

Abstract

This diploma thesis focuses on the so-called “migration crisis” and its impact on public opinion across the European Union (EU) between the years 2014 and 2017. It stems from existing literature that works with the concept of perceived group threat. The main goal is to analyze individual-level and contextual-level factors that played a key role in a certain development of native population’s negative attitudes towards migrants and refugees. Such context is represented by the EU member states. An important part of the analysis deals with the relative importance of contextual-level factors vis-à-vis individual-level determinants. Based on the results of multinomial multilevel logistic regression, the study finds that contextual-level characteristics had a substantial impact on negative attitudes towards immigrants and a large impact on negative attitudes towards refugees. Moreover, the importance of contextual determinants increased in 2015 and 2016, respectively, followed by a decline in the subsequent period. The analyses also revealed that during the „migration crisis“ the impact of specific categories of explanatory variables evolved differently. Furthermore, it was shown that educational attainment, preferred social identity and different historical immigration legacies had a considerably polarized impact on negative attitudes towards refugees. Moreover, the effect of some individual-level factors varied greatly across the EU member states.

Key words

Attitudes, immigrants, refugees, European Union, perceived group threat, multilevel logistic regression