# When Does Immigration Shape Support for a Universal Basic Income?

## The Role of Education and Employment Status

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*Abstract:* Does immigration naturally undermine public support for the welfare state? To what extent – and under what circumstances – should we expect to see such an effect? This chapter explores these questions by studying attitudes toward a Universal Basic Income (UBI), examining the interactive effects of education, employment status, and the size of the immigrant population. It begins by laying out why the impact of immigration on social policy preferences is likely to vary not only across countries and individuals, but also based on welfare program type. It then presents the results of an empirical investigation using 2016 European Social Survey data from 21 countries. Findings suggest that the (negative) immigration effect is concentrated among the less educated, though the scope of this concentration varies by employment status. Results thus suggest that larger immigrant populations may weaken support for a UBI, but only among a relatively small, lower-educated subset of the population.

*Key words:* Migration; UBI; Labour Market Vulnerability; Public Opinion; Welfare State; Universalism.

For Milton Friedman, open borders and universal welfare programs were inherently incompatible. In an attempt to explain the American public's turn against liberal immigration policies, for example, Friedman argued that "[i]t is one thing to have free immigration to jobs", but "another thing to have free immigration to welfare". The tension was clear to him, as:

> .. you cannot have both. If you have a welfare state, if you have a state in which every resident is promised a certain minimal level of income, or a minimum level of subsistence, regardless of whether he works or not, produces it or not. Well then it really is an impossible thing. (Friedman 1977)

In Friedman's view, then, opposition to mass immigration was a logical consequence of welfare state expansion – and immigration should pose a particularly large challenge to welfare state support wherever social programs offer benefit access to natives and newcomers alike. Whether or not more generous welfare states are actually more likely to suffer from these tensions, however, is much less clear (see, for example, Brandt and Svendsen 2019; Fenwick 2019; Römer 2017) – and research suggests that certain programs should be more susceptible to immigration effects than others (e.g. Muñoz and Pardos-Prado 2019; Soroka et al. 2016).

To explore these dynamics, this chapter looks at public opinion toward one social policy innovation that has been garnering increased attention in recent years: a universal basic income (see Dermont and Weisstanner 2020; Gentilini et al. 2020). Though it is rare for social policy programs to take an approach to granting benefit access that is as open as that described by Friedman (see Kevins and van Kersbergen 2018; Simola and Wrede 2020), universal basic income (UBI) schemes offer the closest example of what he appears to have had in mind. At the same time, studying attitudes toward the introduction of such a program

can give us a good sense of how the social solidarity that undergirds the welfare state may be shaped by immigration (see, for example, Bay and Pedersen 2006).

In order to unpack this relationship, the chapter begins by laying out the theoretical and empirical reasons we might expect immigration to have different effects on different types of welfare programs. It then sketches an overview of the literature related to two other likely sources of variation: the broader context, discussing immigration-related policies, the size and distribution of the immigrant population, and economic factors; and individual-level characteristics, homing in on labour market vulnerability and anti-immigrant attitudes. The second half of the chapter then empirically explores how education levels, employment status, and the size of the immigrant population might interact to shape support for UBI. This analysis is carried out using survey data from 21 countries that participated in the 2016 wave of the European Social Survey.

The results, based on hierarchical analysis, indicate that while larger immigrant populations may decrease support for implementing a UBI scheme, we only see clear evidence of such an effect among individuals with lower education levels. Furthermore, the scope of these effects varies based on employment status: while immigration is associated with reduced support for UBI among a substantial proportion of low-educated workers in standard employment, similar effects are concentrated among atypically employed or unemployed individuals with especially low levels of education. All in all, the findings of this investigation thus suggest that larger immigrant populations may weaken support for a UBI scheme, but only among a relatively small subset of the population.

## Public Opinion, Immigration, and the Welfare State

### *Disaggregating the Welfare State*

A wide array of studies have examined the broad impact that immigration might have on support for the welfare state, coming to mixed results (c.f. Auspurg, Brüderl, and Wöhler 2019; Crepaz 2008; Dahlberg, Edmark, and Lundqvist 2012; Schmidt-Catran and Spies 2016; Steele 2016). Yet as the literature on welfare chauvinism has highlighted (e.g. Cappelen and Peters 2018b; Schumacher and van Kersbergen 2016), many people maintain their support for social programs in the face of immigration – on the condition that immigrant access to those programs is restricted. Real and perceived immigrant use patterns have thus been a central component of this debate (e.g. Bratsberg, Raaum, and Røed 2014; Larsen 2011), and evidence suggests that citizens intrinsically take these concerns into account as well (see Albrekt Larsen 2020).

Given that access patterns will almost always vary across different sorts of welfare state programs, however, there are strong *a priori* reasons to expect that some programs will be more susceptible than others to immigration-related attitudinal effects. Indeed, it seems far more probable that any such variation will exist within and across countries, based on *welfare program* types, rather than simply across *welfare state* types, based on the so-called "worlds of welfare" (see van Kersbergen and Vis 2015). A three-fold distinction is likely to matter here.

First, targeted spending and means-tested programs appear to be especially prone to immigration-related effects (e.g. Muñoz and Pardos-Prado 2019). Unemployment benefits, for example, present a series of challenges – in particular when they take the form of social assistance, funded by general taxation (as opposed to unemployment insurance, funded by insurance contributions): worries about moral hazard, misuse, and fraud, with un-deserving claimants seeking out benefits that they do not truly need, are a recurring theme (see, for example, Careja et al. 2016; Soroka et al. 2016). Arguably as a direct consequence of these anxieties, perceptions of recipient deservingness play a central role in shaping who does and

does not deserve access to these benefits. Yet immigrants tend to be rather uniformly treated as an undeserving group, assessed more harshly than their native-born equivalents (see Nielsen, Frederiksen, and Larsen 2020; Van Oorschot 2006). Experimental evidence from Canada, the UK, and the US, for example, suggests that immigrant status – even more than ethnicity – is likely to shape beliefs about who should and should not have access to welfare benefits (Soroka et al. 2017). Indeed, related work suggests that a recipient's place of birth is among the most important factors shaping public perceptions of deservingness (Kootstra 2016; Reeskens and van der Meer 2019).

Second, although similar dynamics may shape public opinion on whether or not immigrants deserve access to social insurance (e.g. Thomann and Rapp 2018), the broader impact of immigration on attitudes toward these programs is less clear (see Finseraas, Røed, and Schøne 2017). In general, however, one would expect that immigration's impact on support for contributory, insurance-based programs should depend on benefit access rules: given the role of contribution requirements in shaping access to these benefits, *de facto* restrictions on access may serve to restrict immigrant take up even where *de jure* restrictions are absent (see Koning 2020; Simola and Wrede 2020). The underlying insurance logic – with benefits "earned" through contributions – may thus help these programs sidestep many of the immigration-related concerns that are raised vis-à-vis other sorts of benefits (e.g. Burkhardt and Mau 2011).

Third and finally, the effect of immigration on support for universal benefits is likely to fall between those of insurance-based programs and targeted ones (c.f. Muñoz and Pardos-Prado 2019). Characterized by an indiscriminate access to benefits for all citizens or residents (see, for example, Carey and Crammond 2017), universalism helps minimize the concerns around deservingness and fraud, for example, that lend themselves well to anti-immigrant sentiment; yet generous universal schemes also risk reinforcing a focus on in-group/out-

group boundaries, given that letting someone into the universal community entails granting them access to "community perks" (Kevins and van Kersbergen 2018). The spread of welfare chauvinism across Scandinavia would thus appear relatively unsurprising (e.g. Frederiksen 2018). Furthermore, and importantly for the study presented here, similar dynamics have been shown to impact attitudes toward *proposed* universal programs, including UBI – with support for the proposition undercut by discourses that foreground immigrant access (Bay and Pedersen 2006).

On the one hand, then, it is difficult to abstract away from the exact contours of welfare state programs: within a given country, for example, immigration could simultaneously (1) undermine support for targeted benefits with a high take-up by immigrants, (2) lead to a push for increased welfare chauvinism vis-à-vis universal programs, and (3) have no impact on attitudes toward insurance benefits that *de facto* exclude (recent) immigrants. On the other hand, however, the sum total of these shifts may undercut broad support for the welfare state, with (in the most likely best-case scenario) foreign-born recipients being the sole targets of the native-born public's ire. What is more, in situations where immigrant use patterns are harder to control (as with, perhaps most notably, intra-EU migration[i]), welfare chauvinism may eventually be replaced by reduced support for the welfare state (Cappelen and Peters 2018a).

*The Broader Context*

As the above section has made clear, the specific constellation of welfare programs should be central to shaping how immigration impacts support for the welfare state. Yet these contextual effects of course go well beyond the social policy landscape. I summarize just a few of the most relevant and commonly cited factors here, drawing out research and debates

related to immigration policies, the size and distribution of immigrant populations, and the broader economic context.

Turning first to what is arguably the most obvious of these factors, immigration- and integration-related policies should play a key role in explaining the effects of migration on social policy preferences. At the most general level, rules around naturalization often shape when foreign-born individuals are granted access to different social programs – with additional variation across different migrant groups (see Sainsbury (2006) for a discussion). Yet immigration policies are liable to matter in other ways too: immigrant selection processes will shape factors – such as immigrant skill profiles, recourse to government transfers, and inter-cultural differences – that likely have knock-on effects on welfare state attitudes (Gorodzeisky 2013; Pardos-Prado 2020; Spies and Schmidt-Catran 2016); while the mix of different types of migrants (e.g. economic migrants, asylum seekers) will affect perceptions of the deservingness and need of would-be benefit claimants (Nielsen, Frederiksen, and Larsen 2020). Multiculturalism policies have similarly attracted much attention. For some, combining generous welfare states with a multiculturalist approach reinforces the divide between native- and foreign-born populations, and hence undercuts the social solidarity and trust that make welfare states viable (e.g. Koopmans 2010); yet other work variously suggests either the opposite relationship, with multiculturalism having a positive impact (e.g. Crepaz 2007; Kymlicka 2015), or no relationship whatsoever (e.g. Hooghe, Reeskens, and Stolle 2007; Kesler and Bloemraad 2010).

Moving beyond the policy context, the size and territorial distribution of migrant populations and the interactions (or lack thereof) of foreign- and native-born individuals are another recurring theme in the literature. At the most fine-grained level, research on daily interactions have built on the broader "contact" literature focused on anti-immigrant sentiment (e.g. Allport 1954; Kotzur, Schäfer, and Wagner 2019): work in this vein looking

at social policy preferences suggests, for instance, that inter-group contact may decrease levels of welfare chauvinism (Cappelen and Peters 2018b), and living in a more diverse neighbourhood has been tied to stronger pro-welfare state attitudes (Steele and Perkins 2018). Research focused on immigrant population sizes, by contrast, typically finds that immigration has a negative impact on social policy preferences, with immigrant influxes and high levels of migrant stock weakening welfare state support and/or increasing levels of welfare chauvinism (e.g. Dahlberg, Edmark, and Lundqvist 2012; Meer and Reeskens 2021; Stichnoth 2012). To take but one example, cross-national research from Eger and Breznau (2017), examining public opinion across Europe, suggests that regional migrant stock levels shape support for both redistribution and a more comprehensive welfare state.

Finally, the broader economic context has attracted considerable attention as well. This is of course unsurprising in light of widespread fears that immigrants will not only undercut the wages of native-born workers and "steal" their jobs, but also reduce the available social support by "using up" state resources (Taylor-Gooby et al. 2019). These worries appear to be reflected in social policy preferences in predictable ways. Research looking at public opinion in Europe, for instance, has found that immigration is especially likely to have a negative impact on welfare state attitudes in countries with higher rates of unemployment and benefit take-up among immigrants (Burgoon 2014). Insofar as general economic circumstances shape perceptions of immigration's effect on the labour market, of broader resource availability, and of immigrants' benefit use patterns, they are likely to also impact how immigration affects social policy preferences. The exact nature of these effects are nevertheless subject to considerable debate: deteriorating economic circumstances could push potential native-born recipients toward favouring stronger welfare states to compensate for increased risk; or they could push potential native-born recipients toward favouring a dualistic approach to welfare protection – with extra protection for natives and less protection

for immigrants (c.f. Brady and Finnigan 2014; Finseraas, Røed, and Schøne 2017; Valentova and Callens 2018).

*Individual-level Variation*

In exploring how immigration might impact social policy preferences, I have thus far concentrated exclusively on contextual-level factors – yet immigration's effect on these attitudes will clearly vary systematically across individuals as well. This section lays out a few themes in the research on this topic, focusing on unpacking the potential overlap between economic vulnerability, anti-immigrant sentiment, and social policy preferences.

It has been widely suggested that immigration is especially likely to shape the welfare state attitudes of the economically vulnerable, with self-interest playing an important role (e.g. Degen, Kuhn, and van der Brug 2019). Evidence from Gerber et al. (2017), to highlight but one study in this vein, suggests that lower-skilled individuals tend to be more concerned that immigration will further reduce their economic standing and jeopardize their access to the welfare state. Yet for reasons alluded to above, it could also be that immigration – to the extent that it renders the vulnerable even more likely to rely on state benefits – has the exact opposite effect, pushing these individuals to be even more supportive of welfare programs (e.g. Finseraas 2008). Empirical work provides some evidence in support of this position as well: working in an occupation with higher levels of exposure to competition from immigrants, for instance, has been tied to increased support for redistribution – as these workers seek compensation for their weakened labour market position (Burgoon, Koster, and van Egmond 2012).

The exact nature of these dynamics is muddled, however, by the fact that an individual's broader take on immigration should clearly affect the dynamics highlighted here. A study of American public opinion by Garand et al. (2017), for example, found that welfare

state attitudes were profoundly shaped by broader attitudes toward immigration; and while Senik et al., (2009) uncovered only weak evidence of an overall relationship between immigration and social policy preferences in Europe, their results suggested that respondents who either disliked immigrants or expressed concerns about immigration's economic consequences were more likely to be critical of the welfare state. Similarly, several studies focused on attitudes in Europe have concluded that the saliency of in-group/out-group (native/foreign-born) boundaries moderates the relationship between immigration and the welfare state (e.g. Breznau and Eger 2016; Larsen 2011). As a consequence, various individual-level factors that have been tied to anti-immigrant sentiment – ranging from relative group deprivation to labour market vulnerability itself (see Kevins and Lightman 2020; Meuleman et al. 2020) – are liable to shape how immigration impacts social policy preferences.

At this point, clearly, the relationship between the factors discussed in this chapter becomes highly complicated – with multiple potential linkages between, on the one hand, economic vulnerability and anti-immigrant sentiment and, on the other, social policy design, immigration patterns, and economic context. Offering perhaps the clearest illustration of this complexity, Burgoon and Rooduijn (2021) found that the impact anti-immigrant attitudes have on support for redistribution in Europe cannot be properly understood unless we also take into account levels of migrant stock, welfare state generosity, and immigrant use of social programs. And in the closest study to this one, Parolin and Siöland (2020) found that welfare chauvinism decreases support for UBI in European countries with higher levels of social expenditure; while similar research from Stadelmann-Steffen and Dermont (2020) concluded that Finns and Swedes react more favourably to generous UBI schemes that explicitly restrict access for non-nationals (for a related discussion on the relevance of cultural divides on these attitudes, see Dermont and Weisstanner 2020). The remainder of the

chapter builds directly on these studies. And while it cannot possibly, of course, aim to parse out all of the dynamics highlighted above, I home in on the extent to which labour market vulnerability – measured in terms of education levels and employment status – might shape how immigration affects UBI preferences.

## Labour Market Vulnerability, Immigration, and Support for a Universal Basic Income

### *Data*

In carrying out this study, I rely primarily on data from the 2016 wave of the European Social Survey (ESS 2016). Given the focus of the analysis, the sample excludes respondents who (1) were not on the labour market (whether employed or unemployed) at the time of the survey or (2) were themselves born abroad. After accounting for missing data at the individual and national level, the final sample includes 20,403 respondents from 21 European countries (see Appendix Table 1 for details).

I focus on the 2016 round of the ESS since it incorporated a special module on welfare attitudes – including a question on support for the introduction of a UBI scheme. As Bay and Pedersen (2006) have argued, attitudes toward UBI offer a good sense of social solidarity via the welfare state – and they also have the benefit of encapsulating the potential trade-off highlighted by Friedman. The wording for this item integrated a brief overview of what a basic income program would entail, with the exact text reading as follows:

> Some countries are currently talking about introducing a basic income scheme. In a moment I will ask you to tell me whether you are against or in favour of this scheme. First, I will give you some more details. The highlighted box at the top of this card shows the main features of the scheme. A basic income scheme includes all of the following:
>
> • The government pays everyone a monthly income to cover essential living costs.
> • It replaces many other social benefits.
> • The purpose is to guarantee everyone a minimum standard of living.
> • Everyone receives the same amount regardless of whether or not they are working.

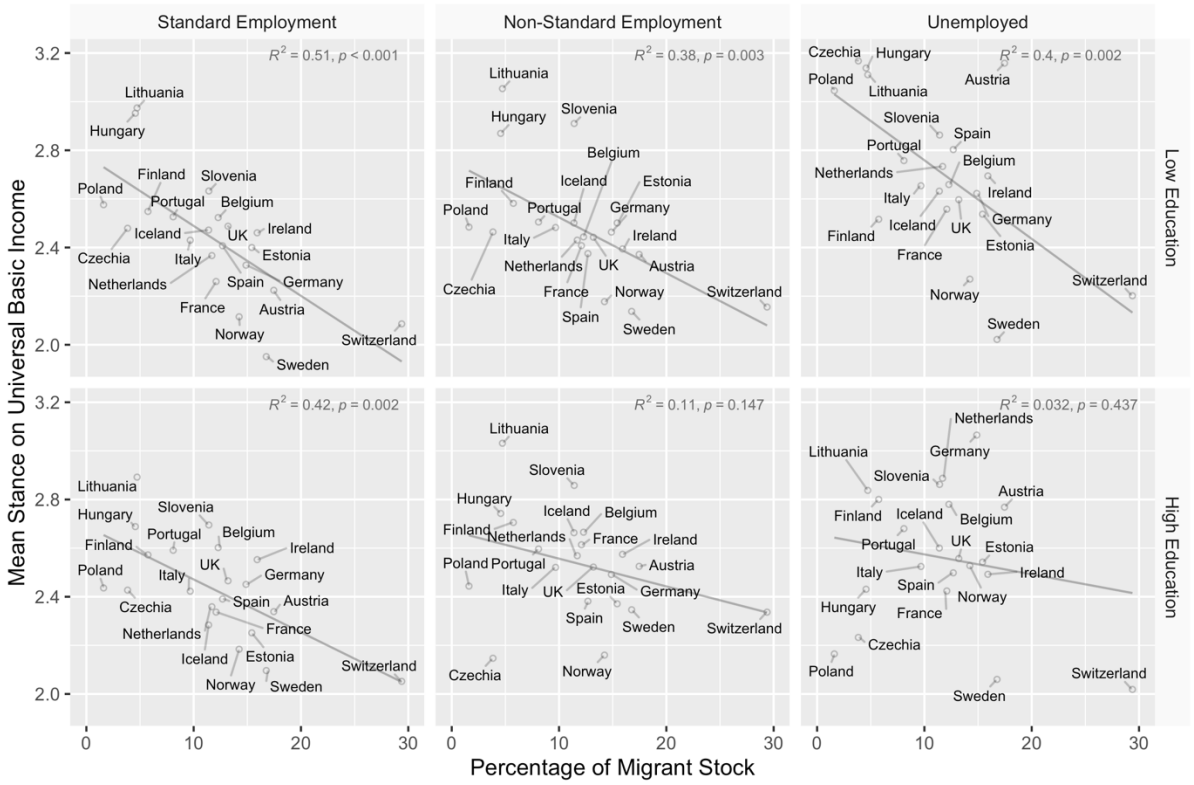
- People also keep the money they earn from work or other sources.
- This scheme is paid for by taxes.

Respondents were then asked whether they would "be against or in favour of having this scheme" in their country, with response options ranging from "Strongly against" (1) to "Strongly in favour" (4). The mean (weighted) response was 2.46 on this four-point scale, with a standard deviation of 0.80.

Reflecting the discussion above, the regression analysis then explores the potential interactive effect of labour market vulnerability – assessed by looking at education and employment status – and migrant stock on attitudes toward UBI. First, education is measured using a variable that captures the total number of years spent in (full-time equivalency) education – with a weighted mean of 13.6 years and a standard deviation of 3.8. Second, labour market positions are assessed using a three-category measure of employment status, divided into: "standard employment" (employees with full-time, open-ended contracts – 51.7 percent of the sample), "non-standard employment" (individuals whose work patterns are marked by one or more of the following: part-time employment; solo self-employment (i.e. self-employed with no employees); fixed-term employment; and/or contract-less work – 40.9 percent of the sample); and the "unemployed" (respondents who described themselves as having been unemployed in the week prior to the survey – 7.4 percent of the sample). Finally, immigrant population size is measured at the national level (to maximize the number of countries in the analysis) using OECD data on the percentage of the population that was born abroad (OECD 2016) – with a mean of 11.9 percent and a standard deviation of 4.6.

Figure 1 presents a first cut at unpacking how education, labour market position, and immigration levels might interact to shape attitudes on UBI. The panels illustrate the percentage of migrant stock versus the (weighted) mean stance on introducing a basic income scheme, alongside a line of best fit. The within-country samples are divided up according to respondents' labour market positions and education levels – with the education split

Figure 1: Mean stance on universal basic income, by employment status, education, and migrant stock




Note: Data from ESS (2016) and OECD (2016). Respondents split based on whether they have completed less than ("Low Education") or at least ("High Education") the weighted mean number of years in education in a given country. Figure incorporates post-stratification survey weights.

separating respondents who have completed less than the mean number of years in education in their country ("Low Education) from those who have completed the mean number of years in education or more ("High Education").

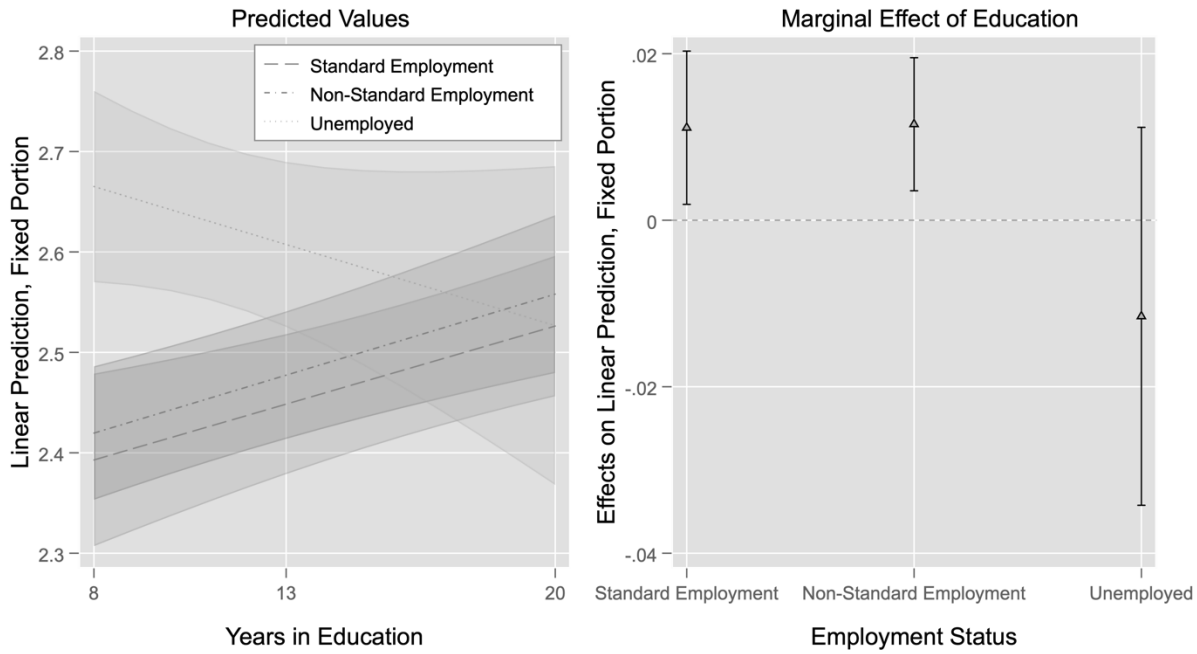
These preliminary analyses suggest that larger immigrant populations are broadly associated with lower levels of support for introducing a UBI scheme. This dynamic is present most notably among respondents who have lower levels of education, for whom the bivariate relationship consistently attains statistical significance regardless of employment status. The relationship is less predominant among higher educated individuals: we only see a clear, statistically significant relationship for respondents in standard employment.

In the full analysis below, I also incorporate a series of controls that reflect past work on the topic (e.g. Parolin and Siöland 2020; Roosma and van Oorschot 2020; Schwander and Vlandas 2020; Shin, Kemppainen, and Kuitto 2021; Vlandas 2021). These are: a binary gender variable (with females coded as 1); age and its square (to account for a potential non-linear effect); household income decile, with decile brackets adjusted to reflect country-level income distributions; the number of people regularly living in a given household (to complement the household income measure); marital/civil partnership status; whether the respondent belongs to a minority ethnic group; trade union membership; gross domestic product (GDP) per capita at current prices; the national unemployment rate; and social expenditure as a percentage of GDP. Note that all national-level data is taken for the closest year (2015 or 2016) available from the OECD (2020a, 2020b) or Eurostat (2020). For a descriptive overview of each of the variables included in the analysis, see Appendix Table 2.

*Analysis*

The empirical investigation is based on a set of models using maximum likelihood estimation, with population and post-stratification weights incorporated into the analysis. The full regression results are included in Appendix Table 3, with four models presenting: (1) an individual-level only regression, excluding the national-level variables; (2) the standard full model; (3) the standard full model with cluster robust standard errors; and (4) the standard full model with random slopes for education and employment status. The results are consistent across the various full-model specifications, despite some small shifts in effect sizes. I also confirm that the findings are robust to converting the dependent variable into a binary "against versus in favour" measure and running logistic regressions instead. Since the core results remain unchanged, I present the findings below using the linear models for ease of interpretation.

Figure 2: Effects of employment status and education on stance toward universal basic income




Note: Plots based on "Individual-Level Only Regression" (see Appendix Table 3). In the predicted values plot, x-axis ticks mark the 5th, 50th, and 95th percentile values of years in education.

As the main focus here is on interactive effects, results are illustrated using a series of plots that present predicted values and marginal effects.[ii] Note that the predicted value plots incorporate 83.5% confidence intervals, allowing readers to quickly visualize when and where values are statistically distinguishable at the $p < 0.05$ confidence level – with a lack of overlapping intervals indicating significant differences (see Bolsen and Thornton 2014). The marginal effect plots, in turn, incorporate 95% confidence intervals, and thus also illustrate statistically significant differences at the $p < 0.05$ level. In both cases, extreme values of the explanatory variables – those in the lowest and highest five percentiles – are excluded from the illustrations so as to focus our attention on representative effects.

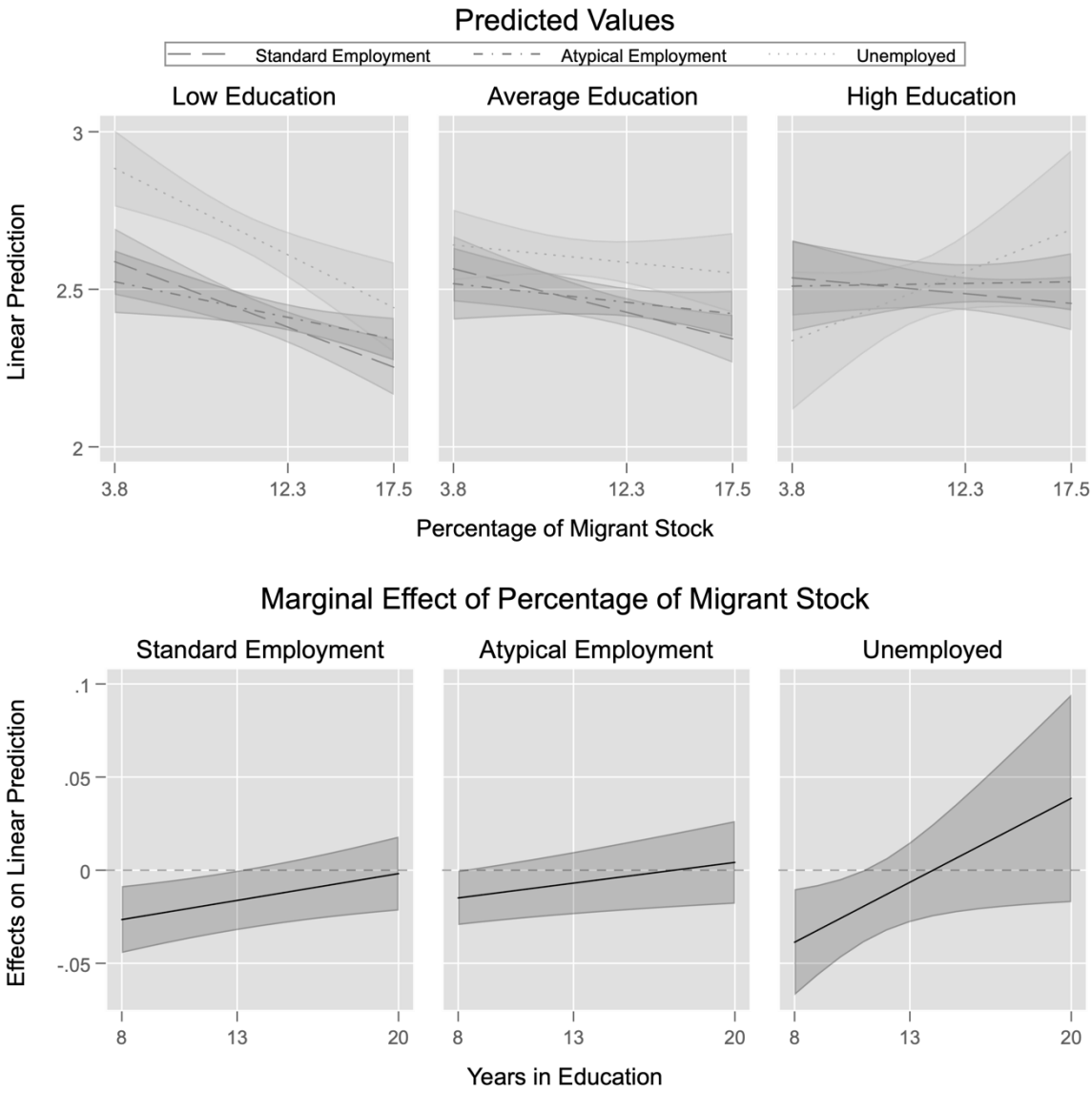
To begin, Figure 2 presents the results of the individual-level only regression analysis (i.e., before accounting for variation in migrant population sizes). Predicted values are illustrated in the left-hand panel (with education on the x-axis) while the marginal effect of

education is illustrated in the right-hand panel (with employment status on the x-axis). In this first stage of the investigation, we see evidence of a division between employed persons – be they in standard or non-standard employment – and unemployed persons. Findings thus highlight that the unemployed often express a greater openness to UBI programs than their employed counterparts. Yet they also suggest that this difference is only present among respondents with lower levels of education (specifically, those with fewer than the median number of years in education – i.e., 12 and under); at higher levels of education, the predicted attitudes of the employed and unemployed become statistically indistinguishable. Notably, results suggest that this shift is due to the positive effect education has on the employed: lower-educated persons in standard or non-standard employment are less likely than their more educated counterparts to be in favour of a UBI program, all else being equal. Among the unemployed, by contrast, education does not appear to impact stances before national-level variation is taken into account.

Figure 3 presents the results after cross-country differences in the (relative) immigrant population sizes are incorporated into the analysis. The top panels illustrate predicted responses to the question based on the size of the migrant population (on the x-axes), education (divided across three panels at illustrative low ($10^{th}$ percentile), average ($50^{th}$ percentile), and high ($90^{th}$ percentile) values), and employment status (plotted with separate lines on each panel). The bottom panels, in turn, show the marginal effect of the percentage of migrant stock, broken down by education (on the x-axes) and employment status (each illustrated separately across the three panels).

Turning first to the top set of panels, we see that the major distinction is once again between the unemployed and those in employment (be it standard or non-standard), but that this effect is only discernible at lower levels of education: when we look at average- or highly-educated individuals, employment status is not associated with a meaningful

Figure 3: Effects of employment status, education, and migrant stock on stance toward universal basic income




Note: Plots based on "Standard Full Regression" (see Appendix Table 3). Predicted values plots are illustrated at three illustrative values of education: low (9 years – the 10th percentile value); average (13 years – the 50th percentile value); and high (16 years – the 90th percentile value). X-axis ticks mark the 5th, 50th, and 95th percentile values of percentage of migrant stock (in the top panels) or years in education (in the bottom panels).

difference. At the same time, the results also suggest that larger immigrant populations are correlated with weaker support for introducing UBI – though once again only among individuals with below-average levels of education.

The bottom panels confirm this effect of migrant stock and allow us to better evaluate the scope of its effect. Among those in standard employment, larger immigrant population sizes are associated with a statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) reduction in support for UBI among individuals with 13 years of education or less; this is the median level of education in the sample and amounts to the (lower) 36 percent of respondents in standard employment. This effect is less prevalent among those in more precarious labour market positions: for the unemployed, we see a similar decrease only among those with 11 years or less of education (25 percent of the unemployed); while for those in non-standard employment, the relationship is only visible among those with 8 years or less of education (5 percent of those in non-standard employment). The size of these effects varies modestly, but is largest among the unemployed: for an individual at the 10$^{th}$ percentile of educational values (9 years), moving across the interquartile range of migrant stock (from 8 to 15 percent of a country's population) would be associated with a reduction of 0.17 on the response scale if they were in standard employment, 0.09 if they were in non-standard employment, and 0.23 if they were unemployed. (Recall that possible responses to the question ranged from 1 to 4, with a mean of 2.46 and a standard deviation of 0.80). I draw out the significance of these findings in the final section of the chapter below.

**Discussion and Conclusion**

This chapter set out to examine Milton Friedman's argument that welfare states are inherently incompatible with free immigration. It began by highlighting that empirical work on this topic is divided (c.f. Brandt and Svendsen 2019; Fenwick 2019; Römer 2017) and that there are good reasons to expect that any effects immigration might have on social policy preferences should be far from uniform (e.g. Muñoz and Pardos-Prado 2019; Soroka et al. 2016). The chapter then discussed some of the main potential sources of heterogeneity

debated in the literature: variation across different sorts of welfare programs (means-tested, insurance-based, and universal benefits); variation tied to the wider context (immigration-related policies, the size and geographic distribution of the immigrant population, and the economy); and the interaction between these broader contextual factors and key individual-level characteristics (economic vulnerability and anti-immigrant sentiment).

To shed further light on Friedman's claim, the chapter then empirically investigated the factors shaping attitudes toward one of the rare social policy programs that may in fact reflect the kind of benefit he had in mind: a universal basic income. Using survey data from a special module included in the 2016 European Social Survey (ESS 2016), this analysis explored how an individual's education and labour market status might interact with immigration levels to shape attitudes toward the introduction of a UBI scheme. Crucially, the focus on this particular program allowed us to investigate how labour market vulnerability and immigration may, taken together, shape the social solidarity that undergirds the welfare state (see, for example, Bay and Pedersen 2006).

The results of this analysis provide some support for the claim that larger immigrant populations may decrease support for a UBI scheme – however this relationship was found only among lower-educated individuals. We also saw that these effects were most widespread among those in standard employment (affecting over a third of all individuals in this group), but that they were also present for unemployed or atypically employed individuals with particularly low levels of education. While this suggests that labour market vulnerability may condition how immigration shapes these social policy preferences, results highlight that education is a key component shaping whether and to what extent immigration undercuts support for a UBI scheme.

Nevertheless, the exact mechanisms driving these relationships remain unexplored in this chapter, and the assessed measures of immigrant population sizes and labour market vulnerability are relatively crude (see, for example, Gorodzeisky and Semyonov 2020; Marx and Picot 2020). At the same time, the attitudinal effects among unemployed persons raise particular questions. Are these results driven, for example, by an assumption among the unemployed that a UBI scheme will go against their interests by weakening existing benefits? Further work exploring these dynamics in greater detail would therefore be especially valuable.

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[i] Within the European Union, non-discrimination rules have pushed member states to offer equal access to social security regimes for all EU citizens residing in a given country, regardless of nationality – though in practice member states nevertheless have room for manoeuvre (see Simola and Wrede 2020).

[ii] Figures in the chapter are drawn with the help of several packages (Bischof 2017; Kassambara 2020; Slowikowski 2019; Wickham 2016; Wickham et al. 2019).

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Appendix Table 1: Number of respondents (per country) included in analysis

| Country | Respondents |
|---|---|
| Austria | 896 |
| Belgium | 1033 |
| Czech Republic | 1112 |
| Estonia | 1180 |
| Finland | 1287 |
| France | 1138 |
| Germany | 1740 |
| Hungary | 578 |
| Iceland | 636 |
| Ireland | 1251 |
| Italy | 830 |
| Lithuania | 982 |
| Netherlands | 1030 |
| Norway | 1032 |
| Poland | 792 |
| Portugal | 716 |
| Slovenia | 600 |
| Spain | 901 |
| Sweden | 920 |
| Switzerland | 707 |
| United Kingdom | 1042 |
| Total | 20403 |

Appendix Table 2: Descriptive statistics, incorporating survey weights for individual-level variables

| | Mean | Standard Deviation | Minimum | Maximum |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Support for a universal basic income | 2.456 | 0.803 | 1 | 4 |
| Years in education | 13.625 | 3.803 | 0 | 54 |
| Employment situation | 0.622 | 0.636 | 0 | 2 |
| Female | 0.501 | 0.500 | 0 | 1 |
| Age | 45.433 | 15.782 | 15 | 98 |
| Household income decile | 5.793 | 2.760 | 1 | 10 |
| Number of people in household | 2.802 | 1.289 | 1 | 12 |
| Lives with spouse | 0.536 | 0.499 | 0 | 1 |
| Belongs to a minority ethnic group | 0.024 | 0.153 | 0 | 1 |
| Member of trade union | 0.158 | 0.365 | 0 | 1 |
| GDP per capita at current prices | 36371.835 | 12769.492 | 12348.915 | 79766.945 |
| Unemployment rate | 7.966 | 4.513 | 3.000 | 19.600 |
| Social expenditure at % of GDP | 24.830 | 4.362 | 15.482 | 31.982 |
| Percentage of migrant Stock | 11.888 | 4.558 | 1.604 | 29.387 |
| Observations | 20403 | | | |

Appendix Table 3: Results of Regression Analysis

| | Dependent Variable: Support for a Universal Basic Income | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
| | Individual-Level Only Regression | Standard Full Regression | Cluster Robust Standard Errors Regression | Random Slopes Regression |
| Years in Education (Centred) | 0.0111* | 0.0109** | 0.0109** | 0.0117** |
| | (0.005) | (0.004) | (0.004) | (0.004) |
| Atypical Employment | 0.0291 | 0.0281 | 0.0281 | 0.0241 |
| | (0.031) | (0.031) | (0.031) | (0.030) |
| Unemployed | 0.143** | 0.140*** | 0.140*** | 0.133** |
| | (0.044) | (0.041) | (0.041) | (0.044) |
| Atypical Employment # Years in Education (Centred) | 0.000421 | 0.000357 | 0.000357 | -0.000303 |
| | (0.004) | (0.004) | (0.004) | (0.004) |
| Unemployed # Years in Education (Centred) | -0.0227** | -0.0196* | -0.0196* | -0.0191** |
| | (0.008) | (0.008) | (0.008) | (0.007) |
| Female | -0.0164 | -0.0158 | -0.0158 | -0.0167 |
| | (0.013) | (0.013) | (0.013) | (0.013) |
| Age | -0.00684** | -0.00721*** | -0.00721*** | -0.00750*** |
| | (0.002) | (0.002) | (0.002) | (0.002) |
| Age # Age | 0.0000443+ | 0.0000473+ | 0.0000473+ | 0.0000511+ |
| | (0.000) | (0.000) | (0.000) | (0.000) |
| Household Income Decile | -0.0326*** | -0.0321*** | -0.0321*** | -0.0322*** |
| | (0.006) | (0.006) | (0.006) | (0.006) |
| Number of People in Household | 0.00888 | 0.00791 | 0.00791 | 0.00807 |
| | (0.010) | (0.009) | (0.009) | (0.009) |
| Lives with Spouse | -0.00940 | -0.00943 | -0.00943 | -0.00980 |
| | (0.024) | (0.024) | (0.024) | (0.023) |
| Belongs to Minority Ethnic | 0.0247 | 0.0167 | 0.0167 | 0.0157 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Group | (0.048) | (0.050) | (0.050) | (0.050) |
| Trade Union Member | -0.00295<br>(0.026) | 0.000190<br>(0.026) | 0.000190<br>(0.026) | -0.00246<br>(0.026) |
| % of Migrant Stock (Centred) | | -0.0147$^{+}$<br>(0.008) | -0.0147$^{+}$<br>(0.008) | -0.0151$^{+}$<br>(0.008) |
| Years in Education (Centred) # % of Migrant Stock (Centred) | | 0.00206$^{*}$<br>(0.001) | 0.00206$^{*}$<br>(0.001) | 0.00186$^{*}$<br>(0.001) |
| Atypical Employment # % of Migrant Stock (Centred) | | 0.00895$^{***}$<br>(0.002) | 0.00895$^{***}$<br>(0.002) | 0.00883$^{***}$<br>(0.002) |
| Unemployed # % of Migrant Stock (Centred) | | 0.0129<br>(0.010) | 0.0129<br>(0.010) | 0.0123<br>(0.010) |
| Atypical Employment # Years in Education (Centred) # % of Migrant Stock (Centred) | | -0.000468<br>(0.001) | -0.000468<br>(0.001) | -0.000537<br>(0.001) |
| Unemployed # Years in Education (Centred) # % of Migrant Stock (Centred) | | 0.00438$^{+}$<br>(0.003) | 0.00438$^{+}$<br>(0.003) | 0.00458$^{+}$<br>(0.002) |
| GDP Per Capita at Current Prices | | -0.00000396<br>(0.000003) | -0.00000396<br>(0.000003) | -0.00000396<br>(0.000003) |
| Unemployment Rate | | -0.000939<br>(0.007) | -0.000939<br>(0.007) | -0.000316<br>(0.007) |
| Social Expenditure at % of GDP | | -0.00788<br>(0.006) | -0.00788<br>(0.006) | -0.00796<br>(0.006) |
| Constant | 2.842$^{***}$<br>(0.061) | 3.184$^{***}$<br>(0.210) | 3.184$^{***}$<br>(0.210) | 3.188$^{***}$<br>(0.210) |
| *Variance* | | | | |
| Country-level | 0.194$^{***}$<br>(0.039) | 0.121$^{***}$<br>(0.019) | 0.121$^{***}$<br>(0.019) | 0.122$^{***}$<br>(0.018) |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Residual | 0.786*** | 0.786*** | 0.786*** | 0.785*** |
| | (0.010) | (0.010) | (0.010) | (0.010) |
| Country (Years in Education) | | | | 0.00739*** |
| | | | | (0.002) |
| Country (Employment Status) | | | | 0.0356*** |
| | | | | (0.012) |
| Observations | 20403 | 20403 | 20403 | 20403 |

Note: Cells contain maximum likelihood regression coefficients, with standard errors in parentheses. All models incorporate survey weights. $^{+}$ $p < 0.10$, $^{*}$ $p < 0.05$, $^{**}$ $p < 0.01$, $^{***}$ $p < 0.001$