



Consensual Versus Heterogeneous Conceptions of Nationhood: The Role of Citizenship Regimes and Integration Policies Across 21 European Countries

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Abstract

Conceptions of nationhood (i.e., who is accepted as a member of the national ingroup) are known to be more open in countries with inclusive citizenship and integration policies. Yet, surprisingly, up to now no research has investigated whether the sharedness of these conceptions is related to national policies. Therefore, relying on data from the 2013 International Social Survey Programme, the present study examined to which extent individuals living in 188 regions of 21 European countries share similar conceptions of who is a “true” member of the nation. Both ethnic (e.g., having national ancestry) and civic (e.g., respecting national laws and institutions) criteria were considered. Multilevel analyses revealed that in countries with more inclusive policies (with inclusive citizenship regimes, and where immigrants are granted more political rights) the average regional importance granted to ethnic criteria was lower, and conceptions were more heterogeneous (i.e., less shared). Civic criteria—that are achievable—were deemed more important. This can explain the lower heterogeneity of civic conceptions of nationhood and the lack of impact of national policies (though the average regional importance of these criteria was higher where immigrants had more rights). Overall, these results suggest that inclusive as opposed to exclusive settings leave more room for differing worldviews.

Keywords Conception of nationhood · Ideological climate · ISSP · Norms · Within-country variation

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1 Introduction

Individuals hold beliefs regarding which outgroup members (immigrants) should be allowed to become members of the national ingroup (citizens). In social and political sciences, these beliefs have been traditionally defined as reflecting a conception of nationhood that is either ethnic or civic (e.g., Brubaker 1992; Greenfeld 1992). While an ethnic conception entails criteria that are very hard, frequently impossible, to acquire (e.g., having national ancestry), a civic conception is comprised of achievable features and behaviours (e.g., respecting national laws and institutions). A vast amount of studies has been carried out to better understand why ethnic and/or civic criteria are more prevalent in one country compared to another. In addition to structural characteristics (e.g., immigrant presence, economic conditions; e.g., Kunovich 2009; Jones and Smith 2001), national policies have been found to matter: achievable criteria of nationhood are endorsed in countries with more inclusive rather than exclusive citizenship regimes (e.g., Wright 2011a; Ariely 2013).

This body of research has focused on why the *average* conception of nationhood is more or less exclusive across nations. However, it remains unstudied whether these conceptions are shared by most people within a given context (that is, they are consensual), or whether who can be included in the national ingroup is controversial (that is, these conceptions are heterogeneous). To understand the relationships between national policies that deal with the inclusion of immigrants and lay beliefs regarding who should be included in the national ingroup, the degree of sharedness versus heterogeneity of such beliefs deserves attention. To fill this gap, the present study relied on data from the 2013 International Social Survey Programme collected in 188 regions of 21 European countries to build scores of both the mean and heterogeneity of support for ethnic and civic criteria. As in previous research, we first verified whether the average support for ethnic and civic criteria relates to national policies that deal with the inclusion of immigrants (i.e., access to nationality and political rights granted to immigrants). Second, we investigated, across these countries, whether the consensual versus heterogeneous nature of ethnic and civic conceptions of nationhood varied from one region within a country to another. Indeed, as political attitudes frequently vary regionally inside the same country, it is plausible that there is also cross-regional variation in sharedness of nationhood conceptions. Finally, we hypothesized and examined how national policies affected the degree to which individuals living in regions of these countries shared similar conceptions of nationhood.

1.1 Ethnic Versus Civic Conceptions of Nationhood

Access to the ingroup determined by ethnic or civic criteria of nationhood can be formal (when one is granted citizenship) or symbolic (by being seen as a “true” member of the national group; see Brubaker 1992; Greenfeld 1992). Ethnic citizenship criteria entail a highly exclusive vision of nationhood, where only individuals with national ancestry are seen as adequate members of the national group. Features that mark strong similarities with those who have national ancestry (e.g., same religion, same ethnicity) are often also considered as ethnic criteria (Kunovich 2009). Ethnic criteria are difficult, if not impossible, to achieve. By way of contrast, civic criteria imply that immigrants born in the country—or who arrive later and fulfil certain criteria—can become members of the national ingroup by acquiring citizenship. Civic criteria, such as respect of political institutions or mastering the local language, can generally be acquired over time, which is not the case for ethnic criteria (see also Green 2009 for acquired and ascribed immigration criteria).

Although less strict than ethnic criteria, civic criteria also entail certain requirements that are expected to be fulfilled prior joining the ingroup. Indeed, because both criteria draw boundaries between those who belong to the national ingroup and those who do not, they can be seen as “as a single boundary that is more or less stringent” (Helbling et al. 2016, p. 747). At the individual level, the two dimensions are often strongly positively correlated (e.g., Kunovich 2009): People who endorse ethnic criteria also support civic criteria (note that such links are generally not observed at the nation level, e.g., Reeskens and Wright 2013). Cross-national research on large-scale survey data support that the two conceptions of nationhood are distinct (Heath et al. 2009; Reeskens and Hooghe 2010). Ethnic representations of nationhood underlie individuals’ anti-immigrant prejudice more explicitly than civic representations do (e.g., Kunovich 2009), which further speaks in favour of distinguishing the two conceptions.

1.2 Citizenship Regimes and Integration Policies

Lay conceptions of nationhood do not exist in a vacuum. Like representations of other social and political objects, they are in part influenced by official voices, such as policies, institutions, and politicians (e.g., Andreouli and Howarth 2013). For example, by regulating who is or can become a national citizen, citizenship regimes define boundaries of the national ingroup. More restrictive citizenship regimes in a country reflect a more exclusive notion of nationhood compared, for instance, to countries where waiting periods for naturalisation are shorter, language requirements are less onerous and fees for naturalisation are lower (McLaren 2017). In countries implementing exclusive *jus sanguinis*—right of blood—policies (e.g., Germany, Japan), national ancestry greatly facilitates obtaining national citizenship. By way of contrast, countries with *jus soli*—right of soil—policies (e.g., most countries in North, Central and South America) grant national citizenship to individuals born there.

Citizenship policy regimes and the prevailing lay conceptions of nationhood—which vary across countries (e.g., Heath et al. 2009; Reeskens and Hooghe 2010)—usually match. Using data from two waves of the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), Wright (2011a) found that more open conceptions of nationhood (i.e., a lower tendency to prioritize ethnic over civic criteria) are more present in *jus soli* than in *jus sanguinis* countries. This effect—apparent in the 2003 but not in the 1995 data—“has actually become stronger over time” (p. 618). This suggests that the impact of policies on individuals attitudes may need time to emerge, to “kick in” so to say (other factors, such as fears associated with increased numbers of immigrants, are also likely at play; Meuleman et al. 2009). Similarly Weldon (2006)—though not strictly examining conceptions of nationhood—revealed that individuals were more willing to grant rights (e.g., to vote and to be a candidate in political elections) in *jus soli* countries. However, policies in some nations contain elements of both *jus sanguinis* and *jus soli* principles (e.g., the Netherlands; see Ariely 2012), which shows that the dichotomy is not clear-cut. By describing the degree of ease of naturalization for immigrants on a scale from 0 (exclusive) to 100 (inclusive), the Access to Nationality sub-dimension of the Migration Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) allows a more fine-grained classification of nations, beyond the ethnic—civic dichotomy. Analysing data from another large-scale survey (European Values Study 2008), Ariely (2013) found a positive relationship between the Access to Nationality Index and a tendency to prioritize a civic over an ethnic conception of nationhood. In line with previous research, we also

expect conceptions of nationhood to be more open in countries where citizenship is more easily obtained (H1a).

Because their goal is to grant the same rights to immigrants as to national citizens, integration policies are also likely to relate to the prevailing conceptions of nationhood. Indeed, when citizens and non-citizens have similar rights (e.g., to vote), the boundaries between the in- and outgroup are blurrier than when firm demarcations prevail. To our knowledge, no cross-national study has investigated the relationships between integration policies and the prevailing conception of nationhood. A cross-national study (Heizmann 2016) has however examined the link between such policies and individuals' support for ethnic and civic *immigration* criteria (i.e., who is allowed to immigrate in the country; Green 2009). Analyses performed on data from the early 2000s (the first round of the European Social Survey) showed that a lower support for ethnic criteria was found in countries that granted more rights to immigrants (as measured by the European Civic Inclusion Index, a predecessor of the MIPEX), while support for civic criteria was predicted by structural variables (e.g., immigrant presence and gross domestic product). Similar results were obtained in a study comparing endorsement of ethnic criteria across districts (in Switzerland, Green et al. 2018): More exclusive views were found in places with more conservative norms (but only when the immigrant ratio was low). Extrapolating from the results of these two studies, we hypothesize that more open conceptions of nationhood will be found in countries that grant more rights to immigrants (H1b).

As the literature reviewed above demonstrated, the average national support for ethnic and civic criteria is related to national policies. However, "aggregated scores only provide information about the average tendency of individuals within groups" (Fischer 2009, p. 36) and constitute poor indicators of the degree to which conceptions of nationhood are consensual or not within a region or a country. Thus, the same regional or national average conception of nationhood could indicate either that *all* individuals living in a given context hold a similar stance or alternatively that very open and very narrow as well as neutral views co-exist within this context. We will argue next that, in addition to average conceptions of nationhood, it is crucial to examine the degree to which these conceptions are shared or not, and whether the consensus versus heterogeneity of conceptions is related to national policies.

1.3 Shared Versus Heterogeneous Conceptions of Nationhood

The absence of research on the degree of consensus is not restricted to the study of nationhood but is symptomatic of research on national- or regional-level cultural or ideological constructs (Fischer 2009). Research in cross-cultural psychology however indicates that paying attention to the consensual versus heterogeneous nature of attitudes and beliefs is of utmost importance. Psychological studies comparing nations have notably distinguished tight from loose cultures (Carpenter 2000; Gelfand et al. 2011; Gelfand 2012; Triandis 1989; Uz 2015, 2018). Defined as "homogeneity in norms, values, and behaviour" (Uz, 2018, p. 287), cultural tightness is composed of two elements, which are "the strength of social norms and the degree of sanctioning within societies" (Gelfand et al. 2006, p. 1225). Strength of norms refers to how clear and prevalent norms are within a given context (that is, norms are strong in tight cultures). Strength can be measured through the degree which attitudes and beliefs are shared within a given place (Uz 2018). Degree of sanctioning, in turn, refers to tolerance of norm violations (low in tight in cultures) and is subject to cross-cultural variations: The same act or belief can be reproved in a context and not in another.

Because we seek to examine how much conceptions of nationhood are shared, in particular the first component of cultural tightness is of relevance here.

The degree of cultural tightness has been found to relate to national institutions and policies. For instance, tighter nations grant fewer political rights and have more laws and regulations (Gelfand et al. 2011). Similarly, countries with stronger institutional repression (e.g., lower freedom of press, greater military control) are tighter (Uz 2015). In a study across US states, Harrington and Gelfand (2014) found that tight states are characterized by greater group inequalities and host more conservative political attitudes. Based on these findings, we hypothesize that countries that draw more impermeable boundaries between the national ingroup and the immigrants—by restricting the access to citizenship (H2a) or granting fewer rights to immigrants (H2b)—host tighter (that is, consensual and narrow), in addition to restrictive conceptions of nationhood. However, highly inclusive policies can also be argued to foster more consensual, but open conceptions of nationhood (i.e., the norm being that immigrants should be included into the national ingroup). This would imply that conceptions are consensual at both ends of the inclusive versus exclusive policy continuum, albeit more open in the former policy context than in the latter. The most heterogeneous representations of nationhood would then occur in the middle of the continuum, which leads us to form alternative hypotheses (H3a, H3b).

1.4 The Present Study

To test our hypotheses, we built regional scores of heterogeneity of conception of nationhood with data from a large-scale survey (ISSP 2013, see below) and matched it with national policy indexes. We decided to estimate the consensual versus heterogeneous nature of conceptions of nationhood at the *regional* rather than at the national level because, as noted by Harrington and Gelfand (2014, p. 7990), “cross-cultural research has focused almost exclusively on accounting for variation across national cultures, often to the detriment of understanding the reasons for the large cultural variation that exist within nations”. Indeed, within-country heterogeneity can be driven by highly dissident voices in a single region.¹ This can be due to a region’s position regarding borders, demographic composition or economic situation, for example. Analyses performed on two large-scale international surveys indeed revealed moderate to large regional variations in various forms of prejudice (e.g., negative attitudes toward immigrants, ageism; Van Assche et al. 2017). When it comes to the average importance granted to ethnic criteria, a study conducted in Switzerland showed significant differences across districts (Green et al. 2018). We operationalized the degree of heterogeneity with an *objective* measure (i.e., standard deviations) instead of with subjective scores of perceived heterogeneity. As argued by Uz (2015), “people are not particularly adept at guessing the correct number of people who

¹ Despite the low number of countries involved, correlations between national policies and means and standard deviations estimated at the national level ($N=20$, excluding Portugal) were estimated. They produced similar results as the multilevel regressions presented in the Results section. Confirming H1a ($r = -.49, p = .03$) and H1b ($r = -.54, p = .01$), the more inclusive policies were, the less individuals granted importance to ethnic criteria. In addition, countries with more inclusive policies hosted more heterogeneous ethnic representations (H2a: $r = .50, p = .03$; H2b: $r = .62, p = .004$). No significant correlation was revealed in the case of civic criteria, with the exception of a marginally significant relationship between political participation and the average importance granted to civic criteria. The same as when considering the regional means, contrary to what we hypothesized (H1b), civic representations were slightly more prevalent in countries where immigrants are granted more rights ($r = .41, p = .07$).

agree with themselves” (p. 320). They indeed tend to over- or under-estimate the extent their attitudes and beliefs are shared by others (e.g., Prentice and Miller 1993). Standard deviations have been used to build indicators of cultural tightness (e.g., Uz 2015) and of organizational climate strength (e.g., Schneider et al. 2002).

To build our indicators we relied on the most frequently used source for measuring conceptions of nationhood in survey research, the National Identity module (fielded in 1995, 2003 and 2013) of the ISSP. MIPEX scores have been assessed since 2007 (an earlier version existed from 2004), therefore data from ISSP 2013 was employed as it could be matched to the MIPEX scores. Respondents rated the extent to which eight criteria are important for being a “true” member of their nation of residence (see Method below). Contrary to some studies on the topic (e.g., Ariely 2013; Wright 2011a), we did not create a score that reflects the priority given to civic criteria over ethnic criteria, but instead used the two sets of criteria as distinct dependent variables. Indeed, while support for ethnic criteria clearly reflects an exclusive conception of nationhood, the meaning associated with supporting civic criteria is ambiguous: These criteria entail both a more achievable conception of nationhood and the desire to draw a boundary between the in- and the out-group. The most open conception would thus imply people opposing both type of criteria. Moreover, when considered separately, only the civic dimension has been found to relate to integration policies (albeit in the case of support for immigration; Heizmann 2016), which also speaks against using a relative score of ethnic and civic criteria. For these reasons, we argue that all the hypotheses developed in the introduction of the present article apply to both ethnic and civic criteria, but the effects may be less prominent in the latter.

Finally, to tap into countries’ tendency to draw boundaries between those who belong to the national ingroup and those who do not, we relied on broader and more nuanced indexes than the *jus sanguinis* versus *jus solis* countries dichotomy: we used two of the eight sub-dimensions of the MIPEX. Although the MIPEX sub-dimensions are highly interrelated, some of them more strongly predict outcomes they are more closely related to in content (e.g., labour market policies and immigration-related perceptions of threat; Callens and Meuleman 2017; see also McLaren 2017), hence the relevance of considering them separately. First, the Access to Nationality Index indicates how easy versus difficult it is for immigrants to get national citizenship. This sub-dimension takes into account eligibility conditions, conditions for naturalization, security of status, and the possibility of having dual citizenship. Second, the Political Participation Index indicates whether a country promotes immigrants’ participation in its daily political life. It is measured with immigrants’ electoral rights, political liberties, and whether participation concerns consultative bodies and implementation policies.

2 Method

2.1 Data

Out of all the countries that participated in the International Social Programme Survey ISSP 2013 only countries in Europe ($N=21$) were retained, because both the indexes of

national policies and the regional classification relied on in our analysis are available only (or mostly) for European countries. All respondents ($N=26,950$) living in the selected countries were included. A small share of the sample—10.35%—reported having foreign roots, that is, at least one of their parents did not possess citizenship of the country of residence at the time of respondents' birth (ranging from 0 to 78.88%, the share of respondents with an immigrant background in the regional samples varied greatly across countries, $ICC = .51$).² Some studies on conception of nationhood excluded immigrants from the sample (e.g., Wright 2011a). However, all individuals living in a country have representations of nationhood, hence contributing in the production of more or less heterogeneous shared conceptions; it thus seems important to also consider the opinions of those with immigrant origins. Finally, respondents who did not report their parents' citizenship ($N = 154$) or for whom their region of residency was not indicated ($N = 21$, in Ireland) were excluded.

2.2 Ethnic Versus Civic Criteria

Respondents were invited to rate to what extent, from 1 (*very*) to 4 (*not at all*), eight criteria are important for being a “true” member of their nation of residence: to be born in the country, to have lived in the country for most of one's life, to be able to speak the national language(s), to hold the religion of the country, to respect the country's political institutions and laws, to have national citizenship, to feel “national” and to have national ancestry. Scales were reversed such that high scores indicated high importance. Reeskens and Hooghe (2010) found that six out of the eight items (excluding length of residence and citizenship) formed two distinct dimensions in the 2003 ISSP pooled data (that is, data of all countries analysed as a whole). Replicating Reeskens and Hooghe's results, preliminary models including either the two or one of the two excluded criteria did not fit the data adequately. For this reason, we pursued with confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) by country with six criteria. Moreover, as in their study, the measurement of the two resulting latent factors was not sufficiently equivalent for producing reliable cross-national comparisons. The language item was found to be most problematic (its role and importance varied across countries). We therefore pursued with five criteria: place of birth, religion and ancestry for the ethnic dimension and respecting political institutions and laws and feelings national for the civic dimension. An overall CFA performed on the pooled data yielded adequate fit indices ($\chi^2(4) = 388.88$, $p < .001$, $CFI = .987$, $RMSEA = .056$).³ Indeed, CFA models are generally considered as fitting the data adequately when the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) is equal or superior to .95 and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) is inferior to .06 (although values between .06 and .08 are often deemed acceptable; Schermelleh-Engel et al. 2003).

² These numbers are very likely lower than the actual regional share of individuals with foreign roots since immigrants, and especially immigrants from geographically distant countries from the Global South or with stigmatised origins, are generally underrepresented in social surveys (see for instance Lagana et al. 2013).

³ Multigroup CFAs further showed that partial scalar measurement invariance, a prerequisite for reliable cross-national comparisons, was reached ($\chi^2(142) = 1490.06$, $p < .001$, $CFI = .948$, $RMSEA = .086$). Note that, as in Reeskens and Hooghe (2010), respecting institutions and laws was allowed to (negatively) cross-load on the ethnic factor. Moreover, the errors of religion and institutions were allowed to correlate, too. Finally, the intercepts of religion and feeling national varied across groups (thus the civic score contains only one equivalent item).

2.3 Heterogeneity Indicator

Means and standard deviations of ethnic and civic conceptions of nationhood at the *regional* level constitute the main dependent variables of the present study. When possible, the used regional level was NUTS2 regions (Classification of Territorial Units for Statistics), which is used to describe regions that have between 800,000 and 3,000,000 residents. For most countries, ISSP provides the NUTS2 region in which respondents live. When possible, other regional coding systems were recoded into NUTS2 (Sweden: municipalities; Czech Republic and France: NUTS3, which are subdivisions of NUT2 regions). This was however not feasible in some countries. First, small countries host only one or two NUTS2. For this reason, the NUTS3 coding used by ISSP was retained (in Estonia, Ireland, Lithuania, Latvia, Slovenia and Slovakia). Second, three countries with a coding system that could not be recoded in NUTS were nevertheless kept in the database (Great Britain, Croatia and Iceland). Finally, a total of 188 regions was retained (see Table 1 for details per country).

Regional means of ethnic conceptions ranged from 1.77 to 3.25 ($M=2.51$, $SD=0.32$), while those of civic conceptions were higher (from 2.49 to 3.88; $M=3.33$, $SD=0.23$; see Table 1). T-tests performed in each region indeed revealed that civic criteria were granted more importance than ethnic criteria in 183 out of the 188 regions. Note that regional means of ethnic and civic criteria were not significantly correlated ($r(188)=-.08$, $p=.28$), which support separating the two dimensions of nationhood conceptions (see for instance Reeskens and Wright 2013). Regional heterogeneity appeared to be greater for ethnic conceptions (SDs ranging from 0.43 to 1.05; $M=0.77$, $SD=0.11$) than for civic conceptions (SDs ranging from 0.23 to 0.99; $M=0.61$, $SD=0.11$; see Table 1). For both ethnic ($r(188)=-.33$, $p<.001$) and civic ($r(188)=-.67$, $p<.01$) conceptions of nationhood, the average mean and heterogeneity were negatively correlated: Higher support for criteria appeared to co-occur with more consensual views (see Fig. 1). Finally, heterogeneity of ethnic and civic representations were unrelated ($r(188)=.02$, $p=.75$).

2.4 National Policies

Scores for the two MIPEX sub-dimensions—Access to Nationality and Political Participation—range from 0 (*very exclusive*) to 100 (*highly inclusive*) theoretically (i.e., no countries are at the extremes). For both, we used the 2013 score (though for Iceland, we had to use the 2014 score). Access to Nationality ranged from 17 (Latvia) to 86 (Portugal; $M=48.48$, $SD=19.21$), while Political Participation ranged from 13 (Croatia and Latvia) to 88 (Norway; $M=47.05$, $SD=25.25$; for see Table 1 for scores per country). The two MIPEX sub-dimensions were positively correlated ($r(21)=.68$, $p<.001$).

3 Results

3.1 Analytical Strategy

Multilevel analyses (Hox 2010) were performed with Mplus 7.4. Regions (level 1, $N=188$) were nested in countries (level 2, $N=21$; note that individual-level data are not considered at all). Because the regional samples differed greatly in size (see Table 1), sample size was

Table 1 Descriptive statistics per country

Sample	Regions	Sample per region		Ethnic criteria		Ethnic criteria		Civic criteria		Civic criteria		AN ^a	PP ^b		
		N	N	M per region		SD per region		M per region		SD per region					
				Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max				
Belgium		2176	11	62	552	2.04	2.62	0.74	0.95	3.16	3.59	0.50	0.50	69	57
Croatia		994	6	82	258	2.30	3.08	0.78	0.86	2.87	3.28	0.66	0.66	31	13
Czech Republic		1905	8	109	372	2.62	2.87	0.64	0.74	3.18	3.41	0.51	0.51	40	18
Denmark		1325	5	141	389	2.10	2.54	0.77	0.86	3.44	3.55	0.47	0.47	42	58
Estonia		998	5	92	433	2.24	2.34	0.72	0.80	3.38	3.49	0.55	0.55	18	21
Finland		1240	5	10	367	1.97	2.47	0.73	0.91	3.05	3.39	0.60	0.60	63	79
France		2003	22	9	323	2.03	2.71	0.52	1.05	3.58	3.88	0.23	0.23	61	53
Germany		1714	17	4	257	1.77	3.25	0.57	0.85	2.96	3.50	0.41	0.41	66	63
Hungary		998	8	95	179	2.83	3.25	0.59	0.77	3.20	3.48	0.50	0.50	31	23
Iceland		1070	8	28	403	2.22	2.77	0.73	0.91	3.25	3.65	0.36	0.36	43	67
Ireland		1188	8	61	348	2.68	2.85	0.71	0.83	2.93	3.19	0.72	0.72	59	73
Latvia		1000	10	105	297	2.39	2.68	0.63	0.79	3.24	3.51	0.61	0.61	17	13
Lithuania		1190	8	43	315	2.39	3.14	0.43	0.64	2.69	3.46	0.45	0.45	35	15
Norway		1566	6	88	411	2.22	2.53	0.83	0.88	3.56	3.65	0.45	0.45	52	88
Portugal		999	5	41	368	2.51	2.85	0.62	0.73	3.24	3.43	0.49	0.49	86	74
Slovak Republic		1152	8	115	179	2.68	3.23	0.52	0.75	2.94	3.38	0.54	0.54	25	16
Slovenia		1007	12	28	221	1.99	2.81	0.67	0.92	2.97	3.39	0.60	0.60	67	23
Spain		1223	17	15	215	1.80	2.94	0.67	0.97	2.49	3.53	0.48	0.48	48	54
Sweden		1081	8	44	227	1.77	2.11	0.72	0.93	3.37	3.51	0.49	0.49	73	71
Switzerland		1235	7	34	313	2.12	2.69	0.62	0.89	3.32	3.41	0.51	0.51	32	58
UK		886	6	51	279	2.19	2.82	0.79	0.93	3.29	3.39	0.62	0.62	60	51

^a Access to Nationality (MIPEX 2013), ^b Political Participation (MIPEX 2013)

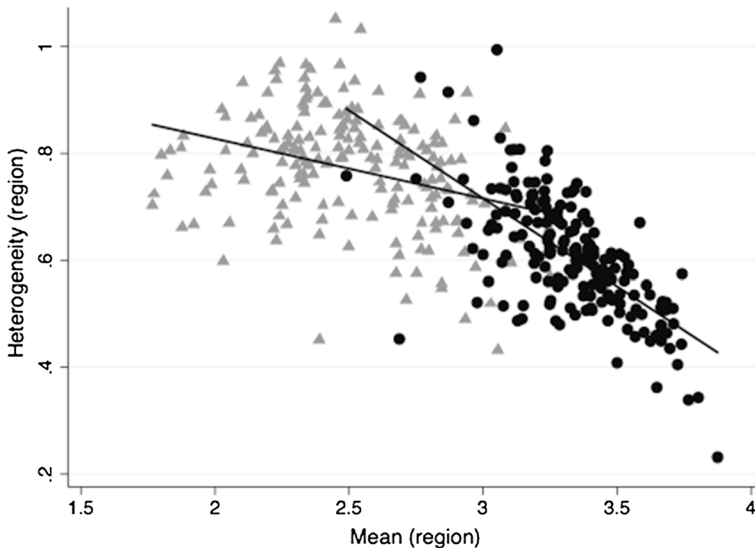


Fig. 1 Scatter plot of standard deviations and means of both ethnic (grey triangles) and civic (black circles) criteria at the regional level

used as a weight. Additional analyses, including only regions with sizeable samples (i.e., at least 30 respondents) were also performed. All four dependent variables—i.e., means and heterogeneity of both ethnic and civic conceptions of nationhood at the regional level—were multiplied by 100, to render the coefficients interpretable. Finally, preliminary examinations of both the national policy indexes and the means and standard deviations of ethnic and civic criteria indicate that Portugal is a clear outlier (see Table 1), because quite inclusive national policies are combined with rather exclusive and consensual conceptions of nationhood. For this reason, additional models excluding this country were also performed.

For each dependent variable, increasingly complex models (i.e., which included a greater number of predictors) were estimated step by step (all results are provided in Tables 2 and 3).⁴ First, Model 0 (or intercept-only model) provided residual variance at both regional and national levels. A significant residual variance at the region level implies that regional means or degrees of heterogeneity of conceptions of nationhood differ significantly. Moreover, Model 0 provided the percentage of variance that was due to regions (level 1) being nested in countries (level 2). With multilevel models, it is justified to test the impact of level-2 predictors only when concepts of interest vary significantly across level 2 units.

Then, Model 1 controlled for the impact of the share of respondents who reported having foreign roots. Indeed, because individuals with foreign roots generally favour more permeable boundaries of the national ingroup of the receiving country (e.g., Helbling et al. 2016), more open and heterogeneous conceptions of nationhood can be expected in more diverse samples. The average support for ethnic or civic criteria was also used as a control variable (Model 1.1) when predicting the heterogeneity of conceptions of nationhood,

⁴ Similar tables for analyses excluding Portugal or regions with less than 30 respondents are available upon request from the first author.

Table 2 Unstandardized estimates of multilevel regression analyses on average regional support for ethnic and civic criteria (standard errors in brackets)

	Average ethnic conception			Average civic conception		
	Model 1	Model 2a	Model 2b	Model 1	Model 2a	Model 2b
Roots	-109.01*** (22.52)	-110.75*** (21.68)	-109.81*** (21.61)	15.53 (18.83)	16.19 (19.53)	17.69 (19.21)
GINI		2.46** (0.90)	2.67** (1.01)		-0.94 (0.70)	-0.62 (0.65)
IMM		-1.16 (0.84)	-0.70 (0.99)		0.25 (0.41)	-0.12 (0.40)
NATIO		-0.53* (0.23)			0.04 (0.14)	
PARTIC			-0.37* (0.17)			0.23* (0.11)
Δdf	1	3	3	1	3	
Δdeviance	15.44***	16.26***	13.41**	3.59†	3.00	6.61†
<i>Explained variance</i>						
Region level	24.07%			0.92%		
Country level	16.95%	67.79%	59.08%	3.47%	11.69%	23.02%

† $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$. Variables in capitals represent country-level variables. Note that log likelihood values (deviance) had to be rescaled before comparison (Satorra 2000)

since highly skewed distributions often result in lower standard deviations (see Schneider et al. 2002). Moreover, when distributions are asymmetrical, it is very likely that the mean has a non-linear effect; for this reason, the quadratic terms (e.g., average support for ethnic criteria*average support for ethnic criteria) were also entered in the model (Model 1.2).

Next, a series of models tested the impact of country-level factors. All models were controlled for group inequalities (tapped with the Gini Index, which measures economic inequalities; Central Intelligence Agency 2016) and diversity (immigrant rate; United Nations 2016), these national-level factors relate to both conceptions of nationhood and cultural tightness (e.g., Ariely 2013; Harrington and Gelfand 2014; Kunovich 2009; Wright 2011a, b). In a first series of models, the impact of the two MIPEX sub-dimensions was considered. Separate models were estimated for each MIPEX sub-dimension since they are strongly correlated. Model 2a (Access to Nationality) and Model 2b (Political Participation) estimated the linear impact of the policy index, thus testing the assumption that stricter (H1a, H1b) and more consensual (H2a, H2b) regional conceptions of nationhood are found in countries with more exclusive policies. However, because the relationship between national policies and the degree of heterogeneity of conceptions of nationhood may be non-linear (H3a, H3b), the quadratic term (Access*Access or Participation*Participation) was also added in further models (Model 3.1 and Model 3.2).

3.2 Average Regional Conceptions of Nationhood

For support for ethnic criteria, Model 0 shows that the residual variance is significant at both the regional—and national-level, which indicates that the average support varies across regions (variance=338.21, $SE=68.81$, $p < .001$) and across countries

Table 3 Unstandardized estimates of multilevel regression analyses on regional heterogeneity (standard deviations, SD) of ethnic and civic criteria (standard errors in brackets)

	SD in ethnic conception						SD in civic conception					
	Model 1.1	Model 1.2	Model 2a	Model 2b	Model 3a	Model 3b	Model 1.1	Model 1.2	Model 2a	Model 2b	Model 3a	Model 3b
	Mean ethnic	0.86 (3.09)	17.73 (30.82)	65.81** (25.17)	64.09** (24.61)	65.23** (23.55)	64.09** (24.53)					
Mean civic	6.87 (7.36)	6.52 (7.95)	9.90 (7.80)	9.90 (7.86)	10.53 (7.88)	9.93 (7.89)	-28.67*** (8.25)	110.47† (66.02)	109.23† (65.18)	105.35† (63.93)	113.28† (63.64)	106.78† (63.96)
Roots							4.66 (4.01)	7.05 (4.42)	7.19 (4.82)	6.56 (0.18)	7.86 (5.48)	6.71 (4.91)
Ethnic ²	-3.59 (5.94)		-12.72* (5.01)	-12.38* (4.90)	-12.71** (4.76)	-12.37* (4.89)						
Civic ²							-29.28* (12.41)		-29.06* (12.28)	-28.17* (11.99)	-29.91* (12.01)	-28.50* (12.03)
GINI			-0.71 ^a (0.38)	-0.68* (0.32)	-0.45 (0.38)	-0.67* (0.30)			-0.08 (0.26)	-0.14 (0.24)	-0.03 (0.27)	-0.13 (0.23)
IMM			0.65* (0.28)	0.50 ^a (0.30)	0.62* (0.29)	0.46 (0.32)			0.02 (0.25)	0.07 (0.29)	0.01 (0.26)	0.03 (0.30)
NATIO			0.09 (0.08)		0.11* (0.05)				0.01 (0.06)		0.02 (0.06)	
PARTIC				0.11† (0.06)		0.11† (0.06)				-0.03 (0.05)		-0.03 (0.05)
NATIO ²					-0.01** (<0.01)						0.00 (<0.01)	
PARTIC ²						0.00 (<0.01)						0.00 (<0.01)
Δdf	2	1	3	3	1	1	2	1	3	3	1	1
Δdeviance	1.40	1.98	16.57***	17.77***	4.56*	0.35	49.61***	1.96	0.18	0.47	0.84	0.29
<i>Explained variance</i>												
Region level	1.01%	2.02%					19.31%	22.90%				
Country level	0%	5.62%	45.67%	50.33%	57%	51.57%	64.50%	69.80%	70.36%	70.53%	71.16%	71.97%

† $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$. Variables in capitals represent country-level variables. Note that log likelihood values (deviance) had to be rescaled before comparison (Satorra 2000)

(variance = 657.79, $SE = 192.78$, $p = .001$). Sixty-six percent of the overall variance is due to regions being nested within countries. Model 1 shows that the average regional support granted to ethnic criteria was significantly lower in regions with a large share of respondents with foreign roots. Further models show that, regional endorsement of ethnic criteria was higher in countries characterized by stronger economic inequalities (i.e., with a higher Gini index), while immigrant rate had no significant impact. More importantly and supporting our expectations (H1a, H1b), ethnic criteria were seen as less important in countries with inclusive citizenship regimes (Model 2a) and in countries that grant more rights to immigrants (Model 2b). The same result pattern (that is, the same significant and non-significant results were replicated) was obtained when the analyses were conducted on databases excluding either Portugal or regions that have less than 30 respondents.

Support for civic criteria also varied significantly across regions (variance = 143.67, $SE = 45.12$, $p = .001$) and across countries (variance = 216.08, $SE = 66.36$, $p = .001$). Model 0 further indicates that 60.1% of the overall variance is due to regions being nested within nations. The regional share of respondents with foreign roots was not significantly related to the average support for civic criteria (Model 1). Model 2 shows that group inequalities and immigrant rate had no significant impact. Not supporting our assumption (H1a), Access to Nationality was not significantly related to the regional average civic conception of nationhood (Model 2a). Unexpectedly (i.e., contrary to H1b), Political Participation was significantly related to *higher* regional means of civic conceptions (Model 2b). While the effects remained similar when considering only regions with at least 30 respondents, the impact of Political Participation became marginally significant ($b = 0.24$, $SE = 0.14$, $p = .08$) when Portugal was removed from the analysis.

3.3 Heterogeneity of Conceptions of Nationhood

We first analysed the factors underlying the degree of heterogeneity of an ethnic conception of nationhood. Residual variances estimated in Model 0 were significant on both levels (region: variance = 33.38, $SE = 4.33$, $p < .001$; country: variance = 58.85, $SE = 19.89$, $p = .003$), which confirms that endorsement of ethnic criteria is more or less consensual as a function of region. Model 0 further indicates that 63.8% of the overall variance is due to regions being nested in countries. Next, none of the two regional-level controls entered in Model 1.1 (i.e., share of respondents with foreign roots and regional mean of ethnic representation of nationhood) had a significant impact. The squared average regional conception had no significant impact either (Model 1.2). Models 2 shows that representations were more heterogeneous in countries marked by a strong immigrant presence, and less so in countries with strong group inequalities. Access to Nationality had no linear effect (Model 2a), but a significant quadratic effect on the heterogeneity of ethnic conceptions of nationhood was revealed (Model 3a). Political participation had a marginally significant impact on the degree of heterogeneity of ethnic conceptions of nationhood (Model 2b) but no significant quadratic impact (Model 3b). Finally, while the results remain similar when regions with less than 30 respondents were not considered, removing Portugal from the analysis affected the result pattern: the linear impact of both Access to Nationality ($b = 0.55$, $SE = 0.26$, $p = .04$; Model 2a) and Political Participation ($b = 0.16$, $SE = 0.05$, $p = .004$; Model 2b) became significant, whereas the effects of the quadratic terms were no longer so (Access to Nationality: $b = 0.00$, $SE = 0.01$, $p = .71$; Political Participation: $b = -0.00$, $SE = 0.00$, $p = .53$). Countries with more inclusive policies were found to host

more heterogeneous representations. Thus, when a clear outlier was not included in the analysis, H2 was confirmed with both types of policies, and H3 was not.

For the degree of heterogeneity of the civic conception of nationhood, residual variances estimated in Model 0 were significant on both levels (region: variance = 45.38, $SE = 14.78$, $p = .002$; country: variance = 50.81, $SE = 19.89$, $p = .003$). As in the case of ethnic criteria, the degree of heterogeneity did vary across regions. Model 0 further indicates that 52.8% of the overall variance is due to regions being nested in countries. In Model 1.1, the share of respondents with foreign roots had no significant impact. The average importance granted to civic criteria, in turn, predicted their heterogeneity implying that higher support for civic criteria was related to less consensual views of civic nationhood. Model 1.2 further indicated that this effect was in fact non-linear. At the national level, there were no significant effects of the control variables (Model 2a). Moreover and contrary to H2, neither Access to Nationality nor Political Participation were significantly related to the degree of heterogeneity of civic conceptions of nationhood (Model 2a and Model 2b). There were neither a significant quadratic effect of the national policies (disconfirming H3; Model 3a and Model 3b). One difference was observed when considering only regions with at least 30 respondents: at the regional level while the mean had still a significant impact (Model 1.1), this was no longer the case for the squared term ($b = -12.04$, $SE = 14.58$, $p = .41$; Model 1.2). Results remain similar when Portugal was removed from the analyses. Indeed, policies had not impact on the heterogeneity of conceptions of civic nationhood.

4 Discussion

Corroborating findings from previous studies, results of multilevel analyses performed on 188 regions across 21 European countries that participated in 2013 ISSP data revealed that countries with more inclusive policies hosted lower levels of regional support for exclusive ethnic criteria. By way of contrast, in countries that granted more political rights to immigrants, the average regional support for civic criteria was higher. Then, going beyond the study of national levels of support for ethnic and civic criteria, the degree of heterogeneity of both ethnic and civic conceptions of nationhood (that is, who is seen as belonging to the national ingroup) varied across regions. Importantly, the heterogeneity of ethnic conceptions was related to national policies dealing with the inclusion of immigrants: the more inclusive national policies in a country (both in terms of access to nationality and immigrants' political participation), the greater the variation in endorsement of ethnic criteria at the regional level (but only after a clear outlier was omitted from the analysis). The heterogeneity of ethnic conceptions was also greater in countries with a higher immigrant rate. We did not find such effects for average support or heterogeneity of civic conceptions of nationhood.

4.1 More Inclusive Policies, More Heterogeneous (Ethnic) Conceptions

The present results showed that inclusive national policies had a linear impact on the degree to which ethnic conceptions of nationhood are heterogeneous versus consensual at the regional level. Indeed, people not only adhered less to criteria that restrict the access to the national ingroup (as found in previous research; Ariely 2013; Weldon 2006; Wright 2011a), but there was more regional variation in nations where it is easier for immigrants to become naturalized and where immigrants have more political rights. There was no

curvilinear or U-shape impact of national policies. Thus, consistency with national policies seems to be stronger when policies convey norms of exclusiveness (that is, when the access to the national ingroup is more restrictive). When policies were more inclusive, there appeared to be greater heterogeneity in attitudes. Similarly, results of previous studies on anti-immigrant prejudice—which are closely related to ethnic conceptions of nationhood; e.g., Kunovich 2009—suggest that in inclusive societal climates, albeit norms of tolerance, individuals are (more) free to adhere to their own worldviews. For instance, Van Assche and colleagues (2017) found that in more inclusive and progressive regions (i.e., in which individuals expressed on average less conservative right-wing ideologies), there was more “room” for individual differences to play a role in shaping prejudice. Moreover, in countries with inclusive policies, the impact of identification with Europe—a well-known predictor of positive attitudes toward immigration—was found to be stronger than in countries with more exclusive policies (Visintin et al. 2018).

Deemed more important in countries that granted more rights to immigrants, civic conceptions of nationhood—that is, endorsement of criteria that individuals can achieve during life—also varied across regions, but to a lesser extent than ethnic criteria. This probably resulted from high average endorsement of civic conceptions, which did not leave room for much heterogeneity (the regional mean indeed had a strong, and non-linear, impact on the heterogeneity). Higher means also very likely explain why there was no significant effect of national policies (or any other contextual variable). The only noteworthy result is the link between immigrants’ political participation and the average regional endorsement of civic conceptions. Contrary to our hypothesis, in countries where immigrants are granted more political rights, residents to a greater extent think that respecting political institutions and laws, and “feeling” national are important. These two criteria clearly relate to knowing the country’s institutions and feeling that one could, and should, act as a member of the national ingroup. These are qualities required in political participation, which may explain the positive relationship between inclusive Political Participation policies and endorsement of these criteria (and the lack of significant impact of Access to citizenship). While these results should be taken with a pinch of salt, the cross-national measurement of the two civic criteria being far from perfect, they speak in favour of considering specific dimensions of national policies instead of overall indicators (for a similar reasoning see Callens and Meuleman 2017; Schlueter et al. 2013).

Finally, national features other than national policies were found to matter too. Ethnic conceptions of nationhood were indeed more heterogeneous in countries where immigrant presence is high (this result was found when considering heterogeneity both at regional and national levels). Presence of those formally excluded from the national ingroup thus seems to have the power to challenge the way some individuals (but not all) perceive the symbolic boundaries of the nation.

4.2 Next Steps

The approach in the present research only allowed to observe whether the degree of inclusiveness of national policies and the degree of heterogeneity of regional conception of nationhood were related. Future research should focus on determining the causality of the links between policies and variables measured at the individual level (which can be, as in the present study, aggregated at a more distal level of analysis). Very likely such links are bidirectional: national policies constitute official sources that inform lay representations, while individuals have also the power to challenge state-level decisions (through votes,

protests, etc.). Another interesting venue for future research is to use contextual indicators of heterogeneity to predict individuals' anti-immigrant prejudice and conceptions of nationhood. Research in cross-cultural psychology has indeed showed that the degree of cultural tightness influences individuals' attitudes and behaviours (Gelfand et al. 2011; Uz 2015). So far multilevel research on anti-immigrant prejudice has mainly relied on *aggregated means* of social and political to predict individuals' prejudice. Drawing on various theoretical frameworks, considering cultural values (Schwartz 2006), social representations (Moscovici 1988) or social norms (Crandall et al. 2002), this body of work has assumed and found that the attitudes of fellow citizens within a given place—the so-called ideological or normative climate—impact individuals' anti-immigrant prejudice over and above the impact of their personal characteristics (e.g., Christ et al. 2014; Sarrasin et al. 2012). Local or national ideological climates have also been found to exacerbate or diminish the role played by individual factors in shaping anti-immigrant prejudice (e.g., Fasel et al. 2013a, b; Van Assche et al. 2017).

Finally, average endorsement of conceptions of nationhood matters too. Based on the 2008 European Value Survey EVS data, Reeskens and Wright (2013), for instance, found that national mean-level conceptions of nationhood impacted indicators of social capital (e.g., volunteering) beyond individuals' conceptions of nationhood. National identification also related more strongly to anti-immigrant prejudice in countries where an ethnic conception of nationhood (measured with the language item only) was prevalent. A much weaker relationship was found in countries where a civic conception (measured with the citizenship item only) prevailed (Pehrson et al. 2009). Similarly, showing that diversity of opinions is possible, regions and countries characterized by a stronger heterogeneity may host lower levels of anti-immigrant prejudice. Whether strongly cohesive inclusive and exclusive climates have a similar impact on individuals' attitudes remains an open question and an exciting avenue for future research.

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