

European Social Survey Round 1 module proposal.

Proposal for a Module on Immigration and Attitudes

Principal Applicant – Ian Preston

The following proposal is from an international team of economists and sociologists with extensive experience in the analysis and design of survey data, with specialisation in immigration and minority-related issues. The team members are :

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Introduction

Migration has once again emerged as a key policy issue throughout Europe. The renewed interest in migration issues is driven in part by growing concern over refugee inflows, and the recognition that many of these refugees will settle permanently in their host countries. Related to this is a growing body of evidence that the children of earlier waves of migrants in many European countries lag behind natives in their education, occupational attainment, and incomes. On the other hand, there is pressure to relax the constraints on international flows of highly skilled migrants whose services are needed in certain key sectors, such as financial services and high-tech. Policy makers must strike a fine balance between the needs of refugees, the concerns of the native population, and the demands of employers. Consequently, the attitudes of the majority population towards ethnic minorities and immigrants are carefully monitored by politicians throughout Europe. A full understanding of the way opinions are formed about immigrants and ethnic minorities, and which factors influence these opinions, is clearly desirable. There are few issues of public policy that are currently more contentious or more in need of serious scientifically driven research.

Although Europe has always been characterized by large population movements, in the past three decades many countries have experienced large inflows of immigrants who are identifiable as ethnically different, and who may hold different cultural and religious values. The successful integration of these individuals in the first, second and third generation is one of the major challenges for Europe. Nevertheless, little is known about their experiences of social exclusion, or of the processes of development of the identities of various migrant groups. There is a need to understand these factors, to relate them to institutional settings across the different countries, and to the differences in personal and group characteristics of different migrant populations in different European countries. A few studies compare attitudes towards immigration across countries [2, 23]. These studies, however, suffer from the problem that they either are not comparable across countries due to different questions in the respective surveys or that they are based on small samples.

The questions we propose are aimed at deepening our understanding of the way all individuals form opinions and attitudes towards minorities, and towards immigration policies

Details

Questions to be asked will cover *perception of current social realities, public policy and its effects and opinions about reform of public policy*. The following summarises issues to be addressed through the survey. It is appreciated that the scale of the module may limit the number of questions to be asked and that the scope to address all of these areas may be limited.

Perceptions of current social realities

Beneath attitudes to these questions are perceptions regarding immigrant flows and immigrant numbers in the societies concerned. In large part, these may be inaccurate and the degree of inaccuracy may differ systematically with social characteristics of respondents, particularly age, education and related aspects of behaviour such as newspaper readership. An adequate understanding of differences in attitudes within the population requires an understanding of these differences and we would propose to

preface questions of opinion with questions addressing understanding of factual issues and possibly, if space within the module allows, with questions regarding characteristics and entitlements of immigrants.

Opinions regarding public policy

Of central interest will be questions regarding desirability of relaxation or tightening of immigration policy. At the most basic level these could relate to opinions on expanding or contracting the size of immigration flows into the country, as featured, for example, in many waves of the BSA survey in the UK. Past research [21] has shown the importance and usefulness of distinguishing according to broad areas of origin of immigrants. Hostility towards immigration from countries where populations are largely ethnically or culturally similar to the majority population in the receiving country differs in magnitude to that towards immigration from other sources and appears to be driven by very different factors. Recognising the importance of such distinctions will be an important feature of the questions asked.

Many other policy questions arise with regard to immigration and these will also be explored. In particular, different criteria are frequently advanced as being suitable elements in immigration policy. Fear of persecution, possession of appropriate skills, proficiency in the language of the receiving country, family links to those with already established residency are all criteria figuring in public discussion and questions will explore respondents' perceptions of the appropriateness of basing entitlements to settle on such grounds.

Closely related to this are questions regarding appropriate criteria for granting nationality or citizenship. Practices of different countries differ widely according to whether either or all of paternal relations, links by place of birth or length of residence are adequate grounds for claims to nationality. Differing national perceptions of the meaning of nationality could be explored through questions in the survey.

These are issues with a considerable European perspective to them and the recent EU Tampere Council envisaged the building, for example, of a Common European Asylum System. Achievement of full freedom of labour movement within the European Union makes a strong case for harmonisation of migration policies. Although the geographical scope of the proposed survey is not coterminous with the boundaries of the EU and will cover some respondents outside its member countries, the acceptability of progressive relaxation of border controls within the EU and of policy harmonisation may nonetheless be an issue worth addressing.

Policy towards issues of asylum have gained particular recent prominence with the increase in numbers of asylum applications. Questions will address appropriate policy responses. How should such applications be processed and what entitlements should asylum seekers have during consideration of their applications with regard to rights of free movement, rights to work and rights to claim social benefits? Opinions on such questions are likely to be linked to perceptions of the genuineness of typical claims of persecution by asylum seekers and this issue can also be addressed.

Related to immigration issues are policy questions regarding the treatment of immigrants after arrival. Questions will be included exploring opinions on laws which address discrimination against ethnic minorities and which seek to control incitement to racial hatred.

Related attitudes

Attitudes to immigration can be driven by many things including fears of competition in both cultural and economic spheres. Past research [21] has investigated the roles of these factors by investigating correlations between responses regarding questions of immigration policy and separate questions on racial, cultural and economic issues. We propose to facilitate continued research by again including questions on these issues but also by asking more directly about respondents' opinions on the impact of immigration on the receiving economy and society.

Indicators of prejudice will include questions about respondents' attitudes to racial intermarriage, presence of racial minorities in their workplace and in their neighbourhood, as well as direct questions about racial prejudice. We will also ask questions exploring respondents' opinions about the genuine extent of harassment and discrimination experienced by minorities.

To enable an assessment of whether personal labour market insecurity is a source of fears about economic competition from immigrants we will also ask questions about fears of job loss and future economic expectations.

Perceptions of effects of public policy

An important innovation however will be direct questions exploring respondents perceptions of the effects of immigration. Is immigration something which is culturally enriching or a threat to native culture? Is it a source of economic dynamism, a way of remedying skill shortages or a threat to jobs and wages of native workers? Is it a source of social tension or of crime? How does it impact on public spending - does it add to social costs through claims on the welfare system or is it a "cure" for future pension problems through demographic replacement? To what extent is immigration perceived to put pressure on housing? All of these will be the basis for specific questions enhancing our understanding of the sources of opposition to immigration. Questions will seek to distinguish between perceived effects on the respondent and on others. For example, respondents may be asked how immigration affects the economic position of high and low skilled workers and how it affects the respondent personally.

Finally a set of questions can ask whether restrictive policies are a source of genuine hardship through preventing family reunion or prohibiting individuals from poorer countries from opportunities for economic enrichment?

Previous Expertise

Survey Design and Analysis

James Nazroo was part of the team involved with the collection and description of data for the Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities. He subsequently designed the questions on racism, ethnic identity and perceptions of discrimination in Empiric, a mental illness study run by the NCSR. He has published extensively on research using attitudinal data on racism, discrimination, identity and health of ethnic minorities [25, 26, 27, 28].

Ian Preston has experience of collaborating on design of questions regarding tax policy in the 1995 British Social Attitudes Survey as part of a joint project between Social and Community Planning Research and the Institute for Fiscal Studies. He has published analyses of the results of that year's survey data both in the BSA Report [9, 10] and in economics journals [24]. He has also worked on other waves of BSA data, publishing work for example on health insurance and public policy [8].

Attitudes to Immigration

Christian Dustmann and Ian Preston have worked on attitudes towards ethnic minorities [22] and the role of racial and economic factors in attitudes to immigration policy [21]. They are currently working on ethnic minority experiences of harassment using the Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities. Thomas Bauer has conducted a cross national study of attitudes towards immigration using attitudinal survey data from several European countries [2].

Economic Effects of Immigration

David Card is one of the leading experts on the economics of immigration in the US. He has written significant contributions on, among other things, the economics of second generation migrants, on the economic impact of immigration and on economic competition between natives and immigrants [1, 11, 12].

Christian Dustmann has made many methodological and empirical contributions to research on the economics of migration, including work on return migration and language [13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20]. He and Ian Preston have both conducted research into the economic impact of immigration, including currently analysis for the UK Home Office of its impacts on the UK labour market. Thomas Bauer has worked extensively on immigration in the European context [2,3, 4, 5, 6, 7].

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Brief Biographies

Thomas Bauer is Program Director at Institute für die Zukunft der Arbeit (IZA) for the Research Area "Mobility and Flexibility of Labor". He is research affiliate of the Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR) in London and the Center for Comparative Immigration Studies (CCIS) at the University of California-San Diego, USA. His research interests include migration, population economics, and applied microeconometrics.

Selected Publications:

Bauer, T. and K. F. Zimmermann. "Network Migration of Ethnic Germans", *International Migration Review*, 1997

Bauer, T. and K. F. Zimmermann. "Causes of International Migration: A Survey", in: C. Gorter, P. Nijkamp, and J. Poot (eds.), *Immigrants, the City and the Labour Market*. Aldershot, Brookfield (USA), Singapore, Sidney: Ashgate, 1997

Bauer, T., M. Lofström and K. F. Zimmermann. "Immigration Policy, Assimilation of Immigrants and Natives' Sentiments towards Immigrants: Evidence from 12 OECD-Countries," *Swedish Economic Policy Review*, 2000.

David Card is the Class of 1950 Professor of Economics at University of California, Berkeley and a Faculty Research Associate, National Bureau of Economic Research. He has been Co-editor of *Econometrica* and Associate Editor of the *Journal of Labor Economics*. He was awarded the 1995 John Bates Clark Prize of the American Economic Association. He is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and of the Econometric Society. His research interests include economics of migration and wage determination.

Selected Publications:

Card, D. "Immigrant Inflows, Native Outflows and the Local Labor Market Impacts of Higher Immigration", *Journal of Labor Economics*, 2000.

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Christian Dustmann is Senior Lecturer at the Department of Economics, University College London and is currently Visiting Scholar in the Center of Labor Economics, Department of Economics, University of Berkeley. He is a Research Fellow of the Center for Economic Policy Research (CEPR), London, a Research Associate of the Institute for Fiscal Studies, London and a Research Fellow at the Institute für die Zukunft der Arbeit (IZA), Bonn. He is a Member of the Council of the European Society for Population Economics. His research interests include labour economics, microeconometrics, welfare economics, population and development economics.

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James Y. Nazroo is Reader in Sociology at the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health, Royal Free and University College Medical School, University College London and an Honorary Lecturer, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Sciences, University College London. His research interests include issues of ethnicity, racism, discrimination and health.

Selected publications:

Nazroo, J.Y. *The health of Britain's ethnic minorities: findings from a national survey*, London: Policy Studies Institute, 1996.

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Ian Preston is Reader in the Department of Economics, University College London and Research Fellow of the Institute for Fiscal Studies. He has been an Editor of Fiscal Studies and is currently editor of the Economic Journal Conference Volume. He is a Fellow of the Royal Statistical Society. His research interests are in the applied microeconomics of household behaviour and include issues regarding immigration, race and attitudes to public policy.

Selected publications:

Brook, L., J. Hall, J. and I. Preston. "What drives support for higher public spending?" in P. Taylor-Gooby (ed) *Choice and Public Policy: The Limits to Welfare Markets*, Macmillan, 1998.

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