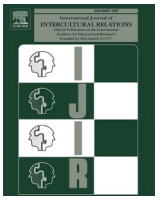
International Journal of Intercultural Relations 113 (2026) 102421

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

International Journal of Intercultural Relations

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/ijintrel



Empathy and national identification as predictors of immigrant prejudice across European countries

Cansu Paksoy [a,*,1,2], Oshrat Hochman [b]

[a] Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Deusto, Bilbao, Spain
[b] Data and Research on Society, GESIS - Leibniz-Institute for the Social Sciences, B6, 4-5, Mannheim 68159, Germany

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:
Anti-immigrant prejudice
Immigrant empathy
National identification
Individualism
Europe

ABSTRACT

Recent immigration flows into Europe have been repeatedly shown to be associated with rising anti-immigrant attitudes among the native population, which are, in turn, related with discrimination and, unfortunately, even violent behaviors towards immigrants. Anti-immigrant attitudes undermine democracy and thus pose an indirect threat to the foundation of many European countries. It is, therefore, of utmost importance to investigate factors that may reduce this hostility. The present study focuses on two such factors, namely empathy and national identification. Additionally, we integrate cultural values into our study to investigate their role. To test our hypotheses, we used the European Values Study 2017 data (32 countries, with 1500 individuals from each country on average) and standardized scores of Hofstede's country-level individualism/collectivism scale. Using a two-step regression analysis procedure, we found that the likelihood of being prejudiced decreases with increasing empathy and is lower among individuals with a civic-national identification than among individuals with other national identification types. The effect of national identification was stronger than that of empathy. We also found that individualism strengthens the negative link between empathy and prejudice. The findings reveal that inclusive emotional (empathy) and normative (national identification) tendencies toward immigrants decrease the probability of prejudice among natives. Furthermore, empathy is found to be more likely to reduce prejudice as levels of individualism in a country increase.

Introduction

According to the World Migration Report, Europe has experienced a sharp increase in the number of immigrants in recent decades (McAuliffe & Oucho, 2024).[2] Longitudinal and cross-national studies show that hostility towards immigrants also rose during this time. Using data from the European Values Study from 1990 to 2017, Bell et al. (2021), for example, show that, on average, anti-immigrant sentiments have increased in Europe. Rising hostility towards immigration and immigrants is associated with stronger support for right-wing populist parties (Semyonov et al., 2006) and the decline of democratic values (Kapelner, 2024). The emergence, spread, and

* Corresponding author.
E-mail addresses: c.paksoy@deusto.es (C. Paksoy), Oshrat.Hochman@gesis.org (O. Hochman).
[1] Affiliation at the time of first submission: College of Administrative Sciences and Economics, Koç University, Rumelifeneri Yolu 34450 Sariyer/Istanbul, Turkey
[2] Address: Faculty of Human and Social Sciences, Unibertsitate Etorb., 24, Deusto, 48007 Bilbao, Bizkaia, Spain
[2] https://worldmigrationreport.iom.int/what-we-do/world-migration-report-2024-chapter-3/europe

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2026.102421
Received 29 March 2025; Received in revised form 20 March 2026; Accepted 23 March 2026
Available online 30 March 2026

persistence of such attitudes thus threaten the fundamental values on which many European states were established and to which they are committed. It is, hence, not surprising that immigration researchers have been engaged in identifying the factors that explain anti-immigrant attitudes and finding ways to address them.

Over the last four decades, a vast body of literature has developed exploring the factors behind anti-immigrant attitudes. The main facilitators of such attitudes are often differentiated along the lines of competition or threat vs. socio-psychological factors (e.g., Blummer 1958; Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014). While the association between perceived and actual group threat and negative attitudes are well-established, also in cross-national studies (see e.g. Gorodzeisky & Semyonov, 2016), there is still a need to strengthen empirical evidence regarding socio-psychological factors and testing their generalizability across countries. Besides, previous studies have mostly relied on negative emotions such as anxiety (Brader et al., 2008; Shepherd et al., 2018; Stephan et al., 2005) and characteristics such as authoritarianism (Duckitt, 2006; Jarmakowski & Radkiewicz, 2021) to predict higher level of immigrant prejudice. As a result, our knowledge regarding prosocial attributes underlying less anti-immigrant prejudice is limited.

In this paper, we focus on two prosocial attributes namely group empathy (e.g., Sirin et al., 2017) and national identification (e.g., Raijman & Hochman, 2011) as predictors of less immigrant prejudice. Whereas empathy is an affective mechanism tapping into emotional reactions towards the (national) out-group, national identification is based on a normative mechanism associated with drawing the boundaries of the national in-group (Raijman & Hochman, 2011; Wright et al., 2012). Furthermore, as cultural features can play a role in determining immigrant-related attitudes (see Leong & Ward, 2006), we also investigate the possibility that the effect of empathy on immigrant prejudice changes depending on cultural values, specifically on the level of individualism or collectivism.

Our study makes several contributions. First, we provide evidence for the relationship between empathy and prejudice using observational large-scale comparative data collected across Europe instead of experimental data (Finlay & Stephan, 2000; Pashak et al., 2018; Vescio et al., 2003). We thus aim to increase the generalizability of this relationship and complement existing efforts in this direction that are underway in the U.S. (Williamson et al., 2020; Wojcieszak & Kim, 2016). Second, we replicate previous studies that explored the role of national identification in predicting prejudice across 32 countries. We thus advance the literature on anti-immigrant prejudice by investigating two prosocial attributes that predict immigrant prejudice, offering insights for future experimental research aimed at fostering favorable attitudes toward immigrants. In addition, we provide insights on which of the two mechanisms has a stronger effect on immigrant prejudice, the affective or the normative one. While both empathy and national identification are considered useful predictors of prejudice (see Esses, 2021 for a review), there are also differences between them: empathy is an affective state based on the ability to perceive the state of out-group members, whereas national identification, or the construction of national ingroup boundaries, is a normative construct related to intergroup boundaries or whether others can become part of the ingroup.

Finally, we add the contextual explanation to our model by testing the role of cultural values in the relationship between empathy and prejudice. For this, we integrate Hofstede's individualism/collectivism (IDV/COLL) scale (e.g., Hofstede, 2011) into our analyses. This final step is central to our efforts to demonstrate the importance of the interplay between contextual and individual level factors in predicting prejudice in Europe.

We use the European Values Study (EVS) Data from 2017 (EVS, 2022) for our analyses. To test our hypotheses, we first predict prejudice as a form of social distance by empathy and national identification using GLM regressions. We then continue to investigate the potential moderation of individualism (vs collectivism) in the relations between empathy and prejudice. To do so, we utilize the country-level parameters estimated in the GLMs and the individualism values originally introduced by Hofstede (1980) and updated by Minkov et al. (2017)[3].

The cross-national nature of our work allows us to investigate cultural values in predicting immigrant prejudice. One might expect a homogeneity in cultural values in European countries. However, studies show a high level of variation in individualism and collectivism (IDV/COLL) within Europe, with a mean of 58.61 and a standard deviation of 17.26 over the 0–100 scale (Gokmen et al., 2021). To illustrate, Lacko et al. (2022) showed distinct patterns of IDV and COLL for the Central European (Czech) and Balkan countries (e.g., Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia). Therefore, cross-country variations in IDV in predicting immigrant prejudice are meaningful to test in the European context.

The theoretical model

We hypothesize first that prejudice will be lower among individuals who understand the boundaries of the dominant group to be inclusive, and those who extend feelings of empathy beyond the boundaries of their own group. To test these hypotheses, we refer to an attitudinal manifestation of prejudice that has long been established in the literature namely social distance. To illustrate, Weaver (2008) suggests social distance or avoidance of getting in contact with others as a behavioral measure of prejudice. Raijman (2013), too, understands social distance or "peoples' intentions and their disposition to behave negatively to outgroup members" to present a valid manifestation of prejudice (Raijman, 2013, p. 138; see also Gorodzeisky, 2013). Social distance is positively correlated with perceptions of economic and symbolic threats (Gorodzeisky, 2013; Raijman, 2013) and negatively correlated with intergroup contact (Raijman, 2013, see also Schlueter & Wagner, 2008). In our study, we investigate whether social distance is negatively correlated with empathy and national identification.

[3] https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison-tool

Empathy and out-group prejudice: the context of immigrants

Empathy, defined as "a shared emotional experience occurring when one person comes to feel a similar emotion to another as a result of perceiving the other's state" (Preston, 2007, p. 428), is linked to improving intergroup relations (Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000; Shih et al., 2009). For instance, empathy decreases racial prejudice (Pashak et al., 2018) and stereotypes towards ethnic out-groups (e.g., Vescio et al., 2003), and it is related to the development of compassion among the majority toward oppressed groups (Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000; Wang et al., 2003).

In the current study we wish to focus on inter-group empathy, and specifically, on the empathy natives feel towards immigrants. The literature suggests that for this purpose, an affective rather than cognitive measure of empathy is most suitable (see Bobba & Crocetti, 2022; Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000; Newman et al., 2015; Shih et al., 2009; Shih et al., 2013; Simonovits et al., 2018). Affective empathy or empathic concern (EC) centers upon experiencing the emotional state of others. It involves feeling concern and compassion toward others (e.g. Baston, 2023; Pavey et al. 2012). The literature also proposes that in order to capture the role of empathy in reducing prejudice, a contextual empathy is preferable. Contextual, or non-dispositional empathy, refers to a feeling of empathy that is contextually bounded or defined, as opposed a trait-based empathy that reflects a more general tendency to show compassion to others (Clark et al., 2019). Contextually bounded empathy focuses on targeting specific groups within specific contexts (see also Parker & Axtell, 2001; Sparkman & Blanchar, 2017). To illustrate, Sirin et al. (2017) used their "Group Empathy Index" to measure empathy towards other racial and ethnic groups, and found that minority group members (i.e., African-Americans and Latinos) tend to possess higher levels of empathy toward detained undocumented immigrants compared to the majority group (Anglos). The authors asserted that the experiences of the undocumented immigrants echoed the past immigration experiences of the minority member participants. Hence, even though the minority group participants in their study are in more direct competition with the detained undocumented immigrants for rights, security, and resources, their empathy towards the detained undocumented immigrants, coming from similar past immigration experiences, overrides the effect of their perception of competition in reducing prejudice. Accordingly, our first hypothesis is:

H1: Individuals who endorse a higher level of empathy towards immigrants will be less likely to be prejudiced against them .

National identification and outgroup prejudice

National identification is a form of group identification individuals use to self-categorize into a specific ingroup (e.g., Reijerse et al., 2013). The literature suggests two main types of national identification: ethnic national identification, and civic national identification. These two types of national identification are based on historical elaborations on the origins of modern nation-states (e.g., Kohn, 1944). Accordingly, the ethnic national identification type is conceptualized around historic properties such as ancestry (birth into an ethnic group), or religion whereas the civic type is associated with more modernist, state-related voluntaristic steps individuals can take to become part of the civic community, like learning a language or accepting the laws and values prevalent in that group (e.g., Brubaker, 1990; Smith, 1991).[4] Jones and Smith (2001a) rightfully argue that the ethnic national identification type is defined using ascriptive properties whereas the civic one is defined by voluntarist actions like learning a language, committing to the laws and institutions etc. (also see Wright et al. 2012).

The relation between the two types of national identification is perceived by some scholars as a dichotomy (Jones & Smith 2001a; Jones & Smith 2001b) and by others as complementary (Hjerm, 1998a; Hjerm,1998b; Raijman & Hochman, 2011). Smith (1991) argued that they coexist on a continuum, but that one pole always prevails over the other, with each pole representing an "ideal type" (Janmaat, 2006).

In his study on xenophobia in Sweden, Germany and Australia, Hjerm (1998b) found that at least in the case of predicting xenophobia, national identification can be perceived as a cumulation of restrictions, ranging from a plural perception that does not consider either types of national identity as important, over a civic national identification and on to the most restrictive perception composed of both civic and ethnic components. He argues that the difference in levels of xenophobia is found between individuals who find the ethnic type to be important and those who do not. Because our main focus in the current study is on prosocial attributes that are related to less prejudice, we do not wish to investigate different levels of restrictionism in national identification but rather focus on how civic /voluntarist national identification can reduce prejudice.

Different studies show that a civic (voluntarist) national identification is typically associated with more tolerant or positive attitudes towards immigrants and towards immigrants' integration (e.g., Heath and Tilley, 2005; Hjerm, 1998a; Kunovich, 2009; Raijman & Hochman, 2011). Our second hypothesis is:

H2: The likelihood of respondents holding a civic type of national identification to be prejudiced will be lower compared with that of respondents holding other types of national identification.

[4] Zimmer (2003) also associates the voluntarist boundary mechanism with civic national identification and the organic one, with the ethnic national identification type. According to Zimmer, voluntarist national identification is often associated with symbolic resources such as political values/institutions, and culture, whereas organic identification is often associated with history and geography. However, there can be deviations from this clear-cut presentation (Zimmer, 2003).

Comparison of immigrant empathy and national identification in predicting anti-immigrant prejudice

We focus on empathy and civic national identification because they represent distinctive "positive" pathways shaping intergroup attitudes within the broader families of affective and normative mechanisms and carry particular promise for policy and intervention. Whereas much research on anti-immigrant attitudes emphasizes negative reactions such as intergroup anxiety, fear, or threat (Brader et al., 2008; Shepherd et al., 2018; Stephan et al., 2005), empathy captures a prosocial disposition that fosters perspective-taking and compassion toward outgroups (Batson et al., 1997; Miklikowska, 2018). Unlike anxiety, which primarily motivates avoidance, empathy can generalize across groups, predict prosocial political behavior, and has been shown to be malleable through educational or contact-based interventions (Batson & Ahmad, 2009; Shih et al., 2009). Similarly, while many normative orientations such as authoritarianism or symbolic threat emphasize exclusion and hierarchy (Duckitt, 2006; Jarmakowski & Radkiewicz, 2021), civic national identification provides an inclusive framework of belonging grounded in shared rights and obligations (Pehrson et al., 2009; Kende et. al., 2018a). Because empathy and civic national identification are both positive attributes that give way to feasible interventions—empathy training at the individual level and civic-integration programs at the institutional level—their comparison is particularly relevant for understanding prejudice reduction across European societies.

Comparing two prosocial attributes, we aim to show the relative effectiveness of normative versus affective mechanisms against immigrant prejudice. Studies investigating negative attitudes towards immigrants and the factors affecting them, often neglect to provide comparative insights on the effects of these factors (but see Gorodzeisky et al. 2023). Yet, knowing which factor works better to predict reduced prejudice would provide us with valuable tools for addressing immigrant hatred. We therefore aim to explore how well empathy towards immigrants and national identification predict prejudice. Generally, studies have found that affective attributes predict behavior better than moral norms (Rivis et al., 2009). Koc and Anderson (2018) demonstrated that intergroup emotions (i.e., intergroup anxiety), an affective dimension, outperformes national identification, a normative dimension, in predicting social distance towards Syrian immigrants. We thus predict that empathy, as another affective attribute, will have a stronger effect on prejudice than national identification.

Based on this assertion, our hypothesis is as follows:

H3: Endorsing higher empathy towards immigrants will be a stronger predictor of anti-immigrant prejudice compared to adopting a civic and not an ethnic-national identification type.

Individualism as a moderator between empathic concern and prejudice

Prejudice is not solely a manifestation of particular individual or group level attributes. Studies that focus on multilevel predictors of attitudes towards immigrants and multiculturalism showed that cultural-level differences are essential to understand the phenomenon (Leong, 2008). In this sense, the individualism (IDV) vs. collectivism (COLL) dimension emerges as a key cultural level factor that accounts for the cultural variations in immigrant prejudice (Leong, 2008; Leong & Ward, 2006).

The IDV-COLL scale represents "the extent to which people see themselves primarily as autonomous personalities or primarily as members of tightly knit communities" (Beugelsdijk & Welzel, 2018, p.1475). Hofstede (2001) defined the IDV/COLL scale as representing a continuum, where one aspect of the value lies on one side of the scale and the other aspect lies at the other end of the scale. Countries are thus classified on a continuum, not a dichotomy, and each country has a position on a scale rather than being placed in a box-like category (Minkov et al., 2017). Countries' orientation on the IDV/COLL dimension shifts towards more individualist values as the importance of autonomy increases compared with group values and towards more collectivist values with increasing importance of group values over autonomy.

In individualistic cultures, people highly value autonomy and self-orientation and tend to have weak family ties, less conformity behavior, and individual incentives for their actions (Hofstede, 2011; Sagiv & Roccas, 2021). These societies give primacy to pursuing individual goals and desires over the community's norms at large (Hofstede, 2011). In collectivistic cultures, individuals have close ties with their group and tend to be guided by the norms, customs and behaviors prevalent in the in-group (Beugelsdijk & Welzel, 2018). They see themselves as an extension of a larger entity and share an intense motivational and emotional attachment to their ingroup (Triandis, 1989). Ingroup goals have primacy over individual goals. Relationships with other ingroup members, especially family and acquaintances, are important. Therefore, individuals living in collectivistic cultures assign crucial importance to ingroup members.

These distinctive characteristics of individualistic and collectivistic societies prime individuals adopting certain perceptions, mindsets and emotional experiences that impact how they react to outgroup members. In the current work, we propose that a country's level of individualism versus collectivism moderates the association between empathy and prejudice toward immigrants for three main reasons.

First, collectivists tend to make greater distinctions between members of the ingroup and the outgroup (i.e., intergroup differentiation) and they practice greater intergroup discrimination (Brown et al., 1992). In other words, collectivistic societies tend to maintain stricter boundaries between in-groups and out-groups, which makes them more exclusionary toward outsiders such as immigrants compared to individualistic societies (Leong, 2008; Leong & Ward, 2006). Consequently, stronger intergroup differentiation among the native population in collectivistic societies can also reduce the possibility of a prosocial attribute in predicting less anti-immigrant prejudice. Therefore, we expect that the empathy-less prejudice link will be weakened as country level COLL increases. In other words, in COLL societies the ingroup/outgroup divisions are more salient and defining features of intergroup relations, thereby, feeling empathy towards immigrants will not be a strong predictor of reduced prejudice as in individualist cultures, where the ingroup/outgroup differentiation is not as meaningful. Therefore, the negative effect of empathy towards immigrants (as an outgroup for the native population) on prejudice towards them will be stronger in individualistic contexts compared to collectivistic ones.

A second reason for our expectation has to do with the fact that individuals living in collectivistic cultures are more other-oriented than those living in individualistic cultures. Their main concern is "the group" rather than themselves. Consequently, they have a stronger general disposition toward empathizing with others (Chopik et al., 2017; Duan et al., 2008). As they have a general predisposition to feel empathy, feeling empathy towards immigrants might not result in a change in their level of prejudice. Because individuals living in collectivistic cultures have a general predisposition to feel empathy, feeling empathy towards immigrants might not be consequential for them to change their level of prejudice. We predict that in this case, empathy will have a diminishing added value for predicting prejudice in collectivistic societies. In contrast, individuals are more self-oriented in individualist cultures, and their general empathic predispositions are weak. In individualist cultures, personal values are the main orientation, and individuals who feel empathy towards outgroup members can be more willing to integrate this emotion into their attitudes regarding outgroup members. An other-oriented emotion like empathizing with immigrants will be more consequential for individuals living in individualistic cultures.

A third rationale for our prediction regarding the moderating role of individualism–collectivism (IND/COLL) concerns the emotional expressivity hypothesis, which posits that individualism is associated with greater emotional expressiveness (Matsumoto et al., 2008). To illustrate, East Asians, as individuals living in a collectivistic society, often suppress emotional displays—particularly affective empathic responses—to maintain interpersonal harmony (Chiang, 2012; Wei et al., 2013). However, those in individualistic cultures tend to express emotions more openly, which has been linked to greater prosocial and cooperative behavior (Schug et al., 2010). Importantly, recent evidence suggests that even when individuals across cultures perceive others' suffering similarly, their affective and behavioral reactions can diverge. For instance, Atkins (2014) found that both British and East Asian participants perceived comparable levels of social pain in others after observing another person's social pain, yet British participants reported stronger affective reactions, while East Asian participants displayed less affective engagement. This indicates that empathy may not translate into similar emotional or behavioral outcomes across cultures. Accordingly, we propose that even when individuals in collectivistic societies feel empathy toward immigrants, cultural norms of emotional restraint may limit the extent to which empathy reduces their prejudice. In contrast, in individualistic societies, where emotional expression is more normative, empathic feelings are more likely to be outwardly expressed and consequently more effective in reducing prejudice toward immigrants.

Summing up, we propose that a country's level of IDV versus COLL moderates the association between empathy and prejudice toward immigrants for three main reasons. First, individuals in collectivistic societies tend to maintain stricter boundaries between in-groups and out-groups, which makes them more exclusionary toward outsiders compared to their individualistic counterparts. Consequently, stronger intergroup differentiation among the native population in collectivistic societies may sustain immigrant prejudice, thereby weakening the predictive power of empathy. Second, because empathy is a common and normative experience in collectivistic societies, high dispositional empathy may be less influential in shaping attitudes, reducing its potential to alter prejudice. Third, according to the emotional expressivity hypothesis, individuals in individualistic cultures tend to express emotions more openly and experience stronger affective responses to others' suffering. Therefore, people in individualistic societies may be more responsive to empathic concern for immigrants, leading to greater attitude change compared to those in collectivistic contexts.

Our last hypothesis is hence as follows:

H4: IDV, as opposed to COLL, is likely to amplify the negative effect of empathy on immigrant prejudice.

Method

For our analyses, we use the latest round of the EVS (European Value Study 2022) data available and the latest IDV/COLL scores from the dimensions of the culture model as they are measured and reported by Hofstede and colleagues (e.g., Minkov & Hofstede, 2011). The EVS is a large-scale, repeated cross-national survey program on fundamental human values conducted every nine years from 1981 to 2017. The last wave of EVS data includes 59,438 respondents from 36 European countries (1500 individuals on average from each country) collected between 2017 and 2020.

Case selection

Since we focus on prejudice towards immigrants among the native population, we excluded participants who were not born in the survey country (n = 4.289, 7.22%) and who did not provide an answer for the country of birth item (n = 71, 0.12%) from our analyses. We also excluded respondents from Sweden, Norway, Iceland and Portugal from the analyses due to low variance in our dependent variable among them (n = 34, 3.35%; n = 47, 4.91%; n = 40, 3.97%; n = 81, 7.63% respectively). We followed that strategy because rare "events" (or the binary dependent variable taking the value of 1) cause biased estimates in a logistic regression (King & Zeng, 2001). Although Portugal is relatively better in this distribution, the case showed low variance in social distance across the national identification categories, and the data for Portugal additionally lacked information on income. For robustness checks, we estimated the main models with the cases we excluded (from Iceland, Sweden, Norway and Portugal). These estimations showed no difference to the results presented below (See Appendix, Table A1-A4). Eventually, we analyzed data for 50.502 individuals from 32 countries.

Materials

The present work focuses on the following individual-level variables. Prejudice towards immigrants is the outcome variable, with empathy and national identification being the main independent variables. In addition, across all models, we control measures for sex, education, employment status, income level, and left-right political orientation. To account for cultural values, we look at one country-

level predictor, namely, the IDV/COL scale.

Individual-level measures

Immigrant Prejudice: To measure prejudice towards immigrants, we use a typical question on social distance included in the EVS. In this question, respondents are asked to mark any group from a list (people of a different race, heavy drinkers, immigrants/foreign workers) that they would not have liked to have as neighbors. For our analyses, we compare respondents who mentioned immigrants/foreign workers (1) to those who did not (0).

Empathy: To measure empathy, we refer to a question asking respondents to indicate to what extent they feel concerned about the living conditions of immigrants, on a 5-point Likert-type scale from 1 (very much) to 5 (not at all). The item represents an affective measure of empathy that is also contextual in nature and is therefore most suitable for our purpose (see Bobba & Crocetti, 2022; Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000; Newman et al., 2015; Shih et al., 2009; Shih et al., 2013; Simonovits et al., 2018). We re-coded this item such that a higher score indicates higher concern for the living conditions of immigrants, that is, more empathy for them.

National identification: We measure national identification using two items from a battery with which respondents rated how important they think specific characteristics are "for being truly [NATIONALITY]" from 1 (very important) to 4 (not important at all). The list included the following characteristics: to have been born in [COUNTRY]; to have [NATIONALITY] ancestry; to respect [COUNTRY]'s political institutions and laws; to be able to speak [THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE] and to share [NATIONAL] culture.

Of these five items, we picked the item "have national ancestry" and the item "respect country's political institutions and laws" (e.g. Ariely, 2013). We feel that these items best showcase the ethnic and civic dimensions, respectively. The reference to ancestry indicates a common ascribed descent, implying an "ethnic" conceptualization of national identity (Pehrson et al., 2009; Wakefield et al., 2011). The reference to country institutions and laws stresses the expectation that all members of the community voluntarily adhere to its main symbols and codes of conduct (Raijman & Hochman, 2011). By focusing on only these two items, we also address concerns about how the ethnic and the civic national identification types often include cultural dimensions (Janmaat, 2006). Our measures are, in this respect, more precise.

Given that we wish to focus on individuals who show a strict preference for civic national identification and not for elements of both dimensions (see Hjerm 1998a,b; Raijman & Hochman, 2011), we created a typology of ethnic and civic national identifications and selected respondents who showed agreement with the latter and disagreed with the former. Accordingly, we created a dummy variable ("Civic National Identification" or "Civic NI") in which 1 indicates supporting the civic national identification item but not the ethnic one, and 0 indicates support for the ethnic item or for both the civic and the ethnic items, or for neither. Specifically, respondents who rated the civic term as 4 (very important) and 3 (important) and the ethnic term as 1 (not important at all) and 2 (not important) were coded as 1, and all others were coded as zero.

The literature indicates that immigrant prejudice is correlated with several demographic properties like age, sex, and education, as well as individual socioeconomic position, employment, and left-right political orientation (see González-Castro et al., 2009; Quillian, 1995; Yoxon et al., 2019).[5] More specifically, previous research indicated that prejudice is positively correlated with age (see e.g. McLaren & Paterson, 2020). Right-wing political identification is also associated with more prejudice (McLaren, 2003) and the same is also true for unemployment (Schneider, 2008). In terms of sex, findings indicate often that men are more prejudiced than women, but this is not always the case (Coenders & Scheepers, 2003; Gorodzeisky & Semyonov, 2009; Raijman 2012). To the contrary, prejudice is negatively correlated with education (e.g. Coenders & Scheepers, 2003) and income (e.g. Gorodzeisky & Semyonov, 2019). We thus control these predictors in our analyses.

To assess sex, the respondents were asked, "Are you a man or a woman?". Answers were coded as one for males and zero for females.[6] Age was measured directly with the measure provided in the data set. We measure education with three categories: The first category (1) indicates low education level and includes respondents with less than primary school and primary school. The second category (2) includes upper-secondary, post-secondary, and non-tertiary education. Finally, all other categories higher than these (short-cycle tertiary, bachelor, and graduate degrees) belong to the highest education level category (3). To account for the respondents' income, we used an EVS-generated income measure ranging from 1 to 10. This variable is recorded from respondents' reports on their total net income in each country. Specifically, respondents indicate the decile group their income fits, counting all wages, salaries, pensions, and other incomes after taxes and other deductions using country-specific answer categories. The approximate weekly, monthly, and annual amounts were then standardized to Euros.[7] Higher scores indicate higher levels of income.

We estimate the effect of employment using a categorical variable where Respondents who work (more or less than 30 h a week) or

[5] We acknowledge that the link between political orientation and anti-immigrant prejudice is inconsistent across European countries (see Leykin and Gorodzeisky 2024). While there was a stable pattern of association between the two in Western Europe, it does not apply to the post-socialist contexts. Since our country sample involves both groups of countries, we found that it is worthwhile to control the political orientation.

[6] Answer choices other than male or female do not include any explicit sex category. They included missing codes "do not know," "no answer," "not applicable," "item not included," "other missing," "follow-up non-response," "no follow-up," and "multiple answers Mail." We did not code any other categories, as there was no explicit sex statement.

[7] EVS, GESIS (2021): EVS 2017 Variable Report: Integrated Datasets (ZA7500, ZA7502); Appendix B:Income. GESIS-Variable Reports 2020/16. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne.

who are self-employed are coded as (1), and all others (e.g., retired, housework, student, military service, unemployed, etc.) were coded as (0).[8] To assess the respondents' political orientation, we used the 10-point self-placement scale from left (1) to right (10).

Country-level measure

The IDV/COLL score we use in our analysis originates from Hofstede's six value dimensions model (e.g., Beugelsdijk & Welzel, 2018) developed by Hofstede in 1980 (Hofstede, 1984; 1991). The scores have been updated and validated based on a large-scale replication study (Minkov et al., 2017). The results were validated by follow-up studies and extended to 102 countries (Minkov & Kaasa, 2022). We obtained each country's updated scores (October 16, 2023) from the Hofstede Insights country comparison tool on the web.[9] Note that the scale constitutes a continuum (Minkov et al., 2017). On the 0–100 scale, scores below 50 (midpoint) are considered collectivistic, while scores above 50 are considered individualistic, with 0 referring to extreme collectivism and 100 referring to extreme individualism.[10]

Analytical strategy

Before proceeding with the analyses, we used multiple imputations to deal with missing cases, allowing us to fill in the blacks for item non-response (see Appendix B for details and pre-imputation missing cases).

To test our hypotheses, we used a two-step regression analysis. The first step consisted of individual-level regression analyses predicting immigrant prejudice by empathy, national identification, and the control variables (sex, age, income, employment status, and left-right political orientation) for each country in our sample. Given the dichotomous form of the dependent variable, we opted for a binomial GLM estimation. For the second step, we created a new data set composed of country-level variables, including Hofstede's IDV/COL scores, country coefficients for empathy towards immigrants, and intercepts taken from the first-step single-country regression analyses. We then created two-way scatter plots to learn how individualism alters the relations between empathy and social distance (see Sides & Citrin, 2007, for a similar strategy).

There are three arguments supporting our analytical strategy: First, in multilevel models, the size of the highest level (the broadest grouping category) determines the power and the existence of variance between groups. The fact that we have only 32 countries decreases the efficiency of this strategy (see Snijders, 2005). To illustrate, fixed effect standard errors are biased in predicting binary outcomes if the number of clusters in the second level is below 50 (McNeish & Stapleton, 2016). Furthermore, the usual interpretation of t-statistics and p-values is problematic without assuming a random sample across all levels of analysis (Bowers & Drake, 2005). However, our countries were not randomly selected. Still, we have data from 32 countries, based on randomly selected samples of different sizes. Finally, our hypothesis regarding the role of individualism does not require a multi-level model. A scatterplot provides sufficient information regarding its positive or negative correlation with our parameters of interest.

Results

First-level analyses

Descriptive statistics for the individual-level variables are provided in Table 1. To test our first hypotheses (H1 to H3), we estimated a multiple regression model using a GLM binomial estimation with a logit link and robust standard errors (see Table 2). Although not shown in the table, the model also included country dummies to control country-specific factors (see Citrin & Sides, 2007; Mitsch et al., 2021, for a similar strategy). Albania was used as the reference country, and hence, the coefficients represent higher or lower coefficients for prejudice in each country compared to Albania.[11]

Table 2 shows the coefficients and odds ratios of social distance. As the table shows, empathy significantly and negatively predicts social distance (Odds Ratio= 0.75, 95% CI [.73,.76], $p < .001$). In support of H1, for every unit increase in empathy, there is a 25% decrease in the odds of social distance. Civic NI, compared to other forms of national identification, also decreases social distance significantly (B=-0.50, OR=0.60, 95% CI [.57,.64], $p < .001$). Supporting H2, endorsing a civic type of national identification decreases the odds of prejudice by 40% compared to not endorsing it. However, contrary to what we expected, given the higher values for the odds ratio for national identification compared to empathy, national identification is a stronger predictor of social distance than

[8] Military service refers to mandatory military service and was coded under the "no paid employment" category in EVS Master Questionnaire. (CAWI Master Questionnaire, Source: https://dbk.gesis.org/dbksearch/download.asp?id=66240)

[9] https://www.hofstede-insights.com/

[10] https://www.hofstede-insights.com/frequently-asked-questions

[11] We did not have a specific preference for baseline country selection as our main purpose is not focusing on individual country differences. The main purpose is to control cross-country variation here.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics of the Study Variables.

Variable		Obs	Mean / %	Std. dev.	Min	Max
Scale variables	Empathy	49,609	2.76	1.12	1	5
	Civic-based National Identity Definition	50,025	3.49	0.68	1	4
	Ethnicity-based National Identity Definition	49,955	2.83	0.96	1	4
	Age	50,232	49.41	17.69	18	82
	Income	43,738	4.92	2.68	1	10
	Political Orientation	40,080	5.52	2.33	1	10
Categorical Variables	Social Distance	12,137	25.37%			
	Civic NI	16,596	33.37%			
	Female	28,190	55.83%			
	Male	22,306	44.17%			
	Education level					
	Low	9852	19.64%			
	Medium	23,721	47.29%			
	High	16,584	33.06%			
	Employed	26,006	51.81%			
	Unemployed	24,186	48,19%			

.

Source: EVS; own analysis. Note. Civic-based and ethnicity-based national identification variables refer to the definition of nationality based on civic or ethnic national terms, respectfully. To create Civic NI (Civic National Identification), as one of our main independent variable, we used these two original variables, then created a dummy variable indicating support for "only the civic national identity" definition against all other definitions

Table 2
Predicting Immigrant Prejudice by Immigrant Empathy and Civic NI.

Immigrant Prejudice	Odds Ratio	95% CI		B	SE	*p*
Empathy	0.75	.73	.76	-0.29	0.01	0.00
Civic NI	0.60	.57	.64	-0.50	0.03	0.00
Age	1.00	1.00	1.01	0.00	0.00	0.00
Income	0.97	.96	.98	-0.03	0.01	0.00
Left-right	1.05	1.04	1.07	0.05	0.01	0.00
Sex (Reference: male)						
Female	0.98	.93	1.02	-0.02	0.02	0.34
Education (Reference: low)						
Medium	0.91	.85	.97	-0.10	0.03	0.00
High	0.80	.74	.86	-0.22	0.04	0.00
Employment status (Reference: unemployed)						
Employed	1.06	1.01	1.11	0.06	0.03	0.03
Constant	0.14	.11	.18	-1.98	0.13	0.00
N	50,502					
Average RVI	0.08					
Largest FM	0.31					

*p < 0.05; ***p < 0.001. *Note:* SE shows robust standard errors.

empathy.[12]

Regarding demographic correlations, our findings are mostly in line with previous work indicating that being older (see e.g. McLaren & Paterson, 2020), adopting a more right-wing political orientation (Kevins & Lightman, 2020; Verkuyten et. al, 2022), being less educated (e.g., Coenders & Scheepers, 2003) and having less income (e.g., Gorodzeisky & Semyonov, 2019) are related with higher levels of immigrant prejudice (see also Appendix A and E). Interestingly, employment was positively associated with prejudice. Although prior work often links unemployment to stronger anti-immigrant attitudes, employment may also heighten perceived competition with immigrant workers, particularly in sectors marked by job insecurity (Coenders & Scheepers, 2003).

In the next step, we estimated the same model separately for each country. We presented analysis results for each country at Appendix Table C1-C32. Figs. 1 and 2 show the unstandardized coefficients and standard errors of empathy and national identification

[12] Our results were robust using a less restrictive categorization for national identification (Appendix, Table D1). To check this, we created a new national identification variable and re-run the imputations with the new variable set. Then estimated the regressions. In this four-category variable, we coded individuals chose civic type but not ethnic description as 1, those who chose both as 2, those chose ethnic but not civic description as 3, and those who chose none of them as 4. Results showed that compared to only civic identification, all other three categorizations are significantly and positively related with social distance.

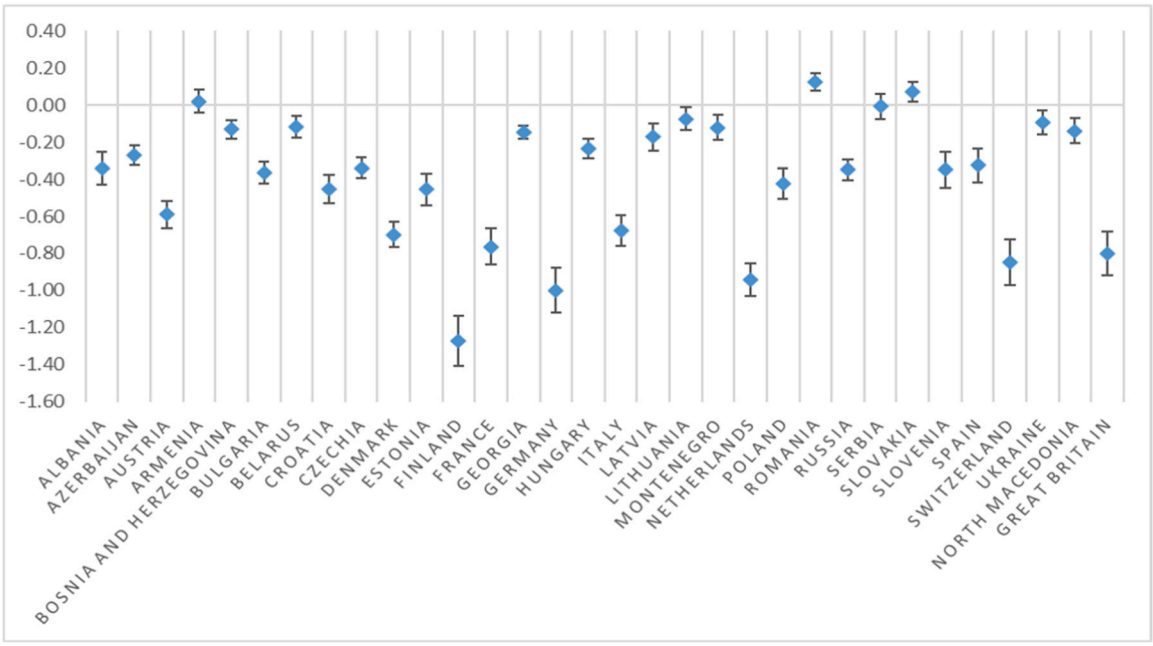


Fig. 1. Immigrant Prejudice Predicted by Immigrant Empathy by Country. *Note. Prejudice Coeff: Prejudice coefficient.*

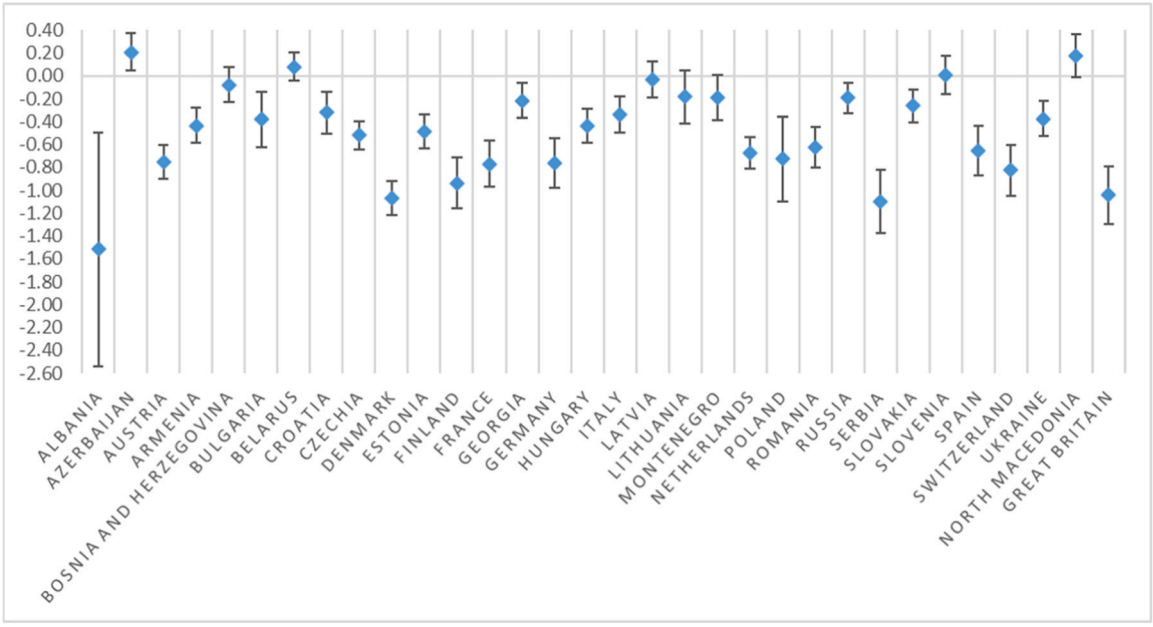


Fig. 2. Immigrant Prejudice Predicted by Civic National Identification by Country. Note. Civic NI: Civic National Identification, Prejudice Coeff: Prejudice coefficient. The large SE values for Albania are considered to be due to the insufficient proportion of civic national identity endorsement (4%) over others (95.77). This, in turn, reduced variability on the social distance variable, with only one participant who endorsed civic identity indicating social distance.

taken from the GLM binomial regression analyses by country. Results show that with a few exceptions, immigrant empathy negatively predicts social distance in all countries, net of our control variables (Fig. 1). Specifically, no effect was found in Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lithuania, Serbia, Slovakia, Ukraine, and Slovenia, while the coefficient is positive in Romania.[13] This might be explained by the lower immigration rates in these countries compared to their Western European counterparts and the lack of salience of the immigration issue there.[14] As expected, holding a civic national identification negatively predicted social distance for most European countries (Fig. 2). In 11 countries, the coefficients were nonsignificant (Albania, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Belarus, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, Montenegro, Russia, North Macedonia, and Slovenia). Interestingly, most of these countries are post-socialist countries that have experienced a sui generis process of national identity formation following the sharp political and social transformations they underwent (see Young & Light, 2001).

These findings indicate that the countries where empathy significantly predicts social distance (n = 28) outnumber the countries where national identification predicts it (n = 21). Thus, although the effect of national identification on prejudice was stronger, empathy is a more widely shared attribute in predicting social distance compared to national identification.

Second Level Analyses

The final step in our analysis was to test whether the correlation between empathy and social distance decreases with increasing levels of individualism. Specifically, we expected that individual-level empathy towards immigrants would be a stronger predictor of anti-immigrant prejudice in more individualistic countries (H4). For this purpose, we plotted the empathy coefficients against the IDV/COL scores (Fig. 3). In the figure, the country-level empathy coefficients are presented on the y-axis, while IDV/COL scores are presented on the x-axis. If our hypothesis about cross-level interaction is correct, then the the coefficients should become more negative (i.e., increase in absolute magnitude) with increasing individualism levels. Indeed, Fig. 3 shows an inverse relationship trend between IDV and empathy coefficients, indicating that as levels of individualism increase, the relationship between empathy and social distance becomes stronger, i.e., more negative.

Robustness checks

To check our findings for robustness, we conducted several tests. Results were robust. First, we estimated the main models with an alternative measure for national identification. In this four-category alternative variable, we coded individuals who chose the civic but not the ethnic description as 1, those who chose both as 2, those chose the ethnic but not civic description as 3, and those who chose none of them as 4. Results showed that compared to only civic identification, all the other three categorizations are significantly and positively related to social distance (Appendix D, Table D1).

Further, we estimated multilevel models to check the robustness of our results from the two-step analysis. Our results were robust across the models including baseline models with and without individualism as a country level predictor, as well as models with interaction between individualism and empathy (see Models 1–3 in, Table E1). In the multilevel models, we also checked if GDP per capita, PPP (Gross domestic product expressed in current international dollars, converted by purchasing power parities) as a country level economic indicator is indirectly responsible for this effect .[15] Controlling GDP as a country-level predictor, the effect of cultural values remains strong (see Model 4 in Table E1). This finding is in line with another study comparing the effect of Hofstedeś cultural values including individualism with that of several economic indicators (GDP growth rate, unemployment rate, GINI per capita, PPP per capita) showing that cultural values dominate economic indicators in predicting immigrant attitudes (Leong, 2008).

Discussion

The present study aimed to predict anti-immigrant prejudice with empathy and national identification. Using data from the EVS, we provided cross-national evidence for the link between empathy and anti-immigrant prejudice, demonstrating that empathic feelings towards immigrants decrease the likelihood of prejudice towards them. This finding extends the literature on empathy and its consequences, which mostly rely on laboratory experiments (e.g., Finlay & Stephan, 2000). Furthermore, in line with other studies, we showed that civic national identification also decreases the likelihood of prejudice towards immigrants (e.g., Raijman & Hochman, 2011). Specifically, compared with respondents who support an ethnic understanding of their national ingroup (or who do not have any national identification), respondents who support a civic understanding of it show lower odds of being prejudiced against immigrants. Since we estimated our regression model with empathy and national identification, we also showed that both predict prejudice independently from each other.

Including two types of prosocial sociopsychological mechanisms, an affective one and a normative one, in our estimation, allowed

[13] The low rate of immigration despite the high emigration might contribute to the unique understanding of immigrant empathy and anti-immigrant prejudice in Romania (https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/210481530907970911/pdf/128064-SCD-PUBLIC-P160439-RomaniaSCDBackgroundNoteMigration.pdf)

[14] Armenia (6.4%), Bosnia (%1.1.), Lithuania (5.3%), Serbia (9.4%), Slovakia (3.6%), Ukraine (11.4%), and Romania (3.7%) have very low levels of immigrant rates compared to their total population (https://worldmigrationreport.iom.int/wmr-2022-interactive/).

[15] We retrieved GDP PPP levels for each country from the World Bank data for 2017 as the EVS data collection year. Source: https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.PP.CD

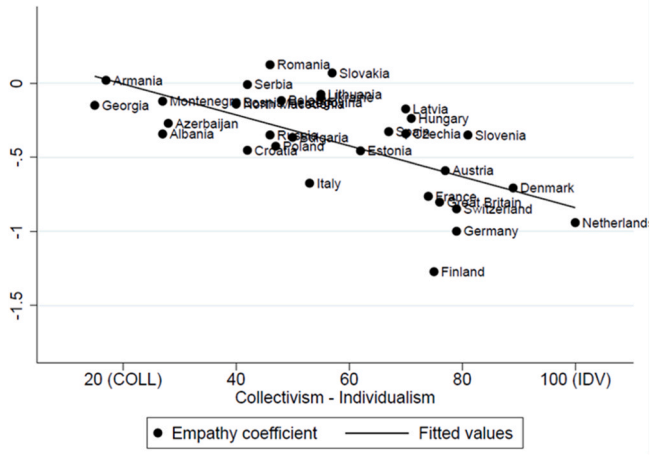


Fig. 3. Scatterplot of Country-Specific Empathy Coefficients against Country-Level Individualism.

us to compare the potential effectiveness of two distinct mechanisms for conflict reduction. We expected that empathy, as an affective attribute directed towards immigrants (the out-group), would better explain prejudice than national identification, a normative attribute centered on the national in-group. The findings are mixed: on the one hand, national identification has a slightly stronger effect in the pooled model; on the other hand, empathy emerges as a more stable predictor of prejudice across country-specific models. While we can report a clear negative trend in the coefficients for both empathy and national identification, we also observe some variation in their size between countries. The difference in the size of the coefficients may be related to specific contextual conditions in the countries, which we did not include in our analysis here.

One possible explanation for the stronger effect of national identification in the pooled analyses draws on classic theories of intergroup relations. Following Allport (1954), in-group identity has a central role in shaping attitudes toward out-groups. Intergroup bias often reflects preferential concern for the in-group rather than direct hostility toward out-groups (Brewer, 1999). Consistent with this perspective, experimental studies show that individuals are more strongly motivated by "in-group love" than by "out-group hate" (Halevy et al., 2012). Accordingly, in-group based motivations (national identification) may outweigh out-group based ones (out--group empathy) in predicting intergroup attitudes.

However, country-level analyses show that the effect of national identification is less widespread compared to empathy. In our analyses, national identification showed null effects in several post-communist societies. One explanation is that in post-communist societies, national identity developed through a sui generis process shaped by the political and social transformations following the collapse of communist regimes (Young & Light, 2001), which may weaken its relevance for attitudes toward immigrants.

To illustrate, using the Life in Transition Survey across 28 post-communist countries, Bell and Valenta (2025) show that predictors commonly associated with anti-immigrant sentiment in Western societies, such as modernization or economic competition, do not explain xenophobia in the same way in these contexts. One reason may be that far-right parties in many post-communist countries mobilize hostility toward other salient out-groups rather than immigrants. Similarly, research from Russia shows that the drivers of anti-immigrant sentiment vary depending on individuals' ethnic identities (Gorodzeisky & Glikman, 2018), and that citizens often categorize "immigrants" differently from institutional definitions (Leykin & Gorodzeisky, 2025).

By contrast, empathy may be less sensitive to such historical trajectories. Defined as a universal "capacity to be affected by and share the emotional state of another" (de Waal, 2008, p. 281), empathy reflects a phylogenetically ancient socio-emotional capacity that operates more consistently across societies. The weaker predictive power of empathy in the pooled analyses may also reflect measurement limitations, as empathy was captured with a single item. Multi-item measures of empathy have been shown to strongly predict immigrant prejudice (Sirin et al., 2017; Miklikowska, 2018).

Taken together, these findings suggest that although in-group identification is central to intergroup relations, the meaning and political relevance of national identity, and thus its relationship with anti-immigrant attitudes, may vary across historical contexts. By contrast, empathy represents a universal human capacity that is less subjected to such historical influences. Although its strength may vary depending on cultural values such as individualism, the association between empathy and anti-immigrant attitude remains relatively consistent across countries, highlighting its broader relevance as a human capacity.

Adding to the current body of knowledge on the role of contextual, country-level variables, which mostly focus on the moderating role of economic or demographic determinants (e.g., Sides & Citrin, 2007), we focused on cultural values. Specifically, we explored whether the relationship between empathy and anti-immigrant prejudice differs with divergent values of country-level individualism. As we expected, the role of empathy in predicting anti-immigrant prejudice was stronger in more individualistic countries. This finding supports previous results showing how cultural factors influence relations between prosocial attributes and prejudice (Kende et al., 2018b).

Our study is not without limitations. Given the observational nature of our data, our results give no indication of the causal links between the predictors (empathy and national identification) and prejudice. We cannot refute the possibility of endogeneity. Still,

controlling for the usual demographic "suspects" and country dummies, we provided cross-national evidence that both empathy and national identification predict anti-immigrant prejudice in representative random samples from 32 countries.

Another limitation is related to our use of single-item measures for prejudice, empathy, and national identification. EVS offers valuable insight into different topics related to individual and collective values. As a general social survey, it lacks elaborate measures for other constructs it includes. In our case, we had to make do with single-item measures to represent rather complex theoretical constructs . Notably, even with this compromise, our findings align with theory and previous research. While we realize that this is not an ideal practice, it allowed us to use a cross-national data set of good quality to investigate our research question in a broader context compared to similar observational studies (Miklikowska, 2018; El-Yashruti, 2020; Sirin et al., 2017; Swart et al., 2023). The literature shows that measuring group-specific empathy via a limited number of items (e.g., two) consisting of concern for and the understanding of the challenges undocumented immigrants face (see "group-specific empathy") is consistent with a 14-items valid measure of general out-group empathy towards other racial and ethnic groups (Sirin et al., 2017, p. 898). Still, it might be worthwhile to retest our hypotheses with further representative survey data that provides more elaborate instruments.

Many studies on the emergence of anti-immigrant attitudes focus on their facilitators, like socioeconomic or symbolic threats. Ample evidence suggests that by reducing perceptions of competitive or symbolic threat, policymakers could contribute to the reduction of such attitudes (Gorodzeisky & Semyonov, 2016; McLaren & Johnson, 2007). In our study, we demonstrate that an additional means to reduce negative attitudes towards immigrants could be increasing feelings of empathy towards them. Notably, empathy is more likely to succeed in reducing prejudice in individualistic cultures. We also show that a voluntarist, inclusive national identification can facilitate a reduction in prejudice. Given the increasing support for anti-immigration, nationalist, and particularistic parties in Europe, today, more than ever, there is a need to embrace these mechanisms as alternatives to the threat discourse these parties promote.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Cansu Paksoy: Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Visualization, Validation, Software, Methodology, Formal analysis, Data curation, Conceptualization. **Oshrat Hochman:** Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Validation, Supervision, Software, Methodology, Formal analysis, Conceptualization.

Funding

This work was supported by the European Commission-funded SocialComquant project (Project Grant ID Number: 952128) as a part of a twinning action program with GESIS - Leibniz Institute for Social Sciences. The project has provided financial support for the authors' on-site collaboration under the exchange program for visiting research.

Declaration of Competing Interest

None

Appendix A. Supporting information

Supplementary data associated with this article can be found in the online version at doi:10.1016/j.ijintrel.2026.102421.

References

Allport, G. W. (1954). *The nature of prejudice*. Reading/Addison-Wesley.

Ariely, G. (2013). Nationhood across Europe: The civic–ethnic framework and the distinction between Western and Eastern Europe. *Perspectives on European Politics and Society, 14*(1), 123–143. https://doi.org/10.1080/15705854.2012.732391

Atkins, D. (2014). *The role of culture in empathy: the consequences and explanations of cultural differences in empathy at the affective and cognitive levels*. University of Kent (United Kingdom).

Batson, C. D. (2023). *Empathic Concern: What it is and why It's Important*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780197610923.001.0001

Batson, C. D., & Ahmad, N. Y. (2009). Using empathy to improve intergroup attitudes and relations. *Social issues and Policy Review, 3*(1), 141–177.

Batson, C. D., Polycarpou, M. P., Harmon-Jones, E., Imhoff, H. J., Mitchener, E. C., Bednar, L. L., Klein, T. R., & Highberger, L. (1997). Empathy and attitudes: can feeling for a member of a stigmatized group improve feelings toward the group? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 72*(1). https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.72.1.105

Bell, D. A., Valenta, M., & Strabac, Z. (2021). A comparative analysis of changes in anti immigrant and anti-Muslim attitudes in Europe: 1990–2017. *Comparative Migration Studies, 9*, 1–24. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-021-00266-w

Bell, D. A., & Valenta, M. (2025). Outside the Western bubble: Explaining anti immigrant attitudes in 28 post-communist countries. *Nations and Nationalism, 31*(3), 668–688.

Beugelsdijk, S., & Welzel, C. (2018). Dimensions and dynamics of national culture: synthesizing Hofstede with Inglehart. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 49*(10), 1469–1505. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022118798505

Bobba, B., & Crocetti, E. (2022). I feel you!": the role of empathic competences in reducing ethnic prejudice among adolescents. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 51*(10), 1970–1982. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-022-01650-0

Bowers, J., & Drake, K. W. (2005). EDA for HLM: Visualization when probabilistic inference fails. *Political Analysis, 13*(4). https://doi.org/10.1093/pan/mpi031

Brader, T., Valentino, N. A., & Suhay, E. (2008). What triggers public opposition to immigration? Anxiety, group cues, and immigration threat. *American journal of political science, 52*(4), 959–978.
Brewer, M. B. (1999). The psychology of prejudice: Ingroup love or outgroup hate? *Journal of Social Issues, 55*(3). https://doi.org/10.1111/0022-4537.00126
Brown, R., Hinkle, S., Ely, P. G., Fox-Cardamone, L., Maras, P., & Taylor, L. A. (1992). Recognizing group diversity: Individualist-collectivist and autonomous-relational social orientations and their implications for intergroup processes. *British journal of social psychology, 31*(4), 327–342.
Brubaker, W. R. (1990). Immigration, citizenship, and the nation-state in France and Germany: a comparative historical analysis. *International sociology, 5*(4), 379–407.
Chiang, W. (2012). The suppression of emotional expression in interpersonal context. *Bulletin of Educational Psychology, 43*, 657–680.
Chopik, W. J., O'Brien, E., & Konrath, S. H. (2017). Differences in empathic concern and perspective taking across 63 countries. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 48*(1). https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022116673910
Clark, M. A., Robertson, M. M., & Young, S. (2019). "I feel your pain": A critical review of organizational research on empathy. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 40*(2), 166–192.
Coenders, M., & Scheepers, P. (2003). The effect of education on nationalism and ethnic exclusionism: An international comparison. *Political Psychology, 24*(2), 313–343. https://doi.org/10.1111/0162-895X.00330
de Waal, F. B. (2008). Putting the altruism back into altruism: The evolution of empathy. *Annual Review of Psy, 59*(1), 279–300.
Duan, C., Wei, M., & Wang, L. (2008). The role of individualism-collectivism in empathy: An exploratory study. *Asian Journal of Counselling, 15*(1), 57–81.
Duckitt, J. (2006). Differential effects of right wing authoritarianism and social dominance orientation on outgroup attitudes and their mediation by threat from and competitiveness to outgroups. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 32*(5), 684–696. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167205284282 (Original work published 2006).
El-Yashruti, R. (2020). Exclusionary beliefs, multicultural ideology, empathy, and perceived threat: A comprehensive model of anti-immigrant prejudice (Order No. 28086545). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global; Publicly Available Content Database. (2445921143).
Esses, V. M. (2021). Prejudice and discrimination toward immigrants. *Annual Review of Psychology, 72*(1), 503–531. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-080520/102803
EVS (2022). European Values Study 2017: Integrated Dataset (EVS 2017). GESIS, Köln. ZA7500 Datenfile Version 5.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.13897.
EVS, GESIS (2021): EVS 2017 Variable Report: Integrated Datasets (ZA7500, ZA7502); Appendix B: Income. GESIS-Variable Reports 2020/16. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne.
Finlay, K. A., & Stephan, W. G. (2000). Improving intergroup relations: The effects of empathy on racial attitudes. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 30*(8), 1720–1737. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1559-1816.2000.tb02464.x
Galinsky, A. D., & Moskowitz, G. B. (2000). Perspective-taking: Decreasing stereotype expression, stereotype accessibility, and in-group favoritism. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 78*(4). https://doi.org/10.1037/0022, 3514.78.4.708.
Gokmen, Y., Baskici, C., & Ercil, Y. (2021). The impact of national culture on the increase of COVID-19: A cross-country analysis of European countries. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 81*, 1–8.
González-Castro, J. L., Ubillos, S., & Ibáñez, J. (2009). Predictive factors of ethnic prejudice toward immigrants in a representative subsample of Spanish young people. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 39*(7). https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1559-1816.2009.00500.x
Gorodzeisky, A. (2013). Mechanisms of exclusion: attitudes toward allocation of social rights to out-group population. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 36*(5). https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2011.631740
Gorodzeisky, A., & Glikman, A. (2018). Two peoples–two stories: anti-immigrant attitudes in post-Socialist Russia. *Social Problems, 65*(4), 543–563.
Gorodzeisky, A., & Semyonov, M. (2009). Terms of exclusion: Public views towards admission and allocation of rights to immigrants in European countries. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 32*(3), 401–423. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870802245851
Gorodzeisky, A., Semyonov, M., Davidov, E., Schmidt, P., & Hochman, O. (2023). Threats, prejudice and opposition to immigration. *Immigration and Integration in Israel and Beyond*, 193–217 (transcript Verlag).
Gorodzeisky, A., & Semyonov, M. (2016). Not only competitive threat but also racial prejudice: Sources of anti-immigrant attitudes in European societies. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research, 28*(3), 331–354. https://doi.org/10.1093/ijpor/edv024
Gorodzeisky, A., & Semyonov, M. (2016). Not only competitive threat but also racial prejudice: Sources of anti-immigrant attitudes in European societies. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research, 28*(3), 331–354. https://doi.org/10.1093/ijpor/edv024
Gorodzeisky, A., & Semyonov, M. (2019). Unwelcome immigrants: sources of opposition to different immigrant groups among Europeans. *Frontiers in Sociology, 4*(24). ⟨https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/sociology/articles/10.3389/fsoc.2019.0002/full⟩.
Hainmueller, J., & Hopkins, D. J. (2014). Public attitudes toward immigration. *Annual Review of Political Science, 17*(1), 225–249. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.polisci-102512-194818.
Halevy, N., Weisel, O., & Bornstein, G. (2012). In-Group Love" and "Out-Group Hate" in Repeated Interaction Between Groups. *Journal of Behavioral Decision Making, 25*(2), 188–195. https://doi.org/10.1002/bdm.726
Heath, A. F., & Tilley, J. R. (2005). British national identity and attitudes towards immigration. *International Journal on Multicultural Societies (IJMS), 7*(2).
Hjerm, M. (1998a). National identities, national pride and xenophobia: A comparison of four western countries. *Acta Sociologica, 41*(4). https://doi.org/10.1177/000169939804100403
Hjerm, M. (1998b). National identity: A comparison of Sweden, Germany and Australia. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 24*(3), 451–469. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.1998.9976644
Hofstede, G. (1980). *Culture's consequences: International differences in work-related values*. Sage, Beverly Hills, CA.
Hofstede, G. (1984). *Culture's consequences: International differences in work-related values, 5*. New York, NY: Sage.
Hofstede, G. (1991). *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind*. McGraw-Hill.
Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions, and organizations across nations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
Hofstede, G. (2011). Dimensionalizing cultures: The Hofstede model in context. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture, 2*(1). https://doi.org/10.9707/2307, 0919.1014.
Janmaat, J. G. (2006). Popular conceptions of nationhood in old and new European member states: Partial support for the ethnic-civic framework. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 29*(1), 50–78. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870500352363
Jarmakowski, T., & Radkiewicz, P. (2021). Why do immigrants make us more authoritarian? The impact of direct and normative threat to social order from outgroupers on ingroup authoritarianism. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology, 43*(6), 354–365.
Jones, F. L., & Smith, P. (2001a). Diversity and commonality in national identities: An exploratory analysis of cross-national patterns. *Journal of Sociology, 37*(1), 45–63. https://doi.org/10.1177/144078301128756193
Jones, F. L., & Smith, P. (2001b). Individual and societal bases of national identity. A comparative multi-level analysis. *European Sociological Review, 17*(2), 103–118. https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/17.2.103
Kapelner, Z. (2024). Anti-immigrant backlash: the Democratic dilemma for immigration policy. *Comparative Migration Studies, 12*(1). https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878/024-00370-7
Kende, A., Lantos, N. A., & Krekó, P. (2018a). Endorsing a civic (vs. an ethnic) definition of citizenship predicts higher pro-minority and lower pro-majority collective action intentions. *Frontiers in Psychology, 9*, 1402.
Kende, J., Phalet, K., Van den Noortgate, W., Kara, A., & Fischer, R. (2018b). Equality revisited: A cultural meta-analysis of intergroup contact and prejudice. *Social Psychological and Personality Science, 9*(8), 887–895. https://doi.org/10.1177/1948550617728993
Kevins, A., & Lightman, N. (2020). Immigrant sentiment and labour market vulnerability: economic perceptions of immigration in dualized labour markets. *Comparative European Politics, 18*(3), 460–484.
King, G., & Zeng, L. (2001). Logistic regression in rare events data. *Political Analysis, 9*(2), 137–163.

Koc, Y., & Anderson, J. R. (2018). Social distance toward Syrian refugees: The role of intergroup anxiety in facilitating positive relations. *Journal of Social Issues, 74*(4), 790–811. https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12299
Kohn, H. (1944). The idea of nationalism: a Study in its Origin and Background Macmillen10.4324/9781315132556.
Kunovich, R. M. (2009). The sources and consequences of national identification. *American Sociological Review, 74*(4). https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240907400404
Lacko, D., Čeněk, J., Točík, J., Avsec, A., Đorđević, V., Genc, A., Haka, F., Šakotić Kurbalija, J., Mohorić, T., Neziri, I., & Subotić, S. (2022). The necessity of testing measurement invariance in cross-cultural research: Potential bias in cross-cultural comparisons with individualism– collectivism self-report scales. *Cross. Cultural Research, 56*(2-3), 228–267. https://doi.org/10.1177/10693971211068971
Leong, C. H. (2008). A multilevel research framework for the analyses of attitudes toward immigrants. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 32*(2), 115–129. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2007.10.002
Leong, C. H., & Ward, C. (2006). Cultural values and attitudes toward immigrants and multiculturalism: The case of the Eurobarometer survey on racism and xenophobia. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 30*(6), 799–810. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2006.07.001
Leykin, I., & Gorodzeisky, A. (2025). "Who'sa migrant in postsocialist Europe?": Popular imagination and geopolitical changes. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 1–20.
Matsumoto, D., Yoo, S. H., & Fontaine, J. (2008). Mapping expressive differences around the world: The relationship between emotional display rules and individualism versus collectivism. *Journal of Cross-cultural Psychology, 39*(1), 55–74.
McAuliffe, M., & Oucho, L. A. (Eds.). (2024), *World Migration Report, 2024*. International Organization for Migration (IOM), Geneva.
McLaren, L. M. (2003). Anti-immigrant prejudice in Europe: Contact, threat perception, and preferences for the exclusion of migrants. *Social forces, 81*(3), 909–936.
McLaren, L., & Johnson, M. (2007). Resources, group conflict and symbols: Explaining anti immigration hostility in Britain. *Political Studies, 55*(4), 709–732. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9248.2007.00680.x
McLaren, L., & Paterson, I. (2020). Generational change and attitudes to immigration. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 46*(3), 665–682. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2018.1550170
McNeish, D. M., & Stapleton, L. M. (2016). The effect of small sample size on two-level model estimates: A review and illustration. *Educational Psychology Review, 28*, 295–314. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-014-9287-x
Miklikowska, M. (2018). Empathy trumps prejudice: The longitudinal relation between empathy and anti-immigrant attitudes in adolescence. *Developmental Psychology, 54*(4), 703–717. https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0000474
Minkov, M., Dutt, P., Schachner, M., Morales, O., Sanchez, C., Jandosova, J., … Mudd, B. (2017). A revision of Hofstede's individualism-collectivism dimension: A new national index from a 56-country study. *Cross Cultural & Strategic Management, 24*(3), 386–404.
Minkov, M., & Hofstede, G. (2011). The evolution of Hofstede's doctrine. *Cross Cultural Management: An International Journal, 18*(1), 10–20. https://doi.org/10.1108/13527601111104269
Minkov, M., & Kaasa, A. (2022). Do dimensions of culture exist objectively? A validation of the revised Minkov-Hofstede model of culture with World Values Survey items and scores for 102 countries. *Journal of International Management, 28*(4), Article 100971. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intman.2022.100971
Mitsch, F., Lee, N., & Morrow, E. R. (2021). Faith no more? The divergence of political trust between urban and rural Europe. *Political Geography, 89*, Article 102426. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2021.102426
Newman, B. J., Hartman, T. K., Lown, P. L., & Feldman, S. (2015). Easing the heavy hand: Humanitarian concern, empathy, and opinion on immigration. *British Journal of Political Science, 45*(3), 583–607. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123413000410
Parker, S. K., & Axtell, C. M. (2001). Seeing another viewpoint: Antecedents and outcomes of employee perspective taking. *Academy of Management Journal, 44*(6). https://doi.org/10.2307/3069390
Pashak, T. J., Conley, M. A., Whitney, D. J., Oswald, S. R., Heckroth, S. G., & Schumacher, E. M. (2018). Empathy diminishes prejudice: Active perspective-taking, regardless of target and mortality salience decreases implicit racial bias. *Psychology, 09*(06), 1340–1356. https://doi.org/10.4236/psych.2018.96082
Pavey, L., Greitemeyer, T., & Sparks, P. (2012). I help because I want to, not because you tell me to": Empathy increases autonomously motivated helping. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 38*(5). https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167211435940
Pehrson, S., Vignoles, V. L., & Brown, R. (2009). National identification and anti immigrant prejudice: Individual and contextual effects of national definitions. *Social Psychology Quarterly, 72*(1), 24–38. https://doi.org/10.1177/0190272509072001
Preston, S. D. (2007). A perception-action model for empathy. *Empathy in Mental Illness, 1*(2), 428–447. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511543753.024
Quillian, L. (1995). Prejudice as a response to perceived group threat: Population composition and anti-immigrant and racial prejudice in Europe. *American Sociological Review, 60*(4), 586–611. https://doi.org/10.2307/2096296
Raijman, R. (2013). Foreigners and outsiders: Exclusionist attitudes towards labour migrants in Israel. *International Migration, 51*(1). https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2435.2011.00719.x
Raijman, R., & Hochman, O. (2011). National attachments, economic competition, and social exclusion of non-ethnic migrants in Israel: A mixed-methods approach. *Quality and Quantity, 45*(6). https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-009-9284-1
Reijerse, A., Van Acker, K., Vanbeselaere, N., Phalet, K., & Duriez, B. (2013). Beyond the ethnic civic dichotomy: Cultural citizenship as a new way of excluding immigrants. *Political Psychology, 34*(4), 611–630. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9221.2012.00920.x
Rivis, A., Sheeran, P., & Armitage, C. J. (2009). Expanding the affective and normative components of the theory of planned behavior: A meta-analysis of anticipated affect and moral norms. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 39*(12), 2985–3019. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1559-1816.2009.00558.x
Sagiv, L., & Roccas, S. (2021). How do values affect behavior? Let me count the ways. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 25*(4). https://doi.org/10.1177/10888683211015975
Schlueter, E., & Wagner, U. (2008). Regional differences matter: Examining the dual influence of the regional size of the immigrant population on derogation of immigrants in Europe. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology, 49*(2 3). https://doi.org/10.1177/0020815207088910
Schneider, S. L. (2008). Anti-immigrant attitudes in Europe: Outgroup size and perceived ethnic threat. *European sociological Review, 24*(1), 53–67.
Schug, J., Matsumoto, D., Horita, Y., Yamagishi, T., & Bonnet, K. (2010). Emotional expressivity as a signal of cooperation. *Evolution and Human Behavior, 31*(2), 87–94.
Semyonov, M., Raijman, R., & Gorodzeisky, A. (2006). The rise of anti-foreigner sentiment in European societies, 1988-2000. *American Sociological Review, 71*(3). https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240607100304
Shepherd, L., Fasoli, F., Pereira, A., & Branscombe, N. R. (2018). The role of threat, emotions, and prejudice in promoting collective action against immigrant groups. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 48*(4), 447–459.
Shih, M. J., Stotzer, R., & Gutiérrez, A. S. (2013). Perspective-taking and empathy: Generalizing the reduction of group bias towards Asian Americans to general outgroups. *Asian American Journal of Psychology, 4*(2), 79–83. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0029790
Shih, M., Wang, E., Bucher, A. T., & Stotzer, R. (2009). Perspective taking: Reducing prejudice towards general outgroups and specific individuals. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations, 12*(5), 565–577. https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430209337463
Sides, J., & Citrin, J. (2007). European opinion about immigration: The role of identities, interests and information. *British Journal of Political Science, 37*(3), 477–504. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123407000257
Simonovits, G., Kézdi, G., & Kardos, P. (2018). Seeing the world through the other's eye: An online intervention reducing ethnic prejudice. *American Political Science Review, 112*(1), 186–193. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055417000478
Sirin, C. V., Valentino, N. A., & Villalobos, J. D. (2017). The social causes and political consequences of group empathy. *Political Psychology, 38*(3), 427–448. https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12352
Smith, D. A. (1991). *National identity: London: Penguin Books*.
Snijders, T. A. (2005). Power and sample size in multilevel modeling. *Encyclopedia Of Statistics in Behavioral Science, 3*(157), 1573.
Sparkman, D. J., & Blanchar, J. C. (2017). Examining relationships among epistemic motivation, perspective taking, and prejudice: A test of two explanatory models. *Personality and Individual Differences, 114*, 48–56. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2017.03.049

Stephan, W. G., Renfro, C. L., Esses, V. M., Stephan, C. W., & Martin, T. (2005). The effects of feeling threatened on attitudes toward immigrants. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 29*(1), 1–19.

Swart, H., Moeschberger, S., Kagee, A., & Hewstone, M. (2023). Perceived diversity, threat, and attitudes towards immigrants: the mitigating role of cross-group friendships and empathy. *South African Journal of Psychology, 53*(1). https://doi.org/10.1177/00812463221093520

Triandis, H. C. (1989). The study of the self has a long tradition in psychology. *Psychological Review, 96*(3), 506–520.

Verkuyten, M., Kollar, R., Gale, J., & Yogeeswaran, K. (2022). *Right-wing political orientation, national identification and the acceptance of immigrants and minorities. Personality and Individual Differences, 184*, 111217.

Vescio, T. K., Sechrist, G. B., & Paolucci, M. P. (2003). Perspective taking and prejudice reduction: The mediational role of empathy arousal and situational attributions. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 33*(4), 455–472. https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.163

Wakefield, J. R., Hopkins, N., Cockburn, C., Shek, K. M., Muirhead, A., Reicher, S., & Van Rijswijk, W. (2011). The impact of adopting ethnic or civic conceptions of national belonging for others' treatment (q) *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 37*(12), 1599–1610. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167211416131.

Wang, Y. W., Davidson, M. M., Yakushko, O. F., Savoy, H. B., Tan, J. A., & Bleier, J. K. (2003). The scale of ethnocultural empathy: Development, validation, and reliability. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 50*(2). https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.50.2.221

Weaver, C. N. (2008). Social distance as a measure of prejudice among ethnic groups in the United States. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 38*(3), 779–795. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1559-1816.2007.00326.x

Wei, M., Su, J. C., Carrera, S., Lin, S.-P., & Yi, F. (2013). Suppression and interpersonal harmony: A cross-cultural comparison between Chinese and European Americans. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 60*, 625–633. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0033413

Williamson, S., Adida, C. L., Lo, A., Platas, M., Prather, L., & Werfel, S. H. (2020). Increasing immigrant inclusion: Family history, empathy, and immigration in the United States. *Immigration Policy Lab Working Paper, 01*, 20.

Wojcieszak, M., & Kim, N. (2016). How to improve attitudes toward disliked groups: The effects of narrative versus numerical evidence on political persuasion. *Communication Research, 43*(6), 785–809. https://doi.org/10.1177/0093650215618480

Wright, M., Citrin, J., & Wand, J. (2012). Alternative measures of American national identity: Implications for the civic-ethnic distinction. *Political Psychology, 33*(4), 469–482. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9221.2012.00885.x

Young, C., & Light, D. (2001). Place, national identity and post-socialist transformations: An introduction. *Political Geography, 20*(8), 941–955. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0962/6298(01)00039-7

Yoxon, B., Van Hauwaert, S. M., & Kiess, J. (2019). Picking on immigrants: a cross national analysis of individual-level relative deprivation and authoritarianism as predictors of anti foreign prejudice. *Acta Politica, 54*(3). https://doi.org/10.1057/s41269-017-0067-8

Zimmer, O. (2003). Boundary mechanisms and symbolic resources: Towards a process oriented approach to national identity. *Nations and Nationalism, 9*(2), 173–193. https://doi.org/10.1111/1469-8219.00081