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Migration and welfare state solidarity in Western Europe

Steffen Mau* and Christoph Burkhardt,

University of Bremen, Germany

Summary In recent decades Western Europe has had to face increasing migration levels resulting in a more diverse population. As a direct consequence, the question of adequate inclusion of immigrants into the welfare state has arisen. At the same time it has been asked whether the inclusion of non-nationals or migrants into the welfare state may undermine the solidaristic basis and legitimacy of welfare state redistribution. Citizens who are in general positive about the welfare state may adopt a critical view if migrants are granted equal access. Using data from the European Social Survey (2002/2003) for European OECD Countries we examine the relationship between ethnic diversity and public social expenditure, welfare state support and attitudes towards immigrants among European citizens. The results indicate only weak negative correlations between ethnic diversity and public social expenditure levels. Multilevel regression models with support for the welfare state and attitudes towards the legal inclusion of immigrants as dependent variables in fact reveal a negative influence of ethnic diversity. However, when controlling for migration in combination with other contextual factors, especially GDP, the unemployment rate and welfare regime seem to have a mediating influence.

Key words ethnic diversity, inclusion, migration, public social attitudes, welfare state solidarity

Introduction

The welfare state can be understood as a social arrangement for coping with collective risks and reducing social inequality. When viewed from a historical perspective it is evident that the development of modern social security institutions was closely linked with the development of national states, especially the formation of a territorially and socially closed society. The welfare state was fundamentally dependent on the integration efforts previously made by the national state, but at the same time it contributed to the deepening and strengthening of the bonds between citizens (Offe, 1998).

If one considers the nexus between the formation of a national collective and the organization of welfare

state solidarity, it is evident that increasing migration movements can give rise to various problems. This is not simply because many migrants are susceptible to particular risks and often have to rely on support from the state, but also because of the resulting change in the social composition of those dependent on the welfare state. A number of authors, most prominently Alesina and Glaeser (2004) in their book *Fighting Poverty in the US and Europe*, expect that solidarity within the welfare state will be weakened as a result of increasing ethnic heterogeneity (see also: Sanderson, 2004; Soroka et al., 2006). They assume that growing ethnic diversity will eventually force European welfare states to reduce social spending on account of the pressure caused by growing ethnic diversity, and adopt a system more similar to the US model.

*Author to whom correspondence should be sent: Steffen Mau, University of Bremen, Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences, P.O. Box 330 440, 28334 Bremen, Germany. [email: smau@bigssuni-bremen.de]

In response to such views, this article attempts to reconstruct how migration and ethnic heterogeneity affect welfare state solidarity. Although a number of authors have already critically examined this link (cf. Taylor-Gooby, 2005; Banting et al., 2006; van Oorschot, 2006), this article strives to present the issue in a new light. Whereas Alesina and Glaeser use social spending as a dependent variable and vantage point from which to assess the development of solidarity within a population, this research will instead look at the actual attitudes of citizens. Moreover, we will use different measures of diversity such as the proportion of foreigners, foreign-born people and migration inflow. Finally, we will employ multilevel analysis as a statistical method well suited to the investigation of such an issue.

The following section will first discuss the extent to which national welfare states can be seen as solidaristic arrangements. Subsequently, the discussion will focus on the possible effects of incorporating foreigners into the state's benefit system on the solidaristic foundations of the welfare state. In the empirical analysis, this relationship will be tested with data from the European Social Survey (2002/2003) on 17 Western European countries. An initial bivariate analysis will determine whether the extent to which these countries vary in terms of the degree of ethnic diversity/migration is related to attitudes towards welfare state redistribution and the inclusion of foreigners. The subsequent multivariate, multilevel analysis will examine whether attitudes differ in these countries on account of their specific diversity, particularly when the population's proportion of non-Western foreign-born people is taken into account in conjunction with relevant control variables on both the individual and contextual level.

Is welfare state solidarity threatened by greater heterogeneity?

Nation states can be considered as specific types of political, social and economic organization. Their historical 'success' has mainly been due to a series of interrelated developments such as the establishment of territorial order, the state appropriation of the monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force, the bundling of political power and the cultural and social homogenization of the population living within the borders of a sovereign state. In addition, the concept of citizenship has been a fundamental starting

point for establishing a connection between state-run agencies and institutions and citizens (Marshall, 1964). The concept of membership, combined with the control of territorial borders, tends to seal off the nation state, like a 'container', from the outside world (cf. Brubaker, 1989). According to Wimmer (1998: 200), the development of nation states can be viewed as a dialectic process 'in the course of which domestic integration by way of citizenship rights expansion and social isolation from external factors mutually strengthen one another' (own translation). By doing so, the nation state became one of the most important organizational entities for social solidarity, because it provided the fundamentals of a political identity and social morals, which underpin redistributive social security systems (cf. Offe, 1998). There is good reason why research on this topic often speaks of the 'nationalization of solidaristic practices' (Wagner and Zimmermann, 2003: 254).

It is, however, neither possible nor desirable to deny new arrivals access to the territory and the social security schemes. The majority of Western European countries have been confronted with immigration for some decades now and it has become necessary to incorporate these groups into the welfare system. Since the 1950s and 1960s a massive change has taken place: though not all immigrant groups enjoy the same rights or entitlements to social benefits as national citizens, a denationalization of solidarity practices can generally be observed, and is particularly evident for those groups which have been granted permanent residency (Soysal, 1994). The main evolution in the area of social rights, therefore, has consisted of a reduction in the relevance of nationality for the enjoyment of benefits, to be replaced instead by an emphasis on residency (Guiraudon, 2002: 135).

However, this transition does not occur without problems, because it requires a broader understanding of the notion of solidarity: state citizenship and the sense of belonging to a national community are becoming less central. A further difficulty is that immigrants tend to be, proportionally, more reliant on state welfare than national citizens (cf. Boeri et al., 2002). This results in a tension because, as soon as foreigners take up permanent residence, it is in the public interest to include them in the welfare system in order to minimize problems arising from ethnic segregation and marginalization. At the same time, it is clear that the inclusion of migrants or groups who are not considered to 'belong' could undermine the legitimacy of

a social security system based on solidarity with one's own community (Bommers and Halfmann, 1998: 21; for further reading see also Banting, 2000; Banting et al., 2006). A fundamental problem associated with all policies on immigration and integration is 'to preserve the balance between the openness and exclusivity of the welfare system without endangering the universal consensus of the welfare state to protect the right to entitlements of both the native population as well as the various immigrant groups' (Faist, 1998: 149, own translation).

The question of the relation between ethnic heterogeneity and welfare state solidarity has been extensively debated (for a discussion see Banting and Kymlicka, 2006). In one of the core contributions to the debate, Alesina and Glaeser (2004) view the increasing diversity of societies as problematic because they assume that the willingness to show solidarity depends on whether social welfare provision is organized within a homogeneous community that is linked by a common culture, language, and origin, or whether it will also extend beyond the boundaries of this group. With the aid of macro indicators for 54 countries, Alesina and Glaeser (2004: 133–81) demonstrate that there is a negative correlation (-0.66) between 'racial fractionalization' and the level of social spending. The European countries, led by the Scandinavian states, emerged as both homogenous and generous welfare states. Latin American countries – such as Ecuador, Peru and Guatemala – were by contrast particularly heterogeneous and weak welfare states. Although the analysis covers a large number of countries which are very dissimilar in social, economic and political terms, the main focal point is a comparison of the US and Europe – with quite far-reaching conclusions. The authors believe that comparably high ethnic diversity in American society is one of the key reasons for the differences in the levels of social welfare spending in the US and Europe. Soroka et al. (2006) find an association between the immigration rate and the rate of growth of welfare spending over time; that is, welfare spending rates in countries with higher immigration grew less than in countries limiting immigration. Along the same line, Sanderson and Vanhanen (2004) conclude from their research that ethnic heterogeneity works as a good predictor of welfare spending (see also Sanderson, 2004; Vanhanen, 2004).

In order to substantiate this link, one can also draw on a comprehensive body of research on prejudice and racism (Pettigrew, 1998; Pettigrew and Tropp, 2000;

Gang et al., 2002). This research reveals that there is a general tendency towards in-group preference because people are more inclined to concede rights and entitlements to their own group or to persons who are perceived as the same than to those regarded as different. Such strategies to secure privileges for the members of one's own group can be found in many areas of life where there is competition for scarce resources. It is said Welfare institutions, responsible for the distribution of collective goods to alleviate situations of risk or need, are bound by their very nature to induce conflict between ethnic groups. Numerous studies confirm that social acceptance of foreigners and the extent to which they are granted rights are directly related to the 'perceived ethnic threat' (Scheepers et al., 2002; Raijman et al., 2003). In countries with a high share of foreigners, the majority shows stronger prejudice against minority groups (Quillian, 1995; Scheepers et al., 2002). However, Coenders and Scheepers (2008) report that, when looking at the relation between migration and public attitudes over time, it is not the actual level of ethnic competition, but the increasing level (i.e. changes over time) which determines negative attitudes towards foreigners. In turn, other studies do not confirm findings linking high or increasing numbers of foreigners with negative attitudes towards them. Hooghe et al. (2006) found hardly any relation between migration or diversity and social cohesion at the country level when comparing 21 European countries. Rippl (2003), who investigates the German case, observes that the share of foreigners has a weak but positive effect on attitudes towards migration (cf. Rippl, 2005). Similar results can also be found for Denmark, where the proportion of foreigners in the population is not associated with negative attitudes or resentment (Larsen, 2006).

Despite these somewhat contradictory results, the majority of empirical studies on the acceptance of welfare policies show that the public differentiates between those of the same nationality or origin and foreigners or ethnic minorities. Within the hierarchy of who is considered deserving, foreigners are placed beneath native groups (van Oorschot, 2006; van Oorschot and Uunk, 2007). Gilens (1999) claims that one explanation for America's rudimentary welfare system is the society's latent racism. Because the welfare state is perceived to favour people of colour, the predominantly white middle class has little interest in expanding the welfare state systems of contribution and redistribution. In the case of the US,

ethnic fragmentation makes it more difficult and can obstruct the growth of solidarity between different social classes because 'the majority believes that redistribution favours racial minorities' (Alesina et al., 2001: 39).

By and large, these findings do not just provide significant information on the genesis and growth of different welfare systems, but are also pertinent to statements about the future of European welfare states faced with increasing immigration. As such, they raise the question of the long-term 'survival' of the current welfare arrangements in the face of continuing high rates of immigration into Western European welfare states.

Research question, data, methods

Against this background, we will investigate whether there is indeed an association between migration and the commitment to welfare state solidarity in European countries. In order to tackle the issue, the following analysis will link individual cross-national data from the European Social Survey (2002/2003) with aggregate data at the country level. Our analyses offer several advantages over those conducted by Alesina and Glaeser (2004): first of all, rather than just focusing on social expenditure, we use other indicators which are clearly relevant to the suggested relationship, namely attitudes to welfare redistribution and the inclusion of foreigners. Second, we do not exclusively rely on the index of ethnic fractionalization¹ in order to portray ethnic heterogeneity, but examine different measures of migration such as the proportion of foreigners or the migration inflow. We can thus examine the influence of the widely discussed fractionalization measure developed by Alesina et al. (2003), but also overcome its limitations, especially in tapping migration. Given the problems of validity, source data and the issue of adequacy of a synthetic index of fractionalization, we include more appropriate and multiple measures of migration in our analyses. The use of different measures of migration enables us to cover various aspects of ethnic diversity and to compare their influence on notions of solidarity and attitudes towards migrants within Western European welfare states. Third, we do not just analyse aggregate data on particular countries but combine individual data with aggregate data to identify factors relevant to public opinion at both levels.

Data and methods

The data set used in the statistical analysis is taken from the first round of the European Social Survey (ESS 2002/2003). The data from 17 European countries were included in the analysis (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland). For these countries data on different macro indicators were collected and added to the ESS data set.²

In the empirical section, we start by presenting the results from descriptive analyses based on aggregate data. At first, the thesis proposed by Alesina and Glaeser (2004) is scrutinized by correlating measures of ethnic diversity/migration with welfare state expenditure. We then correlate these measures with aggregate attitudinal data using two different items, support for governmental redistribution on the one hand and attitudes towards equal rights for foreigners on the other hand. Following this, attitudinal data is linked with micro and macro indicators in a multivariate analysis. We focus on the analysis of the two attitudinal items as dependent variables. The hierarchical linear model applied allows the inclusion of independent variables at both country and individual level. This allows the effects of individual determinants – such as education, gender, and employment status, and macro indicators such as the proportion of foreigners, the rate of unemployment, or the distribution of income within a country – to be taken into account.³

The multilevel models reported first make use of different measures of ethnic diversity (Models 1–4). We then concentrate on the most crucial diversity measure and take other macro variables into account in order to establish whether these are important in explaining country variation. It should be noted that each of the control variables will be added separately to the multilevel regression (Models 5–9). Due to the fact that with only 17 countries, the number of cases at the context level is rather small, it is not possible to run models with larger numbers of macro variables without problems.

Dependent variables

Two attitudinal items were chosen from the ESS.⁴ We selected a general statement on the welfare state's responsibility to redistribute income: 'The government should take measures to reduce differences in income levels' (1). To measure the acceptance of

immigrant inclusion and opinions on their legal situation we use the following question: 'People who have come to live here should be given the same rights as everyone else' (2).⁵

Independent variables: individual level

For selecting our independent variables at the individual level we rely on studies on ethnic prejudice. Education appears to play an important role in hostile attitudes to foreigners: the higher the level of education the lower the extent of prejudice and negative attitudes (Coenders and Scheepers, 2003). Unemployed people tend to have a more positive opinion of the welfare state in general; however, due to their position on the job market, they are also more inclined to think of other people in terms of competition. Persons who are unemployed and those with politically conservative attitudes were found less in favour of ethnic minorities than the employed or the Left-leaning respondents (Raijman et al., 2003). The level of education is measured as a dummy variable and differentiates between low, medium and high level of education based on the ISCED Classification (taking into account the highest educational degree achieved by the individual). The employment status of the respondents is measured by a dummy variable and provides information on whether respondents are in paid work or not. Political affiliation is measured using an 11-point scale ranging from Left-wing to Right-wing. High values represent conservative affiliations whereas lower values indicate a more Left-wing political orientation. As control variables, gender and age are included in the analysis, whereby the age variable is coded metrically and gender is dummy-coded (1=male). All these variables have been found relevant in studies on general attitudes towards the welfare state before (e.g. Svallfors and Taylor-Gooby, 1999; Mau, 2003a).

Independent variables: macro-level

In accordance with our key questions, the first independent factor of interest to us is ethnic diversity. In our descriptive analysis we use five different measures of ethnic diversity, namely ethnic fractionalization, the proportion of foreign population, foreign-born population, non-Western foreign-born population and migration inflow (see Appendix 1). Most important for our multivariate analysis is the proportion of

non-Western foreign-born people (as a percentage of the total population) taken from Citrin and Sides (2006). This measure should be highly relevant for attitudes towards foreigners since immigrants from non-Western countries are usually more visible and are more reliant on social support. They are also those groups which are in the focus of current public debates.

In order to control for other macro factors the analysis draws on available research on determinants of welfare development and support for welfare institutions. We control the effect of each country's economic wealth (GDP in US\$ per capita/purchasing power parities) (Wilensky, 1975). The strength of Left-wing parties in the government is also considered a major factor of welfare state expansion and support (Korpi, 1983; Esping-Andersen, 1985; Taylor-Gooby, 2005). Therefore, the level of participation of Left-wing parties in the government will be included into the analysis. This indicator is operationalized as the percentage of the total number of seats of Left-wing politicians in the Cabinet. In order to ensure that changes of Cabinet composition are taken into account, the arithmetic mean of the data for the years between 1990 and 2002 is used (Armingeon et al., 2006).

Specific to the questions on legitimacy and willingness for inclusion are the Gini coefficient and the unemployment rate (United Nations Development Programme, 2004). Generally, we would expect that a greater degree of inequality in a country induces support for redistribution. However, as far as the link between inequality and diversity is concerned, the relationship is not easy to predict. One might expect that the tendency towards social exclusion would be higher in countries with greater inequalities in the distribution of income than in countries with less uneven distribution. The public in countries with greater inequality is more inclined to mistrust 'others'. Therefore, the uneven distribution of wealth should have a negative effect on public attitudes towards foreigners (Uslaner, 2002; Rothstein and Uslaner, 2005). However, one can assume that very 'equal' countries are more vulnerable towards increased heterogeneity. In other words, with a smaller Gini coefficient, openness towards foreigners could be less pronounced. The unemployment rate (as a percentage of the total workforce) allows one to assess whether tensions on the job market lead to more negative attitudes in different countries. We have also included a classification of welfare regimes as we believe it is related to different forms of inclusion and entitlement

(cf. Bonoli, 1997; Mau, 2003b; see also Sainsbury, 2006 for her analysis of immigration policy regimes). Access is possibly easier in more universal systems than in social insurance systems financed by contributions, which require longer periods of contribution before claims for benefits can be made. At the same time, generous welfare states are more likely to be confronted with the problem that a greater number of immigrant groups can partake in the welfare state. Previous literature has shown that different patterns in attitudes can be identified in different welfare state regimes (cf. Svallfors, 1997; Arts and Gelissen, 2001). The welfare regime typology used in this analysis expands on existing research from Esping-Andersen and Leibfried, and differentiates between social democratic, liberal, continental and Mediterranean welfare systems (cf. Esping-Andersen, 1990; Leibfried, 1992). In the following section, the results of the bivariate comparative analysis of European countries will first be discussed, providing the groundwork for the multivariate analysis.

Descriptive statistics

Let us start with a descriptive overview. In nearly all countries the overwhelming majority is in favour of government redistribution, with Denmark as the exception (Table 1). As far as attitudes towards foreigners are concerned, responses vary quite substantially between the countries. The percentage of people who speak out in favour of granting the same legal rights to immigrants as enjoyed by the native population ranges from 44.3 percent in Switzerland to 86.3 percent in Sweden.

According to the argument put forward by Alesina and Glaeser (2004), it is expected that there is a negative link between welfare expenditure and ethnic fractionalization. Within our sample we find that the association between the level of expenditure and ethnic fractionalization is rather weak and not significant ($-.22$ n.s., Fig. 1). This corresponds to some extent with analyses conducted by Taylor-Gooby (2005), who uses social expenditure as a dependent variable and demonstrates that the validity of the fractionalization theory sinks when the US is omitted from the analysis.

Looking at the association between ethnic fractionalization and attitudes, we find ambiguous results (see Fig. 2). The correlation between attitudes towards the welfare state (i.e. support for redistribution) on

Table 1 Attitudes towards the welfare state and towards foreigners

	<i>Government should redistribute (%)</i>	<i>Immigrants should get the same rights (%)</i>
Austria	68.3	56.0
Belgium	70.6	56.2
Denmark	43.3	79.4
Finland	76.8	71.5
France	83.2	60.9
Germany	53.6	57.6
Greece	90.2	64.6
Ireland	77.4	74.7
Italy	78.9	70.6
Luxembourg	61.4	71.5
The Netherlands	58.8	65.0
Norway	70.4	81.2
Portugal	91.3	79.2
Spain	79.4	73.3
Sweden	68.9	86.3
Switzerland	64.2	44.3
Great Britain	61.8	66.8

Note: For both items the percentage of agreement with the statement was computed.

Source: ESS 2002/2003, own calculations.

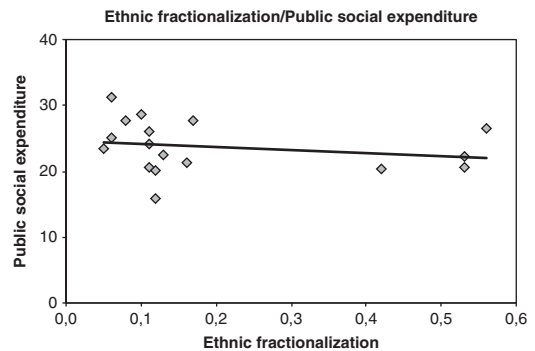


Figure 1 Public social expenditure and ethnic fractionalization

Source: See Appendix for information on macro indicators.

the one hand, and the fractionalization index on the other hand is negligible ($-.11$ n.s.). In other words, when comparing European countries, the general welfare state support does not diminish as ethnic fractionalization increases. Similarly, a study by Kuhn (2006) could not find any negative correlations

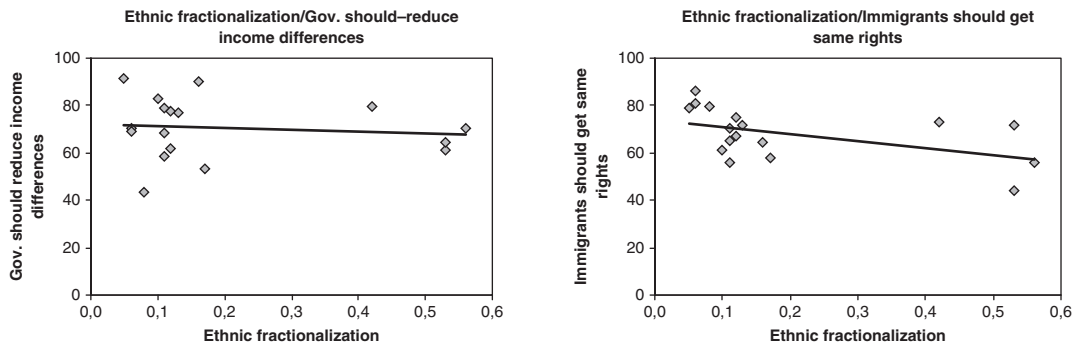


Figure 2 Public social attitudes and ethnic fractionalization

Source: Y-axis: ESS 2002/2003 (own calculations, see also Table 1). X-axis: see Table A1 for information on the index of fractionalization.

between ethnic fractionalization and support for the welfare state when comparing different Swiss cantons. However, support for granting the same rights to foreigners and the index of ethnic fractionalization are negatively correlated ($-.49$, $p < .05$). The more fractionalized a country is the less support we find for the granting of equal rights to foreigners. Nevertheless, considering the distribution of the fractionalization index across countries, one sees that this is clearly due to the outliers Belgium, Luxembourg and Switzerland (see Appendix 1 for country data).

As pointed out already, we consider the index of ethnic fractionalization developed by Alesina and Glaeser to be rather problematic in terms of measurement and data documentation. Thus, let us now turn to other, more appropriate measures of diversity in the context of migration processes. To capture the effect of migration in a better way, we use four different indicators, namely the proportion of foreigners, the foreign-born population, the non-Western foreign-born population and the migration inflow. We have correlated them with attitudes towards redistribution and the granting of right to foreigners (see Figures 3 and 4). With regard to support for government redistribution, we can observe weak negative correlations ranging from $-.25$ for the share of foreign population to $-.42$ for the migration inflow. However, these correlations are not significant.

A consideration of support for granting equal rights to foreigners reveals broadly similar results. Here the correlations between three out of four measures of diversity and migration (foreigners, foreign-born population, migration inflow) and the attitude

item are negative, though not significant ranging from $-.22$ for the migration inflow to $-.32$ for the share of foreign-born population. The share of the non-Western foreign-born population is negatively and significantly correlated with attitudes towards equal rights for foreigners ($-.60$, $p < .05$, Fig. 3). In countries with a higher share of non-Western foreign-born people fewer people are willing to grant equal social rights to migrants.

That means that the thesis of Alesina and Glaeser finds some though limited support at the descriptive level. As far as support for the welfare state in general is concerned, no statistically significant correlations could be found, but this is also due to the low number of cases and might change with a greater sample. In most instances this is also true for the attitudes towards equal rights for foreigners. More relevant, however, was the effect of the share of non-Western migrants. In the next step, we will examine the issue more closely. As the countries also differ in the composition of population, institutional factors and other aspects, we will back up the descriptive findings with multivariate hierarchical linear models.

Multilevel analysis

Let us now turn to results from multilevel modeling. The overarching goal is to shed light on the influence of ethnic diversity on support for the welfare state and willingness to accept the inclusion of foreigners by controlling for various other factors at the individual and the macro level. We have run a

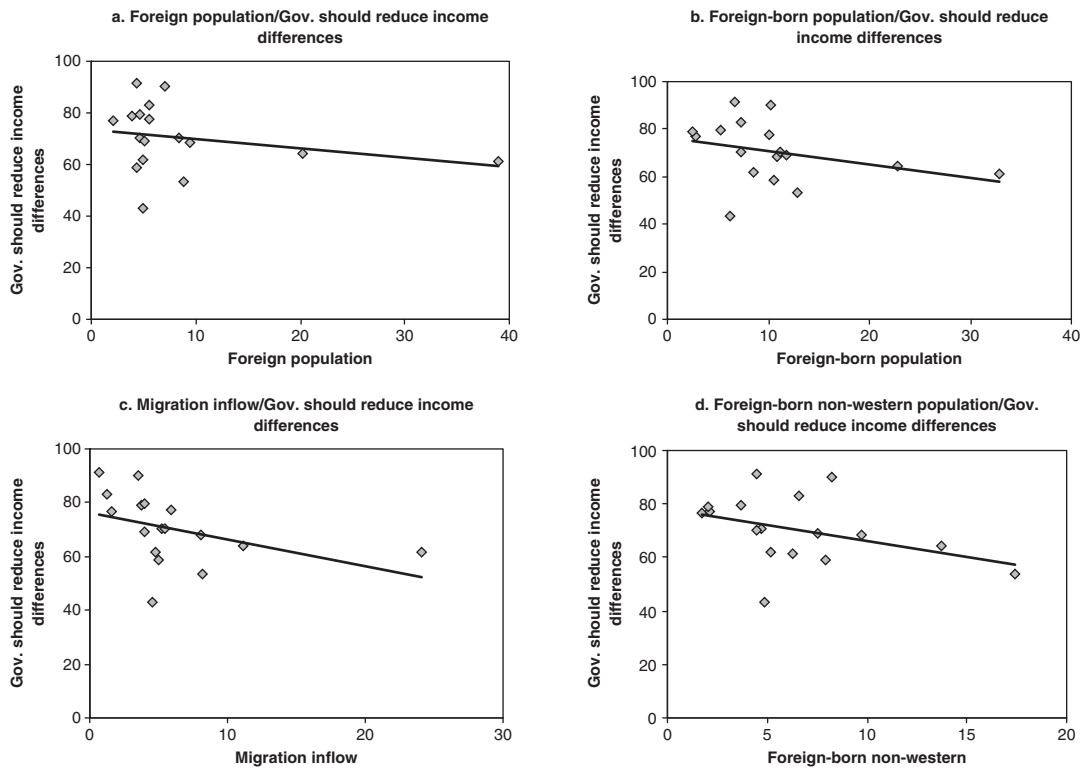


Figure 3 Support of the welfare state and ethnic diversity/migration

Source: Y-axis: ESS 2002/2003 (own calculations, see also Table 1). X-axis: see Table A1 for information on the macro indicators.

number of regressions using one of our diversity/migration measures as country variable and gender, age, education, Left-Right placement and employment status as individual level control variables. These models provide us with the information to determine which of our diversity/migration measures matter. In a second step we have chosen the measure with the strongest effect on the dependent variable and included additional macro variables which allow us to control for other relevant contextual factors.

We first report the results of the analysis of the item relating to the approval of governmental responsibility to redistribute income (Table 2). When we look at the effects of the individual-level variables it becomes clear that especially men and higher-educated people are less in favour of the governmental effort to redistribute income. By contrast, people who are not paid work and those with Leftist political attitudes are more positive. With increasing age

people tend to support income redistribution. These findings are all in line with previous studies on attitudes towards the welfare state. Given the relation between the variance within countries and the variance between countries we can assume that there is a share of variance that can be explained by the differences observed between the countries. However, when looking closer at this relation, we see that a substantially greater share of variance is located at the individual rather than the contextual level. We take this as evidence that the explanatory power of contextual factors on solidarity is generally limited compared to individual aspects. Nevertheless, our model enables us to compare the strength of the country-level factors on the dependent variable. Let us now analyse the effects of the contextual factors. At the country level all indicators of migration/ethnic diversity have a significant negative effect. Greater ethnic diversity seems to lessen support for the

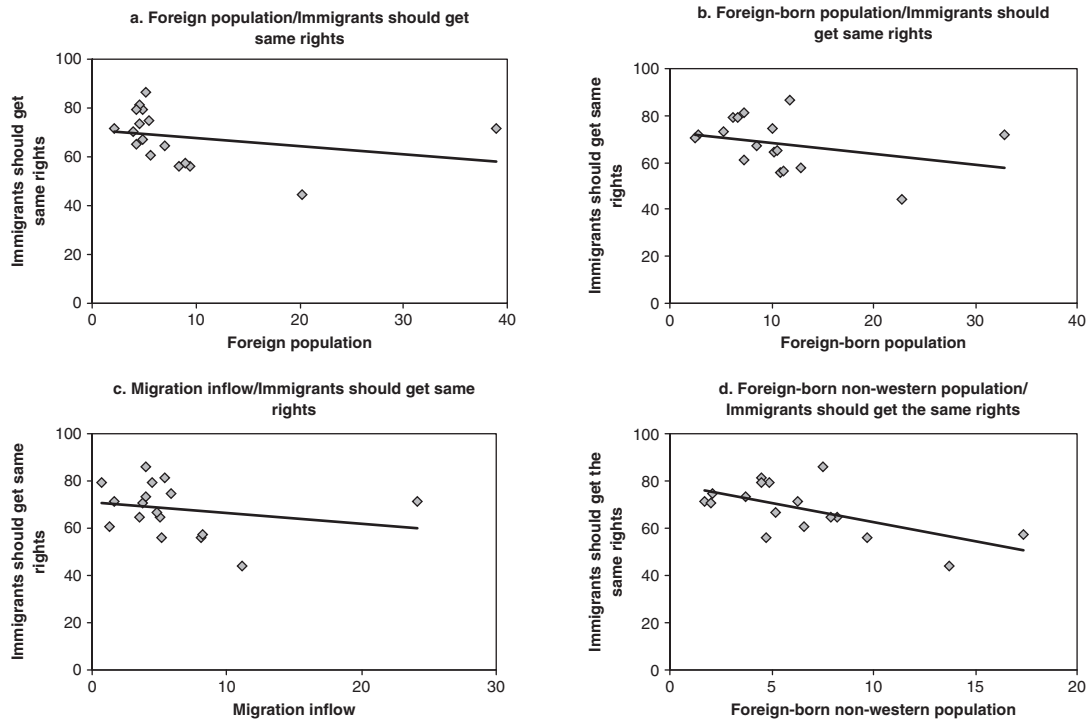


Figure 4 Attitudes towards foreigners and ethnic diversity/migration

Source: Y-axis: ESS 2002/2003 (own calculations, see also Table 1). X-axis: see Table A1 for information on the macro indicators.

welfare state. With regard to the explanatory strength of the model, the share of non-Western foreign-born people and the migration inflow seem to matter most in explaining attitudes towards the welfare state.

Given the effect of the share of non-Western foreigners, we decided to use it as a proxy for ethnic diversity in the following multilevel models with additional macro indicators. This indicator has the strongest effect of all the diversity measures used, and better properties in terms of the distribution across countries. Furthermore, we believe that negative attitudes come up especially in combination with this item because of cultural differences between Europeans and non-Western migrants. Also, migrants from poorer non-Western countries could face more difficulties to establish themselves and thus be more reliant on social benefits. Therefore we expect this indicator to be a good measure to tap into the relation between migration and attitudes towards income redistribution. When additional macro indicators are included

(Table 3), the effect of non-Western foreign-born people remains significant in most of the cases, but the strength of the effect fluctuates. Additionally the share of explained variance on the country level increases when macro-indicators are added. By including the GDP, the unemployment rate and the welfare regime type, a higher share of variance at the contextual level can be explained. Hence, welfare regime type, economic wealth, and a strained labour market situation are of influence on support for welfare state redistribution. The Gini coefficient and Leftist governments do not have significant effects. However, when the unemployment rate is included, the effect of the non-Western population becomes insignificant. This macro factor seems to moderate the diversity effect. As a further result we find a strong positive effect for the Latin Rim welfare regimes, indicating that people in these countries are very much in favour of state redistribution.

We continue by examining attitudes towards foreigners using the same analytical strategy (Table 4).

Table 2 Responsibility of the government to reduce income differences – ML-Regression

	<i>Model 1</i>	<i>Model 2</i>	<i>Model 3</i>	<i>Model 4</i>
Level 1: Individual variables				
– <i>Gender (male=1)</i>	–0.164 *** (0.019)	–0.164 *** (0.019)	–0.164 *** (0.019)	–0.164 *** (0.019)
– <i>Age (in years)</i>	0.003 ** (0.001)	0.003 ** (0.001)	0.003 ** (0.001)	0.003 ** (0.001)
– <i>Education (ref.cat=low)</i>				
– <i>medium</i>	–0.131 *** (0.023)	–0.131 *** (0.023)	–0.131 *** (0.023)	–0.131 *** (0.023)
– <i>high</i>	–0.354 *** (0.025)	–0.354 *** (0.025)	–0.354 *** (0.025)	–0.354 *** (0.025)
– <i>Left-right scale</i> (0 = left, 10 = right)	–0.094 *** (0.011)	–0.094 *** (0.011)	–0.094 *** (0.011)	–0.094 *** (0.011)
– <i>Employment status</i> (not in paid work=1)	0.181 ** (0.066)	0.181 ** (0.066)	0.181 ** (0.066)	0.181 ** (0.066)
Level 2: Country variables				
– <i>Foreign population</i> (% of total population)	–0.012 ** (0.004)			
– <i>Foreign-born population</i> (% of total population)		–0.017 * (0.006)		
– <i>Foreign-born non-Western</i> <i>population (% of total population)</i>			–0.032 *** (0.009)	
– <i>Migration inflow</i>				–0.030 * (0.013)
<i>Intercept</i>	4.392 *** (0.085)	4.480 *** (0.106)	4.503 *** (0.097)	4.474 *** (0.101)
–2*loglikelihood	75132.8	75131.9	75132.3	75130.6
Within-country variance	0.948 (0.053)	0.948 (0.053)	0.948 (0.053)	0.948 (0.053)
Between-country variance	0.105 (0.036)	0.100 (0.037)	0.099 (0.039)	0.091 (0.033)

Note: $n_i=26943$, $n_j=17$; unstandardized coefficients, standard error in parentheses; significance levels: * $p<.05$; ** $p<.01$; *** $p<.001$.

Empty model: Intercept: 3.737*** (0.088); –2*loglikelihood: 76894.3; within-country variance: 1.011(0.057); Between country variance: 0,131 (0.039); Intraclass correlation: 0.12.

Y: Government should take measures to reduce differences in income levels (Likert Scale 1–5)

Source: ESS 2002/2003, own calculations.

At the individual level, age as well as higher education both have a significant influence. With increasing age people are less willing to grant immigrants the same social rights. Higher education, by contrast, has a positive effect on attitudes towards foreigners. Also, persons with Left-wing political backgrounds show fewer reservations in relation to foreigners. In addition, there is a slightly positive effect of gender indicating that male respondents are more willing to support the inclusion of foreigners. The findings for the individual-level variables support previous research on prejudice and attitudes towards foreigners. Let us now turn to the effects of the contextual

factors. Again, the variance of our dependent variable can be partly explained by differences between the countries. However, the share of variance that can be attributed to the contextual level is even smaller here compared to the models examining the support for income redistribution. Most of the explanatory power clearly lies on the individual level. Moreover, individual factors seem to matter more with regard to attitudes towards foreigners than for support for the welfare state. Looking at the context level, Table 4 shows negative effects for all diversity measures, but only the share of non-Western foreign-born people has a significant influence. With regard to the measure of

Table 3 Responsibility of the government to reduce income differences – ML-Regression

	<i>Model 5</i>	<i>Model 6</i>	<i>Model 7</i>	<i>Model 8</i>	<i>Model 9</i>
Level 2: Country variables					
– <i>Foreign-born Non-Western Population (% of total population)</i>	–0.032 *** (0.007)	–0.028 * (0.011)	–0.031 ** (0.009)	–0.025 (0.015)	–0.035 ** (0.009)
– <i>GDP (p.c. ln)</i>	–0.689 ** (0.231)				
– <i>Gini-Index</i>		0.031 (0.018)			
– <i>Left government</i>			0.004 (0.004)		
– <i>Unemployment rate</i>				0.065 ** (0.022)	
Welfare regime (ref.cat.= <i>Continental</i>)					
– <i>Social democratic</i>					–0.144 (0.192)
– <i>Liberal</i>					–0.187 (0.129)
– <i>Latin rim</i>					0.425 * (0.166)
<i>Intercept</i>	11.570 *** (2.349)	3.507 *** (0.611)	4.330 *** (0.230)	4.055 *** (0.219)	4.503 *** (0.162)
–2*loglikelihood	75125.8	75129.1	75131.7	75124.8	75124.2
Within-country variance	0.948 (0.053)	0.948 (0.053)	0.948 (0.053)	0.948 (0.053)	0.948 (0.053)
Between-country variance	0.065 (0.027)	0.080 (0.022)	0.095 (0.037)	0.068 (0.026)	0.058 (0.021)

Note: $n_i=26943$, $n_j=17$; unstandardized coefficients, standard error in parentheses; significance levels: * $p<.05$; ** $p<.01$; *** $p<.001$.

Empty model: Intercept: 3.737*** (0.088); –2*loglikelihood: 76894.3; Within-country variance: 1.011 (0.057); Between-country variance: 0.131 (0.039); Intraclass correlation: 0.12.

Y: Government should take measures to reduce differences in income levels (Likert Scale 1–5)

The coefficients for the individual level variables are omitted since they are only subject to minor changes across the different models. Please consider table 2 for the effects of the individual level variables.

Source: ESS 2002/2003, own calculations.

non-Western migrants, it seems that with an increasing share of these migrants support for equal rights to foreigners decreases.

Let us now examine whether our control variables have a moderating effect for the link between diversity, measured as the proportion of non-Western migrants, and solidarity, measured as the willingness to grant equal rights to foreigners (Table 5). Compared to the attitudes towards welfare redistribution, the macro indicators do not contribute as much to the explanation of attitudes towards the inclusion of foreigners. However, within these models with attitudes towards foreigners as the dependent variable, most of the variance can be explained when the strength of Left-wing parties and the welfare regimes are added.

It can be noted that agreement with the inclusion of foreigners is higher in countries with strong Leftist parties. When we look at the results for the welfare regimes it becomes clear that social democratic countries and the Latin rim welfare regime have a positive effect compared to the continental countries (Table 5, Model 9). Also here, the control for welfare regimes slightly weakens the effect of the diversity measure. As low spenders, the citizens in Southern European welfare states seem to exhibit less opposition to the inclusion of foreigners compared to the continental welfare regimes. The relatively generous Scandinavian welfare states are also not particularly sceptical as far as the inclusion of foreigners is concerned. This stands in contrast to widespread assumptions which see these

Table 4 Immigrants should be given the same rights – ML-Regression

	<i>Model 1</i>	<i>Model 2</i>	<i>Model 3</i>	<i>Model 4</i>
Level 1: Individual variables				
– <i>Gender</i> (<i>male=1</i>)	0.049 ** (0.019)	0.049 ** (0.019)	0.049 ** (0.019)	0.049 ** (0.019)
– <i>Age</i> (<i>in years</i>)	–0.005 *** (0.001)	–0.005 *** (0.001)	–0.005 *** (0.001)	–0.005 *** (0.001)
– <i>Education (ref.cat=low)</i>				
– <i>medium</i>	0.020 (0.025)	0.020 (0.025)	0.021 (0.025)	0.020 (0.025)
– <i>high</i>	0.176 *** (0.027)	0.176 *** (0.027)	0.177 *** (0.026)	0.176 *** (0.027)
– <i>Left-right-scale</i> (<i>0 = left, 10 = right</i>)	–0.068 *** (0.008)	–0.068 *** (0.008)	–0.068 *** (0.008)	–0.068 *** (0.008)
– <i>Employment status</i> (<i>not in paid work=1</i>)	–0.077 (0.048)	–0.077 (0.048)	–0.077 (0.048)	–0.077 (0.048)
Level 2: Country variables				
– <i>Foreign Population</i> (% of total population)	–0.009 (0.009)			
– <i>Foreign-born Population</i> (% of total population)		–0.014 (0.010)		
– <i>Foreign-born Non-Western</i> <i>Population (% of total population)</i>			–0.040 ** (0.010)	
– <i>Migration inflow</i>				–0.014 (0.013)
<i>Intercept</i>	4.266 *** (0.090)	4.337 *** (0.120)	4.446 *** (0.095)	4.269 *** (0.091)
–2*loglikelihood	75334.4	75333.2	75326.2	75334.7
Within-country variance	0.962 (0.067)	0.962 (0.067)	0.962 (0.067)	0.962 (0.067)
Between-country variance	0.049 (0.012)	0.046 (0.011)	0.031 (0.011)	0.051 (0.014)

Note: $n_i=26976$, $n_j=17$; unstandardized coefficients, standard error in parentheses; significance levels: * $p<.05$; ** $p<.01$; *** $p<.001$.

Empty model: Intercept: 3.672*** (0.055), –2*loglikelihood: 76270.6; Within-country variance: 0.997 (0.072); Between-country variance: 0.051 (0.018). Intraclass correlation: 0.05.

Y: Immigrants should be given the same rights as everyone else (Likert Scale 1–5)

Source: ESS 2002/2003, own calculations.

welfare regimes as particularly at risk of losing ground due to immigration.

Discussion

Our initial question was whether increasing ethnic heterogeneity would negatively influence public opinion about the welfare state and thus undermine its legitimacy. We looked at this issue by analysing data from the European Social Survey (ESS). As far as our indicators for ethnic diversity are concerned we did indeed find a negative effect on both support for welfare state redistribution as well as support

for inclusion of foreigners. With regard to the first item, the effect was partly lessened by the inclusion of other macro variables indicating that the effect is mediated through these factors, but also showing that there are factors besides the proportion of non-Western foreigners contributing to the explanation of welfare state support. The ethnic diversity measure is significant, however factors such as GDP, unemployment rate or the welfare regimes are of importance, too. With regard to the link between attitudes towards equal rights for foreigners and ethnic diversity, we observe a weak negative association, while other classic factors, apart from regime typology

Table 5 Immigrants should be given the same rights – ML-Regression

	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9
Level 2: Country variables					
– Foreign-born Non-Western Population (% of total population)	–0.040 ** (0.010)	–0.040 ** (0.010)	–0.039 ** (0.010)	–0.040 ** (0.010)	–0.027 * (0.011)
– GDP (p.c. ln)	–0.098 (0.099)				
– Gini-Index		–0.006 (0.012)			
– Left government			0.005 * (0.002)		
– Unemployment rate				–0.001 (0.012)	
Welfare regime (ref.cat.= <i>Continental</i>)					
– Social democratic					0.306 ** (0.094)
– Liberal					0.050 (0.090)
– Latin rim					0.260 ** (0.067)
Intercept	5.449 *** (1.025)	4.650 *** (0.455)	4.227 *** (0.097)	4.450 *** (0.114)	4.241 *** (0.118)
–2*loglikelihood	75326.0	75325.9	75323.4	75326.2	75314.9
Within-country variance	0.962 (0.067)	0.962 (0.067)	0.962 (0.067)	0.962 (0.067)	0.962 (0.067)
Between-country variance	0.030 (0.011)	0.030 (0.011)	0.025 (0.009)	0.031 (0.011)	0.014 (0.005)

Note: $n_i=26976$, $n_j=17$; unstandardized coefficients, standard error in parentheses; significance levels: * $p<.05$; ** $p<.01$; *** $p<.001$.

Empty model: Intercept: 3.672*** (0.055), –2*loglikelihood: 76270.6, Within-country variance: 0.997 (0.072), Between-country variance: 0.051 (0.018), Intraclass correlation: 0.05.

Y: Immigrants should be given the same rights as everyone else (Likert Scale 1–5)

The coefficients for the individual level variables are omitted since they are only subject to minor changes across the different models. Please consider Table 3 for the effects of the individual level variables.

Source: ESS 2002/2003, own calculations.

and the strength of Left-wing parties, do not play a great role. Interestingly, the people in social democratic and Mediterranean countries are more in favour of granting equal rights to foreigners compared to the respondents in liberal or continental regimes. Furthermore, the inclusion of welfare regimes into the analysis leads to a reduction of the effect of the migration measure. At the individual level, age, education and political orientation have a considerable influence on attitudes to immigrants. People with higher education as well as those who described themselves as Left-wing were more inclined to view foreigners positively.

Overall, it seems that there is an association between migration and welfare state solidarity, but it is not particularly strong. Especially when looking at

Alesina and Glaeser's discussion, the fear that the welfare state might lose its support when the share of migrants increases seems to be exaggerated. At times the effects of ethnic diversity indicators on our dependent variables were rather weak and also moderated by our control variables. Thus, we would follow Crepaz in saying: 'The conditions under which diversity unfolds in Europe are quite different from the American experience. Institutions, levels of trust, and expectations about the role of the government are significantly different' (Crepaz, 2008: 260; see also Crepaz, 2006). Other authors also come to the conclusion that the thesis of the threat to European welfare states through immigration is exaggerated (Halvorsen, 2007; van Oorschot and Uunk, 2007). Further confirmation is provided by

the research of Keith Banting and Will Kymlicka which examines the 'corroding effect' of multicultural policies on welfare state development (Banting et al., 2006). Along our lines these authors find some evidence for a negative association between the recognition of minorities on the one hand, and the level of state expenditure and redistribution on the other. Nevertheless, they claim that it is not particularly strong in comparison to other determinants of the welfare state.

To sum up, our results show that inclusion of foreigners into the welfare system is not without problems. However, the analysis also demonstrates that public attitudes are not just a simple reflex reaction to the degree of ethnic diversity or the influx of

immigrants into a country. They are mediated institutionally, key factors being whether inclusion is institutionally organized and whether social benefits schemes have been constructed in such a way that they reinforce or lessen conflicts over redistribution. Public discourse and the politicization of the immigration issue should also not be underestimated. With the (additional) effect of these factors, it is possible that conflicts between the *in-group* and the *out-group* may escalate which could then influence overall support for the welfare state. In general, the effect of ethnic heterogeneity on the welfare state's ability to sustain its legitimacy is limited, and other factors such as institutional factors and the politics of interpretation play a significant role, too.

Appendix 1

Table A1 Country-level data

	<i>Soc.- Exp.</i>	<i>Ethnic Fract.</i>	<i>Foreign Pop. (%)</i>	<i>Foreign Born Pop. (%)</i>	<i>Foreign Born Non- West. (%)</i>	<i>Mig. Inflow (%)</i>	<i>GDP \$ in PPP</i>	<i>Gini index</i>	<i>Un- emp. Rate (%)</i>	<i>Left. Gov.</i>
AT	26.1	0.11	9.5	10.8	9.7	8.1	29220	30.0	5.3	37.5
BE	26.5	0.56	8.4	11.1	4.7	5.2	27570	25.0	7.3	53.1
DK	27.6	0.08	4.9	6.2	4.9	4.5	30940	24.7	4.5	50.7
FI	22.5	0.13	2.1	2.8	1.7	1.6	26190	26.9	9.1	36.0
FR	28.7	0.10	5.6	7.3	6.6	1.3	26920	32.7	9.0	54.7
DE	27.6	0.17	8.9	12.8	17.4	8.2	27100	28.3	8.1	32.1
GR	21.3	0.16	7.0	10.3	8.2	3.5	18720	35.4	10.0	71.1
IE	15.9	0.12	5.5	10.0	2.1	5.9	36360	35.9	4.4	15.0
IT	24.2	0.11	3.9	2.5	2.0	3.8	26430	36.0	9.1	31.5
LU	22.2	0.53	39.0	32.9	6.3	24.1	61190	30.8	3.0	33.4
NL	20.7	0.11	4.3	10.6	7.9	5.0	29100	32.6	2.3	40.5
NO	25.1	0.06	4.6	7.3	4.5	5.4	36600	25.8	4.0	65.8
PT	23.5	0.05	4.3	6.7	4.5	0.7	18280	38.5	5.1	36.8
ES	20.3	0.42	4.6	5.3	3.7	4.0	21460	32.5	11.4	48.8
SE	31.3	0.06	5.1	11.8	7.5	4.0	26050	25.0	4.0	76.9
CH	20.5	0.53	20.2	22.8	13.7	11.1	30010	33.1	3.1	28.6
GB	20.1	0.12	4.9	8.6	5.2	4.8	26150	36.0	5.2	43.6

Macro indicators

- Public social expenditure (2003, as percent of the GDP) (OECD, 2007b).
- Index of Ethnic Fractionalization, various years (Alesina et al., 2003). The index ranges between

0 and 1. Values close to 0 indicate little ethnic fractionalization within a country while values closer to 1 indicate a more diverse society.

- Stocks of Foreign Population (as % of the total population 2002, France 1999, Greece 2001) (OECD, 2006).

- Stocks of Foreign-born Population (as % of the total population 2002 except for Spain 2001, France 2005, Greece 2001, Italy 2001) (OECD, 2006).
- Stocks of Foreign-born Non-Western Population (people from outside Western Europe, the US, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and Iceland as % of the total population 2001/2002 except for France 1999 and Ireland 2002) (Citrin and Sides, 2006).
- Migration inflow per 1,000 inhabitants in 1995–2000 (OECD, 2006).
- GDP per capita (2002, Purchasing Power Parities in US\$) (United Nations Development Programme, 2004: 139). For the multilevel regression the logarithmized GDP was used.
- Gini-Index, various years (United Nations Development Programme, 2004: 188). The Gini index measures inequality over the entire distribution of income or consumption. A value of 0 represents perfect equality, and a value of 100 perfect inequality.
- Standardized unemployment rate (as % of the total civilian labour force, 2002) (OECD, 2007a: 245).
- Cabinet composition as % of total Cabinet posts; weighted by days, 1990–2002. Arithmetic mean of the share of seats of the Cabinet by Left-wing parties (social democratic and other Left parties). (Armingeon et al., 2006).
- Welfare regime. The countries included in the analysis were dummy-coded:
 - Continental: Austria, Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Switzerland (reference category)
 - Latin Rim: Portugal, Spain, Greece
 - Liberal: Great Britain, Ireland
 - Social democratic: Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark.

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Notes

- 1 The index of ethnic fractionalization was published by Alesina et al. (2003). This index uses racial and linguistic characteristics of ethnic groups in a country to provide a measure for the diversity of a society. However, it must be interpreted very carefully due to the source data and the overall construction of a composite index. Nevertheless, we report results from bivariate correlations between ethnic fractionalization and public expenditure in order

- to compare findings for the European welfare states with the results from Alesina and Glaeser's research (2004).
- 2 Depending on the dependent variable, the sample size is either $N=26.943$ or $N=26.976$. The average sample size for each country consists of some 1,585 respondents. For the multilevel analysis the data was weighted with both the design weight and the population weight included in the ESS data. Respondents not holding the citizenship of their country of residence were excluded from the analysis.
- 3 For a detailed overview of the macro indicators see Appendix 1.
- 4 The ESS data do not provide batteries of variables to create more reliable scales for both dimensions (support for income redistribution and attitudes to foreigners). We thus rely on dependent variables measured by single items.
- 5 The response ratings of the variables were given on a five-point Likert-scale ranging from 1 (disagree strongly) to 5 (agree strongly). For the descriptive part both categories indicating agreement were combined resulting in the percentage of respondents agreeing with the statement.

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