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# The other 'other': Party responses to immigration in eastern Europe

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**Abstract** Eastern Europe has traditionally been a region of emigration, sending thousands of refugees and migrants to the more developed and democratic west. The recent democratization and rising affluence of some eastern European countries, however, make them increasingly attractive destinations of migrant workers, slowly but surely turning them into immigrant societies. This article addresses the responses of political parties to the issue of immigration and immigrant integration. Through large-N quantitative analyses of 11 eastern European countries using the Chapel Hill Expert Surveys, the 2009 European Election Study, the Database of Political Institutions and World Bank indicators, it analyzes the causes of immigration salience, as well as the reasons behind immigration and integration policy positions. The article argues that partisan and voter views on immigration in eastern Europe are guided by ideological views on ethnic minorities, which have been the traditional 'out-groups' in the region. Partisan positions on immigration and immigrant integration are consequently determined by underlying ideological principles concerning cultural openness and acceptance of 'otherness'. Immigrants to eastern Europe are consequently viewed as the other 'other'.

Keywords: party competition; eastern Europe; immigration; ethnic minorities

## Introduction

Eastern Europe has traditionally been a region of emigration, sending thousands of refugees and migrants to the more developed and democratic west. The recent democratization and rising affluence of some eastern European countries, however, make them increasingly attractive destinations of migrant workers, slowly but surely turning them into immigrant societies. Although immigration and immigrant integration issues do not figure prominently in current political discourse of the region, the uniformly increasing migration trends in eastern Europe emphasize their political potential. How do political parties and their voters respond to the

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increasing presence of immigrants in the region? What determines the salience and guides the formation of party preferences over immigration and immigrant integration in eastern Europe?

This article addresses how political parties incorporate the issues of immigration and immigrant integration into their political profiles. It argues that partisan and voter views on immigration in eastern Europe are crucially formed by ideological views on ethnic minorities, which have been the traditional ‘out-groups’ in the region. Partisan positions on immigration and immigrant integration are consequently determined by underlying ideological principles concerning cultural openness and acceptance of ‘otherness’. Immigrants to eastern Europe are thus viewed as the other ‘other’.

By emphasizing the importance of historical affinities between political parties and ‘out-groups’, together with general socio-cultural outlooks of parties and voters, this ideological argument contributes to the debate on the role of ideology and historical cleavages in eastern European politics. This article demonstrates that on certain socio-cultural issues – such as views on immigrants – eastern European politics are significantly ideologically structured.

This article carries out large-*N* quantitative analyses of 150 political parties in 11 eastern European countries – Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia – in 2006 and 2010. It complements these analyses with comparisons with western European countries, as well as with analyses of voters in eastern and western Europe. This article uses the Chapel Hill Expert Surveys (CHES) on party positions, together with the 2009 European Election Study, the Database of Political Institutions and World Bank indicators. The first section addresses the changing migratory trends in eastern Europe. The next section presents the theoretical argument generating specific ideological hypotheses concerning party positioning on and emphasis of immigration and immigrant integration issues, while also presenting alternative strategic and structural arguments. The third section discusses the data and methods, and the fourth section presents the analyses and results. The final section serves as a conclusion.

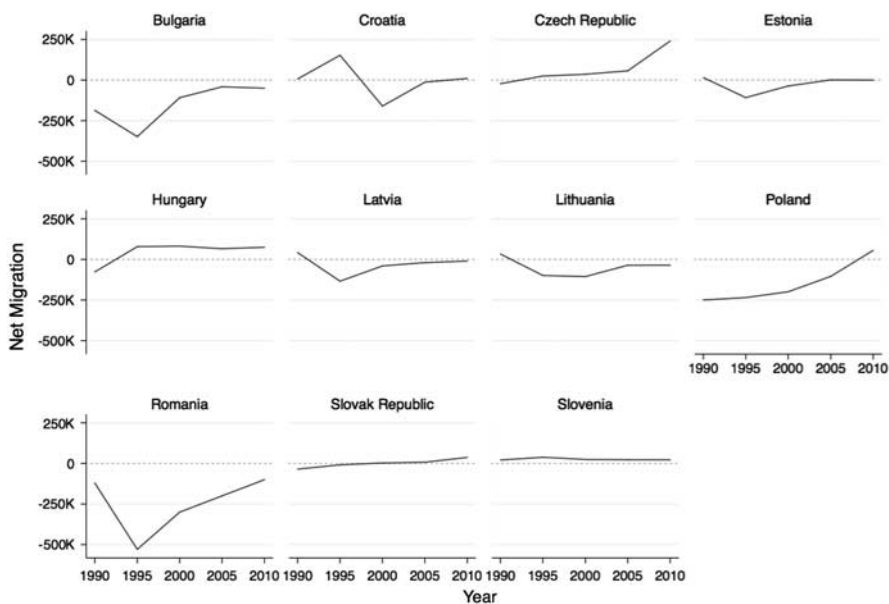
## **Eastern Europe and Migration**

Throughout the late nineteenth and the twentieth century, eastern Europe had been a region of emigration. After waves of migration to North America, the post-war period sent many eastern Europeans seeking refuge from communist authoritarianism in the democratic west. An estimated 6 million Poles and over half a million Czechs left their countries during the communist era (Drbohlav, 2005; Igllicka and Ziolek-Skrzypczak, 2010), while nearly 200 000 fled Hungary only in the 3 months after the 1956 uprising (Juhasz, 2003). More recently, eastern Europeans took advantage of the European single market, spawning the proverbial ‘Polish plumber’, supposedly providing cheap labor in the west. An estimated 700 000 eastern

Europeans migrated to the United Kingdom between 2004 and 2009, prompting debate over east–west migration in the European Union (EU) (BBC, 2011).

The espoused view of notorious emigration from eastern Europe, however, masks shifting migratory trends in the region. Evidence suggests that not only are fewer eastern Europeans leaving their countries, there are significant and increasing inflows of migrants into some eastern member states of the EU (World Bank data). Most migrants to the eastern EU member states come from the near abroad, namely, Ukraine, Belarus, Romania, Moldova and Russia (Juhasz, 2003; Drbohlav, 2005; Iglicka and Ziolk-Skrzypczak, 2010). However, increasingly more migrants from Asia – particularly China – are arriving in the region (Nyíri, 2003; Iglicka and Ziolk-Skrzypczak, 2010).

World Bank data on net migration in eastern Europe, depicted in Figure 1, demonstrate that the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia have been experiencing net immigration since mid-1990s. The other countries have seen a reversal of their migration outflows, which have been invariably slowing.<sup>1</sup> In Poland, the migration outflows switch to migration inflows by 2010. Consequently, officials at the Czech Ministry of the Interior, responsible for migration matters, conclude that ‘naturally people will start to notice as the issue [of immigration] grows ... The trends are obvious’ (Interview Michalova and Koutek, 2010).



**Figure 1:** Net Migration in Eastern Europe.  
*Source:* World Bank Data.

Although the immigration trends in the region point in one direction, the way in which the issues related to immigration enter the political agenda in eastern Europe is much less clear. The following section considers the determinants of partisan response to immigration in eastern Europe, as political parties are key actors in translating social issues into salient, publicly contested political concerns (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967).

## **Determinants of Party Response to Immigration**

Immigration as a social phenomenon is a relative novelty in eastern Europe, and consequently, it remains an under-explored political issue. The immigration trends are, however, slowly generating increased public attention in the region.<sup>2</sup> Political parties are thus approaching a critical juncture when they must choose whether to broach the immigration issue, and how.

This section addresses the considerations parties face when engaging new political issues. It examines both the determinants of the salience of immigration and immigrant integration, and the calculus behind party positioning on both immigration and immigrant integration. Although arguing that partisan response to immigration in eastern Europe is largely determined by ideological factors pertaining to party views of ethnic minorities, the section also presents alternative strategic and structural explanations.

## **Ideological Determinants**

Political parties do not engage new political issues in a vacuum. When a new issue, not aligned to the standing conflict lines of the party system, appears on the political agenda, it increases the dimensionality of party competition. There are suddenly more stances to take. Increased dimensionality is inherently costly. It reduces the simplicity of political choices, taxing voter information, while increasing the uncertainty of party support (Stimson, 2004, p. 63). Consequently, an introduction of a cross-cutting issue creates pressure for alignment into existing positions. Although some issue alignment may be arbitrary, there are logical linkages between some political issues.<sup>3</sup>

A party's response to a new issue is thus likely to proceed from its general ideological commitment,<sup>4</sup> which in turn is a product of underlying social cleavages (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967). Marks *et al* (2002, p. 568) argue that 'political parties are not empty vessels into which issue positions are poured in response to electoral or constituency pressures, but are organizations with embedded ideologies'. These ideologies consequently form frames through which political parties engage new political issues, and link them to their existing positions.

Although literature on eastern European parties questions the extent of socially rooted ideologies after communism (c.f. Kitschelt, 1992, 1995; Evans and Whitefield, 1993, 1998, 2000; Ost, 1993; Mair, 1997; Kitschelt *et al*, 1999; Whitefield, 2002; Webb and White, 2007), there are social cleavages in eastern Europe that survived the communist era, and that inform party positions today. Although communism reshaped the socio-economic structure of society, it strikingly preserved cultural, ethno-linguistic and religious divides – a fact witnessed by the debates surrounding Czechoslovak separation, by the struggle for Baltic independence, and by the Yugoslav wars. These cleavages feature in the ideological orientation of political parties in eastern Europe, and – as I argue here – determine partisan responses to new political issues, such as immigration.

The latent ideological frame underlying the issue of immigration and immigrant integration is associated with approaches to ‘otherness’. Triandafyllidou (1999, p. 66) suggests that national identity ‘presupposes the existence of Others, other nations or individuals, who do not belong to the ingroup and from which the ingroup seeks to differentiate itself in order to emphasise its distinctiveness and uniqueness’. The elementary determinant of ideological positioning over immigration and immigrant integration is the extent to which the entry and continuous presence of *others* in a polity is acceptable. In the eastern European context, the traditional national *others* have been ethnic minorities. Although present in the region for centuries, ethnic minority rights issues have played a central role in political competition in the region since 1989 (Ishiyama and Breuning, 1998). Recent research suggests that partisan approaches to ethnic minorities have crucially structured party competition in eastern Europe (Rovny, forthcoming). This leads to an ideological hypothesis concerning party positions on immigration:

**Hypothesis 1:** Party positions on immigration and immigrant integration in eastern Europe are determined by positions on ethnic minority rights.

However, then how do preferences over immigration relate to the left–right ideological spectrum in eastern Europe? In the west, van der Brug and van Spanje (2009) demonstrate a strong monotonous relationship between the economic left–right dimension (summarizing views over government involvement in the economy) and views on immigration, where the left supports immigration and multiculturalism, whereas the right opposes it. Although scholars of eastern European party politics also consider the economic left–right as a significant dimension of political competition (Kitschelt, 1992, 1995; Markowski, 2006; Marks *et al*, 2006), the uniform relationship between economic placement and preferences over immigration is unlikely to be repeated in eastern Europe.

The relationship between economic left–right placement and views on ethnic minority rights in eastern Europe is determined by party relationships to communist federalism and to the most politically salient ethnic groups (Rovny, forthcoming).

In places where the main ethnic minority consists of members of the nation that formed the center of a communist federation (Estonia, Croatia, Latvia and Slovenia), left parties tolerate or even support the ethnic minorities, or develop multi-ethnic profiles, whereas the right espouses ethnic nationalism.

This is because in these communist federal peripheries the opposition to communism assumes both a pro-market and anti-federal character. Anti-communist forces adopt right-wing economic views, while pushing for national autonomy and finally national independence. Simultaneously, in these countries, left parties have a historical association with multinationalism, as the communist federal regime managed and co-opted ethnic minorities, engaging them through various power-sharing mechanisms (see Leff, 1999; Zakosek, 2000). The left thus adopts multinational outlooks, potentially turning into the representatives of ethnic minorities. Consequently, left party affinities with ethnic minorities encourage left-wing multiculturalism, which later inform the left's views on immigration issues.

On the contrary, in countries with either politically insignificant ethnic minority populations or where the main ethnic minority comes from other nations, than ex-federal centers (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia), left parties have no particular ethnic affinities. They consequently are not induced to cultural openness. They either ignore these issues, or utilize nationalist chauvinism to revive their compromised left-wing ideology after 1989. This leads the left toward conservative stances regarding all 'others'. Conversely, the opposition to communism assumes market economic outlooks combined with social liberalism, making right-wing parties more sympathetic to concerns of ethnic minorities. These positions consequently inform their views toward immigrants.

Given the hypothesized expectation of intimate connection between preferences over immigration and ethnic minority rights, it is logical to expect that the relationship between economic left–right placement and immigration is similarly conditioned by communist federalism and ethnic affinities.

**Hypothesis 2:** The relationship between economic left–right positions and positions on immigration and immigrant integration is conditioned by experiences with communist federalism and ethnic affinities. In countries where the main ethnic minority consists of members of the nation that dominated the country under a communist federation, the economic left is associated with more liberal views on immigration, while the right is more conservative. In other countries, the relationship is inverted.

The salience of the immigration issue is also likely to be determined by the salience of the issue of ethnic minorities. Where ethnic minority rights issues play a significant role in political competition, the issue of admitting and integrating immigrants becomes amalgamated into questions concerning the acceptance and incorporation of all *others*.

**Hypothesis 3:** The salience of immigration and immigrant integration is determined by the salience of ethnic minority rights.

Finally, the salience of the immigration issue is additionally determined by positioning on immigration. Rabinowitz and MacDonald (1989) present a directional theory of voting, where party (or candidate, or voter) placement reflects the intensity with which they care about a certain side of a political issue. Here '[p]arties can be thought to differ in intensity based on how clearly they present their views and the extent to which they stress the issue. Party intensity serves as a means of exciting voter interest and attention' (MacDonald *et al.*, 1991, p. 1109). 'Intensity', can be understood as both heightened issue salience, and extreme issue positioning. Parties that particularly invest in certain issues take outlying positions on these issues (see Rovny, 2012). It is consequently reasonable to expect that parties that hold extreme positions on an issue also tend to emphasize it:

**Hypothesis 4:** Parties with outlying positions on immigration are more likely to emphasize immigration issues.

## Strategic Determinants

Although ideological arguments provide intuitive explanation of how parties engage new political issues, scholarship on party strategies suggests that political tactics, rather than entrenched ideological profiles, determine partisan response to new issues. This line of study stresses that political parties stand to gain from engaging and emphasizing untapped political issues, which may reshape party competition and redirect votes. Riker (1982, 1986) suggests that political parties raise new issues into political discourse in order to upset the *status quo* and capture voter attention. Similarly, issue ownership theory and salience theory expect parties to alter vote choice by increasing the salience of political issues on which the party holds an advantageous position, or on which it has better credentials (Budge and Farlie, 1983; Budge *et al.*, 1987; Petrocik, 1996).

Niche party literature extends this argument by suggesting that electorally marginal, small parties have an increased incentive, and greater ease, in introducing novel issues into political competition. This is because they have more to gain from upsetting the established lines of conflict with new issues, on which their mainstream opponents may have no defined positions (Meguid, 2005, 2008). In addition, niche parties may be advantaged in their ability to raise new political issues. They tend to be younger organizations, less encumbered by long-standing ideological profiles and membership structures (Rovny and Edwards, 2012). This allows them to better pursue narrowly defined political aims neglected by mainstream parties.

In eastern Europe fewer parties have entrenched, historically defined ideological platforms, and most party organizations are weaker and party membership lower



(Van Biezen, 2003). Consequently, many parties face low institutional barriers to issue introduction. Combined with higher levels of electoral volatility in the region (Sikk, 2005; Tavits, 2008), often punishing even the established mainstream, many parties may behave more like niche parties, ready to exploit new issues for political gain. The mechanism, nonetheless, remains the same. The niche literature would expect that in eastern Europe, new issues, such as immigration, are more likely to be raised by electorally marginal parties. Party vote share may thus explain immigration and immigrant integration salience (marginal parties care more about immigration and immigrant integration), as well as immigration policy positions (marginal parties are more likely to oppose immigration and immigrant integration).

Mainstream parties may, however, respond to the ‘contagion’ from niche parties, such as the radical right. Although parties face varying strategic considerations in the context of radical right party success (Green-Pedersen and Kogstrup, 2008; Bale *et al*, 2010), Van Spanje (2010) finds that the radical right ‘contagion’ affects entire party systems. Consequently, the rise of the radical right has the potential to influence party positions on immigration in the entire party system. The system-level vote share of radical right parties may consequently determine immigration and immigrant integration salience (greater vote share of radical right parties leads to greater immigration and integration salience), as well as immigration and integration policy positions (greater vote share of radical right parties leads to more restrictive views on immigration, and to more assimilationist views on immigrant integration).

## **Structural Determinants**

Besides ideological and strategic determinants, party response to new issues may be importantly conditioned by structural factors. Breunig and Luedtke (2008) argue that institutional structure of the party system and of the country determine orientations toward immigration, pointing to the critical role of institutional veto points. The authors demonstrate that governing parties in institutional systems that limit the influence of the majority are less likely to introduce conservative immigration policies. Consequently, institutional variables, such as the number of checks and balances, legislative fractionalization, and electoral system are important determinants of party positions on immigration.

Finally, partisan emphasis on immigration is likely to directly reflect the level of immigration into a country. Givens and Luedtke (2005) suggest that proximity to immigrants affects both salience of immigration and preferences over immigration and immigrant integration policies. Where immigration is higher, it is more likely to be a salient issue, and parties may adopt more restrictive positions on immigration and more assimilationist views on immigrant integration.

## Data and Methods

To test the theoretical propositions while controlling for alternative explanations, this article carries out quantitative data analyses on 150 political parties<sup>5</sup> from 11 eastern European countries – Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.<sup>6</sup> These analyses are also compared with analyses of 177 western European parties. The article combines data on party positions, country characteristics and voter preferences. With respect to parties, it uses the 2006 and 2010 iterations of CHES which is the most comprehensive expert data set on party positions available (Hooghe *et al*, 2010; Bakker *et al*, 2012).

The choice of an expert survey as a data source on party positioning is warranted thanks to its general advantages: (i) experts evaluate not only pre-electoral statements of parties, but also partisan actions; (ii) expert surveys have generally greater coverage of smaller political parties than the commonly used alternative – the Comparative Manifesto Project data (Volkens *et al*, 2012); (iii) tests of validity suggest that expert surveys provide consistent measures that converge with other measures of party positioning (Steenbergen and Marks, 2007; Bakker *et al*, 2012).

I complement this party data with information on country characteristics, such as migration trends and political institutions, available from the World Bank and the Database of Political Institutions (Beck *et al*, 2001). Finally, in order to test some of the above hypotheses using alternative data, I use the 2009 European Election Study (EES, 2009) to address the effect of voter preferences over immigration and immigrant integration on vote choice.

The CHES provide direct measures of party positions and salience on the dependent variables – immigration and immigrant integration. The survey also includes measures of party positioning and salience on ethnic minority rights, as well as general information on economic left–right placement, party families and vote share. To capture the impact of radical right parties on the party system, system-level vote share of radical right parties is operationalized as the percentage of vote for all radical right parties in the dataset in the previous election in a given country. In modeling the impact of political institutions on party positions, this article follows Breunig and Luedtke (2008) by utilizing institutional measures from the Database of Political Institutions (Beck *et al*, 2001). The models consequently control for: the number of checks and balances; legislative fractionalization; electoral threshold and the presence of proportional representation. The analyses of eastern European cases omit the proportional representation variable since all analyzed countries include some proportional representation rules. Proximity to immigrants is captured by net migration. However, since it is reasonable to expect that an increase by 100 000 new migrants would have significantly different effect in Poland than in Slovenia, the models use a standardized measure where net migration is divided by the population of a given country. Table A1 in the Appendix contains the detailed descriptive statistics of these variables. Finally, since the models

pool data from 2006 and 2010, I include a dummy variable for year 2006, in order to capture any variance caused by idiosyncratic time differences.

To test the posited hypotheses, the article performs a series of OLS regressions with cluster-corrected standard errors, a choice motivated by the need to correct for the possibility that observations from the same country in different years may be dependent on each other (Primo *et al.*, 2007). All of the models presented below have been also estimated using hierarchical linear models, where the intercepts were allowed to vary randomly in order to capture the country-specific nature of the data (Steenbergen and Jones, 2002, p. 234; Rabe-Hesketh and Skrondal, 2008). The hierarchical linear models produced substantively identical results to the OLS models using cluster-corrected standard errors (see the Appendix for details).

## **Analyses and Results**

The first analysis demonstrates the relationship between party positioning on ethnic minorities and preferences over immigration and immigrant integration. Supporting Hypothesis 1, Table 1 demonstrates that party positions on both immigration and immigrant integration are significantly predicted by party positions in ethnic minority rights. This impact is substantively profound. As the three positional measures of immigration, integration and ethnic minorities are on the same 0–10 scale, the model coefficients show that one unit change in ethnic minority preferences (that is a 10 per cent shift on the scale) changes views on immigration by 0.54 units (that is by 5.4 per cent on the scale). The effect on immigrant integration ( $\beta=0.82$ ) is even stronger. With  $R^2$ s of 0.64 and 0.80, the models fare very well in capturing the variance in immigration and integration positioning.

The next set of models turns to consider Hypothesis 2, positing a relationship between economic left–right placement and preferences over immigration and immigrant integration. The literature on western Europe suggests a monotonous relationship where the economic left champions immigration and multiculturalism, while the economic right supports immigration limits and immigrant assimilation. The argument here, which connects preferences over immigration and immigrant integration to ethnic minority rights in eastern Europe, suggests that party positions on immigration and integration are affected by party affinities with ethnic minority groups. Where left parties have historical connections to ethnic minority groups, they are induced to general cultural openness and acceptance of ‘others’, be they ethnic minorities or immigrants. In these cases, the association between economic left–right and immigrant positions should copy the western European pattern. Where left parties do not have historical affinities with ethnic minority groups, they are not induced to adopt culturally liberal positions, often opting to use minorities as political scapegoats instead. In these cases, the association between economic left–right placement and immigration should have the opposite sign.

**Table 1:** Predicting party positions on immigration and immigrant integration

	(1)	(2)
	<i>Positioning on immigration</i>	<i>Positioning on integration</i>
Ethnic minorities	0.537*** (0.074)	0.823*** (0.071)
Econ left–right	–0.073 (0.063)	–0.033 (0.065)
Vote share	–0.002 (0.008)	0.004 (0.007)
Vote for radical right	0.031 (0.024)	–0.007 (0.014)
Checks	–0.129** (0.050)	–0.069 (0.133)
Fractionalization	2.945** (0.981)	1.145 (1.234)
Threshold	–0.011 (0.013)	–0.043** (0.015)
Migration	21.398* (10.442)	–20.144 (22.432)
Year 2006	–0.011 (0.179)	–0.140 (0.180)
Constant	1.375 (0.857)	1.338** (0.534)
Observations	153	150
$R^2$	0.642	0.799

*Note:* Robust cluster-corrected standard errors in parentheses.

\*\*\* $P < 0.01$ , \*\* $P < 0.05$ , \* $P < 0.1$ .

*Source:* CHES 2006 and 2010. World Bank. Database on Political Institutions. Immigration, integration and ethnic minorities positions range from liberal to conservative.

Table 2 presents models supporting Hypothesis 2. These models include political parties from across western and eastern Europe,<sup>7</sup> in order to demonstrate the intra-regional variance in eastern Europe, where some countries resemble their western, rather than eastern, European counterparts. In eastern European countries where left parties have historical affinities with ethnic minorities as these originate from the old communist federal center (Croatia, Estonia, Latvia and Slovenia), the relationship between economic left–right placement and immigration is the same as in western Europe (positive relationship). Here the economic left supports greater immigration and favors multicultural approaches to immigrant integration, whereas the economic right is anti-immigrant and assimilationist. Eastern European countries, where left parties have no affinity with ethnic minority groups, as these do not originate from a federal center, (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia) stand apart. Here the economic left opposes immigration and is

**Table 2:** Predicting the relationship between immigration, integration and economic left–right placement

	(1)	(2)
	<i>Positioning on immigration</i>	<i>Positioning on integration</i>
Econ left–right in western Europe <i>partial slope</i>	0.667*** (0.083)	0.634*** (0.082)
Econ left–right in eastern Europe (Left parties with ethnic affinity) <i>partial slope</i>	0.255* (0.143)	0.436* (0.239)
Econ left–right in eastern Europe (Left parties without ethnic affinity) <i>partial slope</i>	–0.237*** (0.075)	–0.260** (0.106)
Eastern Europe with ethnic affinity	2.538*** (0.811)	1.551 (1.339)
Eastern Europe without ethnic affinity	5.162*** (0.476)	5.325*** (0.693)
Vote share	0.014 (0.009)	0.006 (0.009)
Vote for radical right	0.041** (0.016)	0.039** (0.014)
Checks	–0.027 (0.081)	–0.066 (0.097)
Fractionalization	1.605 (1.187)	1.438 (1.105)
Threshold	–0.035** (0.013)	–0.055*** (0.012)
Proportional representation	–1.092*** (0.355)	–2.378*** (0.298)
Migration	12.725 (10.179)	18.257 (11.426)
Year 2006	–0.176 (0.129)	–0.018 (0.157)
Constant	1.357* (0.736)	3.213*** (0.827)
Observations	328	325
$R^2$	0.361	0.293

Note: Robust cluster-corrected standard errors in parentheses.

\*\*\* $P < 0.01$ , \*\* $P < 0.05$ , \* $P < 0.1$ .

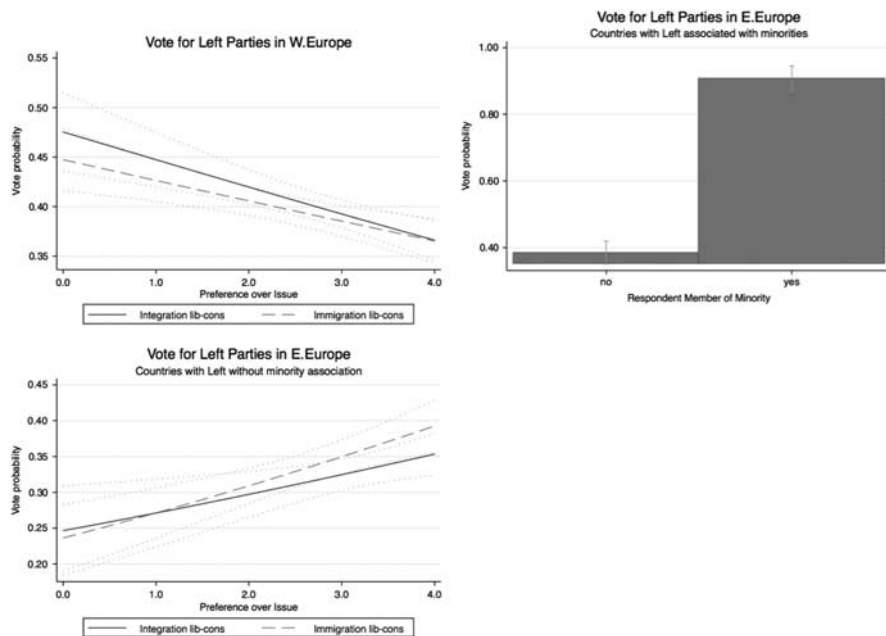
Source: CHES 2006 and 2010. World Bank. Database on Political Institutions. Immigration and integration positions range from liberal to conservative. Partial Slopes estimated using Stata's margins command.

assimilationist, whereas the economic right supports immigration and multiculturalism (negative relationship).

A similar pattern, supporting Hypothesis 2, arises when analyzing voter preferences over immigration and immigrant integration across western Europe and the two different parts of eastern Europe. This analysis performs logit models to predict the

vote for left-wing parties (operationalized as communist, socialist or social democratic parties) versus right-wing parties (operationalized as Christian democratic, liberal or conservative)<sup>8</sup> across the three regions under consideration. The models predict left vote using voter preferences on immigration (q67) and immigrant integration (q56), while controlling for left–right self-placement (q47), gender (q102), age (q103), education (v200), income (q120) and whether the respondent considers him/herself to be a member of a minority (q108), available from the 2009 European Election Study.

Figure 2 summarizes the results across the three regions, while the details are available in Table A3 in the Appendix. In western Europe, vote for left parties is significantly determined by preferences over immigration and immigrant integration. Those favoring liberal immigration and integration policies are more likely to vote for left parties than those opposed (top left panel in Figure 2). The contrary is true in eastern European countries where left parties do not have affinities with ethnic minority groups. Here voters are more likely to vote for the left if they support restrictive immigration and assimilationist integration policies (bottom left panel in



**Figure 2:** Effect of immigration and integration preferences on left vote.

*Source:* 2009 European Election Study. The models control for left-right self-placement, gender, age, education, income and minority status. Predicted probabilities with 95 per cent confidence intervals.

Figure 2). In those eastern European countries where left parties have affinities with ethnic minority groups, preferences over immigration and integration do not predict left vote. Instead, left vote is significantly predicted by whether the voter is a member of ethnic minority, with ethnic minorities supporting left parties (top right panel in Figure 2).

These results underline the different electoral dynamics across eastern Europe where immigration and integration issues interact with ethnic minority issues in intricate ways. They highlight the fact that in eastern European countries, where the left does not have an affinity to ethnic minority groups, immigration issues significantly affect vote choice and, consequently, election outcomes. Interestingly, in eastern European countries where left parties have historical ethnic affinities, left vote is predicted not by policy preferences, but by ethnic minority status. Simultaneously, we know from Table 2 that in this region of eastern Europe left parties take liberal stances on immigration and integration issues. Furthermore, ethnic minorities in these countries are significantly more open to immigration and hold more liberal views on immigrant integration compared with the majority population.<sup>9</sup> Ultimately, these results emphasize the intimate ideological connection between ethnic minority rights, and immigration and immigrant integration in eastern Europe.

The final analysis addresses the salience of immigration and integration issues in eastern Europe. Hypothesis 3 posits that immigration and integration salience is predicted by the salience of ethnic minority rights. Hypothesis 4 expects that parties with outlying positions on immigration and integration are more likely to emphasize immigration and integration issues. The models thus predict immigration and integration salience by position and position squared, as well as ethnic salience, while controlling for alternative explanations.

Table 3 presents evidence supporting Hypotheses 3 and 4. The salience of ethnic minority rights is a significant predictor of immigration and integration salience. It is particularly strong in predicting the salience of immigrant integration, where a unit change in ethnic salience (that is a 10 per cent change along the scale of ethnic salience) leads to over 0.41 unit shift (4.1 per cent) in integration salience. The table, showing a significant effect of the square terms of immigration and integration position, also supports Hypothesis 4.<sup>10</sup> Parties that hold extreme views on immigration and integration tend to care about the topics more than parties taking centrist positions. Figure 3, showing the detailed effect of positioning on salience, however, moderates this claim. The figure demonstrates that, although a curvilinear relationship posited by Hypothesis 4 is indeed present, parties at the more conservative end of the spectrum – those opposing immigration and supporting immigrant assimilation – tend to put significantly greater emphasis on these issues than parties on the liberal extreme.

The results generally underline the centrality of ideology in the formation of preferences on issues of immigration and immigrant integration. The importance of

**Table 3:** Predicting immigration and integration salience

	(1)	(2)
	<i>Immigration salience</i>	<i>Integration salience</i>
Position on immigration	-1.102*** (0.239)	—
Position on immigration <sup>2</sup>	0.135*** (0.019)	—
Position on integration	—	-0.459 (0.329)
Position on integration <sup>2</sup>	—	0.062* (0.032)
Ethnic salience	0.197*** (0.053)	0.414*** (0.062)
Econ left–right	0.051* (0.027)	0.008 (0.049)
Vote share	0.006 (0.008)	0.005 (0.008)
Vote for radical right	0.043 (0.045)	0.048 (0.037)
Checks	0.096 (0.115)	0.024 (0.131)
Fractionalization	-2.722 (3.140)	-0.904 (3.524)
Threshold	-0.023* (0.012)	-0.017 (0.024)
Migration	22.527 (23.221)	27.247** (10.627)
Year 2006	0.050 (0.428)	1.931*** (0.486)
Constant	5.858** (2.000)	2.369 (2.287)
Observations	153	150
R <sup>2</sup>	0.661	0.683

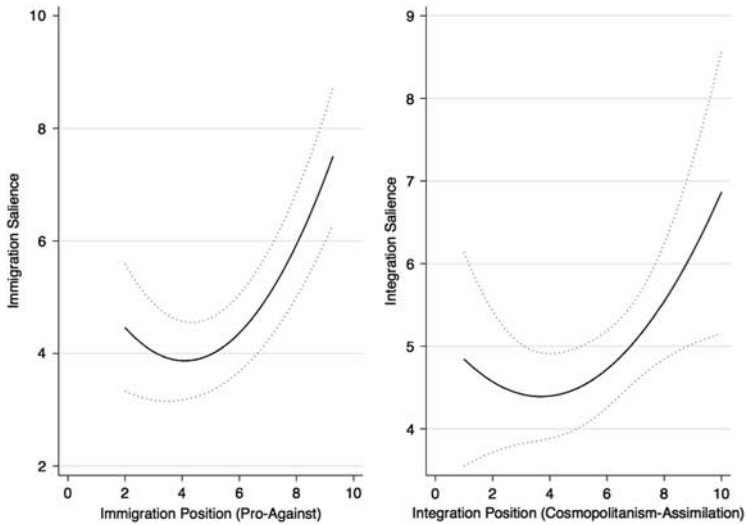
Note: Robust cluster-corrected standard errors in parentheses.

\*\*\* $P < 0.01$ , \*\* $P < 0.05$ , \* $P < 0.1$ .

Source: CHES 2006 and 2010. World Bank. Database on Political Institutions. Immigration and integration positions range from liberal to conservative.

ideological coherence between issues is exemplified by the results showing that immigrant integration positioning and salience tend to be predicted by ethnic minority positioning and salience slightly better than immigration (compare across the two models in Tables 1 and 3). This outcome is logical since the issue of immigrant integration, concerning the extent to which ‘out-groups’ should adapt to majority culture, is conceptually very close to the issue of ethnic minority rights,





**Figure 3:** Effect of immigration and integration positioning on salience.

*Source:* CHES. Predicted values with 95 per cent confidence intervals. The models control for ethnic salience, economic left-right placement, vote share, vote for the radical right, checks, fractionalization, threshold, migration and year 2006.

which reflects on the extent to which ‘out-groups’ should be afforded exceptional treatment, such as minority language use.

## Conclusions

When incorporating the issues of immigration and immigrant integration into their profiles, political parties in eastern Europe reflect their ideological principles regarding cultural openness and acceptance of ‘otherness’. Although immigration is a relatively new social phenomenon in eastern Europe, eastern European parties and voters have keenly developed preferences on how inclusive or exclusive their societies should be with respect to ‘others’. These preferences over ‘otherness’ have been shaped by historical views on and engagements with ethnic minorities, which have formed the traditional ‘out-groups’ in eastern Europe.

Views on ethnic minority rights are thus a strong determinant of preferences over immigration and immigrant integration. Parties follow their positions on ethnic minority rights when formulating their responses to immigrants. Similarly, parties that are deeply concerned about ethnic minority rights also tend to be more engaged in the issues of immigration and – even more so – immigrant integration. The issue of

immigrant integration is particularly well predicted by views on ethnic minority rights, which is likely due to the conceptual similarity between the cultural acceptance of distinct ethnic minorities and the acceptance of distinct immigrants. The effect of the conceptual link between these two issues further underlines the importance of ideology in issue incorporation.

The association between views on ethnic minorities and views on immigrants creates two distinct patterns connecting left–right placement with positions on immigration in eastern Europe. In eastern countries where left parties have historical affinities with ethnic minorities, the left holds liberal socio-cultural views, accepts higher levels of immigration and champions multiculturalism, whereas the right adopts conservative views – very much like in western Europe. On the contrary, in countries where left parties do not have any specific ethnic minority affiliations, the left either ignores ethnic minorities or uses them as political scapegoats. Here the left is culturally conservative, and is subsequently not induced to adopt pro-immigrant stances. In these countries, it is the right that supports greater cultural openness, multiculturalism and liberal immigration policies.

The analyses presented here underline the centrality of ideological preferences in the formation of positions on new political issues, even in eastern Europe, where the impact of ideology has been considered precarious at best. This argument points to the importance of historical cleavages and ideological associations between various socio-cultural issues. It is critical that literature on eastern European party competition recognize that – despite the socially levelling experience of communism – eastern European societies retained a number of critical socio-cultural divides that determine how new political issues enter the politics of the region. The approaches to ethnic minorities have formulated the ideological principles concerning the ‘other’. These principles are now applied to new-coming immigrants who thus become the other ‘other’.

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## Notes

- 1 Note that the exceptional 1995 figure for Croatia is caused by migration in the context of the Yugoslav wars.
- 2 Although about 5 per cent of respondents from eastern EU member states consider immigration-related issues (such as labour migration, national way of life or national immigration policy) as pressing, about 33 per cent report a perceived increase in immigration. Furthermore, as many as 84 per cent of these respondents see their perceived immigration increase to be for the worse (EES, 2009).
- 3 While Stimson (2004, p. 68) suggests that consistency in issue bundling is learned, and no issue connections are natural, Carmines and Stimson (1989, p. 116) underline the logical association between government action in the area of social welfare on the one hand, and racial concerns on the other.
- 4 This article understands ideology as a set of established political preferences held by a political actor – a party, or a voter.
- 5 The CHES data include all parties that have at least one representative in the national parliament; at least one representative in the European Parliament; or that received at least 3 per cent of the vote in the last national election. All these parties are included in the analyses here, with the exception of the vote choice analysis reported in Figure 2, which uses left- and right-wing voters only (see Table A2 in the Appendix for details).
- 6 Ideally I would include all European countries that transitioned from communism to democracy after 1989, however, data limitations confine the analyses to these 11 countries.
- 7 Please note that the two models testing Hypothesis 2 at the party level exclude Belgium, Germany and the United Kingdom, because of the missing data on the institutional control variables. All eastern countries under study are included.
- 8 Table A2 in the Appendix provides the list of parties included.
- 9 On immigration (0–4), ranging from liberal to conservative, ethnic minorities score 2.38, whereas the majority scores 2.56,  $t = 3.3299$ ,  $P < 0.000$ . On integration (0–4), ranging from liberal to conservative, ethnic minorities score 2.65, whereas the majority scores 3.19,  $t = 11.8162$ ,  $P < 0.000$ .
- 10 Although the estimate for the curvilinear effect of integration positioning is significant only at the 0.1 level, the hierarchical linear model in Table A6 of the Appendix shows significance at the 0.01 level.

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## Appendix

**Table A1:** Descriptive statistics (eastern Europe)

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard deviation</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>	<i>Source</i>
Immigration position	5.30	1.55	2.00	9.27	CHES
Integration position	5.41	2.08	1.00	10.00	CHES
Immigration salience	4.02	1.48	0.75	9.67	CHES
Integration salience	4.85	1.90	1.14	10.00	CHES
Ethnic minority rights position	4.80	2.26	0.00	9.93	CHES
Ethnic minority rights salience	5.71	1.95	2.25	10.00	CHES
Economic left–right	4.90	1.97	0.33	8.83	CHES
Vote share	12.49	10.49	0.00	45.35	CHES
Vote for radical right	4.86	5.08	0.00	16.67	CHES
Checks and balances	4.27	1.36	2.00	7.00	DPI
Fractionalization	0.75	0.09	0.52	0.84	DPI
Threshold	7.04	6.75	0.00	25.00	DPI
Proportional representation	1.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	DPI
Net migration/Population	0.00	0.01	–0.01	0.02	WB

*Sources:* CHES = Chapel Hill Expert Surveys; DPI = Database on Political Institutions; WB = World Bank.

**Table A2:** Party classification

<i>Left parties</i>		<i>Right parties</i>			
<i>Country</i>	<i>Party</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Party</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Party</i>
Austria	SPO	Austria	OVP	Latvia	V
Belgium	PS	Belgium	CD&V	Lithuania	TS
Bulgaria	KzB	Belgium	CDH	Lithuania	LCS
Czech Republic	CSSD	Belgium	VLD	Lithuania	LRLS
Czech Republic	KSCM	Belgium	MR	Lithuania	DP
Denmark	SD	Bulgaria	DSB	Lithuania	NS
Denmark	SF	Bulgaria	RZS	The Netherlands	CDA
Estonia	SDE	Bulgaria	GERB	The Netherlands	SGP
Estonia	EK	Bulgaria	NDST	The Netherlands	D66
Finland	SDP	Bulgaria	DPS	The Netherlands	VVD
Finland	VAS	Czech Republic	KDU-CSL	Poland	PO
France	PS	Czech Republic	ODS	Portugal	CDS-PP
France	PCF	Denmark	KF	Portugal	PSD
Germany	LINKE	Denmark	RV	Romania	PNL
Germany	SPD	Denmark	V	Romania	PD-L
Greece	PASOK	Estonia	IRL	Romania	PC
Greece	SYRIZA	Estonia	ER	Slovakia	SDKU-DS
Greece	KKE	Finland	KD	Slovakia	SF
Hungary	MSZP	Finland	KOK	Slovakia	KDH
Ireland	LAB	France	UMP	Slovenia	SDS
Italy	PD	Germany	CDU	Slovenia	NSI
Italy	RC	Germany	FDP	Slovenia	Zares
Latvia	SC	Greece	ND	Slovenia	LDS
Lithuania	LSDP	Hungary	KDNP	Slovenia	SLS-SMS
Netherlands	PvdA	Hungary	Fidesz-M	Spain	PP
Netherlands	SP	Hungary	MDF	Sweden	KD
Poland	SLD	Hungary	SZDSZ	Sweden	M
Portugal	PS	Ireland	FG	Sweden	FP
Portugal	BE	Ireland	FF	The United Kingdom	CONS
Portugal	CDU	Italy	UDC	The United Kingdom	UKIP
Romania	PSD	Italy	PDL	The United Kingdom	LIBDEM
Slovakia	Smer	Italy	IDV	—	—
Slovakia	KSS	—	—	—	—
Slovenia	SD	—	—	—	—
Spain	PSOE	—	—	—	—
Spain	IU	—	—	—	—
Sweden	SAP	—	—	—	—
Sweden	V	—	—	—	—
UK	Lab	—	—	—	—

**Table A2:** (Continued)

<i>Radical Right Parties</i>					
<i>Country</i>	<i>Party</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Party</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Party</i>
Austria	FPO	France	MPF	Lithuania	LLS
Austria	BZO	Greece	LAOS	The Netherlands	PVV
Belgium	VB	Hungary	Jobbik	Romania	PRM
Belgium	FN	Italy	LN	Slovakia	SNS
Bulgaria	NOA	Italy	AN	Slovenia	SNS
Croatia	HSP	Latvia	TB-LNNK	—	—
Denmark	DF	Latvia	NA	—	—
Finland	PS	—	—	—	—
France	FN	—	—	—	—
France	MPF	—	—	—	—

**Table A3:** Logit models predicting left vote

	<i>Western Europe</i>		<i>Eastern Europe</i>		
			<i>Countries with left parties without ethnic affinity</i>	<i>Countries with left parties with ethnic affinity</i>	
Integration	-0.113*** (0.027)	— —	0.128** (0.052)	— —	0.011 (0.081)
Immigration	— —	-0.085*** (0.024)	— —	0.184*** (0.045)	0.011 (0.068)
Member of minority	0.091 (0.100)	0.062 (0.100)	-0.199 (0.225)	-0.127 (0.232)	2.748*** (0.243)
Left-Right	-0.562*** (0.015)	-0.561*** (0.015)	-0.544*** (0.021)	-0.533*** (0.021)	-0.314*** (0.026)
Age	0.002 (0.002)	0.001 (0.002)	0.016*** (0.003)	0.017*** (0.003)	0.011*** (0.004)
Female	0.072 (0.059)	0.095 (0.059)	0.086 (0.099)	0.063 (0.1)	0.179 (0.142)
Education	-0.080*** (0.022)	-0.083*** (0.022)	-0.181*** (0.045)	-0.132*** (0.046)	0.041 (0.054)
Wealth	-0.144*** (0.027)	-0.153*** (0.027)	-0.004 (0.044)	0.005 (0.044)	-0.186*** (0.064)
Constant	3.638*** (0.190)	3.604*** (0.193)	1.775*** (0.332)	1.418*** (0.327)	0.972** (0.467)
Log-likelihood	-3487.69	-3467.89	-1322.68	-1276.01	-624.273
Pseudo-R <sup>2</sup>	0.273	0.272	0.33	0.327	0.269
Observations	7039	6985	2975	2850	1232

Standard errors in parentheses.

\*\*\* $P < 0.01$ , \*\* $P < 0.05$ .

Source: European Election Study (2009). Immigration and integration preferences range from liberal to conservative.



**Table A4:** Replication of Table 1 in the article using hierarchical linear models

	(1)	(2)
	<i>Positioning on immigration</i>	<i>Positioning on integration</i>
Ethnic minorities	0.537*** (0.035)	0.823*** (0.035)
Econ left–right	–0.073* (0.038)	–0.034 (0.038)
Vote share	–0.002 (0.007)	0.004 (0.007)
Vote for radical right	0.031* (0.017)	–0.009 (0.018)
Checks	–0.129* (0.074)	–0.064 (0.077)
Fractionalization	2.945*** (1.103)	1.106 (1.157)
Threshold	–0.011 (0.016)	–0.043*** (0.017)
Migration	21.398 (13.275)	–20.907 (13.923)
Year 2006	–0.011 (0.173)	–0.146 (0.175)
Constant	1.375* (0.775)	1.364* (0.811)
Observations	153	150
Groups	11	11
Log-likelihood	–204.851	–201.534

*Note:* Robust cluster-corrected standard errors in parentheses.

\*\*\* $P < 0.01$ , \*\* $P < 0.05$ , \* $P < 0.1$ .

*Source:* CHES 2006 and 2010. World Bank. Database on Political Institutions. Immigration, integration and ethnic minorities positions range from liberal to conservative.

**Table A5:** Replication of Table 2 in paper using hierarchical linear models

	(1)	(2)
	<i>Positioning on immigration</i>	<i>Positioning on integration</i>
Econ left–right in western Europe	0.667***	0.634***
<i>partial slope</i>	(0.057)	(0.066)
Econ left–right in eastern Europe	0.255*	0.436***
(Left parties with ethnic affinity)	(0.131)	(0.152)
<i>partial slope</i>		
Econ left–right in eastern Europe	–0.237***	–0.260***
(Left parties without ethnic affinity)	(0.081)	(0.094)
<i>partial slope</i>		
Eastern Europe with ethnic affinity	2.538***	1.551*
	(0.777)	(0.903)
Eastern Europe without ethnic affinity	5.162***	5.325***
	(0.582)	(0.672)
Vote share	0.014*	0.006
	(0.008)	(0.010)
Vote for radical right	0.041***	0.039**
	(0.015)	(0.018)
Checks	–0.027	–0.066
	(0.106)	(0.123)
Fractionalization	1.605	1.438
	(1.501)	(1.747)
Threshold	–0.035	–0.055**
	(0.022)	(0.026)
Proportional representation	–1.092*	–2.378***
	(0.574)	(0.668)
Migration	12.725	18.257
	(9.905)	(11.516)
Year 2006	–0.176	–0.018
	(0.186)	(0.218)
Constant	1.357	3.213***
	(0.949)	(1.104)
Observations	328	325
Groups	22	22
Log-likelihood	–634.280	–677.435

*Note:* Standard errors in parentheses.

\*\*\* $P < 0.01$ , \*\* $P < 0.05$ , \* $P < 0.1$ .

*Source:* CHES 2006 and 2010. World Bank. Database on Political Institutions. Immigration and integration positions range from liberal to conservative. Partial Slopes estimated using Stata's margins command.

**Table A6:** Replication of Table 3 in paper using hierarchical linear models

	(1)	(2)
	<i>Immigration salience</i>	<i>Integration salience</i>
Position on immigration	-1.037*** (0.270)	—
Position on immigration <sup>2</sup>	0.131*** (0.024)	—
Position on integration	—	-0.554** (0.237)
Position on integration <sup>2</sup>	—	0.070*** (0.022)
Ethnic salience	0.173*** (0.043)	0.406*** (0.058)
Econ left–right	0.052 (0.033)	0.017 (0.040)
Vote share	0.003 (0.007)	-0.001 (0.008)
Vote for radical right	0.026 (0.021)	0.042 (0.026)
Checks	-0.041 (0.112)	0.034 (0.147)
Fractionalization	1.419 (1.898)	5.537** (2.655)
Threshold	-0.074** (0.031)	-0.042 (0.045)
Migration	15.446 (20.937)	17.080 (27.486)
Year 2006	-0.133 (0.179)	1.521*** (0.225)
Constant	3.849*** (1.462)	-1.711 (1.929)
Observations	153	150
Groups	11	11
Log-likelihood	-191.812	-214.983

*Note:* Standard errors in parentheses.

\*\*\* $P < 0.01$ , \*\* $P < 0.05$ .

*Source:* CHES 2006 and 2010. World Bank. Database on Political Institutions. Immigration and integration positions range from liberal to conservative.