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The Distinction between Refugees and Immigrants

*Philosophical Arguments, International Law, and Citizens' Attitudes
in 26 Countries*

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Abstract

International law obliges states to admit refugees while allowing discretion in accepting voluntary immigrants. This study, based on a 26-country survey, examines citizen attitudes towards these groups. With reference to the debate in political philosophy, the authors distinguish between different attitudinal groups: Nationalists, who advocate for border control; Cosmopolitans, who support unrestricted immigration rights; Legalists, who align with international law by supporting state discretion for voluntary immigrants but mandating refugee acceptance; and Inconsistent, who believe the state should have the right to reject refugees but not voluntary immigrants. The findings reveal that most citizens do not differentiate between refugees and voluntary

immigrants, challenging the legal distinction in international law. Nationalists make up 44% of respondents, Cosmopolitans 31%, Legalists 15%, and Inconsistents 9%. Nationalists and Cosmopolitans have clear social profiles based on structural and cultural characteristics, while Legalists and Inconsistents do not.

Keywords

refugees – immigrants – attitudes – political philosophy – border control

1 Introduction

The number of international immigrants has steadily increased since the 1960s, which is especially true for one particular group of immigrants, namely refugees.¹ This development has led to controversial debates about whether and to what extent countries are justified in rejecting immigrants in general and refugees in particular. Debates on the admission of immigrants take place not only in politics but also in political philosophy. At the core of these debates lies the tension between two principles: The right to individual self-determination, which includes the right to freedom of movement, on the one hand, and the right to collective self-determination of nation-states, which includes the right of the state to control its borders, and to decide on the admission of immigrants. Four ideal-typical positions can be distinguished in this respect. (1) *Nationalists* believe that the state has the right to control its borders and is authorized to decide on the access of all groups of immigrants, including refugees. (2) *Cosmopolitans* take the opposite position by arguing that the state has no right to hinder individuals from moving across borders and immigrate to another country. (3) *Cosmo-Nationalists* take a middle position. In their view, the state has the right to decide whether to admit so-called “voluntary” immigrants. At the same time, they argue that states are obliged to take in those immigrants whose lives are threatened. We also refer to the Cosmo-Nationalists as *Legalists* because they represent the very position codified in international law, which in principle, gives sovereign states the right to decide on the admission of immigrants. However, the law makes a crucial distinction between two groups of immigrants. While voluntary immigrants

1 In this article, we use the term “immigrants” instead of “migrants” because the term “migrants” refers to people who change residence both within a country and across borders, while the term “immigrants” refers to the second group alone.

can be rejected, refugees seeking asylum for persecution in their home country must be granted access to a neighboring state. (4) In our empirical analyses, we will consider a fourth position, a theoretically non-derived residual category that we call *Inconsistent*. Advocates of this position think that the state should have the right to reject refugees, but not voluntary immigrants.

We will outline the different theoretical positions derived from debates in political philosophy in more detail in the next section. Until now, we know very little about the extent to which the various positions are supported by citizens across the world. Based on a new survey conducted in 26 countries, we first examine which of the four positions is supported by citizens around the world. We pay particular attention to those whom we call Cosmo-Nationalists. The sparse existing literature comparing attitudes towards refugees and voluntary immigrants is inconclusive regarding whether people distinguish between the two groups of immigrants (Abdelaaty and Steele 2022; Coenders, Gijsberts, and Scheepers 2004; O'Rourke and Sinnott 2006; Verkuyten 2004). Second, based on a multinomial regression analysis, we try to determine the social profile of the different attitudinal groups in terms of structural and cultural characteristics at the individual and country levels. We derive the potential characteristics determining the four groups from the literature on attitudes toward the admission of immigrants.

Results of our analysis demonstrate that Nationalists are the largest group with 44%, followed by Cosmopolitans with 31%. Hence, more than three-quarters of respondents fall into these two categories, neither of which makes a distinction between voluntary immigrants and refugees as they are either in favor of the state having the right to decide on immigrants' access to their country (Nationalists) or oppose their state having the right to reject immigrants (Cosmopolitans). Only about 15% of citizens belong to the group of Cosmo-Nationalists and thus support the idea codified in international law.

The attempt to determine the social profile of the different attitudinal groups by structural and cultural characteristics shows that the strongest differences can be found between Nationalists and Cosmopolitans. Women, younger respondents, and citizens who do not feel economically disadvantaged, live in urban areas, show a low identification with their country, hold post-materialistic values, and support human rights, are particularly strongly represented in the Cosmopolitan group. In addition, Cosmopolitans are more likely to be found in richer countries with an above-average number of immigrants, and in countries that have often signed international human rights treaties, and whose existence has been less threatened in the past. The opposite characteristics apply to Nationalists, except that they also come from richer countries. Although we find some small features that characterize the

Cosmo-Nationalists, overall, our analyses suggest that advocates committed to defending international refugee law find themselves in a difficult position. The political space is spanned by the two camps of Nationalists and Cosmopolitans, where each group is characterized by opposite features. In this polarized field, there seems to be little room for the group of Cosmo-Nationalists with their nuanced position.

This article speaks to the many other studies that have analyzed citizen attitudes toward admitting immigrants, but specifically to the few studies that have compared citizen attitudes toward voluntary immigrants and refugees (Abdelaaty and Steele 2022; Coenders, Gijsberts, and Scheepers 2004; O'Rourke and Sinnott 2006). We use this literature to investigate the characteristics of the four groups. At the same time, this article goes beyond the existing literature in several respects. First, and most importantly, the conceptual framework is different since we relate citizen attitudes to the various positions taken in philosophical debates, and international law. On this basis, we develop the typology of four groups. Related to the conceptual framework and in contrast to other studies, the empirical approach is different in that we proceed in an explorative-descriptive and less hypothesis-testing way by characterizing the four attitudinal groups with the help of structural and cultural markers. Third, using a new international comparative survey of 26 countries allows us to expand the research focus by including not only countries from the Global North but also from the Global South. This expansion allows us to conclude that the patterns we find could reveal a universal theme.

2 Philosophical Arguments and International Law on State Sovereignty and the Admission of Voluntary and Forced Immigrants

There is a lively debate in political philosophy on the legitimacy of national borders and the right of the state to decide who can cross its borders versus the right of individuals to move and migrate where they wish (overviews, e.g. in Hosein 2019; Wellman 2022). We have outlined the debate in more detail elsewhere and will heavily refer to these considerations in what follows (Drewski and Gerhards 2024a: Chapter 10; 2024b). One of the core elements of modern political thought is the principle of *individual self-determination*, frequently referred to as individual autonomy, freedom, or liberty (Courtland, Gaus, and Schmidtz 2022; Fisch 2015). Individual self-determination means that the individual is conceived as an autonomous actor endowed with the volitional capacity to decide on one's own life and destiny. The freedom to move is an

essential element of individual self-determination. It implies the freedom to leave a particular country and go somewhere else without arbitrary interference (Carens 2013). This freedom to move is particularly important if risks to bodily integrity and fundamental freedoms force people to leave their country, as is the case for refugees.

However, individual self-determination also includes the freedom to associate with others and to constitute a community. The community earns the right to *collective self-determination* deriving from the right to individual self-determination. Its members are free to determine the character of that community, including the right to refuse to associate with others and decide who can become a member and who cannot. This thought can be applied to nation-states as well. Consequently, the principle of collective self-determination suggests that the state has the right to deny people access to its territory.

What follows from the preceding remarks is that there is an inherent tension between the sovereignty and self-determination of nation-states and the rights of immigrants. Whereas the principle of individual self-determination supports open borders, the principles of collective self-determination and national sovereignty imply that nation-states have the right to close their borders. Depending on how one weighs the two principles, one comes to different conclusions. We distinguish between three ideal-typical positions, which can be found in philosophical debates justifying either open or closed state borders.²

(1) *Nationalists* regard the state's right to self-determination as sacred and want their country to have the final say on access for all groups of immigrants. Different arguments support this position, ranging from ethnic-racist to religious ideas to economic conceptions of the distinctiveness of one's nation. However, we focus primarily on ideas that

2 We derive the positions from arguments in the philosophical debate on the admission of immigrants. However, at least two positions – Nationalists and Cosmopolitans – also play a role in empirical research. Scholars have suggested that government and political party positions on immigration are structured by an ideological divide between “cosmopolitanism” and “nationalism or communitarianism” (for many others: de Wilde 2019; see also Bornschier 2010; Hooghe and Marks 2018; Kriesi et al. 2008). Cosmopolitans adhere to universalist principles of justice and thus support open borders, multicultural societies, and supra-national institutions, while nationalists and communitarians emphasize the importance of bounded communities of solidarity and thus support closed borders, culturally homogenous societies, and national sovereignty. In a related approach, Ronald Kwon et al. (2022) developed an empirically grounded typology of anti-immigrant attitudes that captures seven distinct configurations of nativism based on configurations of ascribed and achieved status of immigrants.

can be derived from modern liberal thought. In this respect, one argument is particularly interesting, as it refers to the idea of individual self-determination. If an association of people is based on the free will of those who come together to form a community, then this community has the right to decide in the next step whether it wants to accept new members or not. As Christopher Wellman puts it: “Just as an individual has a right to determine whom (if anyone) he or she would like to marry, a group of fellow citizens has a right to determine whom (if anyone) it would like to invite into its political community. And just as an individual’s freedom of association entitles one to remain single, a state’s freedom of association entitles it to exclude all foreigners from its political community” (Wellman 2008, 110–11).³ Wellman argues that the right to collective self-determination and to close state borders also applies to the case of refugees because there are other ways to help refugees than giving them shelter.

- (2) In contrast, *Cosmopolitans* advocate for open borders and contest the right of the state to control and close its borders. This position is supported mainly by three arguments. First, at the heart of liberal thought is the idea of individual self-determination. A core component of this idea is freedom of movement. While freedom of movement within the nation-state is widely accepted and codified in law, this does not hold true for movement across borders, which is seen as a violation of the principle of individual self-determination.⁴ The second argument refers

3 A similar argument is put forward by Michael Walzer (1983), who compares nation-states to clubs that can define who can become a member. However, it should be pointed out that the argument that the right to collective self-determination automatically implies the right to exclude nonmembers of a collective is questioned by some scholars. The counter-argument reads as follows (Benhabib 2004; Abizadeh 2008): The core idea of democratic self-determination means that all persons affected by political decisions must have the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process, e.g., by electing those who make the decisions. If members of a community, like citizens of a state, decide democratically to close the borders, then this decision will affect not only members but also nonmembers of a community, like immigrants and refugees, as they are no longer allowed to enter the specific country. This argument, however, contradicts the idea that everyone affected by a decision should also have a say in it, which in turn leads to the conclusion that “according to democratic theory, the democratic justification for a regime of border control is ultimately owed to both members and nonmembers” (Abizadeh 2008, 44).

4 As Joseph H. Carens (2013, 239) argues: “Every reason why one might want to move within a state may also be a reason for moving between states. One might want a job; one might fall in love with someone from another country; one might belong to a religion that has few adherents in one’s native state and many in another; one might wish to pursue cultural opportunities that are only available in another land.”

to ideas of social justice and equal opportunities. Advocates of global freedom of movement claim that the way the world is organized is fundamentally unjust (for many others, see Carens 2013; Shachar 2009). Citizens born in a poor country in the Global South have significantly fewer life opportunities than citizens born in a rich country in the Global North; the former group will most likely have a lower income, less education, less health care, and a higher mortality rate. One's country of birth, however, is determined by chance, not by choice, personal effort, or achievements. This fact, in turn, violates the principle that all human beings are born equal and should enjoy the same opportunities. Hence, the right to migrate to another country should be guaranteed to realize the idea of equal opportunities.⁵ A third argument relates to the distinction between voluntary and forced immigrants made in international law. Cosmopolitans consider the legal separation of forced and voluntary immigrants to be artificial and unjustified because international law includes only those defined as refugees who flee from political persecution but excludes those whose life is threatened by other circumstances, such as famine, extreme poverty, or natural disasters (Abdelaaty and Hamlin 2022; Hamlin 2021).

- (3) *Cosmo-Nationalists* take a middle position. From their point of view, it makes a difference whether we are looking at forced migrants, i.e., those fleeing from persecution and serious human rights violations, or “voluntary” migrants, i.e., those moving in search of better opportunities or for other reasons. David Miller (2007; 2016) is among the most prominent scholars for whom the distinction between the two groups of immigrants is key. In principle, Miller defends a state's right to control its borders. He argues that a state whose government is the result of the decisions of its citizens has the right to determine the future of its society, including controlling the borders. In addition, a nation-state constitutes a community based on dense interaction and cooperation between citizens, which legitimizes giving priority to the claims of its own citizens over those of foreigners (Miller 2016). But other principles apply for refugees who are forced to flee from their homes because of persecution, war, or other

5 There is also an economic argument in favor of opening borders for immigrants. Closed borders lead to suboptimal use of human capital, whereas introducing individual freedom of movement rights encourages labor mobility that benefits every country. Correspondingly, economic free movement regimes, particularly for workers, have been introduced at the regional level around the world, with varying degrees of openness (Chetail 2019, 97–119). The most advanced is certainly the free movement regime of the EU.

causes. In this case, the individual right to be protected from persecution and bodily harm trumps any state's right to control access to its territory. The normative point of reference for this position is the individual's right to life and human dignity. The right to survival, to which every human being is entitled, is seen as a basic prerequisite for all other rights. This right also trumps the right of a group to decide on new members.⁶

The position of Cosmo-Nationalists that forced immigrants are entitled to different rights than voluntary immigrants is also codified in international law since the end of World War II. Based on the catastrophic experiences of the two world wars, the associated expulsion and displacement of millions of people, the experience of mass extermination of Jews, and the refusal of many countries to grant asylum to Jewish refugees, the right to seek asylum was declared a fundamental human right by the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Declaration (1948, art. 14). By signing the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, nation-states committed themselves to the principle of non-refoulement (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees 1951), which means that states are not allowed to return or "refouler" refugees and asylum seekers "to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened" (1951, art. 33 (1)).

While the individual right to be protected from persecution and serious human rights violations trumps any state's right to control access to its territory, the legal situation is quite different for voluntary immigrants. Here, the state's right to control access to its territory trumps the individual right to be admitted. According to international law, each state has the right to grant or reject the admission of voluntary immigrants.

6 There are different opinions on how exactly to define a refugee, which countries should take in how many refugees, and above all, which conditions must be met for the principle to be applied (Singer and Singer 2010; Carens 2013; Miller 2016; Gibney 2018). Miller takes a rather restrictive position on these issues by defining the following criteria: (1) The lives and fundamental rights of persons requesting admission must be threatened in their country of origin. (2) The state of the country of origin is the originator of the threat or is not able to protect its citizens. (3) There is no other way to protect those seeking refuge (e.g., international aid or safe zones within the country of origin). (4) The host state is capable of accepting refugees in the first place (Miller 2016, 76–93). Of course, the four conditions are not easy to determine empirically. Above all, there is a debate in the literature about what exactly threat and persecution mean and whether, for example, fleeing hunger or a natural disaster is a plausible reason for obtaining refugee status. Those who support a more restrictive definition of the reasons for admitting refugees argue that, in cases of hunger and natural disasters, people can be helped by international aid, even within their own countries. And because of that, states are not obligated to take in refugees in cases of hunger or natural disaster.

Consequently, immigration policy often follows the requirements of the national economy, and immigrants are selected based on their skills and qualifications.⁷ On the grounds of these considerations, we distinguish three theoretically derived attitudinal positions concerning the question of whether the state should be entitled to admit immigrants, differentiated between voluntary and forced immigrants.

- (4) In addition, we consider a fourth position having the status of a theoretically non-derived residual category. Those who take this position think that the state should have the right to reject refugees, but not voluntary immigrants. We call this group *Inconsistent*s because there is no position in the philosophical debate that demands and justifies that a country has the right to turn back refugees, but no right to reject voluntary immigrants. Empirically, however, it might turn out that some citizens support this view for a variety of different reasons.

Until now, we know very little about the extent to which the various positions are supported by citizens across the world. One of the aims of our empirical analysis is to identify how many people fall into each of the four groups depicted in Table 1.

TABLE 1 Typology of four attitudinal groups

		States have to admit refugees	
		No	Yes
States have to admit voluntary immigrants	No	Nationalists	Cosmo-Nationalists
	Yes	Inconsistent	Cosmopolitans

7 Two main limitations require discretion regarding the selection of voluntary immigrants. The first limitation stems from the right to respect for family life, enshrined in UDHR (United Nations 1948, art. 16/1). This right generally entails the right to family reunification across borders when there is no reasonable alternative to do so elsewhere (Chetail 2019, 124–32). The second limitation on the selection of immigrants derives from the prohibition of racial discrimination enshrined in the “International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,” which prohibits any “distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, color, descent, or national or ethnic origin” (United Nations 1965, art. 1 (1)). However, these two restrictions cannot disguise the fact that, in principle, states have the right to decide whether to admit (voluntary) immigrants and which ones to admit.

3 Social Characteristics of the Attitudinal Groups

We are not only interested in whether and to what extent the different groups are empirically reflected in individuals' attitudes but also in describing the social profile of the groups. As mentioned above, our approach is rather explorative. We do not present hypotheses in the narrow sense of formulating causal assumptions about the association between various independent characteristics and attitudes toward voluntary and forced immigrants for two reasons. First, cross-sectional survey data do not allow testing causal assumptions in the strict sense. Second, as we distinguish between four different attitudinal groups, one would have to formulate specific hypotheses for each of the four groups. This analysis would go beyond the scope of an article. More importantly, the data set lacks information that would enable us to empirically implement and test the very specific hypotheses tailored to the four groups. What we can offer is more modest: we examine whether the four groups can be described by certain structural and cultural characteristics. In selecting the possible characteristics, we are guided by the many studies that have analyzed attitudes toward the admission of immigrants. A detailed overview of this literature is provided by Alin M. Ceobanu and Xavier Escandell (2010), Jens Hainmueller and Daniel J. Hopkins (2014) and, more recently, a meta-study conducted by Lenka Dražanová et al. (2022). Of particular interest to us are those studies that have examined attitudes toward the admission of refugees and voluntary immigrants together and comparatively (Abdelaaty and Steele 2022; Coenders, Gijssberts, and Scheepers 2004; O'Rourke and Sinnott 2006). Like other studies that have analyzed attitudes toward immigrants, we distinguish between individual-level and country-level features, and within each category, between structural characteristics, referring to respondents' social position and characteristics of the countries in which respondents live, and cultural features, which refer to respondents' generalized attitudes and the cultural characteristics of countries (Gerhards et al. 2019; Gerhards and Dilger 2020).

Why is it relevant to determine the social profile of the different attitudinal groups? Proponents of the theory of political cleavages argue that structurally and culturally defined groups of citizens form the mobilization potential for collective actors; political parties and social movements can better mobilize for a political position if there is a socially defined constituency behind a position (Mair 2006). Our goal is to identify the mobilization potential for the different positions with respect to the admission of the two groups of immigrants. We do not investigate whether and to what extent political parties or social movements take up this potential and feed it into the political process.

3.1 *Individual-Level Characteristics*

In regard to *structural characteristics*, we take into consideration respondents' gender, age, geographical region, income, education, and level of economic deprivation. (1) In most studies, gender is not derived theoretically but used as a control variable. Although women's attitudes toward immigrants of different economic and cultural profiles differ (Ponce 2017), women have generally been found to be more positive than men toward admitting immigrants (Semyonov, Rajzman, and Gorodzeisky 2006). (2) This is also true for younger people compared to older people. The influence of age seems to be a cohort effect and not a life course effect. Due to different socialization conditions, young people are more open-minded toward foreigners (Kustov, Laaker, and Reller 2021; Schmidt 2021). (3) Living in urban areas is another aspect that has turned out to be positively correlated with pro-immigration attitudes. Two arguments for this can be found in the literature. People holding positive attitudes towards immigrants are more likely to self-select into urban areas and are more likely to have contact with immigrants, which makes them more favorable towards them (Dražanová et al. 2022). In addition, many studies suppose that attitudes to the admission of immigrants are correlated with the socio-economic position of an individual, measured by (4) income or (5) education.⁸ It is assumed – although this assumption is often not tested – that immigrants have lower human capital than natives and compete primarily with low-income and less-educated individuals in the labor market and for welfare state benefits, which again leads to feelings of threat and negative attitudes toward immigrants (Brief et al. 2005, 831; Lucassen 2005; McLaren 2003, 915; Quillian 1995, 590; Stephan and Stephan 2000, 25).⁹ (6) In addition to objective economic circumstances, respondents' subjective considerations and whether they see themselves as economically disadvantaged increase the likelihood of being against admitting immigrants (Aleksynska 2011).

8 In principle, education stands for two different concepts: a person's structural position and cultural mindset. Jens Hainmueller and Michael J. Hiscox (2007) show that education measures a form of cognitive mobilization (Dalton 1984; Inglehart 1990) rather than social status. Their study demonstrates that more educated respondents are significantly less racist and place greater value on cultural diversity than their counterparts; in addition, they are more likely to believe that immigration generates benefits for the host society as a whole.

9 The empirical results are inconsistent, however. While Kenneth Scheve and Matthew Slaughter (2001) were able to prove a relationship between a low level of qualification and the approval of limiting immigration in the US (similar to Mayda 2006), Hainmueller et al. (2015) do not find any evidence that competition in the labor market impacts attitudes toward immigration.

In addition to structural attributes, we consider three *cultural* characteristics of the respondents, namely national identification, materialist or postmaterialist values, and support for human rights. (7) A couple of studies have shown that people who strongly identify with their nation-state are more likely to agree that their country has the right to reject immigrants (Ivarsflaten 2005, 23; Nickerson and Louis 2008, 798; O'Rourke and Sinnott 2006, 844).¹⁰ (8) Ronald Inglehart (1971) distinguishes between materialist and postmaterialist values. Materialist values include satisfying economic living conditions, security, and the exclusion of outsiders. Postmaterialists are characterized by the desire for self-fulfillment, an emphasis on freedom, participation, and the tolerance of diversity. Empirical evidence shows that openness toward immigrants is part of a postmaterialist value syndrome (Davidov and Meuleman 2012; Schwartz and Sagiv 1995). (9) We assume that respondents who support human rights, namely the idea that every human has the same basic rights, are more likely to reject the idea that states have the right to decide on the admission of immigrants (Emmenegger and Klemmensen 2013; Hercowitz-Amir, Rajjman, and Davidov 2017).

3.2 *Country-level Characteristics*

We consider two *structural* features at the country level to describe the four groups. (1) Immigrants, especially voluntary immigrants, mostly migrate from poorer countries to richer countries. Their human capital is often lower than that of the population in the destination country. Hence, citizens in wealthier countries are assumed to be more skeptical about admitting immigrants than citizens in poorer countries (as has, e.g., been shown by Kim 2023). (2) Some studies have shown that the number of immigrants already living in a country correlate with anti-admission attitudes, as fewer immigrants might lead to less competition in the labor market and for welfare benefits (Abdelaaty and Steele 2022; Kim 2023; McLaren 2003, 916; Meuleman, Davidov, and Billiet 2009, 354; Quillian 1995, 589). However, there is also a counter-thesis to this assumption, which relates theoretically to the contact hypothesis. It is assumed that past experience with immigrants reduces prejudice and has a positive effect

10 Lusine K. Grigoryan and Vladimir Ponizovskiy (2018) have painted a more differentiated picture: Based on ISSP data from Russia, they showed that while nationalism is positively related toward anti-immigrant attitudes, political patriotism (defined as pride to the civic side of the society, its political institutions, and the economy) is negatively related. They have proposed that the latter might be linked to reduced perceived threat and general satisfaction with the quality of life: Those who perceive the country as stable and secure have more positive attitudes toward immigrants. Our independent variable does not allow for this distinction.

on the acceptance of future immigrants (Semyonov et al. 2004). For example, Eva GT Green et al. (2018), based on ISSP data for Switzerland, have shown that immigrant presence buffered the impact of conservative ideological climates.

Cultural characteristics of countries can also be correlated with people's willingness to admit immigrants. (3) A very interesting aspect has been introduced into the debate by Wesley Hiers et al. (2017), who argue that countries that experienced a national trauma in the past, such as the loss of national sovereignty or the loss of a part of the state's territory, have developed a strong form of national consciousness, which in turn, increases the likelihood of excluding foreigners (Soehl and Karim 2021). (4) Finally, countries in our analysis differ in the extent to which they have signed and ratified various human rights treaties. One can assume that the more a country is committed to human rights, the more citizens are exposed to and familiar with the principles of human rights (Joppke 1997). And the more this is the case, the more likely citizens in the respective countries will oppose their country turning back immigrants, especially refugees.

4 Data and Methods

4.1 Data

We use data from a novel survey, which surveyed 53,960 individuals in 26 countries around the world, including countries of the so-called Global North and the Global South, between December 2021 and July 2022 (Giebler et al. 2023a).¹¹ The survey focuses on attitudes toward liberal values and peoples' perspective on how a society should be organized. Countries have been systematically selected to cover as much heterogeneity as possible in terms of geographical spread (four world regions based on the UN Geoscheme), political regimes (based on Varieties of Democracy's Electoral Democracy Index (Coppedge et al. 2021)), and socio-economic conditions (a combination of the Human Development Index and the Gini coefficient) (Giebler et al. 2023b, 13). The target population in all 26 countries was permanent residents living in private households aged 18 or older in each country regardless of their nationality. In 19 countries, the data was collected via computer-assisted web interviews (CAWI). Respondents were recruited from online access panels administered by a collaborating survey company. The samples were stratified by gender, age, education, geographical region, and type of locality (from rural

11 Elsewhere we have explained in detail the underlying methodology of the survey (Giebler et al. 2023b).

to urban) to match the distribution of the respective country's offline population. Respondents received a small incentive for participation assigned by the survey company. In those seven countries where online surveys were not feasible (especially due to too low internet penetration), data were collected via personal interviews (CAPI) based on a stratified probability sample via the random-walk procedure. To validate the questionnaire as best as possible, extensive pre-tests were conducted in the form of cognitive interviews and pilot studies prior to the main fieldwork (Giebler et al. 2023b, 14). The survey was conducted in the most-spoken language(s) in each country.¹² After excluding respondents with missing values on the variables of interest, the dataset contains 41,919 respondents.

4.2 *Items Used to Create the Four Attitudinal Groups*

This study focuses on the question of the extent to which citizens in different countries of the world differentiate between voluntary migrants and refugees when it comes to the state's right to decide on the admission of immigrants. Respondents were asked to state their agreement to the following two statements:¹³

- 1) My country should have the right to reject refugees from other countries, even if they are persecuted in their home country.
- 2) My country should have the right to reject immigrants who want to work and live in my country.

The addition to the first item, "even if they are persecuted in their home country," should make it clear that these are truly persecuted people; and the addition to the second item, "who want to work and live in my country," should indicate that the motive for immigration is economical. Agreement with the two statements is measured on a six-point Likert scale. In addition, respondents were given the options "I prefer not to say" and "Don't know."

To categorize respondents into the four ideal types, we dichotomize and cross both items. Cosmo-Nationalists are respondents who tend to disagree with statement 1 (≤ 3 on the six-point scale) and tend to agree with statement 2 (> 3). Nationalists are respondents who tend to agree with both statements, and Cosmopolitans tend to disagree with both. Inconsistent are respondents who tend to agree with statement 1 and tend to disagree with statement 2.

12 See Appendix Table A1 for an overview of the surveyed countries, sample sizes, modes, and questionnaire languages.

13 These two were part of a larger set of statements measuring attitudes towards the state's regulation of cross-border activities.

4.3 *Individual- and Country-Level Characteristics*

Appendix Table A2 gives an overview of the wording and coding of all variables used as individual- and country-level characteristics. As outlined above, we consider six structural characteristics (gender,¹⁴ age, urban/rural, income, education, and economic deprivation) and three cultural characteristics (commitment to the universality of human rights, national identity, and post-materialism) at the individual level to describe the four attitudinal groups. At the country level, two structural characteristics (Gross domestic product per capita obtained from the World Bank (2023) and migration figures derived from the UN's (2020a; 2020b) migration stock statistics¹⁵) and two cultural characteristics (Geopolitical Threat Scale (GTS) and the degree of a country's embeddedness into the global human rights regime) are considered. The GTS measures a country's level of national trauma and was developed by Hiers et al. (2017). It codes countries' historical experiences with loss of territory or sovereignty and internal and external conflicts into a numeric score ranging from 0 (no national trauma) to 8 (high levels of national trauma). The GTS was originally developed for some selected countries (Soehl and Karim 2021), which covers 18 of the 26 countries in our data. For the remaining eight countries, we constructed the GTS ourselves, following the coding instructions of the authors.¹⁶ The degree of a country's embeddedness into the global human rights regime as outlined by international law is measured as the number of ratified UN Human Rights Treaties (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights 2023).

4.4 *Model*

To describe the four attitudinal groups using structural and cultural characteristics, we calculated a multinomial logistic regression model; the effect of each characteristic is displayed by average marginal effects. Following Andrew Gelman (2008), all continuous variables are standardized by dividing by two standard deviations. The models include a combination of a poststratification weight and a country weight equaling the sample sizes.

14 We compare females to males. However, we also allowed respondents to select "other" but do not display the coefficients here due to a very small number of respondents who selected this category.

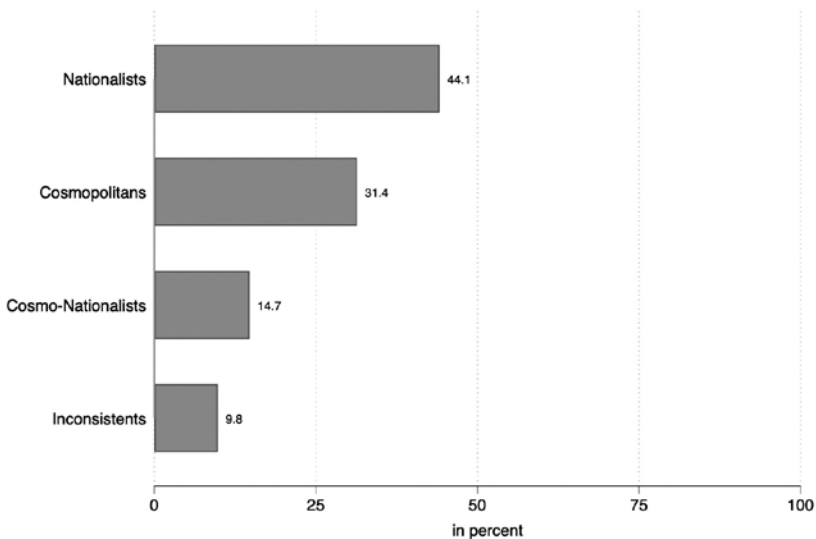
15 International migrants are equated with the foreign-born population obtained from population censuses (United Nations 2020b, 4). Figures are set relative to the country's population size (United Nations 2022).

16 See Appendix Table A2.

5 Results

We first analyze to what extent the four theoretically derived attitudinal groups are reflected in citizen attitudes. Next, we conduct a multivariate analysis that attempts to describe the four groups with the help of individual- and country-level characteristics. Figure 1 shows the percentages of the four groups across all countries. It turns out that Nationalists are the strongest group, with 44%, followed by Cosmopolitans, with 31%. Neither group distinguishes between refugees on the one hand and voluntary immigrants on the other. Hence, most respondents have a more general opinion on whether the state should have the last say on the admission of immigrants regardless of whether they are persecuted in their home country or looking for better jobs. This assumption is confirmed by the fact that the correlation between the two is rather high (.57).¹⁷

Only about 15% of citizens belong to the group of Cosmo-Nationalists and thus support the idea codified in international law, namely that refugees must be admitted but that the acceptance of voluntary immigrants should be



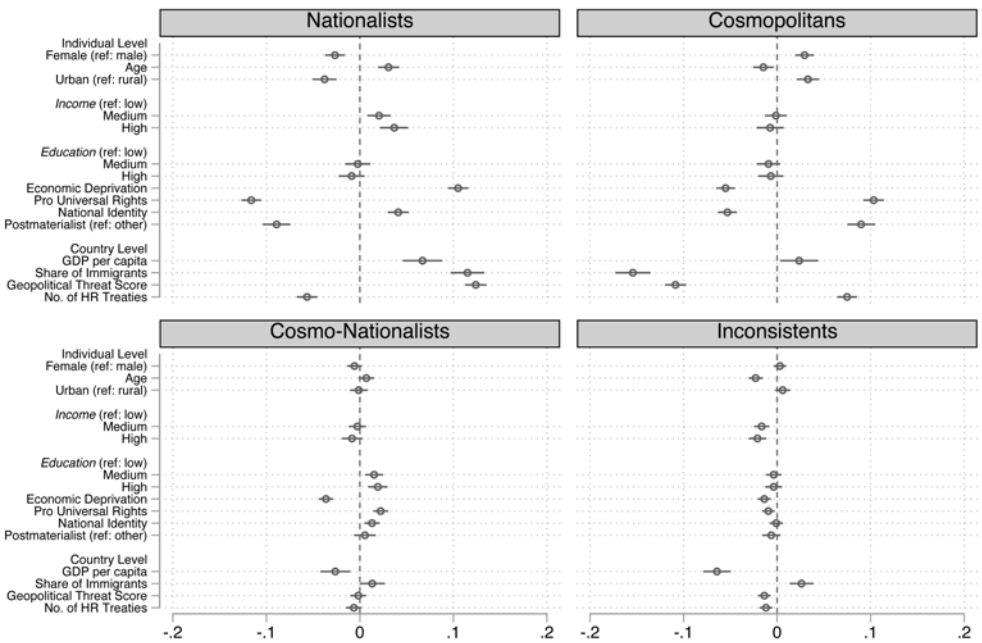
Note: N = 41,919, figures based on post-stratification and country weights.

FIGURE 1 The size of the four attitudinal groups across all countries (%)

¹⁷ In Appendix Table A3, we present the cross-tabulation of the two items, allowing for several alternative constructions of the four groups, showing that our findings are relatively robust as Nationalists and Cosmopolitans always prevail.

decided by the countries. This finding is relatively consistent across countries. In none of the 26 countries do Cosmo-Nationalists (or Inconsistent) form the largest group. Only in two countries, they are among the two largest groups. Hence, the idea of distinguishing between two groups of immigrants, developed and codified in international law after World War II, is supported by only a relatively small minority of people worldwide. Finally, the Inconsistent, i.e., those who cannot be derived from the philosophical debate and international law, form the smallest group with 9.4%.

Figure 2 and Table 2 show the results of a multinomial logistic regression model, including all individual-level and country-level variables. The effects of different characteristics on the likelihood of membership in one of the four groups are expressed as average marginal effects. The categorical variables show – for each of the four groups – the change in the likelihood of belonging to that group when changing from one category of the “explanatory” variable to another. Continuous variables show the increase in the likelihood when the variable rises by two standard deviations.



Note: N = 41,919, results from multinomial regression, including post-stratification and country weights.

FIGURE 2 Individual and country specific characteristics of the four attitudinal groups

TABLE 2 Average marginal effects of multinomial logistic regression model

	Nationalists	Cosmopolitans	Cosmo-Nationalist	Inconsistent
Female (ref: male)	-0.027*** (-0.005)	0.029*** (-0.005)	-0.006 (-0.004)	0.003 (-0.003)
Age	0.031*** (-0.006)	-0.015** -0.006	0.007 -0.004	-0.023*** -0.004
Urban (ref: rural)	-0.038*** (-0.007)	0.033*** (-0.006)	-0.001 (-0.005)	0.006 (-0.004)
Medium Income (ref: low)	0.020** (-0.006)	-0.001 (-0.006)	-0.003 (-0.005)	-0.017*** (-0.004)
High Income (ref: low)	0.037*** (-0.008)	-0.007 (-0.007)	-0.008 (-0.006)	-0.021*** (-0.005)
Medium Education (ref: low)	0.105*** (-0.006)	-0.055*** (-0.005)	-0.036*** (-0.004)	-0.014*** (-0.004)
High Education (ref: low)	-0.002 (-0.007)	-0.009 (-0.006)	0.015** (-0.005)	-0.004 (-0.004)
Economic Deprivation	-0.009 (-0.007)	-0.007 (-0.007)	0.019*** (-0.005)	-0.004 (-0.005)
Pro Universal Rights	-0.116*** (-0.005)	0.103*** (-0.006)	0.022*** (-0.004)	-0.009** (-0.003)
National Identity	0.041*** (-0.006)	-0.053*** (-0.005)	0.013** (-0.004)	-0.001 (-0.004)
Postmaterialism (ref: other)	-0.089*** (-0.008)	0.090*** (-0.007)	0.005 (-0.006)	-0.006 (-0.005)
GDP per capita	0.067*** (-0.011)	0.024* (-0.01)	-0.026** (-0.008)	-0.064*** (-0.007)
Share of Immigrants	0.115*** (-0.009)	-0.154*** (-0.010)	0.013 (-0.007)	0.026*** (-0.006)
Geopolitical Threat Score	0.124*** (-0.006)	-0.109*** (-0.006)	-0.002 (-0.004)	-0.014*** (-0.003)
Number of signed human rights treaties	-0.057*** (-0.006)	0.075*** (-0.005)	-0.006 (-0.004)	-0.012*** (-0.004)

Note: N = 41,919, average marginal effects after multinomial regression, including post-stratification and country weights.

Cosmopolitans and Nationalists have a much clearer social profile than Cosmo-Nationalists and Inconsistents. Furthermore, we find that both groups are characterized by opposite social markers. *Nationalists* are more likely to be male, older, and to live in rural areas. Surprisingly and contrary to other findings, Nationalists are more likely to have a higher income than members of the other groups. However, although they are better off, they are more likely to feel economically deprived, which shows that it is not so much their real economic situation that marks Nationalists, but their perception of their economic position. While structural characteristics at the individual level play a relatively minor role in determining the profile of Nationalists, this is not true for cultural characteristics. Nationalists are characterized by a syndrome of values insofar as they are less likely to favor universal rights, are more likely to have a strong national identity, and hold materialist values. Looking at the country characteristics, we see that Nationalists are more likely to live in economically more prosperous countries already home to many immigrants. This finding suggests that individuals who favor strong governmental control of borders over both voluntary and forced immigrants feel threatened by even more immigrants and their likely low human capital. Cultural characteristics at the country level play an additional role in determining the group of Nationalists, as they are more likely to live in countries less committed to human rights (measured by the number of UN Human Rights treaties signed). Finally, they are more likely to live in a country whose sovereignty has been threatened in the past. This experience is stored in the national collective memory and results in preferences for strict enforcement of the country's borders by the state.

Cosmopolitans can be described by the opposite features. Women, younger people, and citizens living in urban areas are overrepresented in this group. Again, structural characteristics like education and income do not help us describe the social profile of Cosmopolitans, as these characteristics do not have a significant effect on attitudes toward immigrants. Similar to the Nationalists, it is not the objective situation that is significant but the subjective interpretation of the economic situation, as Cosmopolitans tend to feel economically less deprived. With regard to cultural characteristics, Cosmopolitans are more likely to be strongly committed to human rights, support post-materialist values and show a rather weak identification with their nation-state. At the country level, we again find characteristics of Cosmopolitans, which are the opposite of Nationalists: Cosmopolitans tend to live in countries where there are relatively few immigrants so far and whose countries have often signed international treaties and been less threatened in the past. There is, however, one characteristic that Cosmopolitans and Nationalists have in common. Both are more likely to live in wealthier countries. However, one must note that

the effect of GDP is substantially correlated with the number of immigrants already living in a country. This observation intuitively makes sense, as more prosperous countries often host more immigrants. In a model excluding the share of immigrants, the GDP effect for Cosmopolitans is negative, and the effect for Nationalists is even stronger.

Although *Cosmo-Nationalists* represent the idea codified in international law, namely that refugees must be admitted but that the acceptance of voluntary immigrants should be decided by the countries, they have a much less pronounced social profile than the Nationalists and Cosmopolitans. They are more likely to live in poorer countries, but less likely to feel economically deprived; they are more likely to have higher levels of education, more likely to favor universal rights, and have a stronger national identity. Especially the two latter characteristics make theoretically sense: having a strong national identity and, at the same time, being in favor of universal rights corresponds to Cosmo-Nationalists' general support for the nation-state being able to restrict immigration but not when it comes to refugees as a group protected by international law. In this respect, there is also an interesting difference between them and the Nationalists and Cosmopolitans, for whom the direction of the effect of universal human rights and post-materialism runs in both cases opposite to that of national identity.

Lastly, the *Inconsistent*s are even more weakly profiled than the Cosmo-Nationalists, as many features at the individual level have either no or only a weak effect. Members of the inconsistent group tend to be younger, have a lower level of income, but are less likely to experience economic deprivation. As Figure 2 shows, cultural characteristics are of little help in describing the Inconsistent. However, characteristics at the macro level, by contrast, are somewhat more important. Those who reject the admission of refugees but support the admission of economic immigrants tend to live in poorer countries, in countries with an above-average number of immigrants and in countries whose existence has been threatened in the past and which have relatively rarely signed human rights treaties. We can only speculate about the motives of why certain respondents are in favor of rejecting refugees but accepting immigrants. It might be, that they believe that the country's economy will benefit from voluntary immigrants, while they perceive refugees as a financial burden who are likely to harm the economy.

In sum, we find that the majority of citizens around the world fall either in the Nationalist or Cosmopolitan group. Furthermore, the social profile of these two groups is much more strongly determined by structural and cultural characteristics than the Cosmo-Nationalists and Inconsistent.

6 Conclusion

According to international law, states are obliged to admit refugees, but they are free to decide whether to accept so-called voluntary immigrants. Based on a survey conducted in 26 countries, we examine citizen attitudes towards the admission of refugees and economic immigrants. With reference to the debate in political philosophy, we distinguish between four attitudinal groups. Nationalists emphasize the right of the state to decide freely about the admission of immigrants (including refugees), while Cosmopolitans stress the idea that the state has no right to prevent immigrants from moving to another country. Cosmo-Nationalists take a middle position as they argue that states have the right to decide whether to admit voluntary immigrants but are obliged to take in refugees; this position is in line with the position codified in international law, which is why we also call this group Legalists. In the empirical analysis, we considered a fourth, theoretically non-derived residual category that we call Inconsistent. Advocates of this position think that the state should have the right to reject refugees, but not voluntary immigrants.

We find that only about 15% of citizens belong to the group of Cosmo-Nationalists, indicating that the distinction between refugees and voluntary immigrants made in international law is poorly anchored in citizen attitudes. The Inconsistent form the smallest group with 9.4%. Instead, more than three-quarters of respondents fall into the two categories of Nationalists and Cosmopolitans, neither of which distinguishes between refugees and voluntary immigrants. Nationalists are the strongest group, with 44%, followed by Cosmopolitans, with 31%.

Our attempt to determine the social profile of the different attitudinal groups by structural and cultural characteristics on the individual and country level shows that the Cosmo-Nationalists (and Inconsistent) do not have a clear social profile, while the Cosmopolitans and Nationalists do. Men, citizens who are older, feel economically deprived, and live in non-urban areas are overrepresented in the group of Nationalists. In addition, Nationalists are less likely to be in favor of universal rights and post-materialist values, but they are more likely to have a strong national identity, live in economically more prosperous countries that are already home to many immigrants, and come from countries whose existence has been threatened in the past. Cosmopolitans are marked by the opposite characteristics with respect to almost all these features.

What are the implications of our findings? Actors committed to defending international refugee law find themselves in a difficult position. Their stance that the state should decide on the influx of voluntary immigrants but

must accept refugees is supported by a relatively small number of citizens. Moreover, unlike Nationalists and Cosmopolitans, Cosmo-Nationalists do not have a clear social profile. According to the theory of political cleavages, the existence of a group determined by structural and cultural characteristics is a prerequisite for political entrepreneurs (such as social movements and political parties), to take up the concerns of this group and translate them into the political arena (Mair 2006). Our analysis shows that the political space for the issue of immigration is occupied by the two opposite camps of Nationalists and Cosmopolitans. In this polarized field, there seems to be little room for the group of Cosmo-Nationalists with their differentiated position. The fact that international law regarding refugees is very weakly anchored in the minds of citizens may explain governments' low adherence to international law in their refugee policies.

We do not want to conclude without pointing out some methodological limitations of our analyses. (1) Our approach does not allow us to draw causal conclusions from our analysis. Future research might use our results as a starting point to investigate possible causal relationships, for example, by distinguishing different characteristics of immigrants in the form of a conjoint experiment and asking respondents which immigrants the state must legitimately accept or can reject. (2) Related to the first point, the two items we use in our survey capture citizen attitudes more generally and do not specify different characteristics of the two groups of immigrants. Other studies have shown, however, that citizens' willingness to admit refugees or voluntary immigrants depends on immigrants' specific characteristics. For example, Kirk Bansak et al. (2016) demonstrate that asylum seekers with higher employability, more consistent asylum testimonies and severe vulnerabilities, and who are Christian rather than Muslim received the greatest public support. Jürgen Gerhards et al. (2019) show that the willingness to admit people who are persecuted because of their advocacy for human rights is significantly higher than those who are persecuted because of their sexual orientation. Unfortunately, we are unable to determine to what extent the two questions asked in the survey triggered different associations and consequently led to different responses. (3) We asked citizens whether their country should have the right to reject voluntary and forced immigrants. Although we believe that the wording of the two questions is an exact operationalization of our research question derived from political philosophy and international law, respondents may have understood the questions not as attempting to measure attitudes about the right of the state to control its borders but as measuring attitudes toward immigrants in general.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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Appendices

TABEL A1 Country samples

Country	Mode	Languages	Fieldwork period	Cases included in the analysis
Australia	CAWI	English	20.12.21–16.01.22	1584
Brazil	CAWI	Portuguese	23.12.21–16.01.22	1852
Chile	CAWI	Spanish	23.12.21–28.01.22	1747
France	CAWI	French	22.12.21–24.01.22	1675
Germany	CAWI	German	13.12.21–07.01.22	1664
Ghana	CAPI	Akan, English	25.01.22–23.03.22	1490
India	CAPI	Bengali, Gujarati, English, Hindi, Marathi, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu	15.02.22–31.03.22	2377
Indonesia	CAWI	Indonesia, Javanese	24.12.21–08.03.22	1809
Italy	CAWI	Italian	20.12.21–12.01.22	1674
Japan	CAWI	Japanese	24.12.21–28.02.22	1296
Latvia	CAWI	Latvian, Russian	21.12.21–29.01.22	1465
Mexico	CAWI	Spanish	22.12.21–22.01.22	1891
Nigeria	CAPI	English, Igbo, Hausa, Yoruba	08.02.22–19.03.22	1501
Peru	CAPI	Spanish, Quechua	19.03.22–11.06.22	1201
Poland	CAWI	Polish	20.12.21–13.01.22	1616
Russia	CAWI	Russian	21.12.21–03.02.22	1760
Senegal	CAPI	French, Wolof	18.02.22–11.04.22	974
Singapore	CAWI	English, Malay, Mandarin	20.12.21–25.01.22	1720

TABLE A1 Country samples (*cont.*)

Country	Mode	Languages	Fieldwork period	Cases included in the analysis
South Africa	CAPI	Afrikaans, Xhosa, English, Zulu	04.02.22–12.03.22	1409
South Korea	CAWI	Korean	21.12.21–20.01.22	1802
Spain	CAWI	Catalan, Spanish	22.12.21–17.01.22	1770
Sweden	CAWI	Swedish	09.12.21–15.01.22	1651
Tunisia	CAPI	Arabic	01.07.22–31.07.22	1247
Turkey	CAWI	Turkish	20.12.21–28.01.22	1784
United Kingdom	CAWI	English	17.12.21–06.03.22	1535
USA	CAWI	English, Spanish	22.12.21–11.01.22	1643

TABLE A2 Description of the variables

A. Dependent Variables

Variable Description	Manifestation	Weighted proportion in used sample
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Attitudes towards the rejection of refugees/immigrants

Now we are interested in your opinion concerning the borders of [COUNTRY]. Some people think that a country should have the right to substantially limit cross-border activities, like travel or trade. Others think that the borders of a country should be rather open.

To what extent would you agree or disagree to each of the following statements?

Note: Items (1) and (2) are asked in a battery with six other items. The order has been randomized between respondents.

1) My country should have the right to reject refugees coming from other countries, even if they are persecuted in their home country.	1	20.10 %
(1) 1 – Fully disagree	2	11.03%
(2) 2	3	14.95%
(3) 3	4	17.64%
(4) 4	5	13.52%
(5) 5	6	22.76%
(6) 6 – Fully agree		

TABLE A2 Description of the variables (*cont.*)**A. Dependent Variables**

Variable Description	Manifestation	Weighted proportion in used sample
2) My country should have the right to reject immigrants who want to work and live in my country.	1	17.61%
	2	9.69%
(1) 1 – Fully disagree	3	13.85%
(2) 2	4	18.23%
(3) 3	5	14.69%
(4) 4	6	25.93%
(5) 5		
(6) 6 – Fully agree		

B. Independent Variables

Variable Description	Manifestation	Weighted proportion in used sample
(1) <i>Gender</i>		
Do you identify as ...	male	50.39%
(1) ... male?	female	49.25%
(2) ... female?	other	0.36%
(3) ... other?		
While we did not omit those who answered "other" from the analysis, we do not present the effect of the variable due to the small proportion of respondents.		
(2) <i>Age</i>		
When were you born? Please give us your birth year.	Mean	43.09
	Standard deviation	16.03
(3) <i>Urban/Rural</i>		
Would you say you live in a ...	rural	27.56%
(1) ... rural area or village?	urban	72.44%
(2) ... small or middle size town?		
(3) ... large town or city?		
(2) and (3) have been combined to achieve a dichotomy of "rural" and "urban"		

TABLE A2 Description of the variables (*cont.*)**B. Independent Variables**

Variable Description	Manifestation	Weighted proportion in used sample
<i>(4) Income</i>		
Considering everyone living regularly in your household, what is your household's total monthly income, after tax and compulsory deductions, from all sources (including wages, profits, investments, social benefits)? If you don't know the exact figure, please give an estimate. If you are living on your own, this refers just to you.	low	33.88%
	middle	42.48%
	high	23.64%
<p>(1) Less than [40% of mean national income]</p> <p>(2) [40%–60% of mean national income]</p> <p>(3) [60%–80% of mean national income]</p> <p>(4) [80%–100% of mean national income]</p> <p>(5) [100%–150% of mean national income]</p> <p>(6) [150%–200% of mean national income]</p> <p>(7) [200%–250% of mean national income]</p> <p>(8) [250%–350% of mean national income]</p> <p>(9) More than [350% of the mean national income]</p> <p>Note: Answer categories were based on national income figures. In the analyses, we grouped together categories (1)–(3) “low income”, (4)–(6) “middle income”, and (7)–(9) “high income”.</p>		
<i>(5) Education</i>		
What is the highest educational level that you have attained? If you have attained your highest educational degree outside [COUNTRY], please select the educational level that comes closest to the highest educational level that you have attained elsewhere. Country-specific categories based for:	low	32.17%
	middle	38.45%
	high	29.39%
<p>(1) Less than lower secondary education (including no formal education, early childhood education, primary education) (ISCED 0-1)</p> <p>(2) Lower secondary education (ISCED 2)</p> <p>(3) Upper secondary education (ISCED 3)</p> <p>(4) Post-secondary non-tertiary education (ISCED 4)</p> <p>(5) Lower tertiary education, BA level (including short-cycle tertiary education) (ISCED 5-6)</p>		

TABLE A2 Description of the variables (*cont.*)

B. Independent Variables

Variable Description	Manifestation	Weighted proportion in used sample
(6) Higher tertiary education, MA level or higher (ISCED 7–8)		
(7) Still in education, without prior degree		
Recoded: Categories were clustered into three groups: (1) low education (ISCED 0–2, lower secondary education or less); (2) medium (ISCED 3–4, upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education); (3) high (ISCED 5–8, tertiary education or higher).		
<i>(6) Economic deprivation</i>		
There is often a discussion about whether different groups in [COUNTRY] nowadays actually have or get what they deserve. Some people even become angry when they think about this issue, because they think they are treated unfairly. To what extent do you agree or disagree to each of the following statements?	1	7.79%
	2	7.11%
	3	14.17%
	4	21.07%
	5	17.48%
	6	32.37%
(b) It makes me angry that nowadays people like me do not earn or own as much as we deserve.		
1 – Fully disagree		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6 – Fully agree		
Note: The item is part of a three-item battery. The order of the three items is randomized		
<i>(7) Commitment to universality of human rights</i>		
Should every human have the same basic rights in all countries or should a country’s society decide which rights people have in its country?	1	53.74%
	2	11.08%
	3	8.53%
	4	6.74%
	5	5.57%
	6	14.33%
1 – Every human should have the same basic rights in all countries.		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6 – A country’s society should decide which rights people have in its country.		
(Item was reversed for the analyses and standardized. Distribution for original item)		

TABLE A2 Description of the variables (*cont.*)**B. Independent Variables**

Variable Description	Manifestation	Weighted proportion in used sample
<i>(8) National identity</i>		
People have different views about themselves and how they relate to the world. How close do you feel to ...	1	5.70%
	2	4.90%
	3	12.03%
(b) [COUNTRY]?	4	20.67%
1 – Not close at all.	5	21.26%
2	6	35.54%
3		
4		
5		
6 – Very close.		

(9) Postmaterialism

There are different opinions about what society's goals should be for the next ten years. Below are listed some of the goals which different people would give top priority. Please, pick the two that are most important to you.

- (1) Maintaining order in the nation
- (2) Giving people more say in important government decision.
- (3) Fighting rising prices.
- (4) Protecting freedom of speech.

Recoded: Respondents who selected (1) and (3) are classified as 'materialists'. Those who selected (2) and (4) are classified as 'postmaterialists'. All others as 'in-between'. In our analysis, we compare 'postmaterialists' to the rest.

C. Macro Variables

	(10) GDP per capita (in US-\$ PPP)	(11) Share of immigrants per inhabitant	(12) Geopolitical Threat Score	(13) Number of ratified human rights treaties
Australia	60443.11	0.2912	0	14
Brazil	7507.16	0.0038	3*	16
Chile	16265.10	0.0482	1	17
France	43658.98	0.1292	0	17
Germany	51203.55	0.1574	3	16
Ghana	2363.30	0.0142	2*	13
India	2256.59	0.0037	4	8

TABLE A2 Description of the variables (*cont.*)

<i>C. Macro Variables</i>				
	(10) GDP per capita (in US-\$ PPP)	(11) Share of immigrants per inhabitant	(12) Geopolitical Threat Score	(13) Number of ratified human rights treaties
Indonesia	4332.71	0.0013	2*	10
Italy	35657.50	0.1059	1	17
Japan	39312.66	0.0201	3	10
Latvia	21148.16	0.1266	3	13
Mexico	10045.68	0.0084	3	16
Nigeria	2065.75	0.0059	3*	14
Peru	6621.57	0.0232	2*	16
Poland	17999.91	0.0171	2	13
Russia	12194.78	0.0802	6	11
Senegal	1636.89	0.0163	3*	14
Singapore	72794.00	0.3628	1*	5
South Africa	7055.05	0.0711	1	14
South Korea	34997.78	0.0225	3	13
Spain	30103.51	0.1285	2	17
Sweden	61028.74	0.1916	1	14
Tunisia	3807.139	0.0047	1*	15
Turkey	9661.24	0.0693	6	16
United Kingdom	46510.28	0.1420	3	13
United States	70248.63	0.1503	2	5

D. Sources and Explanations

Source(s)	World Bank (2023)	United Nations (2020a; 2022)	Hiers et. al (2017), Soehl/Karim (2021)	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (2023)
Additional explanations		Migrant stock divided by population size	Countries marked with * have been coded independently by three different scholars based on the coding instructions used for Soehl/Karim (2021). The mean thereof is used.	

TABLE A3 (Weighted) cross-tabulation of attitudes towards refugees and migrants

		"My country should have the right to <i>reject immigrants</i> who want to work and live in my country."					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
"My country should have the right to <i>reject refugees</i> coming from other countries, even if they are persecuted in their home country."	1	12.06%	2.14%	1.76%	1.22%	0.59%	2.34%
	2	1.32%	3.71%	2.31%	1.77%	1.10%	0.82%
	3	1.03%	1.82%	5.22%	3.58%	1.90%	1.40%
	4	0.71%	0.95%	2.70%	7.48%	3.47%	2.33%
	5	0.36%	0.63%	1.11%	2.86%	5.22%	3.35%
	6	2.14%	0.45%	0.75%	1.32%	2.41%	15.69%