



Juan Díez Medrano

Mediation Analysis of the Effect of Education on Anti-Migration Attitudes

SCRIPTS Working Paper No. 52

CLUSTER OF EXCELLENCE “CONTESTATIONS OF THE LIBERAL SCRIPT (SCRIPTS)”

SCRIPTS analyzes the contemporary controversies about liberal order from a historical, global, and comparative perspective. It connects academic expertise in the social sciences and area studies, collaborates with research institutions in all world regions, and maintains cooperative ties with major political, cultural, and social institutions. Operating since 2019 and funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG), the SCRIPTS Cluster of Excellence unites eight major Berlin-based research institutions: Freie Universität Berlin, the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, the Berlin Social Science Center (WZB), as well as the Hertie School, the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW), the Berlin branch of the German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA), the Centre for East European and International Studies (ZOiS), and the Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient (ZMO).

SCRIPTS WORKING PAPER SERIES

The SCRIPTS Working Paper Series serves to disseminate the research results of work in progress prior to publication to encourage the exchange of ideas, enrich the discussion and generate further feedback. All SCRIPTS Working Papers are available on the SCRIPTS website at www.scripts-berlin.eu and can be ordered in print via email to office@scripts-berlin.eu.

Series-Editing and Production: Dr. Anke Draude, Christina Templin, Isabela De Sá Galvão, and Carol Switzer.

Please cite this issue as: Díez Medrano, Juan 2025: Mediation Analysis of the Effect of Education on Anti-Migration Attitudes, SCRIPTS Working Paper No. 52, Berlin: Cluster of Excellence 2055 “Contestations of the Liberal Script (SCRIPTS)”.

Cluster of Excellence
“Contestations of the Liberal Script (SCRIPTS)”
Freie Universität Berlin
Edwin-Redslob-Straße 29
14195 Berlin
Germany

+49 30 838 58502
office@scripts-berlin.eu

www.scripts-berlin.eu
Twitter: [@scriptsberlin](https://twitter.com/scriptsberlin)



CONTENTS

Author

Abstract

1	Introduction	3
2	Literature Review	3
3	An Empirical Test	5
4	Results	7
5	Discussion and Conclusion	9

References

Appendix I

Appendix II

AUTHOR



Juan Díez Medrano (PhD, University of Michigan, 1989) is a Professor of Sociology at the Universidad Carlos III de Madrid. He is the author of books and articles on nationalism (e.g. *Divided Nations*, 1995, Cornell University Press) and European integration (e.g. *Framing Europe*, 2003, Princeton University Press and *Europe in Love*, 2020, Routledge). His current research focuses on the mediators of the effects of education on attitudes towards European integration and international migrants. In the Winter-Spring of 2024, he was a Senior Visiting Researcher at the Berlin International College of Research and Graduate Training.

juan.diez@uc3m.es

Mediation Analysis of the Effect of Education on Anti-Migration Attitudes

Juan Díez Medrano

ABSTRACT

The literature consistently shows a moderate negative association between educational attainment and anti-immigration attitudes. Yet, we know very little about the factors that explain this association. This working paper draws on extant literature exploring the factors that explain anti-immigration attitudes and how these factors are related to education. Using data from the European Social Survey (ESS), it tests the validity of a causal model linking education to anti-immigration attitudes. The statistical analysis shows that universalism, political interest, and social trust are the strongest mediators of the effect of educational attainment. These findings sustain a narrative according to which the educational system instills universalistic values in students, enhances their interest in politics, and provides them with the skills necessary to navigate social interactions in this very complex world. These qualities then enhance their social skills and make them more trustful of others, including migrants.

1 INTRODUCTION

The rise of the far-right in many established democracies has been of concern for some time. While the far-right party programmes differ widely across countries and lack ideological coherence, one feature that supporters and their leaders have in common is xenophobia and resistance to migration. This article adds to a very extensive literature by focusing on the latter. While existing literature has uncovered many factors that contribute to negative attitudes towards immigration, little is known about the causal ordering of these factors. Filling this gap is important because of the endogeneity of the many factors that impact these attitudes and because a better causal understanding can orient policies aimed at modifying those attitudes. The paper focuses on the role of educational attainment, one of the most robust predictors of anti-immigrant and anti-immigration

attitudes. Its main contribution is to shed light on the causal relationship between educational attainment and attitudes towards migration by empirically examining the role of different mediators. After a literature review, the article describes the causal model and discusses the data and methods used to test it. Then, it proceeds with the analysis, which reveals that all theoretically relevant individual variables behave as anticipated in mediating the effect of educational attainment. The paper ends with a discussion of the relative importance of the different variables and the policy implications these findings can have.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The focus on educational attainment can be justified on two grounds: First, two of the most robust findings in the literature are the associations between educational attainment and vote for the far-right (Arzheimer 2009; Arzheimer/Carter 2006; Evans 2005; Givens 2005; Golder 2016; Hahkiopoulou/Vlandas 2020; Lubbers et al. 2002; Lucassen/Lubbers 2012; Stockemer et al. 2020), as well as between educational attainment and anti-immigration attitudes (Drazanova et al. 2024; Harris 2023; Van de Werfhorst/De Graaf 2004). Second, the level and type of education people receive fall, to some extent, within the domain of public policy and are therefore manageable. One can, to some extent, predict trends in average educational attainment and thus make informed conjectures about how these trends may impact future attitudes towards immigrants, controlling for other factors.

The literature distinguishes two different channels through which educational attainment may impact attitudes towards immigrants: the institutional experience itself and the long-term impact of attaining a lower or higher level of education on one's subsequent life trajectories. The institutional mechanism, in turn, comprises three distinct potential mediators: the lived experience within education institutions, the actual substantive content of education, and the cognitive skills acquired as one moves from one educational stage to another.

Regarding the direct impact of educational institutions, some authors have claimed that schools and other education venues are unique settings where children, adolescents, and young people in general are in intense and unavoidable social contact with people of different personalities and origins. Therefore, the longer they are in school, the greater their exposure to diversity is, and the greater the likelihood they will come to terms with and learn how to negotiate this diversity. This effect of education should then be reflected in how individuals approach migration (Nunn et al. 1978).

A more extensive strand of research has focused on the role of educational institutions' socialisation and their role in instilling norms and values in individuals. While educational institutions could socialise individuals into a wide variety of norms and values, empirical research has highlighted a *longue-durée* trend, amplified by globalisation, toward the transmission of universalistic values, of which tolerance, and more specifically tolerance of migrants, would be one key dimension (Blinder et al. 2013; Davidov et al. 2014; Gaasholt/Togeby, 1995; Hyman/Wright 1979; Jensen/Engesbak 1994; Kruecken/Drori 2009 on John Meyer's major contribution to this literature). This same research strand has highlighted that education institutions worldwide tend to de-value tradition as a guide to behaviour or as something worth fighting for and that traditional values are

positively associated with anti-immigrant attitudes (Davidov et al. 2014).

Finally, the institutional approach to the effect of education on attitudes towards immigration and immigrants stresses the mediating cognitive skills acquired as students moving through the educational system face increasingly complex topics and problems to solve. This increasing complexity and difficulty allegedly make individuals more rational, their minds more flexible, and less prone to generalisation, qualities which eventually translate into greater restraint when dealing with others (e.g. immigrants) among those with higher levels of education, compared to those with lower levels of education (Bobo/Licari 1989; Hyman/Wright 1979; Jensen/Engesbak 1994; Knutsen 2004; Nie et al. 1996; Pacarella/Terenzini 1991; Weakliem 2002).

The literature on the causal impact of education on attitudes towards migrants and migration has also focused on the long-term effects of educational attainment. Here, one can distinguish between personality and structural/competitive mechanisms. The personality mechanism emphasises the role of cognitive skills acquired through education in instilling a greater sense of control in highly educated individuals compared to those with lower levels of education. On the social level, this greater sense of control, grounded on the accumulation of positive interaction experiences, makes highly educated individuals more prone to engage with a wide variety of people. This, in turn, trains them to negotiate all sorts of interpersonal situations, makes them more sophisticated in dealing with others, reduces their reliance on stereotypes when judging people, and increases their trust in others. This greater trust, in turn, makes them more likely to accept immigrants (Hooghe et al. 2012; Jensen/Engesbak 1994; Lipset 1981; Mitchell 2021; Rustenbach 2010; Sturgis et al. 2010; Uslaner 1999; Weil 1985; Wu 2021). In fact, the literature shows that educational attainment is the

greatest predictor of social trust (Uslaner 1999) and that social trust is the strongest individual predictor of attitudes towards migrants (Rustenbach 2010).

Research on the long-term effects of educational attainment has also focused both on the individual and aggregate levels of structural/competitive factors. The argument goes that people with more education concentrate in high-status occupations, where competition from migrants is less intense than in low-status occupations. Also, more educated individuals earn higher incomes than their less educated counterparts, which makes them more financially secure and feel less threatened by the presence of immigrants. This, in turn, results in more favourable attitudes towards migrants and migration (Kitschelt 1994, 1995).

Despite the wealth of articles focused on the psychological, social, and structural effects of educational attainment and the role of both educational attainment and these other factors on attitudes towards migrants and migration, no effort has been made to develop and test a causal model that treats many of the variables mentioned as mechanisms mediating the effect of educational attainment (Ichilov 2023).

3 AN EMPIRICAL TEST

The following analysis uses Rounds 8 to 10 of the European Social Survey (2012–2016), with data for 23 countries. Drawing on the reviewed literature and within the limits imposed by the information contained in the dataset, it tests the validity of the causal model represented in Figure 1.

The dependent variable in the analysis is a 1 to 4 scale that measures the respondents' attitudes towards immigration from poor non-European countries. The question respondents must answer reads: "To what extent do you think that [country]

should allow people from the poorer countries outside Europe to come and live here?" (1 = Allow many to come and live here; 4 = Allow none). We have chosen this variable instead of others that measure different forms of xenophobia because one common denominator among far-right political parties, at least in the West, is opposition to non-Western migration. The main independent variable in the analysis is educational attainment, measured in years.

To test the institutionalist socialisation variant of the discussion of the effects of educational attainment on attitudes towards migrants and migration, the statistical analysis uses two variables: one that measures universalistic values and another that measures traditionalist values. The measures draw on Schwarz's categorisation of values and take advantage of including Schwarz's battery of items in the European Social Survey. Respondents are provided with a series of statements and must indicate to what extent these apply to them on a 6-point scale, where 1 means 'Not at all like me' and 6 means 'Very much like me.' Universalism is captured by the responses to three items in Schwarz's battery: 1. "It is important that every person in the world be treated equally. He believes everyone should have equal opportunities in life." 2. "It is important to listen to people who are different from him. Even when he disagrees with them, he still wants to understand them." 3. "He strongly believes that people should care for nature. Looking after the environment is important to him." Traditionalism is captured through two items in Schwarz's battery: 1. "It is important to him to be humble and modest. He tries not to draw attention to himself" 2. "Tradition is important to him. He tries to follow the customs handed down by his religion or family." In accordance with Schwarz's recommendations, the values for the Universalism and Traditionalism constructs were obtained by averaging the scores for the corresponding items and then subtracting the mean score for all the items in the battery.

To test the personality variant of the long-term effects approach regarding the mechanisms that mediate the effect of education on attitudes towards migrants and migration, the statistical analysis includes a measure of social trust. Respondents were asked to place themselves on a 1 to 10 scale, where 1 means “Most people can be trusted” and 10 means “You cannot be too careful.”

To test the structural/competitive variant of the long-term effects approach to the mechanisms that mediate the effect of education on attitudes towards migrants and migration, the statistical analysis includes a measure of occupational status and a measure of income. The first is a dummy variable that distinguishes people currently or previously employed in managerial, professional, or technical occupations. The second is an equalised measure, where the mid-point of the income bracket (in Euros) in which respondents locate themselves is divided by the square root of the household size (OECD 2023).

The statistical model controls for variables that could confound the effects of our variables of interest. First of all, it controls for political interest. Political interest is measured through a question that asks respondents how interested they are in politics. The possible answers run from 1 to 4, where 1 means very interested and 4 means not at all interested. Although the literature does not discuss it as a potential mediator of the effect of education on attitudes towards migrants and migration, it is well known that more educated individuals are more interested in politics than those who are less educated. At the same time, we may assume that people more interested in politics are more exposed to dominant discourse on migration and migrants. Since this discourse has emphasised tolerance on a global level, we may expect that individuals who have more interest in politics will be more attuned to this dominant discourse and express anti-immigrant views less often when asked in a survey than respondents with less interest in

politics (Creighton 2023). Then, the statistical analysis controls for people’s degree of religiosity as measured on a 1 to 10 scale. Although the literature does not address the role of religiosity as a mediator of the effect of education, it shows that education instills rational, secular worldviews in individuals (Inglehart 1990). At the same time, religion’s moral codes generally call for compassion for others, which may make more religious people more sympathetic to immigrants.

Other statistical controls in the analysis are age, gender, father’s occupation, ESS round, and country of interview. Finally, since attitudes towards migration and migrants may be influenced by political party programmes and discourse, and since these programmes pack together different messages, positions, and policy proposals, we control for the possibility that the respondents’ answers to questions on attitudes towards migration and migrants may capture other related attitudes that are part of the political parties’ programmatic discourse that inform their political views. The statistical analysis thus includes another dependent variable, which we assume is correlated with attitudes towards migration and migrants for the reasons stated previously. This variable measures respondents’ attitudes towards gays and lesbians through an item that asks them how much they agree with the following statement: “Gays and Lesbians should be free to live their lives as they wish.” The Lickert scale ranges from 1 (Strongly agree) to 5 (Strongly disagree).

We have normalised the main independent variables in the analysis to facilitate the interpretation of the statistical results on a 0 to 1 scale. We have reversed the codes for Political Interest and normalised it to a 0 to 1 scale. Table 1 provides descriptive statistics for all the variables used in the analysis.

The causal model represented in Figure 1 is a fully recursive structural equation model, which we

estimate using the *sem* procedure in Stata (for a similar question and approach, but focused on authoritarianism, with fewer mediators and limited to Denmark, see Stubager, 2008). In this model, the effect of education is mediated through universalism, traditionalism, social trust, occupational status, equivalised income, religiosity, and political interest.

4 RESULTS

This article's main goal is to examine the role of various mechanisms discussed in the literature in mediating the effect of education on attitudes towards migration, controlling for potential confounding factors. We first examine the direct effect of both education and the potential mechanisms. Table 2 presents both unstandardised and standardised coefficients, all statistically significant at the 0.05 level and in the predicted direction. Since the sample is quite large, we also pay particular attention to the magnitude, actual and relative, of these coefficients. The findings show that, on average, and controlling for the rest of the variables in the model, individuals who have completed more than twenty years of education (1 on the normalised scale) are about two-thirds of a point less opposed to migration from non-European poor countries than are individuals who have no education. Since the dependent variable range goes from 1 to 4, this effect represents about one-fifth of the range, which would seem small, given that we are comparing individuals with no education with individuals with university degrees. However, it is still bigger, in absolute terms, than any other effect, except for universalism. The most universalist among the respondents are almost two points (66% of the range in the dependent variable) less likely to oppose migration from poor non-Western countries than the least universalist. This effect can be seen as considerable.

When we examine the standardised effects, which account for variation within the independent variables, the picture changes slightly. While the effect of universalism is still the biggest (one standard deviation in the independent variable is associated with a fifth of one standard deviation change in the dependent variable), the effect of social trust is the second most important in relative terms, followed by those of educational attainment and political interest. All of these can be considered relatively small.

The previous description, however, does not take into consideration the model's causal structure and the fact that the tested model presumes that part of the effect of education is mediated by other variables in the model. The total effect of education on attitudes towards migration from poor non-Western countries is, in fact, -1.25 (standardised: -0.17), barely smaller than the effect of universalism (unstandardised -1.81; standardised -0.21) and greater than those of all the other mechanisms mediating the education effect. Table 3 presents the decomposition of the educational attainment effect into its total, direct, and indirect components. It shows that the mechanisms included in the model mediate half of the effect of educational attainment on attitudes towards migration from poor non-Western countries. One can only speculate about the direct effect of education measures. One possibility is that it absorbs measurement error in the mediators of the effect of education. Another possibility is that it captures the effect of two mechanisms mentioned in the theoretical section for which we have no measures in the dataset. One of those mechanisms is exposure to diversity in socio-cultural origins and personality while in educational institutions; the other mechanism could be the rational, problem-solving cognitive skills acquired while in educational institutions, which increase the longer one stays in them. And yet, it could capture the role of other mechanisms not yet considered in the literature.

Table 4 presents unstandardised and standardised coefficients for the strength of the indirect effects of educational attainment on attitudes towards migration from non-Western poor countries via the different mediators included in the causal model. They are all quite small. The biggest ones are those mediated by universalism, social trust, and political interest. While similar, they differ in the role that education plays in explaining them. Thus, as Table 5 shows, the effect of educational attainment on social trust and political interest is considerably greater than its effect on universalism. The relatively large indirect effect of educational attainment on attitudes towards migration from poor non-Western countries through universalism is mainly due to the fact that the direct effect of universalism on attitudes towards migration is relatively bigger than that of any other mechanism. But the effect of educational attainment on universalism is itself relatively small. One can thus conclude that the two effects of educational attainment that contribute most to shaping people's attitudes towards migration from poor, non-Western migrants, are political interest, which makes people more exposed to the global discourse of tolerance of and generosity to migrants, and social trust, which makes individuals high on it more expert in dealing with a wide diversity of people, and therefore more receptive to the arrival of migrants. Whereas the political interest is probably directly in educational institutions themselves, the latter is an indirect consequence of the greater skills that highly educated individuals have, compared to less educated individuals, to negotiate social interactions, resulting in a greater sense of control.

The causal model contrasted in this article performs relatively well. The coefficient of determination for the whole model, including the sub-model that explains attitudes towards gays and lesbians, is 77%. This result means that the estimated variance-covariance matrix based on the hypothesised causal structure and obtained through

maximum likelihood reproduces the actual variance-covariance matrix to a very large extent. A focus on the model for attitudes towards migration from poor non-Western countries shows that the model explains about 35% of the variance. Finally, the relatively small difference between the coefficient of correlation for the relationship between educational attainment and attitudes towards migration (-0.1960) and the total effect of education (-1.253), suggests that the level of causal specification of the model is quite complete. It also suggests that educational attainment has net positive effects on attitudes towards migration that would need to be modelled causally. These net positive effects probably involve some of the control variables in the model.

This paper uses attitudes towards gays' and lesbians' freedom to live their lives as they like as a dependent variable correlated with attitudes towards migration as a control to limit the possibility that respondents' answers to the question on immigration may be capturing other attitudes packaged together in far-right political programmes. The causal structure for the effects of education on this variable is the same as for attitudes towards migration and is not reported here because it is not the focus of the paper. Suffice it to say, however, that the correlation between the two dependent variables is 0.30. Also, the effects of education and the mediators on anti-gay and lesbian rights are identical in sign and statistical significance to those observed for anti-immigration attitudes. The only exception is the effect of religiosity, which, instead of negative (more religiosity, less anti-migration attitudes), is positive (more religiosity, more opposition to gays' and lesbians' right to live their lives as they wish).

5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Educational attainment is the most robust predictor of individual attitudes towards migration and the contribution of migrants (Drazanova et al. 2024). Yet, as in many other domains of social life, we know very little about the causal mechanisms and mediators of this effect. Advancing in this direction is important, theoretically certainly, but also in practice because it can provide guidance on which educational policies may contribute to mitigating conflict between natives and immigrants or make Western societies more welcoming of immigrants in places where they are sorely needed. This article moves in this direction by testing a theoretically motivated causal model using the rich source of information provided by the European Social Survey.

The statistical results reported in the text confirm previously held assumptions about the effects of different variables on attitudes towards migration and their role as mediators of the effect of education. At the same time, they help assess their relative importance and reveal the extent to which attitudes towards migration are amenable to change through targeted policy. Universalism, political interest, and social trust appear as the strongest mediators of the effect of educational attainment. The statistical findings sustain a narrative according to which the educational system instils universalistic values in students, enhances their interest in politics, and provides them with the skills necessary to navigate social interactions in this very complex world, which then enhances their social skills and makes them more trustful of others, including migrants. These effects, combined with the structural advantages that more educated people enjoy in the labour market and the ensuing financial security, make them less resistant to immigration than the less educated. The mediating effect of political interest is particularly interesting, not only because it is strong, in relative terms, but also because it

is easily manipulable through educational policy that, for instance, introduces politics as a subject in the schooling process. Needless to say, this is what the data for these three waves tell us. Since they are not a random sample of time, it is conceivable that in a rarified political context where xenophobic and anti-immigrant discourse is becoming more legitimate, this discourse may resonate more with politicised individuals than does the liberal world society narrative of respect and acceptance of diversity or the discourse that emphasises the necessity of migrants in societies that are getting older. Because of this, it is conceivable that the mediating effect of political interest on attitudes towards migration may change in the future.

The findings reported in this article are subject to the usual criticism that they are based on cross-sectional data. While the causal model rests on solid theoretical contributions and expectations, omitted variables may be biasing the results. At the very least, however, the findings should offer guidance to extant and future panel studies on the content of the questionnaires on which they are based. Future research may also improve on this contribution through *Confirmatory Factor Analysis* that takes full advantage of the ESS-rich dataset to develop more reliable and valid measures of the analysed constructs. Finally, future research should examine in detail how the causal structure and estimated parameters discussed here vary across countries. Preliminary inspection of these parameters shows that the effects discussed in the text are reproduced in the large majority of countries. More rigorous analysis would highlight statistically significant contrasts and analyse them. It would also explore the contextual factors that determine these contrasts.

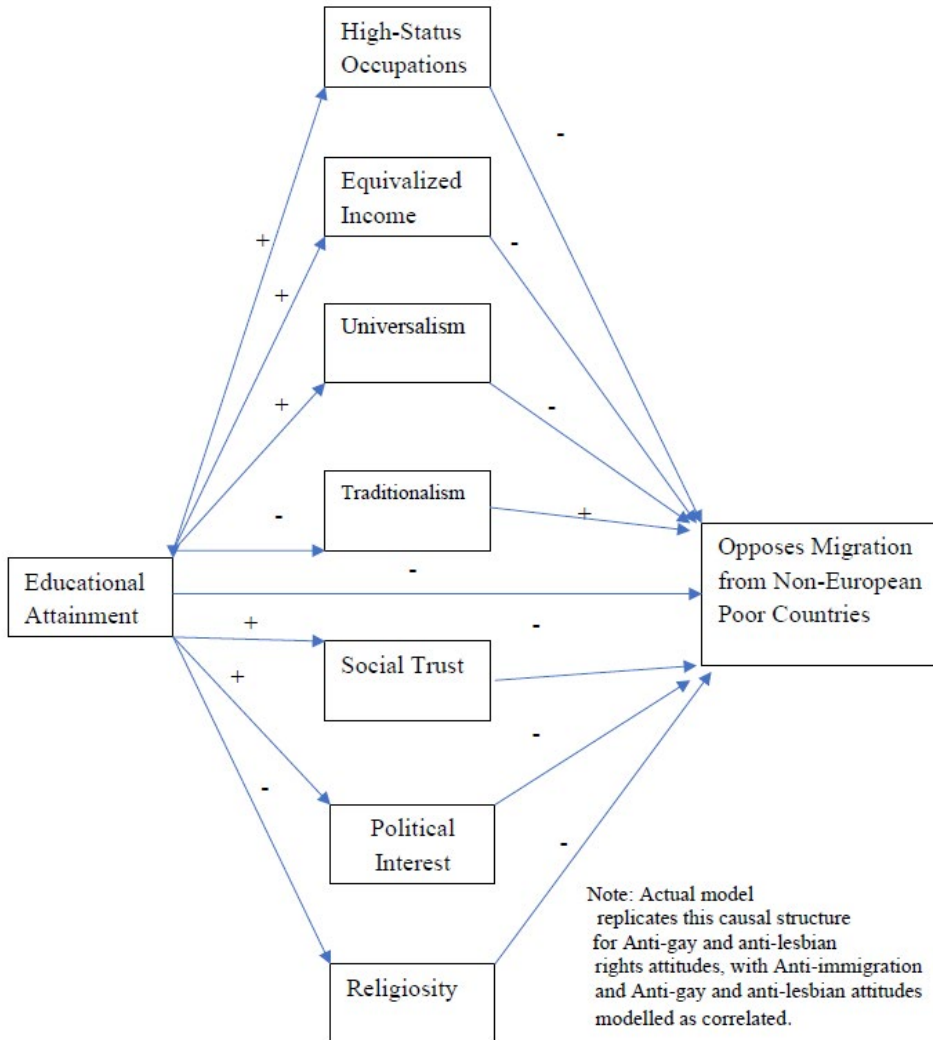
REFERENCES

- Arzheimer, Kai 2009: Contextual Factors and the Extreme Right Vote in Western Europe, 1980–2002, *American Journal of Political Science* 53 (2): 259–275.
- Arzheimer, Kai / Carter, Elizabeth 2006: Political Opportunity Structures and Right-Wing Extremist Party Success, *European Journal of Political Research* 45 (3): 419–443.
- Blinder, Scott / Ford, Robert / Ivarsflaten, Elisabeth 2013: The better angels of our nature: how the antiprejudice norm affects policy and party preferences in Great Britain and Germany, *American Journal of Political Science* 57: 841–857.
- Bobo, Lawrence / Licari, Frederick 1989: Education and Public Tolerance: Testing the Effects of Cognitive Sophistication and Target Group Affect, *Public Opinion Quarterly* 53: 285–305.
- Creighton, Mathew 2023: *The Resilience of Xenophobia*, New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Davidov, Eldad / Meulemann, Bart / Schwartz, Shalom / Schmidt, Peter 2014: Individual values, cultural embeddedness, and anti-immigration sentiments: Explaining differences in the effect of values on attitudes toward immigration across Europe, *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie* 66: 263–285.
- Drazanova, Lenka / Gonnot, Jérôme / Heidland, Tobias / Krüger, Finja 2024: Which individual-level factors explain public attitudes toward immigration? a meta-analysis, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 50(2): 317–340.
- Givens, Terry 2005: *Voting Radical Right in Western Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Evans, Jocelyn 2005: The dynamics of social change in radical right-wing populist party support, *Comparative European Politics* 3(1): 76–101.
- Gaashold, Oystein / Togeby, Lise 1995: Interethnic Tolerance, Education, and Political Orientation: Evidence from Denmark, *Political Behavior* 17(3): 265–285.
- Golder, Matt 2016: Far-Right Parties in Europe, *Annual Review of Political Science* 19(1): 477–497.
- Hahkiopoulou, Daphne / Vlandas, Tim 2020: When Economic and Cultural Interests Align: The Anti-Immigration Voter Coalitions Driving Far Right Success in Europe, *European Political Science Review* 12(4): 427–448.
- Harris, Eloise 2023: Educational Divides and Class Coalitions: How Mainstream Party Voters Divide and Unite Over Immigration Issues, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 49(17): 4481–4500.
- Hooghe, Marc / Marien, Sophie / de Vroome, Thomas 2012: The cognitive basis of trust. The relation between education, cognitive ability, and generalized and political trust, *Intelligence* 40(6): 604–613.
- Hyman, Charles / Wright, Herbert 1979: *Education's Lasting Influence on Values*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Ichilov, Orit 2003: Education and Democratic Citizenship in a Changing World in. In: Huddy, Leonie / Sears, David / Levy, Jack (eds.): *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press: 737–774.
- Inglehart, Ron 1990: *Cultural Shift*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Jensen, Anders / Engesbak, Heidi 1994: The many faces of education: Why are people with lower education more hostile towards immigrants than people with higher education?, *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research* 38(1): 33–50.
- Kitschelt, Herbert 1994: *The Transformation of European Social Democracy*, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Kitschelt, Herbert 1995: *The Radical Right in Western Europe. A Comparative Analysis*, Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.
- Knutsen, Oddbjorn 2004: *Social Structure and Party Choice in Western Europe*, London: Palgrave.
- Kruecken, Georg / Drori, Gili (eds.) 2009: *World Society. The Writings of John W. Meyer*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lipset, Seymour Martin 1981: *Political Man. The Social Bases of Politics*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

- Lubbers, Marcel / Gijsberts, Mérove / Sheppers, Peer 2002: Extreme Right Voting in Western Europe, *European Journal of Political Research* 41(3): 345–378.
- Lucassen, Geertje / Lubbers, Marcel 2012: Who Fears What? Explaining Far-Right Preference in Europe by Distinguishing Perceived Cultural and Economic Ethnic Threats, *Comparative Political Studies* 45(5): 547–574.
- Mitchell, Jeffrey 2021: Social Trust and Anti-Immigrant Attitudes in Europe. A Longitudinal Multi-Level Analysis, *Frontiers of Sociology* 6: 604884.
- Nie, Norman / Jun, Jane / Stehlik-Barry, Kenneth 1996: Education and Democratic Citizenship in America, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Nunn, Clyde / Crockett, Harry / Williams, J. Allen 1978: Tolerance for Nonconformity, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2013: OECD Framework for Statistics on the Distribution of Household Income, Consumption and Wealth, Paris: OECD, doi:10.1787/9789264194830-en.
- Pascarella, Ernest / Terenzini, Patrick 1991: How College Affects Students. Findings and Insights from Twenty Years of Research, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Rustenbach, Elisa 2010: Sources of Negative Attitudes towards Immigrants in Europe: A Multi-Level Analysis, *International Migration Review* 44(1): 53–77.
- Stubager, Rune 2008: Education Effects on Authoritarian-Libertarian Values: A Question of Socialization, *The British Journal of Sociology* 59(2): 327–350.
- Sturgis, Patrick / Read, Sanna / Allum, Nick 2010: Does Intelligence Foster Generalized Trust? An Empirical Test Using the UK Birth Cohort Studies, *Intelligence* 38(1): 45–54.
- Stockemer, Daniel / Halikiopoulou, Daphne / Vlandas, Tim 2020: Birds of a Feather? Assessing the Prevalence of Anti-Immigration Attitudes among the Far Right Electorate, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 47(15): 3409–3436.
- Uslaner, Eri 1999: Trust but Verify: Social Capital and Moral Behavior, *Social Science Information* 38(1): 29–55.
- Van de Werfhorst, Herman / De Graaf, Nan Dirk 2004: The Sources of Political Orientations in Post-Industrial Society: Social Class and Education Revisited, *British Journal of Sociology* 5(2): 211–235.
- Weakliem, David 2002: The Effects of Education on Political Opinions. An International Study, *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 14(2): 141–157.
- Wu, Cary 2021: Education and Social Trust in Global Perspective, *Sociological Perspectives* 64(6): 1166–1186.

APPENDIX I

Figure 1. Causal Model for the Prediction of Attitudes to Immigration from Non-European Poor Countries



APPENDIX II

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Main Variables in Causal Model

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Lowest Value	Highest Value
Anti-Immigration Attitudes	2.48	0.90	1	4
Against Freedom for Gays and Lesbians to live as they Wish	1.99	1.10	1	5
Years of Education	0.39	0.11	0	1
Equivalentized Income	0.17	0.12	0	1
High Occupational Status	0.39	0.49	0	1
Universalism	0.51	0.10	0	1
Traditionalism	0.58	0.12	0	1
Social Trust	0.53	0.24	0	1
Political Interest	0.50	0.30	0	1
Religiosity	0.45	0.31	0	1

N = 47131

Table 2. Direct Effects on Anti-Immigration Attitudes of Variables in Causal Model (Unstandardised and Standardised Effects)

	b	Standard Error	Standardised Coefficient
Years of Education	-0.649*	0.042	-0.086
Equivalentized_income	-0.120*	0.047	-0.015
High Occupational Status	-0.048*	0.009	-0.026
Universalism	-1.814*	0.039	-0.215
Traditionalism	-0.377*	0.033	-0.054
Social Trust	-0.510*	0.018	-0.131
Political Interest	-0.241*	0.014	-0.083
Religiosity	-0.028*	0.013	-0.010

Table 3. Decomposition of the Effect of Educational Attainment on Anti-Immigration Attitudes

	Unstandardised	Standard Error of Unstandardised Effects	Standardised
Raw Correlation			-0.196
Total Effect	-1.253*	0.039	-0.166
Direct Effect	-0.649*	0.042	-0.086
Indirect Effect	-0.604*	0.022	-0.080

Table 4. Decomposition of Educational Attainment's Indirect Effects on Anti-Immigration Attitudes

Mediated by...	Unstandardised	Standardised
Equivalentized Income	-0.024	-0.003
High Occupational Status	-0.083	-0.011
Universalism	-0.168	-0.022
Traditionalism	-0.036	-0.001
Social Trust	-0.153	-0.020
Political Interest	-0.144	-0.019
Religiosity	0.003	4.0E-4

Table 5. Education's Unstandardised and Standardised Effects on Mediators

	Unstandardised	Standard Error	Standardised
Equivalentized Income	0.204*	0.004	0.219
High Occupational Status	1.750*	0.021	0.419
Universalism	0.093*	0.005	0.104
Traditionalism	-0.094*	0.006	-0.088
Social Trust	0.300*	0.010	0.154
Political Interest	0.596*	0.013	0.230
Religiosity	-0.121*	0.014	-0.045

RECENT SCRIPTS WORKING PAPERS

No. 28 2023 Jürgen Gerhards, Lukas Antoine, and Rasmus Ollroge
The Liberal Script on State Sovereignty and the Admission of Immigrants. Do Citizens Distinguish between Voluntary and Forced Immigrants?

No. 29 2023 Jessica Kim, Yasemin Nuhoglu Soysal, Hector Cebolla Boado, and Laura Schimmöller
Inhibiting or Contributing? How Global Liberal Forces Impact Climate Change Scepticism

No. 30 2023 Daniel Wajner
Delegitimizing International Institutions. How Global Populism Challenges the Liberal International Order

No. 31 2023 Steven Livingston
The Nature of Beliefs. An Exploration of Cognitive Science and Sociological Approaches to the Crisis of Democracy

No. 32 2023 Jiwei Ci
States, Scripts, and Democratisation

No. 33 2023 Heiko Giebler, Lukas Antoine, Rasmus Ollroge, Jürgen Gerhards, Michael Zürn, Johannes Giesecke, and Macartan Humphreys
The “Public Attitudes towards the Liberal Script” (PALS) Survey. Conceptual Framework, Implementation, and Data

No. 34 2023 Tanja A. Börzel, Valentin Krüsmann, Julia Langbein, and Lunting Wu
Colliding Scripts in Asia? Comparing China’s Belt and Road Initiative and the EU Global Gateway Strategy

No. 35 2024 Alexander Kalgin
How Economics and Sociology Contest the Meaning of “Social Inequality”. The Russian Case

No. 36 2024 Arie M. Kacowicz
Before and After the Liberal International Order. Overlapping and Diverging Trajectories of the International Society and the Liberal Order

No. 37 2024 Cristiane de Andrade Lucena Carneiro and Mariane Monteiro da Costa
Institutions of the Inter-American Human Rights System and Their Role in Shaping the Liberal International Order

No. 38 2024 Adriana Cuppuleri
20 Years of LIO Contestation(s). A Computational Text Analysis of Russia’s Foreign Policy Discourse (2003–2023)

No. 39 2024 Jessica Gienow-Hecht and Steffen Just
Music and Human Rights Since World War II

No. 40 2024 Xinyuan Dai and Lucie Lu
Beyond Liberal Narratives. China and the International Human Rights Order

No. 41 2024 Roberta Astolfi
Between Populism and Technocracy. The Impoverishment of the Individual’s Political Role and the Vulnerability of Liberal Democracy

No. 42 2024 Mattias Kumm
Academic Freedom in Liberal Constitutional Democracies. Justifications, Limits, Tensions, and Contestations

No. 43 2024 Ettore Recchi
Fighting “Scandalous Inequalities”. A Global Policy Proposal for a Humanity Identity Card and Basic Income

No. 44 2024 Michael Zürn, Nieves Fernández Rodríguez, Lena Röllicke, Maximilian Weckemann, Alexander Schmotz, and Stefan Gosepath
Towards a Typology of Contestation. Four Clusters of Contestants

No. 45 2024 Thomas Risse
Deep Contestations and the Resilience of the Liberal International Order

No. 46 2024 Johannes Heß and Tobias Klee
Putting the Masculinity into Liberalism. Gender Essentialism and Catalan Self-Perception as a Progressive Liberal Democracy

No. 47 2024 Gülay Çağlar and Jessica Gienow-Hecht
Putting the Masculinity into Liberalism. Gender Essentialism and Catalan Self-Perception as a Progressive Liberal Democracy

No. 48 2024 Jessica Gienow-Hecht, Tobias Klee, Marlene Ritter, and Lesar Yurtsever
Welcome to the Liberal State! Place Branding as a Historical Practice

No. 49 2024 Simon Clemens, Lorena Drakula, and Julian Heide
U.S. vs. Them. How Populism and Polarization Challenge the Liberal Order

No. 50 2024 Dmitry Uzlaner
Religion and Contestations of the Liberal Script. Non-Liberal, Illiberal and Beyond Liberal

No. 51 2024 Jürgen Gerhards and Johannes Giesecke
Non-Discrimination in Access to the Labour Market and its Support by Citizens in 26 Countries around the World

No. 52 2025 Juan Díez Medrano
Mediation Analysis of the Effect of Education on Anti-Migration Attitudes



All SCRIPTS Working Papers are available on the SCRIPTS website at www.scripts-berlin.eu and can be ordered in print via email to office@scripts-berlin.eu



Hosted by:



In Cooperation with:



The Cluster of Excellence
“Contestations of the Liberal Script (SCRIPTS)”
is funded by:

