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# EFFECTS OF IMMIGRATION ON PUBLIC OPINION ON THE FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

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# Preface

Maria Solevid, my academic supervisor, provided excellent support during my research process. For this I am grateful.

I would also like to thank colleagues, family and friends for their encouragement.

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## Abstract

The freedom of movement of persons is a fundamental principle of European integration. Public support for EU policy on freedom of movement is essential, as this might influence the overall public support for EU. This thesis investigates if the personal economic situation and the relative size of immigration affect the public opinion on the freedom of movement.

The thesis contributes to existing research on public opinion by examining up-to-date data from the Eurobarometer 85.2 (2016) with a multidimensional approach. It also contributes by exploring distinctions in public opinion on internal immigration and external immigration.

The statistical investigation shows that if a person considers her economic situation as very good she is also more in favour of the freedom of movement. The relative size of internal immigration has no direct impact on the opinion on the freedom of movement. However, if individuals perceive their economic situation secure, they are likely to become more positive towards the freedom of movement with increasing numbers of EU immigrants. On the other hand, individuals, who consider their economic situation insecure, are likely to become less in favour towards the freedom of movement with increasing numbers of internal immigration.

In parallel, the thesis analyses public opinion on immigration of nationals from outside EU. People who consider their economic situation as very good are more in favour of external immigration. The relative size of external immigration has no direct impact on the opinion towards external immigration; no interaction was found.

*Keywords:* EU, public opinion, freedom of movement of persons, internal immigration, external immigration, size of immigration

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## **Abbreviations**

ECJ – European Court of Justice

EES – European Election Studies

EU – European Union

GDP – Gross National product

GNI – Gross National income

IMF – International Monetary Fund

OECD – The Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development

PPP – Purchasing Power Parity

TFEU – Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

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# Introduction

Freedom of movement and residence by citizens of the European Union (EU) is the cornerstone of the Union citizenship. It is one of the four fundamental Freedoms guaranteed by EU. Already in 1957, the Treaty of Rome secured rights to move and work in another member state. In 2016, about 19 million EU citizens were residing in a EU country other than their country of birth. In recent years, the freedom of movement within EU as well as the external immigration (i.e. immigration from outside the EU), have become controversial political issues of great magnitude.

Public support for EU's freedom of movement, as for other supranational policies, is essential as it might influence the public support for EU in general. According to Easton's systems theory a political system contains two principal types of support mechanisms, diffuse support and specific support. Specific support refers to how the system responds to demands by the system's members. In some of the member states, such as the UK, we are witnessing strong opposition towards EU's internal mobility. In this specific political context, emphasised in 2016 by Brexit, the 2017 general election in the Netherlands and the 2017 presidential election in France, it is important to understand how immigration affects public opinion on the freedom of movement. Not understanding and meeting the demand by the citizens might undermine the political system of EU with serious consequences.

Freedom of movement, also known as the internal immigration, can be explored from at least three viewpoints.

- a. For EU, the freedom of movement is a critical element in the formation of the internal market. As importantly, the freedom of movement is linked to the European citizenship, introduced in the Maastricht Treaty (1992). The individual rights of mobile citizens have increased continuously, since freedom of movement is considered an element in further EU integration.
- b. For the member state, the freedom of movement represents gains as well as losses. Immigrants can help advance economic growth, but they might also put strains on the welfare system. The member states in the EU are different in many aspects; they vary in size, economic wealth, number of immigrants, political system, history, unemployment situation, quality of government etc. These elements of diversity may have an impact on public opinion on the freedom of movement in the member states.
- c. For the individual citizen, the freedom of movement allows possibilities to pursue a richer and better life elsewhere. It is a liberating force for those who are mobile. For other persons, freedom of movement might be negative, if immigrants increase competition in the labour market, causing downward pressures on wages and conditions of work. Union citizenship and the freedom of movement that comes with it, create a gap between the people who benefit from it and people who don't. As a result, the Union citizenship might create a perception of winners and losers (de Witte 2016:43).

With these three dimensions as a background it is rational to assume that individuals in different member states will experience aspects of immigration differently. The dominant research approach to explain public opinion puts focus on economic factors such as individual cost-benefit analyses (McLaren 2007; Garry and Tilley 2009; Hobolt and de Vries 2016). The overall aim of this thesis is to investigate how actual immigration affects public opinion on the freedom

of movement. The thesis investigates if opinions vary according to the individuals' judgements of their own economic situation, conditioned by the actual size of immigration. Understanding new perspectives on public opinion is considered essential for future of EU policy making.

1st of January, 2016 19.3 million people were residing in another member state than their country of birth and 35.1 million people born outside EU were living in one of the member state (Eurostat). Internal immigration is agreed at the EU level while the external immigration is determined at the level of the member states. Even if both areas for policy making are decided at different political levels, they remain interrelated. Efforts have been made to decide on a common standpoint, when it comes to external immigration in EU. Still, we lack comparative insights and knowledge about public perceptions of the freedom of movement and related attitudes towards external immigration.

This thesis argues that, in the present situation, the relative size of immigration from both other EU countries and from countries outside the Union might impact the public support for freedom of movement and external immigration. Economic immigrants from non-EU countries and refugees need to be considered together when discussing the freedom of movement. The flow of mobile citizens within the Union has similar effects on the member state as immigration by persons from third countries as they can put pressure on the labour and housing markets (Fine 2016:21-22; Ruhs 2016:41; EEAG 2017:92). Previous research on the impact of immigration level in connection to sentiments towards immigration is still ambiguous (Toshkov and Kortenska 2014:1). One purpose for this thesis is therefore to perform a comparative analysis of the public opinion on both internal and external immigration and if they follow the same pattern. Since the number of people living in EU, born outside the union are relatively larger than the number of internal immigration, it is appropriate to investigate these different type of immigration together.

### **Research aim**

Much of previous research on public opinion concentrates on the general approval of EU (Hobolt and de Vries 2016:414), and not on support for specific policies like the freedom of movement of persons. Many studies aim at uncovering attitudes at the individual level, but there is a lack of studies investigating how contextual factors on the national level can help us understand how these individual attitudes vary across countries. This thesis aims at examining if the public opinion on the freedom of movement is affected by the individual's economic situation conditioned by the relative size of immigration in their host country. In addition, this thesis will investigate and compare, if attitudes towards internal EU immigration and external immigration from non-EU countries follow similar patterns. It is not very common to make this divide. This thesis will contribute to existing research by examining new data from Eurobarometer 2016. It will acknowledge the multidimensional aspects to explain public opinion. Furthermore, it will make a contribution by studying specific support of a policy since previous researchers have mainly focused on the general approval or disapproval of EU.

### **Outline of this thesis**

*The freedom of movement and external immigration in EU*, this part will briefly introduce and problematize the concept of internal immigration and the meaning of being a citizen of the Union. *Theory*, the point of departure is David Easton's political theory and definitions of public

support from the 1960's. Attitudes on immigration can be analysed from different theoretical perspectives. The general assumption is that individuals make rational (e.g. economic) choices based on cost-benefit or similar calculations when shaping attitudes. A second approach is social theory. Attitudes are often seen as positions towards another social group, where people are categorized as an in-group or an out-group. Thirdly, people's opinion can stem from political cues and benchmarking. *Previous research*, this chapter makes a brief introduction to the research field in public opinion on European integration. This thesis departs from different perspectives; public opinion related to immigration, public opinion related to economics and how these opinions vary according to national contexts. *Research hypotheses*, this presents the specified research hypotheses. *Methodology*, a statistical analysis will be conducted. Research design, empirical material, delimitations and operationalization of central concepts are presented in this section. *Analysis*, the regression results will be presented and compared. *Conclusion and discussion*, this part summarizes the confirmed or discharged hypotheses and discuss the results. In addition, this part will provide policy implications and offer recommendations for future research.

## The freedom of movement and external immigration in EU

The internal market of EU is based on the four freedoms: free movement of goods, persons, services and capital. Nevertheless, the freedom of movement of persons also comes with rules and conditions regulating the free market (Barnard 2013:3). By January 1, 2016, some 19 million persons were born in another EU country than their current country of residence (Eurostat). After the Brexit referendum, it seems clear that the relatively large immigration to the UK played a decisive role for voters to support Brexit (Clarke et al 2016:24).

With regard to external immigration, EU experienced large-scale immigration between 2014 and 2016 – both economic immigration as well as forced immigration (e.g. refugees), which put heavy pressure on Europe. In 2016, some 35 million residents in the EU were born in a non-EU country (Eurostat). Already in 1990-1991, before the surge in immigration, the EU member states agreed to the Dublin Convention on Asylum as well as the External Frontiers Convention. These conventions facilitate for third country nationals to reside and travel within the union. The framework of asylum and immigration relates to standards, procedures, rules and conditions such as entry visas and the freedom to travel within EU for third country nationals (Hix and Høyland 2011:282-283). Even though the EU member states manage and control most aspects of external immigration themselves, EU made efforts in creating a common EU policy (Hix and Høyland 2011: 285). The immigration and refugee crisis of 2015 has shown the weakness of the Dublin Regulation (Dublin III from 2013) and has forced the European Commission to propose a reformation of the Common European Asylum System (Dublin IV).

### Union citizenship from different perspectives

Ever since the signing of the Treaty of Rome in 1957, the right to move and to seek work in another member state has been a fundamental right. Later, in the Maastricht treaty (1992), the ‘Citizenship of the Union’ was introduced. Article 20(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) stipulates the rights that belong to the European Union Citizenship.

*Citizens of the Union shall enjoy the rights and be subject to the duties provided for in the Treaties. They shall have, inter alia:*

- *the right to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States*

Barnard (2013) summarises the right to move freely:

- *the right to leave the home state*
- *the initial right of entry into another Member State*
- *a free standing and directly effective right of residence in another Member State*
- *the right to enjoy social advantages on equal terms with nationals for those lawfully resident in another Member State*
- *the right to have decisions taken against them regularly reviewed* (Barnard 2013:437)

The right to leave a member state for another only requires a valid identification card. Member states are obliged to allow citizens of the Union to enter their country. The right to be resident in another member state concerns residence up to three months; this right comes with the condition not to become a burden to the social welfare system of the host state. This right of

residence after three months is only valid for persons who have an occupation or income. Apart from the TFEU, there is the Citizens' Rights Directive that applies to all citizens of EU and also to their family members, in order to facilitate their entry and residence (ibid: 438). One of the cornerstones of this Directive is the right to equal treatment. This means that citizens of EU, who are residents in another member state than their country of origin, cannot be discriminated based on nationality.

EU member states have different experiences with regard to immigration. Moreover, historically, people in Europe have migrated from East to West (Triandafyllidou and Gropas: 12-13). The gatekeeper for granting EU citizenship is not EU itself, but the member states (Barnard 2013:476; Hix and Høyland 2011:281). EU citizenship does not give a EU citizen equal rights in every member state, since each member state may offer different national rights. Each member state decides who is a EU citizen and, because of this, the member state also decides who has the right to benefit from economic and political rights (Hix and Høyland 2011:281).

The freedom of movement is based on the presumption that the single market can operate independently of social policies in each country. Here, the autonomy of the nation-state has increasingly weakened along with a more integrated market (Leibfried 2015:264; Gabel and Palmer 1995:6). Since the 1960s, the European Court of Justice (ECJ) delivered verdicts in some 1400 cases on social policy; 65 per cent of these cases were related to the free movement of workers, their social security and non-discrimination (Leibfried 2015:274). These court cases reflect tensions between the supranational efforts to integrate the EU market and the interests of the member states. This evolution has been characterised as a growing multi-tier system with the member states acting as influencers and EU-institutions as moderators of the system (Leibfried 2015:290). McCann calls these conflicts 'regime competition'. Applying European law is a challenge to existing national institutional arrangements (McCann 2010:178).

The right to move freely within the Union is a question of having the possibility to access the common market. The freedom of movement as a concept cannot be divided only into what impact it will have on mobile and as well as immobile citizens. It also involves those who use the right to move, those who cannot use the right to move and those who choose not to use this right (Oberman 2016:32). Yet, the possibility to move freely might be limited to those who have the economic means, thereby creating a gap between those who remain and those who move (Sardelic 2016:27; Bauböck 2016:19). As a result, the immobile citizen might face increased competition from mobile individuals. This can lead to a perception of winners and losers in European integration (de Witte 2016:43). The possibility to move is not only about economic means, but also about the social and cultural capital of the individual. However, freedom of movement includes freedom to stay. To use this freedom is about having control over one's own residence and movements (Oberman 2016: 31).

# Theory

Public opinion works as an indicator of support for the political system. Not meeting public demand could weaken the political system and, in the long run, might even undermine its existence. The political system of the EU triangulates between input-throughput-output. The legitimacy of the system depends upon these processes. According to previous research, there are at least three dominant approaches for analysing public support of European integration: the economic/utilitarian, the identity and the cue-taking and benchmarking approaches (Hooghe and Marks 2005:419; Hobolt and de Vries 2016). The theory and the analytical approaches of this thesis are designed for empirical research on attitudes towards immigration. The neoclassical economic theory on immigration claims that individual attitudes towards immigration are caused by relatively straightforward economic calculations. By the identity approach to public opinion analysis, social science concepts - such as group membership and social identity – are being applied within a political science framework.

## Diffuse and specific support

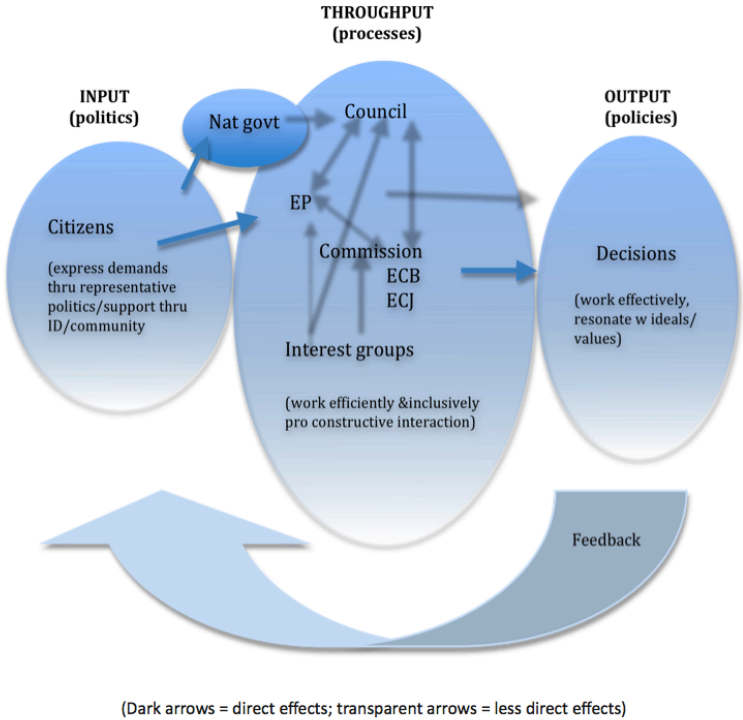
In the 1960's, the work of David Easton came to influence political science in a new direction by a systems approach to 'empirically oriented political theory'. In a simplified version of his model, the political system is the central unit, surrounded by the social and physical environment outside of the system's boundaries. The political system is subject to demands and support (input) that influence the system. The decisions and actions that may follow (output) influence the social and physical environment. Hence, there is a continuous loop of input and output as well as feedback from previous actions of the political system towards its environment (Easton 1965:110-112). In order for the political system to persist and endure, the correspondence among inputs, outputs and feedback needs to be successfully executed (Easton 1965:119). For Easton, the feedback function is indispensable to the persistence of the system.

Stress in the political system occurs when the system strives to handle challenging inputs such as new demands. Not being able to make decisions is considered a failure of the political system's essential functions (Easton 1965:24). According to David Easton a political system can become stressed also by decline in public support. Responses to decline in support take three significant forms. First, *structural regulation* of system support refers to the 'efforts to change the structure and processes that characterize a particular type of political system'. Second, *diffuse support* is defined by the members' (e.g. the citizens') loyalty and affection to the system. Hence, diffuse support is a more general type of support. The third form of system response is *specific support* or the *output of regulative mechanisms*. Specific support occurs when demands are met through the system's output. Easton suggests that this type of support contributes to system sustainability. Not meeting demands might weaken the system (Easton 1965: 124-126).

Vivien Schmidt's systems theory is developed from David Easton's work and applied on the political system of European Union. Figure 1 illustrates citizens' demands as input to the system, either directly to EU institutions or through the citizens' national governments. The throughput process refers to the quality of decision-making where EU-institutions, interests groups and other actors process the input. Output is decisions and policies. These policies will produce feedback and later become input. Input-throughput-output represent a continuous loop. Schmidt says that

these three mechanisms – input legitimacy, throughput legitimacy and output legitimacy – are different, yet interdependent. Input is citizens’ expression of a demand. Throughput depends on openness, efficiency and interaction with citizens in the decision-making process. Output depends on the throughput process to be in line with the citizens’ values and demands. Increasing or decreasing one of these three mechanisms will impact the system’s legitimacy. EU’s political system is complex, since some decisions are split between the member states and the various EU-institutions (Schmidt 2010:8-10).

**Figure 1. Systems Theory of the EU: Input, Output and ‘Throughput’**



Source: Schmidt 2010:10

Easton’s systems theory has two kinds of support. *Diffuse support*, such as loyalty for the system, is more abstract, since it refers to affection of a system. *Specific support* is a measurement of satisfaction that can impact the loyalty. Schmidt’s systems theory of the EU is an illustration of the specific support. Even if Schmidt focuses on specific support, the diffuse support remains present. The extent of loyalty to a system will impact the support for outcomes differently. In this case, the diffuse support will act as a filter determining opinion. Public opinion in this thesis concerns support for the freedom of movement of persons, one of the pillars of European integration. Public support for the freedom of movement can be seen as a measure of specific support for a policy area of EU.

**Explaining support for EU: Three approaches to public opinion research**

The three dominant approaches to public opinion research on EU are economic, identity and cue-taking and benchmarking. The economic or utilitarian approach contains two strands: egocentric evaluations and sociotropic evaluations. Here, an individual who benefits from an integrated European market seems more likely to support EU. The identity approach, on the

other hand contains e.g. territorial identification, identification with the nation or with Europe, and cultural identification, e.g. attitude towards people from other cultures and countries (Hobolt and de Vries 2016:421; Hooghe and Marks 2005:423). A citizen can have several identities. The national identity and the European identity are not necessary in conflict (Hooghe and Marks 2005:423). The third approach is about cue-taking and benchmarking. This approach is based on how the perception of EU is grounded in the national political arena such as political parties, mass media and elite-messages.

According to neoclassical economic theory, international immigration of labour is driven essentially by wage differentials among countries and can be analysed as rational economic decisions by potential migrants regarding benefits and costs. In this part of the thesis, we will emphasize the economic approach to public opinion research when constructing the theoretical context. The identity approach and the cue-taking and benchmarking approach will be brought up as complementary perspectives.

**The economic approach**

In public opinion, hostile attitudes can stem from group characteristics, but attitudes can also originate from conflicts of interest. An example of the latter is competition in the labour market regarding jobs, wages and conditions at work. In times of economic decline, conflicts or even hostility might be more easily detectable. Since a conflict could be a rivalry between individuals, it might be difficult to know if the conflict is based on economic terms or on other matters such as ethnic prejudice (Allport 1954:229-230).

**Figure 2. Economic models of public opinion on European integration**

	<i>Objective evaluation</i>	<i>Subjective evaluation</i>
<i>Egocentric</i>	<p><b>I</b></p> <p>Education Manual worker*GNI Professional*GNI</p>	<p><b>III</b></p> <p>Personal economic prospects</p>
<i>Sociotropic</i>	<p><b>II</b></p> <p>Fiscal transfer Type of capitalism</p>	<p><b>IV</b></p> <p>National economic prospects</p>

Source: Hooghe and Marks 2005:422

According to the economic model by Hooghe and Marks (Figure 2), the individual person evaluates benefits of integration from a subjective perspective as well as from an objective perspective. In the wider context, these dual perspectives by the many individuals, will influence also public opinion on EU integration.

The sociotropic context includes economic prospects regarding the whole nation. Moreover, in shaping public opinions, evaluation of integration can occur within a sociotropic context as well as within an egocentric context. In line with this model of analysis (Figure 2), public opinion on the consequences for the labour market of the influx of immigrants due to the freedom of



movement, will depend on factors within each of the squares of the model. For example, an individual who perceives European integration as beneficial from both the individual and national perspectives is likely to be in favour of further integration (Anderson and Reichert 1996:236; Hooghe and Marks 2005:422).

People's experiences of the EU membership as beneficial or not beneficial represent another perspective of cost/benefit arguments (McLaren 2002:552; Garry and Tilley 2009:362). Benefits can be divided into direct and indirect benefits. Direct benefits relate to the EU-membership, such as trade benefits, while indirect benefits are associated with actual returns via EU budget allocations. This distinction between direct and indirect benefits also applies to individual evaluations. When assessing direct and indirect benefits, EU citizens will tend to consider personal benefits as well as national benefits (Anderson and Reichert 1996:233-234).

According to the neoclassical economic model, immigration is a function of expected earnings due to wage differentials and probability of employment (Kurekova 2011:5). The model predicts that there is a relationship between differences in wage levels across country borders and immigration flows. The likelihood for immigrants to find work depends also on the structure of the labour market and supporting institutions (EEAG 2017:93). However, the consequences of immigration for the labour market are complicated and depend on factors like the skills of the immigrants and of the indigenous workforce, rates of unemployment, laws and labour market rules and the time allowed for work and residence in the host country.

If the simple model of supply and demand of labour is applied to immigration, wages in the receiving countries tend to decrease, while, in the sending countries, wages tend to increase following the emigration of workers. For example, if immigrants work mostly in low-skill segments of the labour market in the receiving country, wages tend to be reduced and unemployment tends to increase for people who are working in the same labour market segment (Kahanec 2010:7-8). The conditions are that the supply of low skilled labour increases with immigration (EEAG 2017:94) and influx of labour immigrants is high.

More generally, the employment situation in the various EU countries is influenced by the structure of the welfare system ('types of capitalism') and the transfer of benefits by way of a wide range of social services, i.e. healthcare, social security and education. These wider contexts will determine the population's employment situation (Esping-Andersen 1990:221-223). Cf. the sociotropic objective evaluation in Square II of Figure 2.

The connection between the European welfare systems or types of capitalism and the different labour markets is investigated by Esping-Andersen (1990). Esping-Andersen claims that the welfare state itself is a power resource that impacts the government, the market and the family by different types of arrangements (Esping-Andersen 1990:26-29). Sociotropic evaluation includes EU's impact at the national level. Sociotropic evaluation also includes how people perceive EU's influence on available welfare. People do not evaluate economic benefits only for themselves, but also for the group they belong to (Hooghe and Marks 2005:420). A big inflow of immigrants can put pressure on available welfare services. This refers to Square IV in Figure 2.

When challenged by immigrant workers, the free movement of persons within EU might cause people to feel more vulnerable (McLaren 2007:255; Garry and Tilley 2009:365). Immigration

becomes a threat, since immigration can jeopardise the individual's economic position. Hooghe and Marks call such evaluations egocentric - objective (according to the individual's profession) as well as subjective (according to the individual's economic prospects).

People evaluate policies differently with respect to what effect the policy will have on their personal economy and lives. At the microeconomic level, the model of individual choice might be classified as human capital theory, depicted in the egocentric (upper) axis in Figure 2. Obviously, the individual citizens in EU live under different economic circumstances and they will - because of their circumstances - perceive European integration differently (Gabel and Palmer 1995:4; Gabel 1998:336). A neoclassical economist will claim that immigration is based on rational calculation of benefits and costs, mainly economic but also psychological. People can be opponents to immigration based on economic calculations. Egocentric subjective evaluations correspond to Square III in Figure 2.

The human capital theory of immigration claims that age, skills, family status and other socio-economic factors influence decisions to emigrate. Human capital also refers to individual skills, i.e. education and occupation. Some skills are more transferable in an advanced industrial economy (Gabel and Palmer 1998:7). The network theory of immigration suggests that the existence of a diaspora or networks of earlier immigrants is likely to influence decisions by emigrants on where to go. The existence of such networks reduces the uncertainties and costs of immigration (Kurekova 2011:10). This theory corresponds to Square I in Figure 2.

The attitude among low-skilled labour will be influenced by the supply and demand of low-skilled labour force. One prediction is that when a country is labour rich, with a labour abundance, citizens will be more supportive towards integration (Brinegar and Jolly 2005:160; Hooghe and Marks 2005:421). People doing unskilled work will also be more sceptical towards further integration, while managers and professionals are more in favour. The opinion on immigration will be influenced by an individual's economic situation, conditioned by type of welfare capitalism since the character of a welfare system's intuitional arrangements will affect a person's perception of their economic situation differently. Individual factors will therefore have different outcomes depending on national circumstances (Brinegar and Jolly 2005:157-159; Gabel and Palmer 1998:7).

This thesis argues that the economic situation will determine the opinion about the freedom of movement. It seems rational to draw a connection between freedom of movement and the impact of immigration on domestic labour market. Egocentric evaluations can because of this look different when filtered through sociotropic evaluations. The economic approach has dominated the research on public opinion towards EU integration. Alternative public opinion research efforts benefit from other analytical approaches. In the following sections we will focus on explanations related to identity and to cue-taking and benchmarking respectively.

### **The identity approach**

During the past many years, immigration has created ethnic diversity in several European countries. 'Out-groups' and 'in-groups' are key concepts of social identity theory. The shaping of an 'in-group' stems from a sense of belonging and could even be perceived as an issue of survival (Allport 1954:42). Within this new and changing European context, social science studies have indicated that individual attitudes and public opinions are not always made by rational choice,

based on facts and solid knowledge. Feelings, ideological standpoints, political predispositions and even prejudices play important roles when opinions on immigration are being formed (Meuleman 2009:27).

Allport (1954) turns to sociology when explaining the effect of contact between people. The type of contacts determines if the process of increasing or decreasing prejudice will occur. There are several aspects of contacts and interpersonal relationships. One of the quantitative aspects of contact involve variables like frequency, duration, number of persons involved and variety (Allport 1954: 262-263). In fact, the presence of immigrants may foster favourable attitudes towards immigrants and immigration. On the other hand, under unfavourable conditions, opposite attitudes might occur, generating hostility and increasing prejudices against immigrants (Azrout et al 2013:482). For example, due to the size of immigration, citizens might perceive European integration as a threat to the nation-state. Because of this, people might make a distinction between 'in-groups' (persons from their own nation) and 'out-groups' (e.g. people from other EU member states) (Garry and Tilley 2009:364). Support for enlargement or support for EU in general might depend on how people perceive others, belonging to European union or outside the union as an 'in-group' or 'out-group' (Azrout 2011:17).

In some of the EU member states, negative attitudes towards immigrants are associated with the declining support for European integration. Nevertheless, the actual impact of the level of immigration on attitudes and public opinion regarding immigration is not evident by current research (Toshkov and Kortenska 2014:1; McLaren 2015:80). It has also been difficult to determine under which circumstances contact is more favourable (Toshkov and Kortenska 2014:4). People are not homogenous, they will react differently to immigrants. Information about an immigrant group might have different outcomes on attitudes, because people tend to use their knowledge in varying ways and interpret facts differently. Size and density of minority groups also matter. Anti-group feelings might become more evident, when the size and influx of an immigrant group is more visible (Allport 1954:227). Immigration of a different group of people may increase the risk of conflict, the larger the minority group and the more rapid the change. In reality, actual direct contacts with immigrants will involve only a minority of the native population. Because of this, the indirect effects of the presence of a minority group may dominate. In this context, immigration becomes a subjective evaluation (Toshkov and Kortenska 2014:6-7). Level of immigration might explain why the public opinion in different countries shows different patterns in attitudes towards immigrants.

### **The cue-taking and benchmarking approach**

Since EU is a complex matter, this analytical approach in public opinion research assumes that the individual citizen, if lacking information, will take a shortcut and evaluate EU on the basis of national context or according to party allegiance (Hooghe and Marks 2005:425; Hobolt and de Vries 2016:422). For example, people who vote for a party with a Eurosceptic program might be less supportive of EU. Another inclination could be the individual's appreciation of national public institution: If citizens are satisfied with the performance of national public institutions, they might consider further EU integration as a risk of undermining the sovereignty of the nation state. Dissatisfaction might, on the other hand, cause an opposite opinion of EU integration (Hobolt and de Vries 2016:423).

The cue-taking and benchmarking approach to public opinion is represented in the research work of John Zaller. Zaller's analytical model explains how people receive and accept political messages, named the RAS-model (Receive Accept Sample). According to this model, people evaluate political information in these three steps. A person's opinion is a sum of previous received, already accepted information that can be sampled from a person's memory. Opinion will also depend on time and context and opinions will vary according to elite messages, recent happenings or political campaigns. For example, a news story on a political issue will likely update an individual's attitude on this issue (Zaller 1992:42-51). This thesis uses data collected from the time before Brexit, June 2016. Also, the public opinion was measured before this new European political context of 2017, influenced by the general election in the Netherlands and the presidential election in France.

The theory and analytical framework for this thesis are drawn from economic models of public opinion. The main perspective is the individual's egocentric subjective evaluation. In addition, this thesis argues that the societal context, where the individual is located, will matter for the individual's evaluation that shapes her opinion. In short, egocentric subjective evaluations are filtered through sociotropic objective evaluation. Figure 2 offers further guidance when presenting previous research in the next chapter.

## Previous research

The general public support for European integration peaked in the beginning of the 1990's and has since declined (Hix and Høyland 2011). After the crisis in the Eurozone this decline was more apparent and the rise in support of Eurosceptic parties became more evident (Hobolt and de Vries 2015:414). In some EU countries, public support for European integration is stronger than in others. Hix and Høyland identify two major reasons for the differences. Firstly, there are political differences: The EU member countries have different political histories and cultures. The country-based political systems work differently in their practices of democracy. Hix and Høyland claim that strong democratic institutions – along with citizens who generally trust their political leaders - might positively influence political attitudes to European integration and to the EU. Secondly, economic differences among the European countries could also explain differences in public attitudes toward European integration. EU countries have different economic structures, different composition of industries, etc. Hence, it seems relevant to investigate both individual and contextual factors in research on public opinion on freedom of movement and immigration.

In their review of previous research on public support for EU, Hobolt and de Vries acknowledge a distinction between studies that investigate diffuse support and studies that investigate specific support. Diffuse support and the general approval or disapproval of further European integration has been the main focus in European integration research (Hobolt and de Vries 2016:414). Ten years ago, Hooghe and Marks offered a comprehensive overview on previous studies of the public opinion on European integration (Hooghe and Marks 2005:428-429). They concluded that the dominant explanations were drawn from three analytical perspectives: the economic/utilitarian, identity, and cue-taking and benchmarking (ibid:420). Hooghe and Mark's result was confirmed last year (Hobolt and de Vries 2016:414).

The economic/utilitarian approach within research on public support for EU can be divided into the individual context and the country context. Previous research on individual explanatory variables that explain support for the EU is extensive. Variables at the level of the individual have been thoroughly studied, while support in combination with context level is still understudied (Hobolt and de Vries 2016:426). Previous research on how attitudes among EU citizens towards immigration relate to support for European integration is well known (Toshkov and Kortenska 2014:1). The studies presented below represent three analytical angles that constitute the main core of this thesis: how immigration affects attitudes towards immigration or EU integration, how economics affect the opinion on immigration or EU integration and how these attitudes are shaped by the country context.

### Economic variables in a European context

The key question in Toshkov and Kortenska (2014) study is whether the actual level of immigration, after the Central and Eastern European (CEE) enlargement in 2004, has reduced public support for European integration. Their study sheds light on EU enlargement and how the freedom of movement of persons affect public opinion among four EU countries. The authors combine the sociotropic objective evaluation and the egocentric subjective evaluation. Here, the level of analysis is kept at the regional level, since they claim that immigration has the strongest impact regionally. Moreover, immigration impacts on support for EU will also vary according to

country. The relationship is conditioned by economic circumstances (Toshkov and Kortenska 2014:2). The four countries included in the study are the Netherlands, Ireland, France and Spain (ibid:14-15). The presence of immigrants is measured by the size of the local CEE immigration community. The presence of CEE immigrants and support for EU has a negative relationship in the Netherlands, Ireland and France, while in Spain this relationship could not be statistically proved (ibid:20). The result suggests that immigration from CEE countries has a negative effect on support for European integration. This might seem as a paradox as internal immigration remains important for the economic union to function successfully (Toshkov and Kortenska 2014:1-3).

Brinegar and Jolly (2005) investigate if socio-tropic or egocentric evaluations have a stronger impact on citizens' attitudes towards EU. If the individual's type of occupation or skill has an impact on the opinion on European integration, the opinion should be considered in the national context, such as factor endowment and type of capitalism. They emphasize research by Esping-Andersen and how various types of welfare capitalism might influence the individual's opinion. At the national level, welfare state type is used as macro variable. Brinegar and Jolly combine egocentric objective evaluation with the sociotropic objective evaluation as indicators that determine the opinion on EU to perform a multi-level analysis. Public opinions depict different features depending on socio-tropic assessments and different national contexts (ibid:159). For example, previous research shows that highly skilled citizens feel less vulnerable in times of shifting economic circumstances.

Garry and Tilley (2009) also use the country context as an explanatory variable. Like McLaren (2002), the authors use both economic and identity as factors for explaining attitudes towards EU. Garry and Tilley suggest that attitudes will vary according to the country's economic situation. Richer countries are more attractive to economic immigrants. Because of this, economic xenophobia is more present in countries that attract many immigrants. People might draw a negative connection between EU membership and economic immigration (Garry and Tilley 2009:364,366). Generally, if individuals are against immigration, they are more likely to be less supportive of EU. In poorer EU countries this effect of economic xenophobia might be much weaker, simply because these countries do not experience the same inflow of immigrants (Garry and Tilley 2009:363). The authors' focus is on the economic immigrant within the freedom of movement and not immigration in general.<sup>1</sup>

The economic context is measured through a combination of the percentage of gross national income (GNI) that countries receive as net transfer from EU and GNI per capita adjusted for purchasing power parity (PPP) (ibid:369). Garry and Tilley use European Election Study (EES) data set from 2004 to test their hypotheses (Garry and Tilley 2009:366). Moreover, Garry and Tilley do also investigate if interactions can be found, between effect of identity and EU contributions. In countries, which are high net contributors to the EU budget, national identity impact is increased while the opposite pattern is found for countries that are net receivers. Economic xenophobia is more evident in wealthy countries than in less wealthy countries (Garry and Tilley 2009:373). The study reports that the impact of identity factors (such as an exclusive national identity or economic xenophobia on attitudes towards EU) should be seen as complementary explanatory variables rather than competing variable. These variables are also

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<sup>1</sup> When jobs are scarce employers should give priority to people from (own country) over citizens from other EU member

conditioned by country economic contexts (Garry and Tilley 2009:375). Garry and Tilley use egocentric subjective evaluations as indicators conditioned by the sociotropic objective evaluation when investigating the opinion towards EU.

## Immigration in a European context

Heath et al (2016) have studied within- and cross-country differences in attitudes towards immigrants using the European Social Survey (2002/3 and 2014/15). There are significant differences among countries with regard to levels of public support for immigration and these attitudes are stable over time. In countries where public opinion is relatively positive towards immigration, the attitudes and opinions are also consistent over time. The same stability in attitudes is shown in countries that demonstrate a more negative attitude towards immigration. The differences between countries cannot be explained by the size of immigration. Moreover, Heath et al divide immigrants into different groups. For example, they can show that some religious immigrant groups are more preferable than others.

McLaren's study from 2001 follows a different approach when dealing with the concept of immigrants. She investigates if European citizens distinguish between internal and external immigration (McLaren 2001:81). The data for this research purpose were collected from Eurobarometer 39.0 (1993) and Eurobarometer 48.0 (1997). While Heath et al study the general attitude towards immigrants, McLaren's study of public opinion connects immigration to European integration. Since the creation of EU, there is a clear difference between internal and external immigration and public opinion should be more favourable towards the former than the latter (McLaren 2001:84). The study compares cross-country differences based on individual level data for 14 countries and at two points in time (1993 and 1997). Furthermore, in countries where the public is positive to European integration, people are more positive towards internal immigration (ibid: 94-97). The same correlation occurs between favourable attitudes towards European integration and favourable attitudes towards external immigration. McLaren claims in her study that people do not distinguish between these two types of immigration. There is no recognition of needs to treat EU citizens more favourably compared to third country nationals (ibid:101-102).

De Vreese and Boomgaarden (2005) also investigate the correlation between public attitudes towards immigration and public opinion on European integration. They summarize previous analyses and explanations: cognitive mobilization, cost/benefit analysis, domestic politics, national identity and threats to national and cultural identity, and immigration. Their own investigation starts with the 'in-group' and 'out-group' classification. The issues under study include: negative attitudes towards immigrants might cause people to be less in favour of further European integration. On the basis of most similar design, the authors compare Denmark and the Netherlands using data from the Eurobarometer 58 (2003) (ibid:68). Anti-immigration sentiments and economic evaluation represent key variables for understanding negative attitudes towards European integration (ibid:69).

McLaren (2002) examines public opinion on immigration further by comparing two alternative explanations, which can better explain attitudes towards European integration: the economic cost/benefit analysis at the individual level on the one hand and the perception of immigrants as a cultural threat on the other hand. The author emphasises that other researchers have not

acknowledged the perspective of cultural threat to the same extent as the cost/benefit approach. Moreover, the cost/benefit analysis focus on individuals' gains as well as other benefits from their country's EU membership (McLaren 2002:551-552). McLaren claims that the economic reasoning and the perception of cultural threat might produce equally strong unfavourable attitudes towards EU (McLaren 2002:564).

Some public opinion researchers indicate that the general public distinguishes between different types of immigrants. See the distribution of public opinion regarding freedom of movement and external immigration in Figure 6 and Figure 8, in appendix. These studies represent the egocentric subjective evaluation. Citizens' opinions on European integration are also influenced by their country context. A sociotropic assessment implies, for example, that the individual citizen engages in assessments of the benefits of EU membership according to the country they live in.

Despite the rise of immigration across country borders, the actual impact on public attitudes towards immigration by the size of immigration has been difficult to demonstrate and verify (Toshkov and Kortenska 2014:1; Pottie-Sherman and Wilkes 2015:218). A recent meta-study by Pottie-Sherman and Wilkes (2015) provides comparative summaries of similar and related studies of public opinion towards immigration. The meta-study looked into 55 studies that investigate the impact of minority group size on anti-immigrant sentiments. They observed that different results reported were often caused simply by differences among the measurements applied. For example, size of immigration was measured either by actual numbers of foreign-born persons or by the respondent's own perceptions of the group's size (Pottie-Sherman and Wilkes 2015:220).

Among the studies reporting an impact of the size of immigration on public opinion, the impact was positive towards immigration in 25 percent of the cases and negative in 15 percent. The meta-study found no statistically significant effects in 60 percent of the studies analyzed. Moreover, the research outcome also depends on the measured concept of anti-immigration attitudes. The attitudes were based on economic concerns or sociocultural threat (ibid:224). Another explanation to the differences in outcomes relates to the choice of geographic unit of analysis. Some studies look at cities while others use country as their unit of analysis (Pottie-Sherman and Wilkes 2015:228). In sum, the concepts used to measure size of immigration and anti-immigration sentiments contain a wide variety of measurements. The authors of the meta-study emphasize that size of immigration can be measured both according to sociotropic objective evaluation (actual size) and sociotropic subjective evaluation (perception of size), which can determine the individual attitude towards immigration. One conclusion is that perception of size has a stronger effect on attitudes towards immigrants than the actual size of immigration (ibid:243-244).

In sum, this thesis chapter has provided a brief overview of the research field of public opinion towards European integration and immigration in EU. From the available research results, it seems relevant to investigate both individual and contextual factors that might impact public opinion on these issues. It is clear that there is a range of possible and relevant variables in use by researchers, when studying immigration in the light of European integration.

Moreover, among current research when investigating public opinion on immigration, there are three main families of explanations: the economic approach, the identity approach and the cue-



taking and benchmarking approach. As already indicated, I have chosen the economic or utilitarian approach, which contains two principal strands: egocentric evaluations and sociotropic evaluations. Cf. the elaboration in the chapters on Theory, Methodology and Conclusions and discussion.

Considering previous research on public opinion on European integration, this thesis looks more in depth on the impact of size of immigration and the impact of economics on the internal (freedom of movement) and external immigration. It is clear that there are only few previous studies on EU public opinion that divide immigration into the two types of immigration, internal and external. Moreover, previous research shows mixed results when analysing the impact on public opinion of the actual size of immigration.

Traditionally, public opinion has been studied as support for European integration in general and for the EU as a whole and not as public support for a specific policy. In addition, most studies of public opinion use either individual-level or country-level explanations. It has been rare among public opinion researchers to combine country variables and individual variables in their analyses (Toshkov and Kortenska 2014:8; Boomgaarden et al 2011:241-242).

- This thesis will contribute to previous public opinion research by investigating new perspectives on immigration by considering both internal and external immigration.
- Moreover, this thesis will study multidimensional aspects of public opinion by combining individual-level analysis and contextual-level analysis. Public opinion about immigration is expected to be determined by the economic situation of individual citizens, influenced by the relative size of immigrants in their host country. This thesis will put focus on the egocentric subjective evaluation conditioned by the sociotropic objective evaluation.
- The thesis will investigate the relevant relationships by using new data – from the time before Brexit (Eurobarometer 85.2, May 2016).
- While previous researchers have focused on the general approval or disapproval for EU, this thesis will examine the public support for the freedom of movement of persons. This approach will contribute to public opinion research by acknowledging specific support as a measurement that could matter for the general public support for EU.

By investigating the support for one of the four fundamental pillars of European integration, the thesis research results might also help measure EU's legitimacy. Public support in several specific policy areas can be essential for the survival of the EU as we know it.

## Research hypotheses

As stated in the previous sections this thesis stems from two strands of literature on public opinion, immigration in relation to sentiments towards immigrants and European integration and economic models related to opinion on immigration and European integration. Furthermore, this thesis aims to combine these two perspectives by using a multidimensional approach when explaining public opinion, how context variables can regulate these opinions. Public opinion on how immigration relates to European integration is a well-established relationship. The Hooghe and Marks economic model for public opinion summarizes how the individual attitude on integration is shaped by economic evaluation both objectively and subjectively as well as from egocentric and sociotropic points of view. Economic models will guide the egocentric subjective evaluation while theory on how immigration affects the public opinion will be used as the sociotropic objective evaluation. Furthermore, since European integration has created a divide between internal and external immigration it is accurate to assume this has created a divide in public opinions. One purpose is to test if the same variables can explain public opinion on both the freedom of movement and the external immigration. Moreover, will it be possible to establish the same pattern for different types of immigration or will another pattern emerge?

### Freedom of movement of persons

EU's freedom of movement has opened the market for people to move freely across borders and seek work elsewhere within the union. The inflow of internal immigration has increased with the big enlargements of EU in 2004 and 2007. A large inflow of immigrants can put pressure on labour and housing markets and cause increased competition. In line with economic theory, people with a good economic situation are less vulnerable to economic shifts and because of this it is reasonable to assume that the individual's economic situation affect opinions on the freedom of movement. Immigration could be seen as a threat since it can risk the individual's economic position. It could be assumed that people who feel economic vulnerable are likely to be less supportive of the freedom of movement of persons.

*H1:* People who perceive themselves as economic secure are more in favour of freedom of movement of persons.

There is ambiguity in previous research on the relationship between the size of immigration as an influence on public opinion. People do not only evaluate policies according to their own egocentric subjective evaluation. Their opinions must also be considered in their country's context, the sociotropic objective evaluation. If the actual size of internal immigrants is high, people are less likely to be supportive towards the freedom of movement.

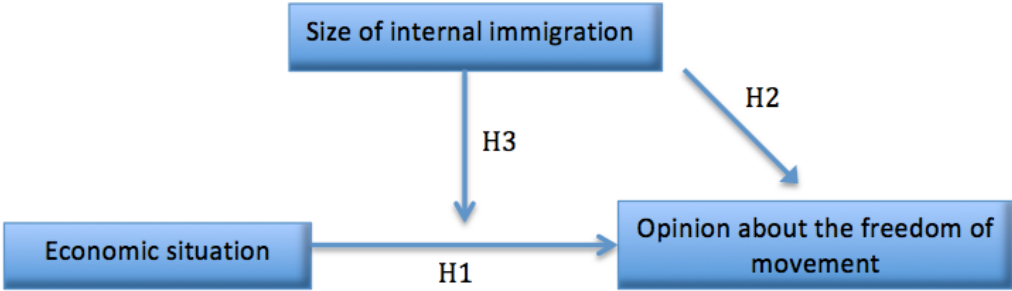
*H2:* People who live in a country with higher levels of internal immigration are less in favour of the freedom of movement of persons.

In addition, this thesis argues that the opinion on the freedom of movement is shaped by the individual's economic situation, which is conditioned by the relative size of immigration. The opinion on the freedom of movement looks different depending on both the individuals' perception of their economic situation and actual size of internal immigration.

*H3:* People who perceive themselves as economically insecure and live in a country with high levels of internal immigration are less in favour of freedom of movement.

Figure 3 displays the relationship between the hypotheses stated above. H1 visualises the affect individual’s economic situation on the opinion about freedom of movement. Country level impact is represented by arrow H2. The conditioned relationship is an interaction between two arrows visualised by H3.

**Figure 3.** The relationship between independent variables and dependent variable (opinion on the freedom of movement of persons)



**Note:** The individual’s subjective judgement of own economic situation affect the opinion on the freedom of movement, conditioned by the relative size of internal immigration of total population in their host country.

**External immigration**

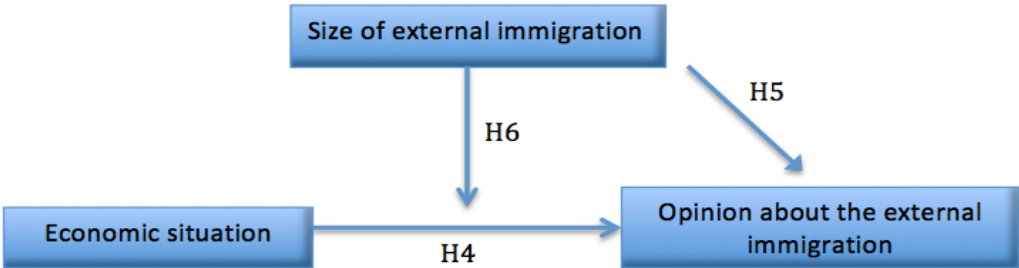
Many previous studies have not made any distinction between internal and external immigration. Internal immigration and external immigration are not decided at the same political level. Yet, they remain connected. The recent refugee crisis has put pressure on EU to establish a common stand. The relative size of external immigration is actually bigger than the internal immigration for most countries in the union. Immigrants, internal or external, can cause the same pressure on labour and housing markets. Hence, there is a probability that the patterns of explanation look the same.

*H4:* People who perceive themselves as economic secure are more in favour of external immigration.

*H5:* People who live in a country with high levels of external immigration are less in favour of external immigration than people in countries with lower levels of external immigration.

*H6:* People who perceive themselves as economic insecure and live in a country with high levels of external immigration are less in favour of external immigration.

**Figure 4.** The relationship between independent variables and dependent variable (opinion on external immigration)



**Note:** The individual’s subjective judgement of own economic situation affect the opinion on external immigration, conditioned by the relative size of external immigration of total population in their host country.

The legitimacy of the political system depends on several mechanisms. One of these mechanisms is the specific support. Public opinion works as an indicator if the system has fulfilled its members' demand. To measure the support for the freedom of movement will serve as measurement on public satisfaction of and as a response to the functioning of EU.

The following chapter will present the data used to conduct the analysis and test the stated hypotheses. Furthermore, the operationalization of central concepts is also presented and discussed in this chapter.

## Methodology

This chapter begins with a discussion on the selection of empirical material used for the research. Then, the text elaborates on this thesis's main variables and presents the choice of method to conduct the statistical analysis.

### Eurobarometer data

To achieve the research objectives, data from the Eurobarometer 85.2 (May 2016) will be used to execute the analysis. Since 1973, Eurobarometer surveys measure and analyse opinions among citizens in EU, first and foremost attitudes to European integration and related issues. There are three types of Eurobarometer surveys: the Standard Eurobarometer, the Special Eurobarometer and the Flash Eurobarometer.<sup>2</sup> Information about how opinions have changed over the years is well documented in the survey reports (Jagodzinski 2006:8). Another strength of the Eurobarometer surveys is the magnitude of the data collected: between 500-1000 interviews conducted in each country belonging to EU.

The Eurobarometer surveys have received criticism from several viewpoints or analytical angles such as their usability and the quality of their data. Already in 1993 Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann states that the questions are framed in a way that make certain answers more likely. Another criticism is the lack of comparability. According to Karmasin and Pitters (2008) and Jagodzinski (2006) the sampling methods were differentiated across the member states, causing issues of methodology. Moreover, Karmasin et al claim that translations into different languages as well as the cultural bias can influence meanings and contexts (Höpner and Jurczyk 2015:4). Höpner and Jurczyk (2015) reviewed the Eurobarometer 43.0 (1995) through 73.4 (2010) and concluded that the data has been violated, since the responses were steered in a 'pro-European, integration-friendly direction' (Höpner and Jurczyk 2015:18).

Another criticism of the Eurobarometer surveys is the face-to-face interviews. Interviewing implies an interaction between the interviewee and the interviewer and, in this process, different persons might respond differently to the same questions (Esaiasson et al 2012: 251). There is always a risk that the answer will depend on the interaction between these two (ibid:267). There are also ethical aspects when interviewing e.g. how the interviewee might oppose the usage of some material in the interview (ibid:257). One positive aspect is that interviews allow opportunities to follow up answers (ibid:251).<sup>3</sup>

Despite these criticisms of methodology, this dataset is still considered valuable for this analysis. The Eurobarometer surveys put focus on important topics related to EU. Particularly relevant to this thesis research is the fact that the Eurobarometer also distinguishes between internal and external immigration. These immigration questions were added recently (2014) to the Eurobarometer surveys and, because of this, cannot be properly analysed over a period of time.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/COMMFrontOffice/publicopinion/index.cfm> 2017-03-25

<sup>3</sup> See Table 6 in appendices for a more comprehensive information about questions used and distribution of answers.

<sup>4</sup> The same analysis can be found for Eurobarometer 82.3 (2014), as a robustness check. The results for 2014 can be found in appendix.

## Dependent variables

*Policy support* in this thesis is limited to the support for the freedom of movement of persons. How the public perceives immigration within the union becomes a measurement of public satisfaction with the functioning of EU. Moreover, this thesis is focused on the output of regulative mechanisms or the specific support, in line with Easton's system theory, as a dependent variable.

Previous researchers have used different questions to generate indicators of public opinion on immigration, but only a few of them do acknowledge differences between internal and external immigration in EU. McLaren (2001) represents researchers that do distinguish between internal and external immigration. However, the particular questions do not ask about the exact same thing. The first questions treat internal immigration in relation to work, while the other question addresses external immigration with regard to residence. To migrate with the intention to work and to migrate with the intention to settle down might not be the same thing. Perceptions of these two different concepts might impact the respondent's answer.<sup>5</sup>

Heath et al (2016) distinguish between European and non-European immigration. Here, the questions asked frame immigrants as people from poorer countries and not immigrants in general. In addition, this question asked about immigrants from specific countries. This might steer survey respondents in a certain direction. When asking people about their opinions, awareness of how questions are framed and formulated are of great methodological concern.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, Garry and Tilley (2009) does not distinguish between internal and external immigrants. Instead they focus only on the internal immigration. As a measurement tool, they use a question regarding the opinion on citizens from other EU countries in relation to the labour market. The question used emphasizes the problem of framing, since it explicitly asks if people from the respondent's own country should be given priority over people from other countries in the EU - when jobs are scarce.<sup>7</sup> All three studies summarize face-framing problem, since the questions are not asked in a neutral way. There is a risk that the respondents are more likely to be steered in one direction because the questions could induce certain sentiments or inclinations.

In this thesis, the support for the freedom of movement of persons will be measured through the following phrase: 'Please tell me whether each of the following statements evokes a positive or a negative feeling for you'. Statement: 'Immigration of people from other EU-member states'; (1) very negative, (2) fairly negative, (3) fairly positive, (4) very positive. This phrase does not measure the respondent's opinion on the freedom of movement of persons in general. It puts focus on the inflow of immigrants that might shape the individual's perception of freedom of movement in relation to her own county, the receiving country.

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<sup>5</sup> (1) 'If people from different countries of the South of the Mediterranean wish to work here in the European Community (European Union in the 1997 questionnaire), do you think they should': (a) Be accepted, without restrictions, (b) Be accepted but with restrictions; (c) Not be accepted; and (d) Don't know. To measure external immigration McLaren used following question: (2) 'What about people coming from other countries of the European Community (European Union in the 1997 questionnaire) who wish to settle in (Our country)? Do you think they should: (1) Be accepted, without restrictions, (2) Be accepted but with restrictions; (3) Not be accepted; and (4) Don't know. (McLaren 2001:84-85).

<sup>6</sup> Now, using this card, to what extent do you think (Country) should allow people of the same race or ethnic group as most (country)'s people to come and live here? And how about people from poorer countries in Europe? How about people from poorer countries outside Europe? (Heath et al 2016).

<sup>7</sup> When jobs are scarce employers should give priority to people from (own country) over citizens from other EU member countries who want to work here. (Garry and Tilley 2009:370)

External immigration is restricted to the member state's decision-level. However, the external immigration as a policy area is also considered at the European level. The internal and external immigration remain connected, since they cause similar effect on the labour and housing markets. There is a possibility that people will not distinguish between internal and external immigration. Support for the external immigration will be measured through following phrase: 'Please tell me whether each of the following statements evokes a positive or a negative feeling for you.' Statement: 'Immigration of people from countries outside EU'; (1) very negative, (2) fairly negative, (3) fairly positive, (4) very positive.

The measurements used in this thesis, for both freedom of movement (internal) and external immigration, frame immigration in more general terms. These questions do not specify immigration in relation to the labour market nor the economic situation in the migrants' country of origin. It is valuable that the questions concerning both the freedom of movement and external immigration are asked by the same wording and that answers are provided according to the same scale. This will allow for better comparability since one purpose of this thesis is to make a distinction between internal and external immigration.

### **Independent variables**

At the individual level, economic security will be measured through the following question: 'How would you judge your current situation in following areas? Area: The economic situation for your household.' This question captures different angles of an individual's economic situation. It is not only framed in the context of the individual respondent, it also includes the situation for members of the entire household. An individual's economic situation is often not determined by her own income or wealth; it depends also on the economy of her family. In line with economic theory this measurement will capture the subjective evaluation of personal economic prospects. A possible point of departure is that people who perceive themselves as economically secure are inclined to be in favour of the freedom of movement and external immigration respectively. There are other variables, which could be used for this purpose, for example how people perceive their social status in society. This variable is more problematic, since persons who perceive themselves as working class might have a very good economic situation, while persons who consider themselves upper middle class might have difficulties paying their bills. Therefore, this variable does not capture economic insecurity in the same way as, e.g., the economic situation of the household.

The second independent variable is the current size of immigration, measured by the share of immigration of the total population in each country. Thus, this macro-level indicator measures the current percent of immigrants of total population in each EU country. The definition of an immigrant includes several aspects of mobility, related, e.g., to the time spent in the country of residence. According to Eurostat, an immigrant is someone who moves to another country for a period of at least 12 months. Immigrants include people who are foreign-born and who are residents in a country where they are not citizens (Triandafyllidou and Gropas 2014:8). Immigrants can include people who seek temporary stay in another country. A labour immigrant is someone who works in another member state for a limited period of time, posted workers (McCann 2010:162-163). A temporary or seasonal immigrant is someone who stays in another member state for a limited period of time and could also be a student (Triandafyllidou and Gropas 2014:13).

Another measurement is the numbers of foreign nationals. This measurement can be difficult to use for research purposes, since citizenship might change throughout a lifetime. In line with Eurostat and previous research, this thesis will define immigrants as persons born in another country than their current country of residence (Pottie-Sherman and Wilkes 2015:224). Pottie-Sherman and Wilkes underline that different modes of measuring will lead to different research results. In this thesis, I will use two measurements of size of immigration: data on people born in EU and on people born in a non-EU member state. The data on EU immigrants will be used when measuring the support for the freedom of movement and the data on people born outside EU will be used when measuring support for external immigration.

**Table 1. Countries, number of observations and country level statistics**

<i>EU countries</i> <sup>1</sup>	<i>N</i>	<i>EU immigrants (%)</i>	<i>Immigrants from outside EU (%)</i>	<i>Total immigration (%)</i> <sup>8</sup>	<i>GDP per capita</i>	<i>Average value freedom of movement</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>Average value external immigration</i> <sup>3</sup>
Austria	1 002	8.2	9.9	18.2	128	2,72	2,22
Belgium	1 004	7.7	8.7	16.3	119	2,57	2,22
Bulgaria	1 024	0.7	1.2	1.9	47	2,82	1,88
Croatia	1 030	1.6	11.4	13.1	58	2,75	2,37
Cyprus	1 026	13	7.4	20.4	82	2,25	1,87
Czech Republic	1 044	1.6	2.5	4.1	87	2,36	1,71
Denmark	1 007	3.8	7.4	11.2	127	2,64	2,06
Estonia	1 012	1.5	13.3	14.7	75	2,72	1,76
Finland	1 008	2.2	3.8	6	109	2,85	2,17
France	1 001	3.3	8.5	11.8	106	2,58	2,22
Germany	1 592	5.3	8	13.3	124	2,67	2,20
Greece	1 016	3.2	8.1	11.3	68	2,48	1,91
Hungary	1 041	3.3	1.9	5.1	68	2,50	1,64
Ireland	1 004	11.6	5.3	16.9	177	2,97	2,55
Italy	1 016	3	6.7	9.7	96	2,38	2,05
Latvia	1 003	1.4	11.7	13.1	64	2,37	1,68
Lithuania	1 009	0.7	3.8	4.5	75	2,82	1,91
Luxembourg	507	33.8	11.4	45.2	264	3,03	2,57
Malta	510	4.8	5.8	10.6	88	2,56	1,92
The Netherlands	1 022	3.3	8.8	12.1	128	2,69	2,35
Poland	1 004	0.6	1.1	1.6	69	2,72	2,01
Portugal	1 013	2.2	6.2	8.4	77	2,76	2,48
Romania	1 021	0.8	1	1.8	57	2,60	2,07
Slovakia	1 011	2.8	0.6	3.3	77	2,35	1,68
Slovenia	1 043	3.2	8.4	11.7	83	2,70	2,11
Spain	1 009	4.2	8.5	12.7	90	2,91	2,60
Sweden	987	5.4	11.6	17	124	2,97	2,67
UK	1 352	5	8.3	13.3	108	2,40	2,25

**Note:** The table shows number of observations for each EU country in Eurobarometer 85.2 (May, 2016). The percent rate is the percent of the total population in each country, 1 of January 2016. GDP per capita in thousands of Euro for each EU country adjusted for price level differences, 2015. <sup>1</sup>The data includes countries that are still in the accession process for EU membership. <sup>2</sup> *'Please tell me whether each of the following statements evokes a positive or a negative feeling for you.'* Statement: 'Immigration of people from other EU-member states.' <sup>3</sup> *'Please tell me whether each of the following statements evokes a positive or a negative feeling for you.'* Statement: 'Immigration of people from outside EU. The respondent is given a choice of four alternatives, (1) 'very negative', (2) 'fairly negative', (3) 'fairly positive' and (4) 'very positive'.

**Source:** Eurostat, Eurobarometer 85.2 (May 2016)

<sup>8</sup> The total number can differ according to decimals.

<sup>9</sup> These countries are Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania; they will be excluded from the analysis. Secondly, several merges are made, West and East Germany, Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Greek and the Turkish parts of Cyprus.



The relative size of existing immigration is a good measurement from several aspects. For example, relative size is an indicator for how attractive a country is – economically and socially – to immigrants (Toshkov and Kortenska 2014:16; Garry and Tilley 2009:366). Table 1 above displays country level statistics. The national statistical authority in each EU member state provides the statistics made available by Eurostat.<sup>10</sup>

### **Control variables**

In line with previous research this thesis also aims at using gender, age, and level of education as control variables at the individual level. These are the most commonly used variables, when investigating public opinion towards EU. Young people tend to be more mobile than other age groups and, because of this, they might be more in favour of free movement of persons. The Eurobarometer dataset consists of seven age categories from 15 years of age: '15-24', '25-34', '35-44', '45-54', '55-64', '65-74' and '75 years and older'. Previous researchers acknowledge that people with a higher level of education are inclined to be more in favour of EU. This could indicate that people with high levels of education might favour the freedom of movement more than others. The Eurobarometer measures education according to five categories. These are 'No full-time education', 'Still studying', 'Up to 15 years of formal education', 'Between 16-19 years of full time education and '20 years or more of full-time education'.

A competing argument in this thesis is drawn from the identity perspective. Hence, one control variable will be identity measured by this survey question: 'To what extent do you feel like a European citizen?', (1) 'Definitely not', (2) 'Not really', (3) 'To some extent', (4) 'Yes'. People who identify themselves as European citizens might be more in favour of EU and also in favour of the freedom of movement of people. In line with the identity approach this measurement measures territorial identification. In this thesis we will use GDP per capita (adjusted for price level differences) as a control variable at the country level. The survey data was collected for the Eurobarometer in collaboration with OECD, the World Bank and IMF.<sup>11</sup> A country's economic situation can be a way of indicating economic security. Here, in line with economic theory, we will measure according to the sociotropic objective evaluation. Richer countries attract more economic migrants and, because of this, the level of economic prosperity will be a relevant control variable. Previous research has used economic variables such as transfer of EU funds, level of GDP and level of GNI.

### **The choice of method**

At present, EU consists of 28 member states. The data gathered from these for the Eurobarometer builds on almost 30,000 observations and has more than one variance component. The structure is a hierarchical model. Due to the structure, the assumption in linear (OLS) regression on independent observations, is violated. Because of this, multilevel modelling is recommended (Gelman et al 2006:1-2). Thus, an assumption is made that people within the same country will not differ to a high degree. First, a test is conducted to see if multilevel modelling is necessary. Model (0)<sup>12</sup> is tested to calculate the intra-class correlation (ICC). This value will show if there is a variation among the observations within the same cluster and

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<sup>10</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:Foreignborn\\_population\\_by\\_country\\_of\\_birth\\_1\\_January\\_2016\\_\(%C2%B9\)\\_YB16.png](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:Foreignborn_population_by_country_of_birth_1_January_2016_(%C2%B9)_YB16.png) 2016-04-15.  
[https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries/cyprus\\_en](https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries/cyprus_en) 2017-05-15

<sup>11</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/GDP\\_per\\_capita\\_consumption\\_per\\_capita\\_and\\_price\\_level\\_indices](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/GDP_per_capita_consumption_per_capita_and_price_level_indices)

<sup>12</sup> Only the dependent variable

between the clusters in the dependent variable. The obtained value is close to zero, which means that grouping by countries in a multilevel model will not be useful since the variability between countries is not big. Instead a simple multiple regression model will be used. In order to deal with non-independent observations, a code can tell the statistical program Stata 14 that the data deals with observations nested within countries. Moreover, a multicollinearity test has also been conducted before modelling the regression. There are no signs of multicollinearity. It is reasonable to assume that economic insecurity interacts with size of internal immigration. Furthermore, an interaction will also be conducted in the case of external immigration.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> <http://www.theanalysisfactor.com/interpreting-interactions-in-regression/>, <http://www.theanalysisfactor.com/testing-and-dropping-interaction-terms/>

## Analysis

This section will present the results of the regression analysis. The results will be introduced step by step following the structure of the hypotheses stated in previous chapter. Furthermore, the first section will present the results from opinion about the freedom of movement of persons and continue with the results of the opinion regarding external immigration.

### Results opinion on the freedom of movement of persons

The results are shown in Table 2. Model 1 shows the relationship between the individual's economic situation for their household and opinion about the freedom of movement of persons. There is a significant positive relationship. For every unit increase towards more economic security, opinion about freedom of movement increases with 0.075. All else equal, an individual with a very positive view of her economic situation is 0.23 more (0.075\*3) positive about the freedom of movement than the individual who perceive her economic situation as very bad. Because of this, Hypothesis 1 is supported.

**Table 2. Multiple regression results: Opinion about the freedom of movement**

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Economic situation <sup>1</sup>	.075** (.022)		.073** (.018)
Gender	-.015 (.014)		-.015 (.014)
Age <sup>2</sup>	-.000 (.006)		-.000 (.006)
Education <sup>3</sup>	.072*** (.017)		.074*** (.017)
European identity <sup>4</sup>	.25*** (.025)		.24*** (.025)
Share of EU immigration	-	.002 (.006)	.000 (.006)
GDP per capita	-	.001 (.001)	.000 (.001)
Intercept	1.52*** (.12)	2.49*** (.100)	1.52*** (.14)
R <sup>2</sup>	.11	.063	.11
N	24 405	24 405	24 405

\*p<0.05\*\*p<.01\*\*\*p<.001 **Note:** Dependent variable is sentiments towards immigration from EU member states. 'Please tell me whether each of the following statements evokes a positive or a negative feeling for you.' Statement: 'Immigration of people from other EU-member states. The respondent is given a choice of four alternatives, (1) 'very negative', (2) 'fairly negative', (3) 'fairly positive' and (4) 'very positive'. 'How would you judge the current situation in each of the following? The financial situation for your household': (1) 'very bad', (2) 'rather bad', (3) 'rather good' and (4) 'very good'. <sup>2</sup>Age is divided into seven categories: (1) '15-24', (2) '25-34', (3) '35-44', (4) '45-54', (5) '55-64', (6) '65-74' and (7) '75 years and older'. <sup>3</sup>The Eurobarometer measures education according to five categories: (1) 'No full-time education', (2) 'still studying', (3) 'Up to 15 years of formal education', (4) 'Between 16-19 years of full time education and (5) '20 years or more of full-time education'. <sup>4</sup> You feel you are a citizen of the EU?: (1) 'Definitely not', (2) 'Not really', (3) 'To some extent' and (4) 'Yes, definitely'.

Each variable is tested individually with the economic situation for the household. See appendix, Table 7 for full results. Gender and age are not significant. Level of formal education is significant. Persons who have received more than 20 years of education are 0.29 (0.072\*4) more positive than people who have not received any full-time education. European identification has

a bigger coefficient than the other variables. It is a positive significant relationship. People who consider themselves European (Yes, definitely) are 0.75 (0.25\*3) more positive towards the freedom of movement than people who do not consider themselves Europeans (Definitely, not).

Hypothesis 2 is tested in Model 2 and also displayed in Table 2. It shows that the effect between the relative size of immigrants from other EU member states and the opinion about freedom of movement is not significant. Level of GDP, as the control variable, is not significant either. Because of this, Hypothesis 2 cannot be supported. The actual share of internal immigration of the total population seems to not cause an effect on the respondent's opinion on the freedom of movement. In Model 3 both individual and country variables are considered. The model does change modestly compared to previous results. Gender, age, size of internal immigration and GDP per capita are not significant variables. Economic situation, level of education and European identity are significant. A person that considers her economy as very good is 0.22 more positive towards the freedom of movement than a person who consider her economy as very bad. A person with more than 20 years of education is 0.30 more positive towards the freedom of movement than someone who has not received any full time education. In addition, a person who identifies with being definitely European is 0.72 more positive to the freedom of movement than someone who does not identify as being European. The model explains about 11 per cent of the variance in opinion about internal immigration. Hypothesis 1 is supported while hypothesis 2 cannot be supported.

**Table 3. Multiple regression result with interaction: Opinion about the freedom of movement of persons**

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Model 4</i>	
	Ref: very bad	
Economic situation & share of EU immigrants	Rather bad & share	.018* (.008)
	Rather good & share	.021 (.133)
	Very good & share	.026* (.077)
<i>Individual level control</i>	Gender	-.015 (.014)
	Education	.073*** (.017)
	Age	-.000 (.006)
	European identity	.247*** (.0255)
<i>Country level control</i>		
	GDP per capita	-.000 (.001)
	Fixed intercept	1.67*** (.158)
	R <sup>2</sup>	.112
N	24 405	

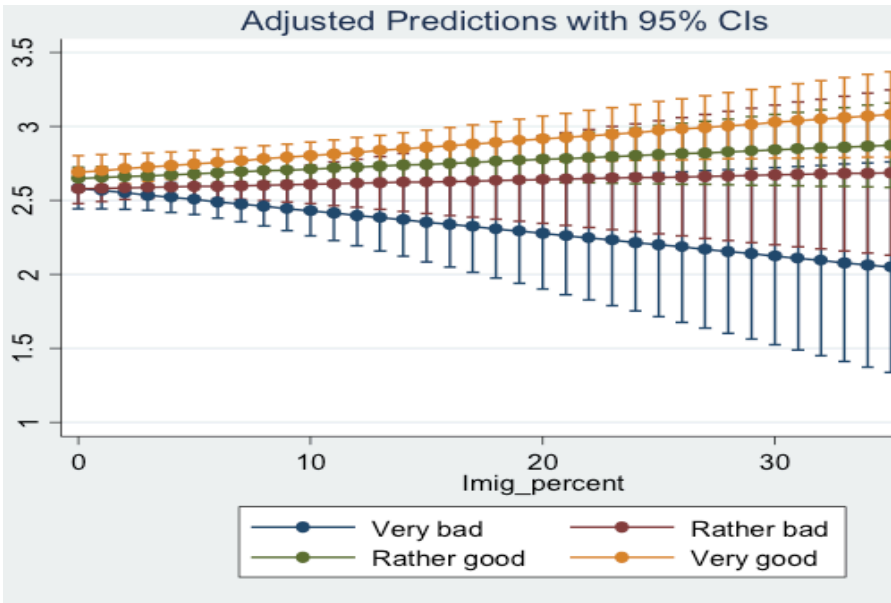
\*p<0.05\*\*p<.01\*\*\*p<.001 Dependent variable is sentiments towards immigration from EU member states

Table 3 and model 4 show the results for Hypothesis 3. The result shows the regression looks different depending on which group the respondents consider themselves belonging to. The interaction shows what effect the individual's economic situation has on the opinion on the freedom of movement of persons when the relative size of internal immigration increases. People

who consider their economic situation as very good are predicted to become more in favour of freedom of movement as the relative size of internal immigration increases. The same relationship is supported in the group who consider their economy as rather bad. Gender and age are not significant. Education and European identity are significant in the model.

The interaction and these relationships are visualised in Figure 5 below. The yellow line represents people who consider their economic situation as very good and the blue line represents people who consider their economic situation as very bad. Investigating the difference between the yellow line and the blue line shows the opinion is diverse between the two groups. There is a gap between people who have a very good economic situation and people who have a very bad economic situation and their opinion about the freedom of movement.<sup>14</sup>

**Figure. 5** Predicted probabilities to be in favour of the freedom of movement



**Note:** The figure shows four different regressions illustrating H3. The regression looks different depending on the respondent's economic situation when internal immigration increases.

At lower levels of internal immigration there are no differences in opinion on the freedom of movement between different economic groups. For every percent unit that the share of internal immigration increases, people who consider themselves economic secure are likely to become more positive towards the freedom of movement. On the other hand, people who consider their economic situation as very bad are likely to become less positive towards the freedom of movement with increasing internal immigration. However, the confidence interval is quite big in the group of people that consider their economic situation as very bad.

<sup>14</sup> These tests have been conducted without Luxembourg since Luxembourg is considered an outlier in this context, with 33 percent of internal immigration of the total population. The results do not differ.

## Results opinion on the external immigration

Table 4 and model 5 shows the results on opinion about external immigration. The economic situation for household is significant in the model and it is a positive relationship. For every unit increase in economic security the opinion towards external immigration changes with 0.10. People with a very good economic situation for their household are 0.30 (0.10\*3) more positive towards external immigration than people who consider their economic situation as very bad. Because of this, Hypothesis 4 can be supported.

**Table 4. Multiple regression results: Opinion about external immigration**

Variable	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
Economic situation <sup>1</sup>	.10*** (.024)		.066** (.017)
Gender	.026 (.015)		.028 (.015)
Age <sup>2</sup>	-.021** (.007)		-.028*** (.007)
Education <sup>3</sup>	.046 (.025)		.036 (.023)
European identity <sup>4</sup>	.20*** (.023)		.19*** (.024)
Share of external immigration	-	.019 (.016)	.018 (.018)
GDP per capita	-	.003** (.001)	.003 (.001)
Intercept	1.14*** (.163)	1.64*** (.122)	0.96*** (.19)
R <sup>2</sup>	.08	.036	.097
N	24 405	24 405	24 405

\*p<0.05\*\*p<.01\*\*\*p<.001. **Note:** Dependent variable is sentiments towards immigration from of people from outside EU. 'Please tell me whether each of the following statements evokes a positive or a negative feeling for you.' Statement: 'Immigration of people from outside EU. The respondent is given a choice of four alternatives, (1) 'very negative', (2) 'fairly negative', (3) 'fairly positive' and (4) 'very positive'. 'How would you judge the current situation in each of the following? The financial situation for your household': (1) 'very bad', (2) 'rather bad', (3) 'rather good' and (4) 'very good'. <sup>2</sup>Age is divided into seven categories: (1) '15-24', (2) '25-34', (3) '35-44', (4) '45-54', (5) '55-64', (6) '65-74' and (7) '75 years and older'. <sup>3</sup>The Eurobarometer measures education according to five categories: (1) 'No full-time education', (2) 'still studying', (3) 'Up to 15 years of formal education', (4) 'Between 16-19 years of full time education and (5) '20 years or more of full-time education'.<sup>4</sup> You feel you are a citizen of the EU?: (1) 'Definitely not', (2) 'Not really', (3) 'To some extent' and (4) 'Yes, definitely'.

Gender is not significant. The effect of age has a negative significant impact on the opinion on external immigration. People who belong to the group '75 years and older' are 0.13 (-0.021\*6) more negative than people who are between 15-24 years of age. Education is not a significant variable. There is a positive relationship between European identity and opinion about external immigration. People who consider themselves European (yes, definitely) are 0.60 (0.20\*3) more positive towards external immigration than people who do not consider themselves European (Definitely, not).

The relationship between actual share of external immigration and the opinion about external immigration can be found in Table 4 and Model 6. There is not a significant relationship. Because

of this, Hypothesis 5 could not be supported. Level of GDP per capita is significant in the model but not causing a big effect. Increase in GDP means increase in positive sentiments towards immigration from outside EU. The level of explained variance is 3.6 per cent.

In Model 7 both macro and micro variables are considered. Economic situation, age and European identity are significant variables. Gender, education, size of external immigration and GDP per capita are not significant. A person who considers her economy very good is about 0.20 (0.066\*3) more positive towards external immigration than a person who does not consider her economic situation very good. People in older age categories are less positive towards external immigration. Someone who belong to the age group 75 years of age and older is about 0.17 (-0.028\*6) more negative towards external immigration than people belonging to the group 15-24 years of age. European identity does also influence the opinion. Respondents who say that they identify with definitely being European are more than half a scale step (0.19\*3) more positive towards the external immigration than persons who do not identify with definitely being European. The variables in Model 7 explain about 10 percent of the variances in the opinion concerning external immigration. Hypothesis 4 can be supported and Hypothesis 5 cannot be supported.

Table 5 shows results for testing Hypothesis 6. Model 8 tests if people who consider their economic situation for their household interact with the size of external immigration. In this context there is no interaction between economic situation and the share of external immigration.<sup>15</sup>

**Table 5. Multiple regression result with interaction: Opinion about external immigration**

Variable	Model 8
	Ref: Very bad
<i>Economic situation &amp; size of immigrants from outside EU</i>	Rather bad & size
	Rather good & size
	Very good & size
	Gender
<i>Individual level control</i>	Education
	Age
	European identity
<i>Country level control</i>	Country level control
	GDP per capital
	Fixed intercept
	R <sup>2</sup>
N	

\*p<0.05\*\*p<.01\*\*\*p<.001 Dependent variable is sentiments towards immigration from outside EU.

<sup>15</sup> Interaction is visualised in figure 10 in appendix.

Hypothesis 6 could not be supported. There is no effect of economic situation on opinion about external immigration when the share of external immigration increases. Because of this Hypothesis 6 cannot be supported.

People who perceive their economic situation as very good are also more positive towards the freedom of movement. In line with the economic theory the expected outcome turned out to be true. In this context the impact of the actual size, the share of internal immigrants of the total population, could not be proved to have a direct affect on the opinion on the freedom of movement. However, people who perceive their economic situation as very bad become less in favour of the freedom of movement, when the share of internal immigrants increases. On the other hand, people who consider their economic situation as very good the result shows the reversed pattern. This was unexpected. The result also confirms previous research, education influences the opinion on European integration. People who received more years of education are more in favour of the freedom of movement.

The perceived economic situation of the individual does influence the opinion on external immigration. The relative size of external immigration does not directly affect the opinion on external immigration. In addition, the effect of the individual's economic situation on the opinion on external immigration, conditioned by the share of external immigration could not be supported. This was unexpected, since the share of external immigration in EU is relatively larger than the share of internal immigration.

One purpose of the thesis was to compare the opinion on the freedom of movement with the opinion on external immigration. The stated hypothesis expected that the same variables, on both the individual and country level, should influence the opinion on both the freedom of movement and external immigration. Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 4 did show the same result, economic situation influences the opinion in both cases. Share of immigration does not directly affect the opinion and because of this Hypothesis 2 and Hypothesis 5 could not be supported. However, there is an effect of economic situation on the opinion about the freedom of movement, conditioned by the share of internal immigration. The same pattern could not be established in the case of external immigration.

The outcome confirms the ambiguity when it comes to the effect of actual size of immigration on attitudes towards immigration. EU has recently experienced a refugee crisis. Opinions on external immigration are not differentiated by the individual's economic situation. Another difference is education and age. Age has an impact on the opinion towards external immigration. One explanation for this could be the contact theory. Allport says duration can influence the attitude towards immigrants. Presence of immigrants has become more evident during the last decades. Persons belonging to the category of 75 years and older is not used to immigration on this scale as people belonging to the age group of 15-24 years of age because they are brought up in a less diverse society.



## Conclusion and discussion

This thesis has investigated public opinion on the freedom of movement of persons as a foundation for EU Citizenship and European integration. Three dominant research approaches were identified for explaining public opinion on European integration: (1) economic, (2) identity, (3) cue-taking and benchmarking. In addition to the study of public opinion on the freedom of movement of persons, comparisons were made with public opinion on external immigration.

- a. This thesis confirms previous research: the individual's economic situation influences the opinion. Persons who are more economically secure are more in favour of the freedom of movement as well as external immigration (H1 and H4).
- b. The relative size of internal immigration has no direct impact on the opinion on freedom of movement (H2). The relative size of external immigration has no direct impact on the opinion on external immigration (H5).
- c. The effect of the individual's economic situation interacts with the relative size of internal immigration. People who judge their economic situation as very bad are expected to become less in favour of the freedom of movement, when the relative size of internal immigration increases (H3). On the other hand, people who consider their economic situation as very good are expected to become more in favour of freedom of movement, when the share of internal immigration increases. A person's economic situation does not interact with the relative size of external immigration (H6). The result of the H6 was unexpected.
- d. The impact of the relative size of immigration on the opinion on immigration is still contested. This thesis confirms what previous research on this subject has concluded: a mixed result.
- e. It is important to acknowledge that factors, which influence public opinion, are multidimensional. For example, this thesis has investigated how opinions are influenced by the egocentric subjective evaluation and were filtered through the sociotropic objective evaluation.
- f. This thesis has examined internal and external immigration separately. Both policy areas need to be acknowledged, when investigating immigration in a European context. The result shows that the same variables cannot explain public opinion on the freedom of movement and the opinion on external immigration.

## Discussion

As has been underlined, this thesis makes a distinction between internal and external immigration. The research results indicate that people evaluate internal and external immigration differently. When comparing Figure 7 and Figure 9 in the Appendix, it seems as if the public is more positive towards internal immigration than towards external immigration. The distribution of public opinion depicts a polarized opinion in the member states. In some countries, public opinion is more negative towards external immigration than in other countries. In comparison, internal immigration seems to be more preferable than external immigration. If the results of 2014 and 2016 are compared, ten member states display a more negative opinion towards

freedom of movement while 20 member states display a more negative opinion towards external immigration in 2016.<sup>16</sup>

The relative size of external immigration might serve as an indicator of national politics. Previous studies show that public opinion on immigration is relatively stable over time even when a member state experiences increasing internal and external immigration. In countries where the number of external immigration is relatively high, the policies have been more open towards external immigration. Perhaps some countries have an inherent public opinion, shaped by generous or less generous national policies. Because of this, time-series analysis should be considered for future research on both freedom of movement and external immigration in order to establish a more robust result.<sup>17</sup>

For the individual citizen, the freedom of movement is characterised by tensions between opportunity and challenge. In line with Allport, it could be argued that public attitudes towards immigration can stem from both ethnic and economic conflicts (Allport 1954). A large inflow of immigrants can cause rising housing prices and tougher competition on the labour market. Nevertheless, the freedom of movement can also decrease the unemployment rates in Europe. For the individual, the freedom of movement could be a wonderful opportunity for living and working. Yet, to operate successfully, the freedom of movement comes with rights as well as obligations that need to be respected and followed. EU citizens need to know that they can use this right without fear of discrimination. Similarly, EU citizens need to know that other citizens will obey the rules, including obligations. For further policy development, it might be hard to formulate relevant policies, suitable for all. There are risks for a deep divide between those perceived as winners from the freedom of movement and those perceived as losers from the freedom of movement.

For the member state, European integration and the freedom of movement of persons have remained political issues at the national level, as emphasized in 2016 by the Brexit referendum and, this year, in the general election in the Netherlands and in the presidential election in France. European politics influenced the national politics and gave further energy to Eurosceptic movements. The freedom of movement for EU citizens comes with rights and obligations for the individual citizen. Yet, there are discrepancies among member states, e.g., regarding the implementation of some of these rights and obligations, especially with regard to social services.

Even if the EU-citizenship is well established, tension remains between the rights of inclusion and exclusion of immigrants in the national welfare systems. Each member state operates, de facto, as a sort of gatekeeper for EU citizens wanting to work or seek residence in another member country. As indicated already in the Introduction and in the section on Internal and external immigration in EU, each member state can determine – to a considerable degree – who should be allowed to benefit from the various social services available in the country. The reasons for upholding entry restrictions and other limitation to the benefits of the welfare system include a need to prevent cross-border misuse of the systems.

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<sup>16</sup> The average value of opinion on freedom of movement in each EU member state 2014 was compared to the average value of opinion on the freedom of movement in each member state 2016. The same comparison was made for the opinion on external immigration.

<sup>17</sup> A robustness check has been conducted to see if the results of this thesis can be confirmed. It was executed on Eurobarometer data from 2014. The results can be found in the appendices.

Before the big enlargements of the Union in 2004 and 2007, EU agreed to institutional arrangements helping the old member states to control the size and speed of immigration from the new member states. These measures could be taken if the old member states experienced massive inflow of immigrants that caused disruptions (Kahanec et al 2010:4). Immigrants have spread unevenly among the EU member states (Kahanec et al 2009:68). Given the considerable political consequences in some EU member countries, should new and more radical measures need to be taken into consideration in future enlargements of the Union or can the freedom of movement remain unchanged?

For EU, public dissatisfaction regarding the freedom of movement can lead to spill-over effects on the general public support for European integration and for EU as a whole. If Europe will experience a new economic recession, this could trigger economic downturns for some member states as well as for groups of citizens. Large waves of immigration can trigger dissatisfaction in the receiving countries and among people left behind in the emigration countries. On the other hand, another scenario is that the freedom of movement will speed down with a boosting economy. Wage differences will decrease and countries where the population has earlier emigrated from will become more attractive to their indigenous population. Specific policy support cannot be disregarded in relation to diffuse support. If freedom of movement of persons should continue, without undermining further European integration, measures need to be taken to deal with policy dissatisfaction.

### **Policy implications**

This thesis puts focus on European integration by looking into the specific policy support to the freedom of movement of persons. The freedom of movement remains one of EU's fundamental pillars in fostering an integrating market. European politics clearly influences national politics. This is evident also from the research reported in this thesis.

Consistent with David Easton's systems approach, this thesis claims that specific policy support for the freedom of movement of persons remains essential also for the general public support to EU. European politics clearly influences national politics as indicated in recent general elections. Decreasing public support for freedom of movement in one or several EU member countries can cause negative spill-over effects on the public support for European integration and for EU. Yet, probably, the public opinion in the large EU member states will have a more determining effect on EU policy than public opinion in the small EU countries.

One policy implication is how possible future enlargements, by new EU member countries, will best be constructed in the light of current experiences from the freedom of movement. Size of migration due to freedom of movement might become a critical issue. New member countries with lower standards of living than the EU average could trigger immigration of persons for job seeking in the richer EU countries. Loss of job opportunities along with other economic insecurity – perceived or actual insecurity – could cause changes in public opinions. Current national policies might need to be changed, if the freedom of movement of persons should remain generous and maintain its public support. For example, the political issue of too many low-skilled workers arriving in a country due to freedom of movement could be addressed by several policy initiatives, such as better options for technical education and vocational training, including apprenticeships, for the citizens of the country. Unemployment could be avoided by

better chances to move into higher-skilled jobs. Otherwise, unemployment due to crowding out by immigrants might favour political parties sceptical to the European integration.

Another policy recommendation is that EU as well as the member states should continue to monitor and analyse public opinion on the freedom of movement in order to promote evidence-based policy initiatives. To avoid political disruptions – like in the UK referendum on EU – hampering the integration of Europe, more in-depth knowledge and more up-to-date insights about reasons for changes in the public opinion on the freedom of movement will be required. If public dissatisfaction with the freedom of movement grows in the member states, EU might face a serious loyalty crisis.

### ***Future research***

The results reached by this thesis underline demand for more studies with a multidimensional approach when analysing public opinion. This thesis has investigated the egocentric subjective evaluation conditioned by sociotropic objective evaluation. There are many combinations that can be tested to uncover new patterns. To build a more comprehensive model, the combination of the three approaches (economics, identity and cue-taking and benchmarking) presented in the thesis should be further considered, when analysing public opinion on the freedom of movement of persons.

This thesis has investigated public opinion only at a specific point in time. As a result this is a limitation to the current research results. By comparing the results of Eurobarometer 2016 with similar results of Eurobarometer 2014, it is obviously there is an additional value in studying public opinion over a period of time. For example, by studying public opinion over time, it will be possible to isolate effects that are stable over time. Time-series analyses would offer more comprehensive results. Another suggestion for time-series analyses is to study the development of public opinion in each of the EU countries separately with ambitions for country-to-country comparisons.

Moreover, the physical scope of public opinion research matters. The choice of geographical unit of analysis might lead to new research findings. There might be significant differences in public opinion within a country due to location under study, e.g. in metropolitan cities, city-regions, border cities, rural districts, etc. These differences across locations might be even more distinct due to the economics of the place, the relative size of immigration, etc. Share of foreign born of total population in each EU member state was used as a measurement of size of immigration. This measurement is not comprehensive since it can involve an underestimation and an overestimation of the numbers of immigrants.

Another proposal for future research is to adopt a more qualitative approach to public opinion and emphasize cue-taking and benchmarking as the principal analytical approach. For example, such a study could investigate the influence of political parties, mass media and elite-messages on public opinion. Economic aspects of public opinion are at the centre of attention in this thesis work. As a consequence, the identity perspective has served only as a control variable. For future research, it is valuable to investigate the identity perspective more in depth with regard to the freedom of movement of persons as well as to external immigration.

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# Appendix

## Variables in Eurobarometer data 2016

**Dependent variable:** 'Please tell me whether each of the following statements evokes a positive or negative feeling for you. (Qb4\_1) Immigration of people from other EU Member States. (Qb4\_2) Immigration of people from outside EU. The response alternatives are: (1) Very positive, (2) Fairly positive, (3) Fairly negative, (4) Very Negative. These variables have been recoded. The responses are coded in reversed order going from (1) Very negative- (4) Very positive.

### Independent variables

(QA1a\_4) *Economic situation:* 'How would you judge the current situation in each of the following? The financial situation for your household'. The response alternatives are: (1) Very good, (2) Rather good, (3) Rather bad, (4) Very bad. The responses are coded in reversed order going from (1) Very bad- (4) Very good.

(QD1\_1) *European identity:* 'For each of the following statements, please tell me to what extent it corresponds or not to your own opinion. The response alternatives are: You feel you are a citizen of the EU'. (1) Yes, definitely, (2) Yes, to some extent, (3) No, not really, (4) No, definitely not, (5) don't know. The responses are coded in reversed order going from (1) No, definitely not - (4) Yes, definitely.

(D10) *Gender:* (1) Man (2) Woman

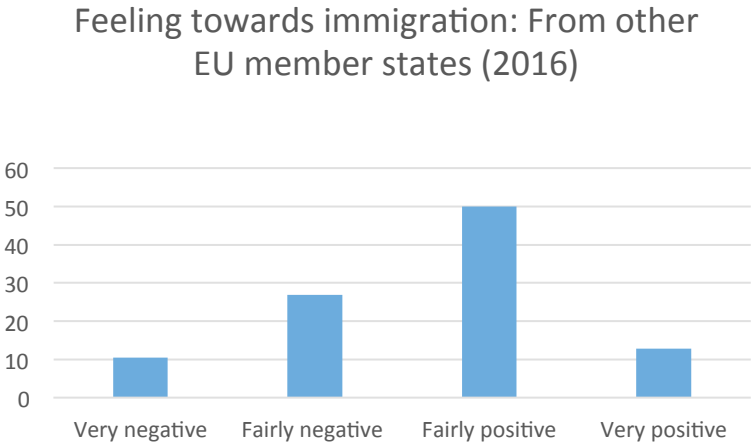
(D8r2- recoded into five categories) *Education:* 'How old were you when you stopped full-time education?' The response alternatives are: (1) Up to 15 years, (2) 16-19 years, (3) 20+, (4) Still studying, (5) No full-time education, (6) Refusal, (7) Don't know. The responses are coded into another order going from (1) No full-time education, (2) Still studying, (3) Up to 15 years, (4) 16-19 years, (5) 20+.

(D11r3 recoded into seven categories) *Age:* (1) 15-24 years of age, (2) 25-34 years of age, (3) 35-44 years of age, (4) 45-54 years of age, (5) 55-64 years of age, (6) 65-74 years of age, (7) 75 years of age and older.

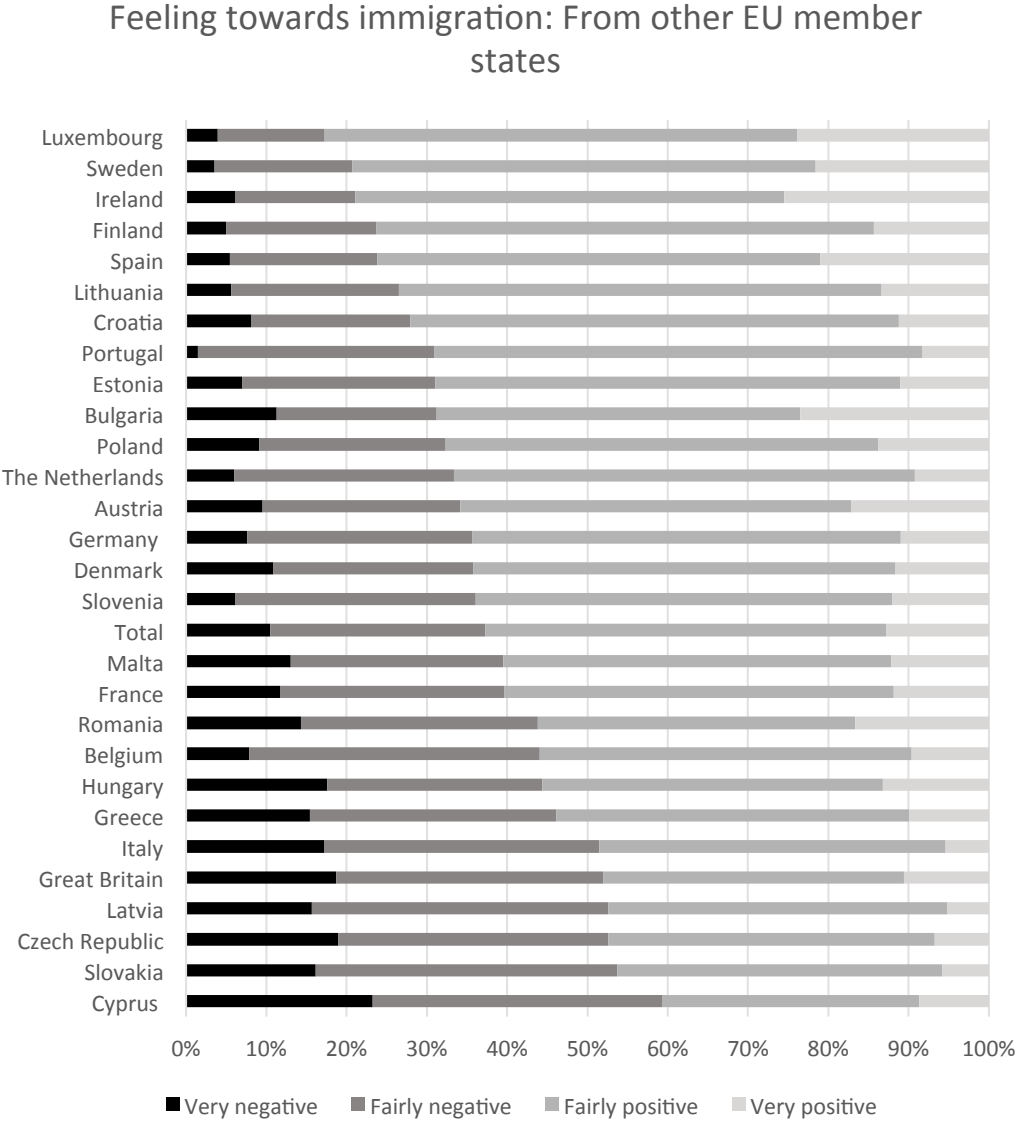
**Table 6. Responses (percent) 2016**

Variables	Very negative	Fairly negative	Fairly positive	Very positive	Don't know			
Qb4_1	10	25	47	12	6			
Qb4_2	26	37	25	5	6			
Qa1a_4	Very bad	Rather bad	Rather good	Very good	Don't know			
	7	24	56	11	2			
QD1_1	No, definitely not	No, not really	Yes, to some extent	Yes, definitely	Don't know			
	11	21	40	28	1			
D10	Men	Women						
	45	55						
D8r2	No full-time education	Still studying	Up to 15 years	16-19 years	20+	Don't know and refusal		
	1	6	15	43	33	2		
D11r3	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-	-
	9	13	16	17	18	17	10	-

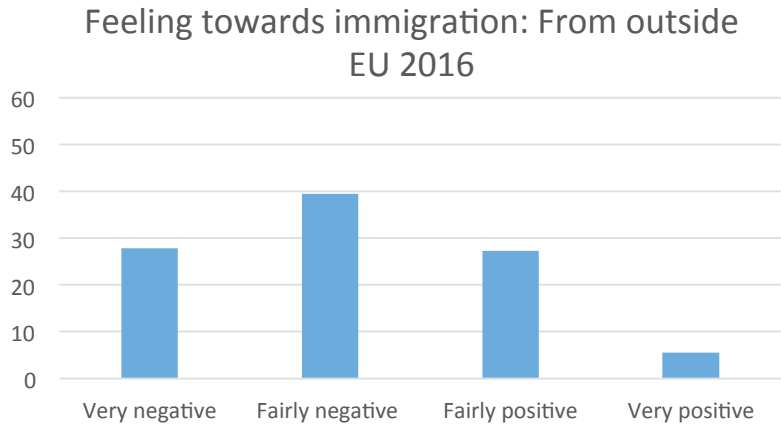
**Figure 6. Distribution of opinion regarding freedom of movement of persons in EU**



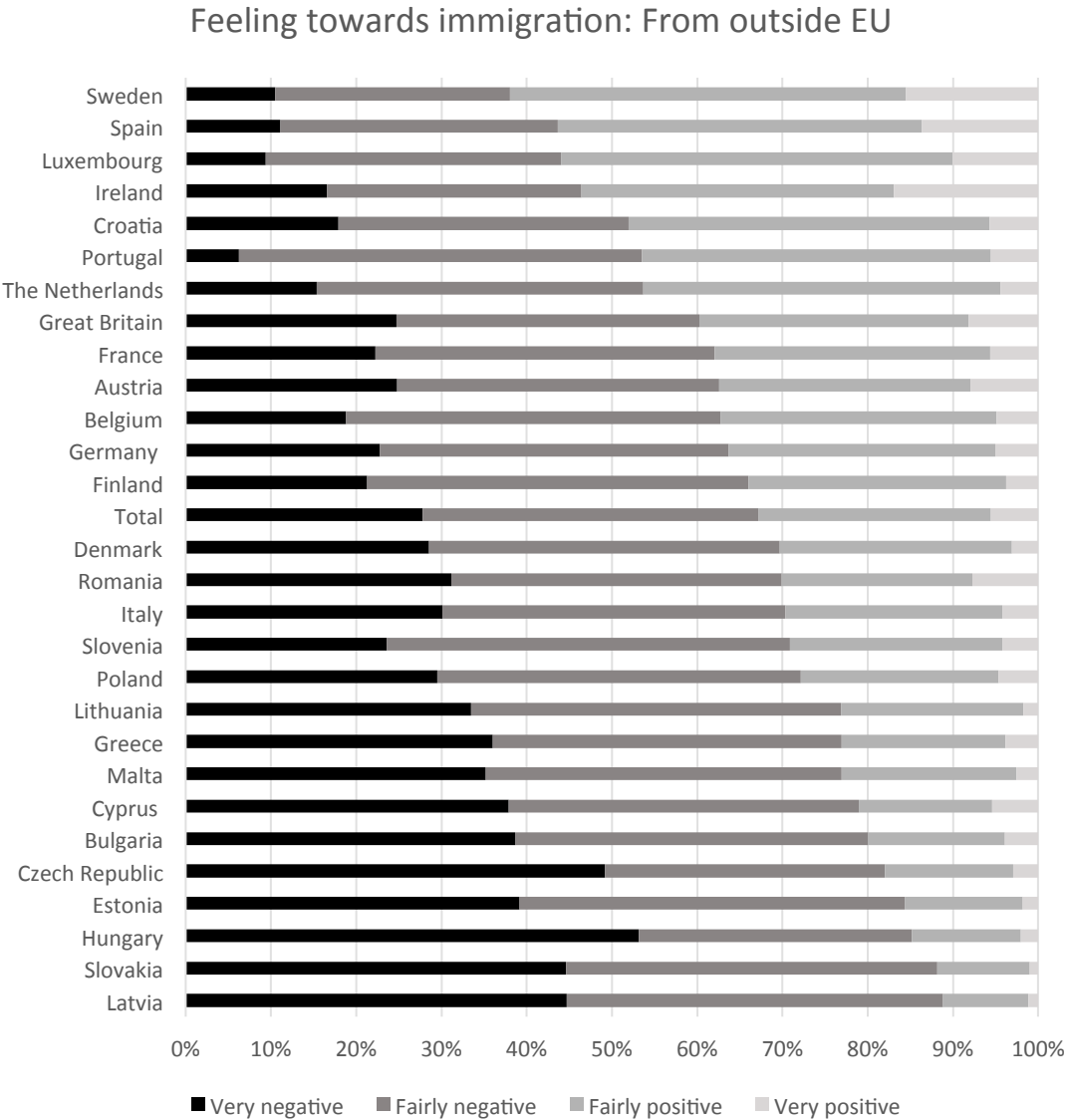
**Figure 7. Distribution of opinion regarding freedom of movement of persons by member state**



**Figure 8. Distribution of opinion regarding external immigration in EU**



**Figure 9. Distribution of opinion regarding external immigration by member state**



**Table 7a. Multiple regression results: Opinion about freedom of movement<sup>18</sup>**

Variable	Model 1a	Model 1b	Model 1c	Model 1d	Model 1e	Model 1
Economic situation <sup>1</sup>	.17*** (.002)	.17*** (.022)	0.17*** (.022)	.14*** (.023)	.087** (.022)	.075** (.022)
Gender		-.030* (.0142)				-.015 (.014)
Age <sup>2</sup>			.028** (.007)			-.000 (.006)
Education <sup>3</sup>				.12*** (.022)		.072*** (.017)
European identity <sup>4</sup>					.26*** (.027)	.25*** (.025)
Share of EU immigration		-	-	-	-	-
GDP per capita		-	-	-	-	-
Intercept	2.18*** (.007)	2.23*** (.067)	2.30*** (.086)	1.85*** (.089)	1.66*** (.0877)	1.52*** (.12)
R <sup>2</sup>	.0244	.0247	.028	.038	.106	.11
N	24 405	24 405	24 405	24 405	24 405	24 405

\*p<0.05\*\*\*p<0.05\*\*p<0.01\*\*\*p<.001 **Note:** Dependent variable is sentiments towards immigration from EU member states. 'Please tell me whether each of the following statements evokes a positive or a negative feeling for you.' Statement: 'Immigration of people from other EU-member states. The respondent is given a choice of four alternatives, (1) 'very negative', (2) 'fairly negative', (3) 'fairly positive' and (4) 'very positive'. 'How would you judge the current situation in each of the following? The financial situation for your household': (1) 'very bad', (2) 'rather bad', (3) 'rather good' and (4) 'very good'. <sup>2</sup>Age is divided into seven categories: (1) '15-24', (2) '25-34', (3) '35-44', (4) '45-54', (5) '55-64', (6) '65-74' and (7) '75 years and older'. <sup>3</sup>The Eurobarometer measures education according to five categories: (1) 'No full-time education', (2) 'still studying', (3) 'Up to 15 years of formal education', (4) 'Between 16-19 years of full time education and (5) '20 years or more of full-time education'. <sup>4</sup> You feel you are a citizen of the EU?: (1) 'Definitely not', (2) 'Not really', (3) 'To some extent' and (4) 'Yes, definitely'.

**Table 7b. Multiple regression results: Opinion about freedom of movement<sup>19</sup>**

Variable	Model 2a	Model 2b	Model 2	Model 3
Economic situation <sup>1</sup>	-	-		.073** (.018)
Gender	-	-		-.015 (.014)
Age <sup>2</sup>	-	-		-.000 (.006)
Education <sup>3</sup>	-	-		.074*** (.017)
European identity <sup>4</sup>	-	-		.24*** (.025)
Share of EU immigration	.011** (.0041)	-	.002 (.006)	.000 (.006)
GDP per capita	-	.001* (.000)	.001 (.001)	.000 (.001)
Intercept	2.59*** (.0422)	2.47*** (.084)	2.49*** (.100)	1.52*** (.14)
R <sup>2</sup>	.0048	.006	.063	.112
N	24 405	24 405	24 405	24 405

\*p<0.05\*\*\*p<0.05\*\*p<0.01\*\*\*p<.001

<sup>18</sup> Table 7a corresponds with Table 2 in Analysis

<sup>19</sup> Table 7b corresponds with Table 2 in Analysis

**Table 8a. Multiple regression results: Opinion about external immigration<sup>20</sup>**

Variable	Model 5a	Model 5b	Model 5c	Model 5d	Model 5e	Model 5
Economic situation <sup>1</sup>	.18*** (.027)	.18*** (.026)	0.18*** (.022)	.16*** (.025)	.11** (.027)	.10*** (.024)
Gender		.014 (.017)				.026 (.015)
Age <sup>2</sup>			-.04*** (.007)			-.021** (.007)
Education <sup>3</sup>				.123*** (.022)		.046 (.025)
European identity <sup>4</sup>					.21*** (.024)	.20*** (.023)
Share of external immigration		-	-	-	-	-
GDP per capita		-	-	-	-	-
Intercept	1.62*** (.090)	1.60*** (.088)	1.79*** (.105)	1.34*** (.126)	1.20*** (.087)	1.14*** (.163)
R <sup>2</sup>	.0246	.0247	.032	.034	.074	.08
N	24 405	24 405	24 405	24 405	24 405	24 405

\*p<0.05\*\*p<.01\*\*\*p<.001. **Note:** Dependent variable is sentiments towards immigration from of people from outside EU. 'Please tell me whether each of the following statements evokes a positive or a negative feeling for you.' Statement: 'Immigration of people from outside EU. The respondent is given a choice of four alternatives, (1) 'very negative', (2) 'fairly negative', (3) 'fairly positive' and (4) 'very positive'. 'How would you judge the current situation in each of the following? The financial situation for your household': (1) 'very bad', (2) 'rather bad', (3) 'rather good' and (4) 'very good'. <sup>2</sup>Age is divided into seven categories: (1) '15-24', (2) '25-34', (3) '35-44', (4) '45-54', (5) '55-64', (6) '65-74' and (7) '75 years and older'. <sup>3</sup>The Eurobarometer measures education according to five categories: (1) 'No full-time education', (2) 'still studying', (3) 'Up to 15 years of formal education', (4) 'Between 16-19 years of full time education and (5) '20 years or more of full-time education'. <sup>4</sup> You feel you are a citizen of the EU?: (1) 'Definitely not', (2) 'Not really', (3) 'To some extent' and (4) 'Yes, definitely'.

**Table 8b. Multiple regression results: Opinion about external immigration<sup>21</sup>**

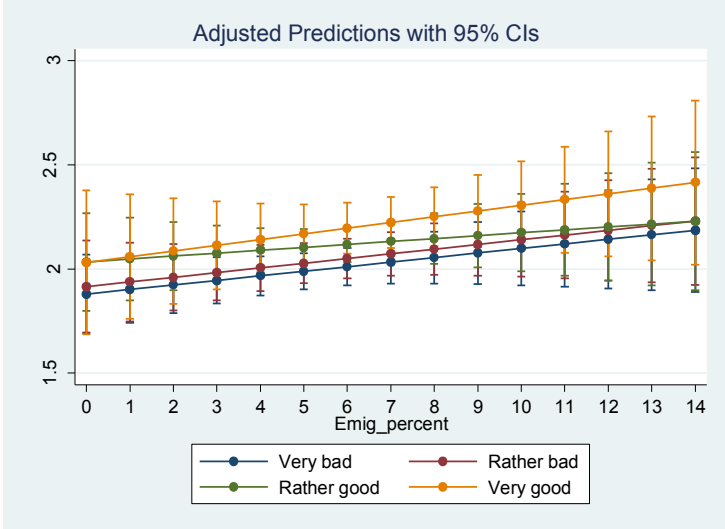
Variable	Model 6a	Model 6b	Full model 6	Full model 7
Economic situation <sup>1</sup>	-	-		.066** (.017)
Gender	-	-		.028 (.015)
Age <sup>2</sup>	-	-		-.028*** (.007)
Education <sup>3</sup>	-	-		.036 (.023)
European identity <sup>4</sup>	-	-		.19*** (.024)
Share of external immigration	.030 (.0356)	-	.019 (.016)	.018 (.018)
GDP per capita	-	.004*** (.000)	.003** (.001)	.003 (.001)
Intercept	1.91*** (.101)	1.71*** (.122)	1.64*** (.122)	0.96*** (.19)
R <sup>2</sup>	.0149	.031	.036	.097
N	24 405	24 405	24 405	24 405

\*p<0.05\*\*p<.01\*\*\*p<.001.

<sup>20</sup> Table 8a corresponds with table 4 in Analysis

<sup>21</sup> Table 8b corresponds with table 4 in Analysis

Figure 10. Predicted probabilities to be in favour of external immigration<sup>22</sup>



**Note:** There were no interactions found between opinion about external immigration, under different sizes of external immigration and perception of financial situation for household.

<sup>22</sup> Figure 10 corresponds with interaction of hypothesis 6 in analysis

## Variables in Eurobarometer data 82.3 2014

**Dependent variable:** 'Please tell me whether each of the following statements evokes a positive or negative feeling for you. (Qa11\_1) Immigration of people from other EU Member States. (Qa11\_2) Immigration of people from outside EU. The response alternatives are: (1) Very positive, (2) Fairly positive, (3) Fairly negative, (4) Very Negative. These variables have been recoded. The responses are coded in reversed order going from (1) Very negative- (4) Very positive.

### Independent variables

(Qa1a\_4) *Economic situation:* 'How would you judge the current situation in each of the following? The financial situation for your household'. The response alternatives are: (1) Very good, (2) Rather good, (3) Rather bad, (4) Very bad. The responses are coded in reversed order going from (1) Very bad- (4) Very good.

(Qd1\_1) *European identity:* 'For each of the following statements, please tell me to what extent it corresponds or not to your own opinion. The response alternatives are: You feel you are a citizen of the EU'. (1) Yes, definitely, (2) Yes, to some extent, (3) No, not really, (4) No, definitely not, (5) don't know. The responses are coded in reversed order going from (1) No, definitely not - (4) Yes, definitely.

(D10) *Gender:* (1) Man (2) Woman

(D8r2- recoded into five categories) *Education:* 'How old were you when you stopped full-time education?' The response alternatives are: (1) Up to 15 years, (2) 16-19 years, (3) 20+, (4) Still studying, (5) No full-time education, (6) Refusal, (7) Don't know. The responses are coded into another order going from (1) No full-time education, (2) Still studying, (3) Up to 15 years, (4) 16-19 years, (5) 20+.

(D11r3 recoded into seven categories) *Age:* (1) 15-24 years of age, (2) 25-34 years of age, (3) 35-44 years of age, (4) 45-54 years of age, (5) 55-64 years of age, (6) 65-74 years of age, (7) 75 years of age and older.

**Table 9. Responses (percent) 2014**

Variables	<i>Very negative</i>	<i>Fairly negative</i>	<i>Fairly positive</i>	<i>Very positive</i>				<i>Don't know</i>
Qa11_1	10	30	43	11				6
Qa11_2	21	38	27	7				7
Qa1a_4	<i>Very bad</i>	<i>Rather bad</i>	<i>Rather good</i>	<i>Very good</i>				<i>Don't know</i>
	9	27	53	9				2
Qd1_1	<i>No, definitely not</i>	<i>No, not really</i>	<i>Yes, to some extent</i>	<i>Yes, definitely</i>				<i>Don't know</i>
	11	22	41	25				1
D10	Man	Women						
	47	53						
D8r2	<i>No full-time education</i>	<i>Still studying</i>	<i>Up to 15 years</i>	<i>16-19 years</i>	<i>20+</i>			<i>Don't know and refusal</i>
	1	8	16	41	32			2
D11r3	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-	-
	11	15	17	17	17	15	8	

Descriptive statistics

Figure 11. Distribution of opinion regarding freedom of movement of persons

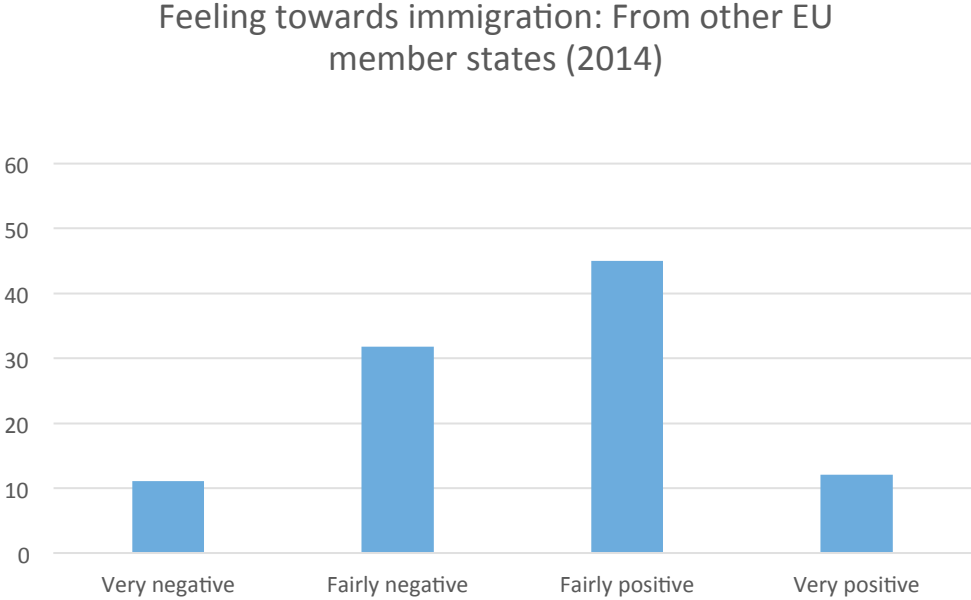
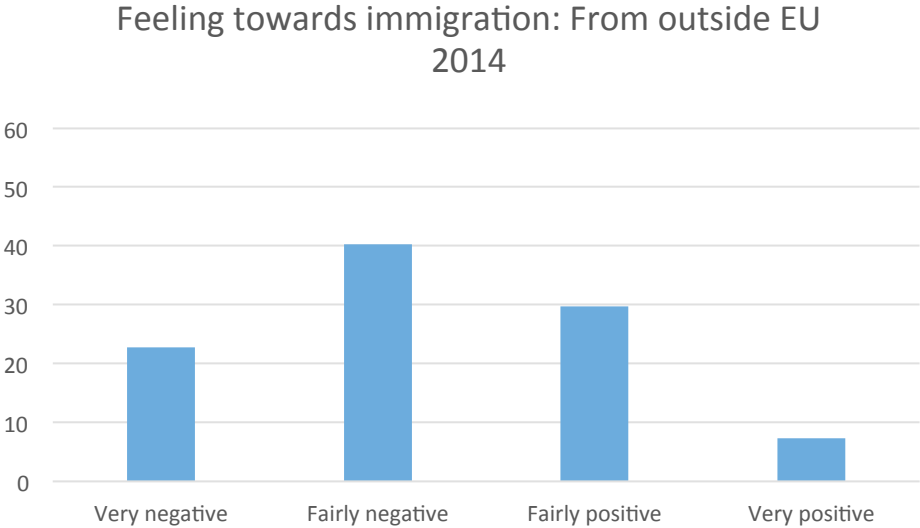


Figure 12. Distribution of opinion regarding external immigration in EU





**Table 10. Countries, number of observations and country level statistics 2014**

<i>EU countries<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>N</i>	<i>EU immigrants (%)</i>	<i>Immigrants from outside EU (%)</i>	<i>Total immigration (%)</i>	<i>GDP per capita</i>	<i>Average value freedom of movement<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>Average value external immigration<sup>3</sup></i>
Austria	1 032	7.5	9.1	16.6	127,1	2,65	2,29
Belgium	1 001	7.5	8.4	15.9	118,2	2,46	2,13
Bulgaria	1 006	0.6	0.9	1.5	46,5	2,68	1,96
Croatia	1 027	1.7	11.7	13.4	58,5	2,77	2,56
Cyprus	1 000	13	9.4	22.4	81,5	2,31	1,86
Czech Republic	1 055	1.5	2.3	3.8	85,5	2,22	1,86
Denmark	1 004	3.4	6.7	10.1	124,4	2,81	2,31
Estonia	1 002	1	13.9	14.9	75,3	2,55	1,88
Finland	1 002	2	3.5	5.5	110,2	2,86	2,36
France	1 012	3.3	8.3	11.6	106,9	2,44	2,11
Germany	1 610	4.8	7.4	12.2	125,8	2,50	2,13
Greece	1 009	3.1	8.4	11.5	72,4	2,49	1,95
Hungary	1 061	3	1.5	4.5	67,6	2,42	2,06
Ireland	1 002	10.2	5.9	16.1	136,7	2,75	2,42
Italy	1 016	3	6.5	9.5	96	2,27	1,92
Latvia	1 003	1.4	12.2	13.6	63,6	2,18	1,85
Lithuania	1 002	0.6	4.1	4.7	74,9	2,62	2,14
Luxembourg	507	32.3	11	43.3	265,5	2,94	2,38
Malta	506	4.4	5	9.4	85,8	2,56	1,91
The Netherlands	1 010	3	8.6	11.6	130,5	2,59	2,37
Poland	1 033	0.6	1	1.6	67,6	2,74	2,41
Portugal	1 005	2.1	6.1	8.2	77,8	2,76	2,53
Romania	1 018	0.4	0.7	1.1	55,3	2,83	2,57
Slovakia	1 037	2.7	0.5	3.2	76,7	2,34	1,95
Slovenia	1 046	3.3	8.1	11.4	82,2	2,59	2,20
Spain	1 055	4.4	8.5	12.9	90,9	2,82	2,50
Sweden	1 023	5.3	10.6	15.9	122,5	3,05	2,85
United Kingdom	1 317	4.4	8.1	12.5	109,7	2,33	2,20

**Note:** The table shows number of observations for each EU country in Eurobarometer 82.3 (2014). The percent rate is the percent of the total population in each country, 1 of January 2014. GDP per capita in thousands of Euro for each EU country adjusted for price level differences, 2014. <sup>1</sup>The data includes countries that are still in the accession process for EU membership. These countries are Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania; they will be excluded from the analysis. Secondly, several merges are made, West and East Germany, Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Greek and the Turkish parts of Cyprus.<sup>2</sup> *'Please tell me whether each of the following statements evokes a positive or a negative feeling for you.'* Statement: 'Immigration of people from other EU-member states.'<sup>3</sup> *'Please tell me whether each of the following statements evokes a positive or a negative feeling for you.'* Statement: 'Immigration of people from outside EU. The respondent is given a choice of four alternatives, (1) 'very negative', (2) 'fairly negative', (3) 'fairly positive' and (4) 'very positive'.

**Source:** Eurostat. Eurobarometer 82.3 (2014)

## Results 2014

**Table 11. Multiple regression results 2014**

Variable	Freedom of movement				External immigration			
	Model 9a	Model 9	Model 10a	Model 11	Model 12a	Model 12	Model 13a	Model 14
Economic situation <sup>1</sup>	.18*** (.027)	.098*** (.019)	-	.098*** (.017)	.17*** (.027)	.10*** (.023)	-	.095** (.018)
Gender		-.011 (.013)	-	-.011 (.015)		.031 (.016)	-	.031* (.015)
Age <sup>2</sup>		-.018* (.007)	-	-.018* (.007)		-.037** (.011)	-	-.038** (.010)
Education <sup>3</sup>		.10*** (.023)	-	.10*** (.022)		.06* (.03)	-	.062* (.028)
European identity <sup>4</sup>		.22*** (.020)	-	.22*** (.02)		.18*** (.018)	-	.18*** (.018)
Size of external immigration		-	.007 (.006)	-.002 (.013)		-	.008 (.016)	.0005 (.017)
GDP per capita		-	.001 (.002)	.000 (.001)		-	.001 (.002)	.002 (.001)
Intercept	2.07*** (.090)	1.44*** (.15)	2.55*** (.054)	1.45*** (.18)	1.76*** (.090)	1.34*** (.19)	2.16*** (.13)	1.29*** (.22)
R <sup>2</sup>	.03	.11	.002	.11	.02	.074	.001	.074
N	24 579	24 579	24 579	24 579	24 579	24 579	24 579	24 579

\*p<0.05\*\*p<.01\*\*\*p<.001. Dependent variables are sentiments towards. 'Please tell me whether each of the following statements evokes a positive or a negative feeling for you.' Statement: (1) 'Immigration of people from other EU Member States (model 7 and model 8), (2) 'Immigration of people from outside EU (model 9 and model 10). The respondent is given a choice of four alternatives, 'very negative', 'fairly negative', 'fairly positive' and 'very positive'. 'How would you judge the current situation in each of the following? The financial situation for your household': Very bad, rather bad, rather good, very good. <sup>2</sup>Age is divided into seven categories: '15-24', '25-34', '35-44', '45-54', '55-64', '65-74' and '75 years and older'. <sup>3</sup>The EB measures education according to five categories: 'No full-time education', 'still studying', 'Up to 15 years of formal education', 'Between 16-19 years of full time education and '20 years or more of full-time education'. <sup>4</sup> 'You feel you are a citizen of the EU?': 'Definitely not', 'Not really', 'To some extent', 'Yes, definitely'.

H1 (2014): People who perceive themselves economic secure are more in favour of freedom of movement of persons (Model 9). One increased step on the scale very bad to very good will increase the opinion with 0.098 in a positive direction. People who consider their economic situation as very good are 0.29 (0.098\*3) more positive towards the freedom of movement than people who consider their economic situation as very bad. H1 (2014) can be supported.

H2 (2014): People who live in a country with higher levels of internal immigration are less in favour of the freedom of movement of persons than people in countries with lower levels of immigrants (Model 10). There is no relationship between size of internal immigration and opinion about the freedom of movement. H2 cannot be supported.

H4 (2014): People who perceive themselves as economic insecure are less in favour of external immigration (Model 12). One increased step on the scale very bad to very good will increase the opinion with .10 for each step in a positive direction. People who consider their economic situation as very good are 0.30 (0.10\*3) more positive towards external immigration than people who consider their economic situation as very bad. H4 (2014) can be supported.

H5 (2014): People who live in a country with high levels of external immigration are less in favour of external immigration than people in countries with lower levels of external immigration (Model 14). There is no relationship between size of external immigration and opinion about external immigration. H5 cannot be supported.

**Table 12. Multiple regression results with interaction 2014**

Variable	Freedom of movement		External immigration	
		Model 15		Model 16
Economic situation & size of immigrants	Rather bad & size	-0.002 (.006)		-.023** (.008)
	Rather good & size	-0.012 (.006)		-.026* (.011)
	Very good & size	.009 (.007)		.0004 (.023)
<i>Individual</i>				
Gender		-0.011 (.012)		.032* (.015)
	Age	.10* (.022)		-.038** (.010)
Education		-.018*** (.007)		.062* (.028)
	European identity	.22*** (.002)		.18*** (.018)
<i>Country level control</i>				
GDP per capital		-.0005 (.001)		.0000 (.001)
	Fixed intercept	1.61*** (.18)		1.29*** (.18)
R <sup>2</sup>		.11		.076
N		24 579		24 579

**Note:** The table displays the results from Eurobarometer 82.3 (2014). Contrary to Eurobarometer 2016 there is no interaction between opinion about the freedom of movement and perception of economic situation, under different sizes of internal immigration. On the other hand an interaction was found between opinion about external immigration and the respondents' perception of economic situation, under different sizes of external immigration.

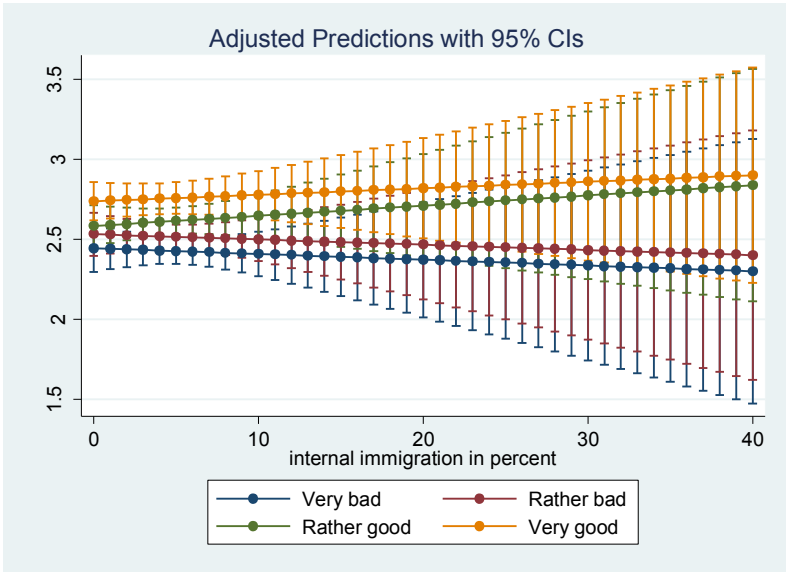
H3 (2014): People who perceive themselves as economic insecure and live in a country with high levels of internal immigration are less in favour of freedom of movement of persons. No interactions were found (Model 15). See figure 13 below.<sup>23</sup>

H6 (2014): People who perceive themselves as economic insecure and live in a country with high levels of external immigration are less in favour of external immigration (Model 16). Interactions were found see figure 14 below.<sup>24</sup> People who consider their economic situation as rather good or rather bad, their opinion towards external immigration are predicted to be less in favour of external immigration with increased size of external immigration.

<sup>23</sup> Interactions were done without Luxembourg. The pattern did not change.

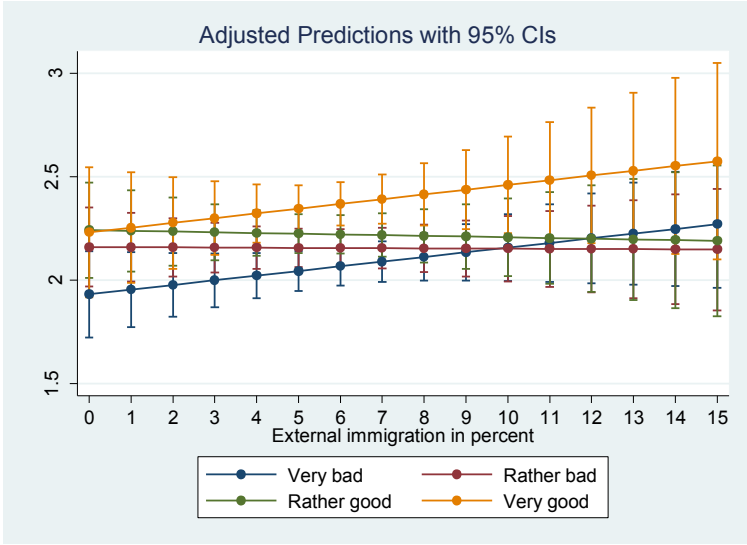
<sup>24</sup> Interactions were done without Luxembourg. The pattern did not change.

**Figure 13. Predicted probabilities to be in favour of freedom of movement (2014)**



**Note:** Dependent variable is sentiments towards immigration from other EU countries. The interaction displays how the relationship between opinions about the freedom of movement looks like in different economic groups, when the relative size of internal immigration increases. There is no significant difference between people who consider their household’s economic situation as good and people who consider their household’s economic situation as bad.

**Figure 14. Predicted probabilities to be in favour of external immigration (2014)**



**Note:** Dependent variable is sentiments towards immigration from outside EU. The interaction displays how the relationship between opinion about the external immigration looks like in groups with different economic situations, at different sizes of external immigration. There is a significant difference between people who consider their household’s economic situation as rather good and people who consider their household’s economic situation as rather bad. If you consider your household’s economic situation as rather good or rather bad your sentiments towards external immigration are predicted to be less in favour of external immigration increased size of external immigration. However, the relationship for people who consider their household’s economic situation as very good is not significant.

### **Concluding remarks**

The same test on data from Eurobarometer 82.3, 2014 was conducted in order to establish a more robust result. The results do not show the same pattern for data 2016 and data 2014. In sum, the relationship between opinion about the freedom of movement and external immigration seem to display the same pattern. People who consider their economic situation as very good are also more in favour of the freedom of movement and external immigration. Level of formal education causes a positive effect in the opinion. Age has a negative impact in both regressions. European identity has a positive effect in both cases. On the micro level both regressions display the same pattern.

There were no interactions found between opinions about the freedom of movement for different economic groups and relative size of internal immigration. Contrary, there is a significant difference between different economic groups with increasing level of external immigration. This result shows there is an ambiguity if actual size impacts attitudes. The interactions for 2014 show a different pattern compared with the data of 2016. This can depend on the contextual changes. During 2014-2015 EU experienced a refugee crisis that might have caused the opinion to change.