Number of Groups	27	27	27
R ² (within)	0.111	0.110	0.110
R ² (between)	0.339	0.331	0.333
R ² (overall)	0.136	0.135	0.135

Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Figure 2: The Interaction Effect of Political Articulation on the Effect of Household Income on Anti-Immigrant Attitudes

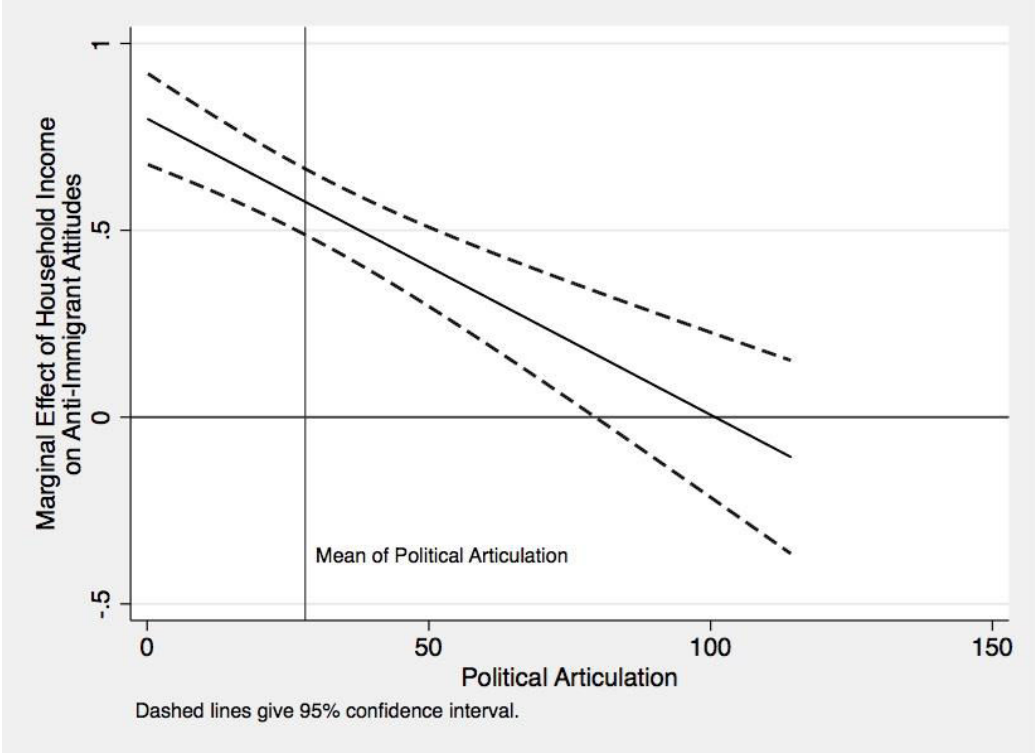


Figure 3: The Interaction Effect of Political Articulation on the Effect of Education on Anti-Immigrant Attitudes

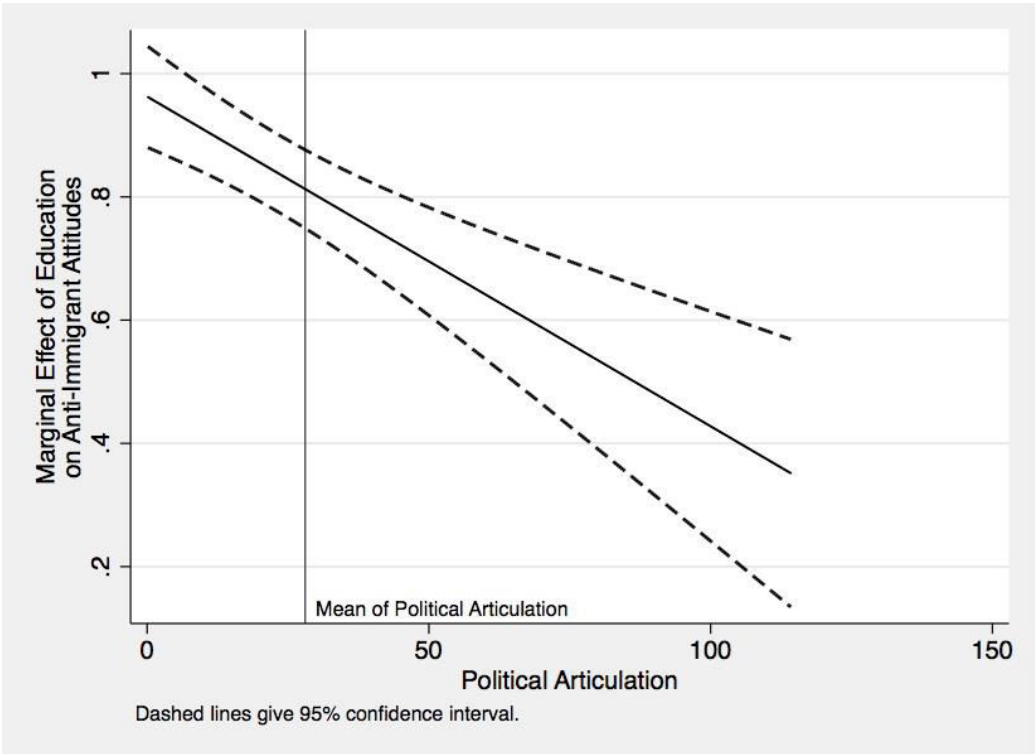
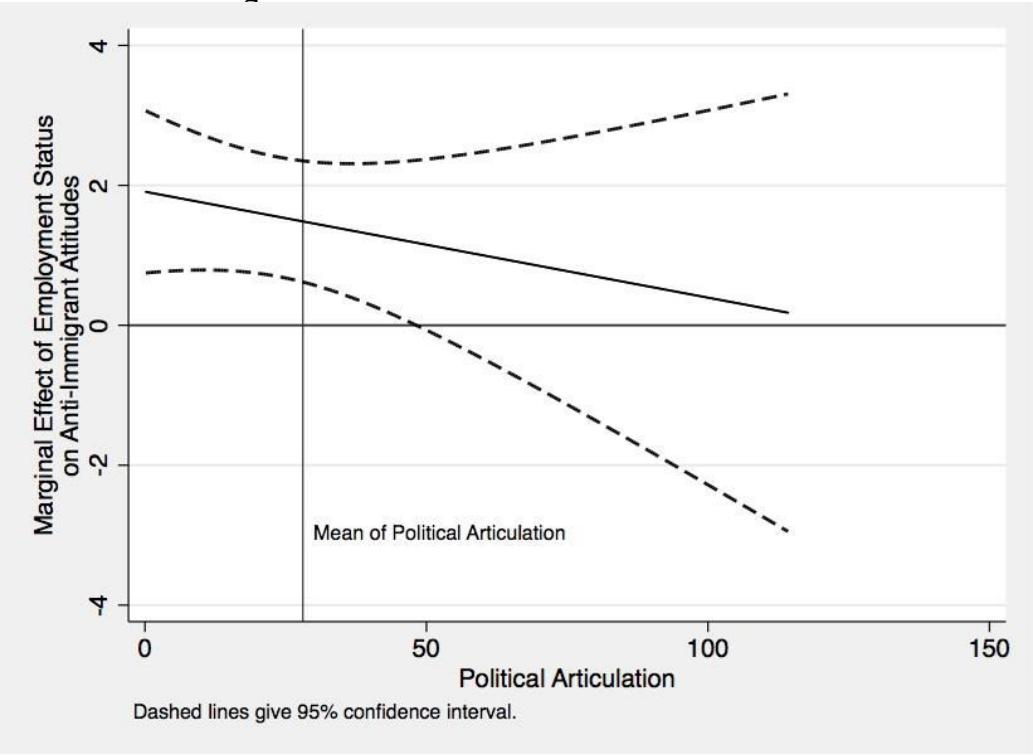


Figure 4: The Interaction Effect of Political Articulation on the Effect of Employment Status on Anti-Immigrant Attitudes



8. ANALYTICAL DISCUSSION

8.1 SUMMARY

The study set out with the aim to explore the potential mediating effects of political articulation on the effects of ‘vulnerability’ or ‘security’ on anti-immigrant attitudes. Asking the following research question: *Does the effect of socio-economic characteristics on anti-immigrant attitudes depend on the level of political articulation (on the issue of immigration)?* To be able to answer this research question the study, with the use of the theory of elite discourse, proposed the following hypotheses:

H₁A: Political articulation accelerates the effects of vulnerability on anti-immigrant attitudes.

H₁B: Political articulation decelerates the effects of vulnerability on anti-immigrant attitudes.

H₂: Political articulation decelerates the effects of security on anti-immigrant attitudes.

The study employed a multi-level cross-sectional, random effects model, while controlling for interaction effects in its pursuits to explore the possible answers to the proposed research question and its proposed hypotheses, using up-to-date individual-level and country-level data.

8.2 DISCUSSION

The study expected that the effect of vulnerability on anti-immigrant attitudes would increase or decrease depending on level of political articulation. The study found that the effect of vulnerability on anti-immigrant attitudes decrease depending on level of political articulation and found two ideal explanations for why this might be the case.

As the study tested the first hypothesis H₁A, results show that political articulation does not accelerate the effects of vulnerability on anti-immigrant attitudes, with regard to any of the socio-economic characteristics covered in this study. Indicating that if political elites produce increased levels of political articulation, that emphasises the national way of life in a positive light, this would not increase tensions between the in-group and the out-group, for individuals that are considered vulnerable, which would result in increased levels of anti-immigrant attitudes.

As the study tested the second hypothesis H₁B, results show that political articulation decelerates the effects of vulnerability on anti-immigrant attitudes, with regard to both household income and education but not with regard to employment status. Indicating that if political elites produce increased levels of political articulation, that emphasises the national way of life in a positive light, this would reduce tensions between the in-group and the out-group, for individuals that are considered

vulnerable with regard to the level of household income and education, resulting in reduced levels of anti-immigrant attitudes.

As the study tested the third and final hypothesis H_2 , results show that political articulation decelerates the effects of security on anti-immigrant attitudes, with regard to both household income and education but not with regard to employment status. Indicating that if political elites produce increased levels of political articulation, that emphasises the national way of life in a positive light, this would reduce the effects of higher levels of household income as well as education on anti-immigrant attitudes. Increasing tensions between the in-group and the out-group, by those individuals within a population that have a high level of household income or education.

The study shows that political articulation mediates the effects of vulnerability and security on anti-immigrant attitudes, with regard to household income and education but not employment status. What is interesting here is that in the case of both education and household income two ideal explanations are identified (H_{1B} and H_2) for why this might be the case. Although, given the data used in this study it is not easy to be certain of, which of the two explanations is more accurate or if both might apply due to the quite distinct, hypothesis.

In the case of both household income and education, increased levels of political articulation decelerate the effects of vulnerability (i.e. poverty and low levels of education) on anti-immigrant attitudes. This further supports the understanding that as the issue of immigration is magnified (through a more polemic political elite discourse) and becomes associated with the idea that is a threat to the nations economic situation (Bauer et al., 2000; Kunovich, 2004; O'Rourke and Sinnott, 2006) members of the vulnerable group become more pro-immigrant. As their demands for compensation due to the increased level of vulnerability becomes more legitimate and most likely will result in a redistribution of wealth (Brady and

Finnigan, 2014). Members of the vulnerable group have nothing left to lose from this elite discourse and everything to gain, through politically induced measures of compensation.

Simultaneously, with regard to both household income and education, results show that political articulation decelerates the effects of security (i.e. earning a high level of household income and being highly educated) on anti-immigrant attitudes. This further supports the understanding that as the issue of immigration is magnified (through a more polemic political elite discourse) and becomes associated with the idea that is a threat to the nation's economic situation (Bauer et al., 2000; Kunovich, 2004; O'Rourke and Sinnott, 2006) members of the secure group become more anti-immigrant. As demands for redistribution of wealth become more legitimate in order to compensate for the increased level of vulnerability for the members of the vulnerable group (Brady and Finnigan, 2014).

With regard to the results as presented in both of the hypotheses H_{1B} and H₂ this suggests further support to the understanding that as the threat to the economic situation becomes greater (as suggested by a more polemic elite discourse), the benefits of social status (i.e. security) are washed away (Kunovich, 2004).

So why did political articulation not mediate the effects of vulnerability or security on anti-immigrant attitudes, with regard to employment status? Results suggest that regardless of whether an individual is employed or unemployed, political articulation does not affect the individual's level of anti-immigrant attitude. While increased levels of unemployment has a direct and increasing effect on anti-immigrant attitudes, this is not mediated by increased levels of political articulation that emphasises the national way of life in a positive light. It seems as if social status is associated with higher levels of household income and higher levels of education and not whether or not an individual is employed or not.

Either you are vulnerable in the sense that you are unemployed and unable to find a job or you are not, the increased level of competition in this situation determines the

individual's level of anti-immigrant sentiments, not whether political elites articulate a threat to this fact in the political arena. Future studies should investigate whether labour market position (Kunovich, 2004) would provide a better understanding of anti-immigrant attitudes associated with competition in the labour market. In essence, the effect of if an individual identifies with a high skilled or low skilled occupation on anti-immigrant attitudes and if this relationship is dependent on the level of political articulation (on the issue of immigration).

Although, the results are clear with regard to the mediating effect of political articulation on the effects of the three operationalized socio-economic characteristics on anti-immigrant attitudes the effect might also be caused by immigration flows. Something that this study was unable to control for due to limitations with regard to both time and data collection, but is something, which future studies should control for.

9. CONCLUDING REMARKS

9.1 CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this study was to investigate and further explore the mechanisms behind the effect of political articulation on anti-immigrant attitudes. The study focused its efforts on the mediating effect of political articulation on the effect of 'vulnerability' or 'security', in the form of household income, education and employment status, on anti-immigrant attitudes. With the use of the theory of elite discourse, and up-to-date individual-level and country-level observations the study employed multi-level cross-sectional random effects models across 27 European countries and controlled for interaction effects of political articulation on the effect of socio-economic characteristics on anti-immigrant attitudes. Asking the following research question: *Does the effect of socio-economic characteristics on anti-immigrant attitudes depend on the level of political articulation (on the issue of immigration)?*

The results from the study suggest that the answer is yes; the effect of socio-economic characteristics on anti-immigrant attitudes does depend on the level of political articulation (on the issue of immigration).

The study shows that political articulation mediates the effects of vulnerability and security on anti-immigrant attitudes, with regard to household income and education but not employment status. In the case of both household income and education, increased levels of political articulation decelerate the effects of vulnerability (i.e. poverty and low levels of education) on anti-immigrant attitudes. Simultaneously, with regard to both household income and education, results show that political articulation decelerates the effects of security (i.e. earning a high level of household income and being highly educated) on anti-immigrant attitudes.

As presented above with regard to both household income and education, two ideal explanations are identified for why this might be the case. Although, given the data used in this study it is not easy to be certain of, which of the two explanations is more accurate or if both might apply due to the quite distinct, hypothesis. Though, what is certain, is that this suggests further support to the understanding that as the threat to the economic situation becomes greater (as suggested by a more polemic elite discourse), the benefits of social status (i.e. security) are washed away (Kunovich, 2004).

9.2 CRITICAL EVALUATION OF STUDY

The main strength of the study is that its design follows in the footsteps of previous scholars and employs the same methodological approach and up-to-date data as it explores the possible explanations for the proposed research question. While the study has a solid foundation in the work of previous scholars there are aspects of this study that could be improved. The results are clear with regard to the mediating effect of political articulation on the three operationalized socio-economic characteristics effects on anti-immigrant attitudes but the models do not control for

immigration flows due to limitations with regard to both time and data collection, something that future studies should investigate. As the interaction variable political articulation is operationalized as national way of life: positive and acts as a proxy for anti-immigrant rhetoric it would be better if future studies could use data that specifically measures political articulation on anti-immigrant rhetoric in the political arena, something that previous studies have also highlighted.

9.3 FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research should explore what and how political manifestos are influenced by the policy positions of other political parties, in order for a better understanding of the mechanisms behind anti-immigrant attitudes (Bohman, 2011), as the content of elite discourse measured through political articulation most probably is a response to the political articulation of other political parties. Although, this study investigated if political articulation mediated the effect of employment status on anti-immigrant attitudes (which it did not), future studies should also investigate the effect of labour market position on anti-immigrant attitudes (Kunovich, 2004) and if political articulation mediates this relationship. Furthermore studies should also explore the effects of increased levels of vulnerability within the socio-economically secure group on voting behaviour associated with anti-immigrant parties.

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11. APPENDIX

Figure 5: The Mean of Anti-Immigrant Attitudes Across Countries

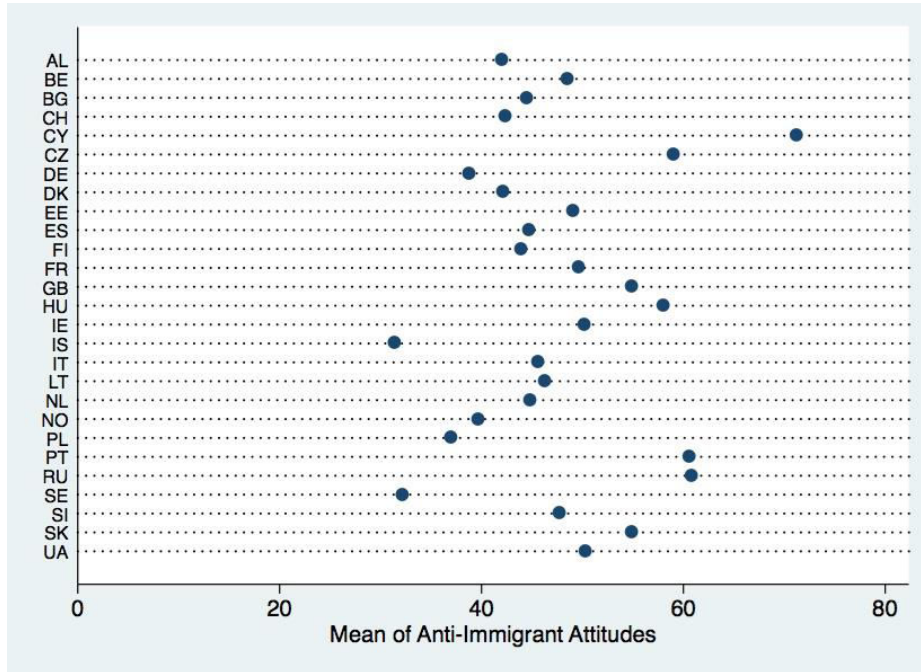
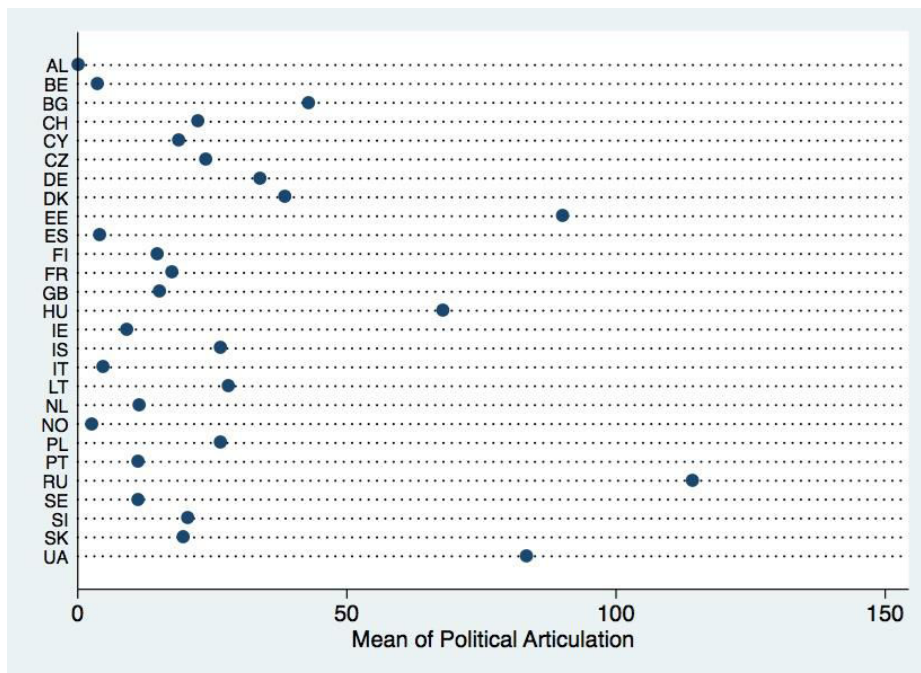


Figure 6: The Mean of Political Articulation Across Countries



In figure 5 the graph depicts the average amount of anti-immigrant attitude an individual harbours in each country included in the study, the variable is measured on a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 equal a low level of anti-immigrant attitude and 100 equal a high level of anti-immigrant attitude. Island, Sweden, Norway and Poland report a low average level of anti-immigrant attitudes while Cyprus, Russia and Portugal followed by the Czech Republic, Hungary, Great Britain and Slovakia report a high average level of anti-immigrant attitudes.

In figure 6 the graph depicts the average amount of political articulation in each country included in the study on a scale from 0 to 150. Albania, Norway and Estonia report a low average level of political articulation while Russia, Estonia, Ukraine and Hungary followed by Bulgaria, Denmark and Germany report a high average level of political articulation.