Proposal

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(1) **Key Question:**

Immigration is among the most crucial problems of the world. According to the UNHCR, total number of refugees is about 22 million (3 million of them is hosted in Turkey) and the UN estimates the average immigration to Europe, North America and Oceania as 3.1 million people per annum.¹ These are only statistical figures and when we focus on individual stories, we are facing with the most important tragedies of the modern world.

For refugees and immigrants, accessing to a safe land where they can start a new life is the most urgent problem. However, how they are received by the locals is relatively more crucial for the rest of their lives. They can live as permanent foreigners, excluded and scapegoated or they may be integrated to the host society and may have equal rights with the nationals. This situation is directly related with how attitudes of locals towards immigrants are formulated and developed. In our paper, we will try to discuss the determinants of anti-immigrant attitudes and focus on a generally excluded factor, namely values.

Thus, the current literature on anti-immigrant attitudes is generally based on the rational choice theory with special emphasis on threat perceptions. We believe that anti-immigrant attitudes are not only outcomes of rational calculations but also shaped by individuals’ values. Our research question is therefore to show how values of individuals affect anti-immigrant attitudes and what is the relative power of values as a determinant of anti-immigrant attitudes, vis-à-vis other demographic, socioeconomic or structural variables.

We believe that focusing on values of individuals, along with rational calculations will help us to understand mechanisms of value formation such socialization or culture.

(2) **Specific Contribution and Theoretical Framework**

The current literature on anti-immigrant attitudes is highly concentrated on the “developed” Western world, countries such as Denmark, England, U.S.A., and Canada (Freeman et al., 2013). This is both because these are considered receiving countries that provide opportunities to immigrants, and also because of the prevalence of negative attitudes such as Islamophobia and xenophobia in these countries. However recent developments showed that Migration is presently viewed in diverse ways and most countries in the world are both sending and receiving migrants (Castles and Miller, 2009). Many migrants do not end up in the “West” or “North”. “East” to “East” and “South” to “South” migration is possible (Kleemans and Klugman, 2009).

In order to explain anti-immigrant attitudes, most studies base their arguments on perceived “threat” by the individuals. Many argue—on the basis of mainly one or two variables that are not always explicit—that individual conditions, perceptions, the group dimension, and contextual factors create different degrees of threat perception, which lead to varying levels of anti-immigrant sentiments.

Integrated threat theory (Stephan et al., 1999), one of the most well-known sociopsychological explanation of how anti-immigrant attitudes form, is based on two types of threat: economic (realistic threats) and symbolic (perceived differences such as values, religion, and culture) (Curşeu et al., 2007; Stephan et al., 1999). Since 9/11, however, various arguments based on security and safety have also come to the fore (Copenhagen School—Buzan et al. 1998; Chiru and Gherghina, 2012). A rhetoric of existential threat—read as physical threat—is used to remove migrants from the context of “normal politics” and force them into the “security” realm. With the increasing number of terrorist acts that threaten everyday life in various cosmopolitan cities, such as Paris, Istanbul, London, and Brussels, this last point can be repeatedly observed in the media.

When we try to summarize the existing literature through this lens, we first have to mention the use of individual factors in explaining the attitudes towards migrants. How migrants are perceived at the individual level seems to be affected by personal demographic features such as age, gender, social-economic conditions, employment status, class, and housing conditions (Kleemans and Klugman, 2009). Perceptions at the individual level related to trust, and collective or personal threat, are also influenced by structural or contextual variables in a country, including economic conditions, trade structures, and institutional characteristics (such as, relatively high rates of resident migrants, immigrants, and asylum seekers; high levels of unemployment; and relatively low levels of GDP allocated to social welfare) (Coenders et al., 2003; Kleemans and Klugman, 2009).

However, one of the most stated explanations of anti-immigrant attitudes is economic competition (Gorodzeisky and Semyonov, 2009; Scheve and Slaughter, 2001), which claims that increasing international labor flows create insecurity and feelings of threat, operationalized at both the individual (such as employment status, and low or high skilled labor) and the contextual levels (such as unemployment rates). Various empirical studies confirm that group threat has a negative effect on attitudes toward minority groups (Quillian, 1995; Coenders and Scheepers, 2003; McLaren, 2003). However, Pichler (2010) finds that there is a variable nature of perceived group threat across European societies, over time and across countries, due to changing economic conditions. Competition over scarce resources, particularly jobs, also increases the level of anti-immigrant attitudes (Zimmerman, 1995).

In line with economic competition, human capital theory argues that low education levels also generate anti-immigrant attitudes. Citizens with higher education in immigrant-receiving countries are expected to exhibit fewer anti-immigrant attitudes. There is an inverse relationship between education level and being anti-immigrant, with different explanations for why this happens, such as not directly competing with migrants, having more democratic values, or being more tolerant (Coenders and Scheepers, 2003; Hainmueller and Hiscox, 2007).

Another factor that determines anti-immigrant attitudes is stated as contact (McLaren, 2003; Fetzer, 2000). However, contact can work both ways—it can be positive, if backed by true acquaintances, and negative, if acquaintances are casual (Fetzer, 2000; Weber, 2015). For instance, Schneider
(2008) compared migrant group size and the role played by the perception of ethnic threat in anti-migrant attitudes, and found that a lack of familiarity and a fear of conflict over values and culture was influential in establishing the relationship between outgroup size and anti-immigrant attitudes.

The recent literature also underlines the importance of values, particularly tolerance, on public attitudes toward migrants (Davidov and Meuleman, 2012; Kehrberg, 2007; Herreros and Criado, 2009), as well as the role of personal traits (Dinesen et al., 2014; Gallego and Pardos-Prado, 2013). Davidov and Meuleman (2012) used Schwartz’s (2012) human values (power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity, and security) to illustrate the role of values in determining public attitudes toward migrants. There are also a few studies that try to understand the role of trust and tolerance in understanding public attitudes toward migration. Based on the five nationally-representative waves of the World Values Survey between 1981 and 2007, Inglehart and Welzel (2005, 2009) argued that survival values emphasized the economy and physical security, which were linked to low levels of trust and tolerance. According to the authors, “evidence from the World Values Survey indicates that the publics of high-income countries have much lower levels of xenophobia than do the publics of low-income countries,” (2009, p. 46) and “interpersonal trust and tolerance flourish when people feel secure” (2009, p. 47).

In a study that did not directly link tolerance and survival, Kehrberg (2007) used Eurobarometer data to analyze the impact of the national economy (estimated economic wealth and growth) and political tolerance on how migrants were viewed by the public. By including a measure of economic growth and defining political tolerance as the acceptance of civil liberties in all circumstances, he then claimed that public opinion regarding immigrants was best explained by a combination of economic impact, tolerance, and exposure. While Herreros and Criado (2009) emphasize the role that social trust and social capital play in how migrants are perceived, they also argue that societies with high levels of social trust tend to have more positive attitudes toward immigration. Halapuu et al. (2014), however, focus on the role of institutional trust in shaping pro-immigrant attitudes, particularly looking at the attitudes toward immigrants among members of minority and majority populations.

In our presentation, we will focus on the role of values, especially tolerance as a determinant of anti-immigrant attitudes. We are planning to show that the value system of individuals is equally important as above discusses economic or symbolic threat perceptions, and this factor is more relevant is some group of countries. We propose to understand anti-immigrant attitudes not only outcomes of rational calculations, but also a product of value systems of individuals and creating a tolerable environment for immigrants and refugees need more than simple economic measures.


Core Variables and Hypotheses:

Dependent Variable: Attitudes toward immigrants

Independent Variables:

A) Individual Level Variables

1. Socioeconomic Status: Self-report on a 10-point scale to place themselves within their own society. Higher socioeconomic status means less vulnerability to threats and feeling more secure, since the majority of immigrants and foreign workers compete with lower socioeconomic classes.

2. Change in Socioeconomic Status: Perceived change in the family’s socioeconomic status may affect anti-immigrant attitudes. A period of increased prosperity can make people more tolerant toward immigrants, while a relative decline could generate the opposite effect. This variable measure how the family perceives its socioeconomic status over the past four years.

3. Being Unemployed: Unemployed persons are more against job competition and therefore perceive immigrants/foreign workers as threat.

4. Perceived Effect of Economic Crisis: People who experienced a material decline due to the economic crisis are expected to have negative attitudes toward immigrants/foreign workers.

Rokeach (1973) defines values as prescriptive beliefs about desirable goals in life and modes of behaving that transcend specific objects and situations, which act as determinants of attitudes. Accordingly, anti-immigrant attitudes may be an output of an overall value system that also includes political affiliations.

Variables included in the model were:
1. Institutional Trust: The extent to which individuals trust institutions, from parliament to religious institutions.

2. Primary Trust: The trust people feel toward their primary network, family, friends, and relatives.

3. Overall Trust: The extent to which individuals trust people outside their primary network.

4. Overall Intolerance: The extent to which people are intolerant of others, based on factor analysis of the “don’t want as a neighbour” battery.

5. Morality-based Intolerance: The extent to which people are intolerant of homosexuals, drug addicts, and others, based on factor analysis of the “do not want as a neighbour” battery.

B-Country-level Variables:

Multilevel models allow us to include macro-level variables in addition to individual-level variables. These variables provide information on the sociological structure and economic performance of countries.

1. Ethnic Fractionalization Index: Data obtained from the Fearon (2003) database shows the degree of ethnic fractionalization in a given country.

2. Percentage of the immigrant population.

3. Unemployment: The unemployment score of a given country.


(4) Analyses and Modelling:

In our analyses, we will use hierarchical logistic regression models, where dependent variable is binary. We will include individual level variables first, starting with demographic variables. Then, following models will include other individual level variables.

Level 1 Model:

\[
\log \left( \frac{\pi_{ij}}{1 - \pi_{ij}} \right) = \beta_{0j} + \sum_{l=1}^{k} \beta_{lj} X_{lj} + \epsilon_{ij}
\]

X: Individual-level independent variables

Level 2 Model:

\[
\beta_{0j} = \tau_{0j} + \sum_{l=1}^{w} \tau_{lj} Z_{lj} + u_{j}
\]
Z= Country-level independent variables

**Combined Model:**

\[
(3) \log \left( \frac{\pi_{ij}}{1 - \pi_{ij}} \right) = \tau_{0j} + \sum_{i=1}^{t} \beta_{ij}X_{ij} + \sum_{w}^{w} \tau_{w}Z_{j} + \varepsilon_{ij} + u_{j}
\]

**Targeted Data Base:**

We are planning to use data set provided by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) under the research programme of Life in Transition Survey (LITS). The EBRD, acted as the coordinator of data collection effort of three phases of the research project in 2006, 2010 and 2016. The last wave is consisted of 51000 households in 34 countries including typical transitional countries in addition to Turkey, Greece, Germany and Italy.

The major objective of the research has been defined as “to analyse and understand how transition has affected the lives of people in regions, and what their views are on issues such as democracy, the role of the state, and prospects for the future”.

In our analyses we will focus on the last two waves of the research (LITSII and LITSIII).

**Roadmap:**

By using the pooled data set of LITSII and LITSIII, we are planning to make these analyses:

1) We will standardize variables to be analysed than combine two datasets;

2) Compare the quantities of interest across surveys by using descriptive statistics;

3) We will run logistic regression models by using individual level variables;

4) Then we will include country level variables and run multi-level logistic regression models;

5) We will run these models for each group of countries to show how different factors affect attitudes of individuals towards immigrants.