



**Bachelor of Science in Sociology (BSc)**

# **Differences in anti-immigrant attitudes among native Danes**

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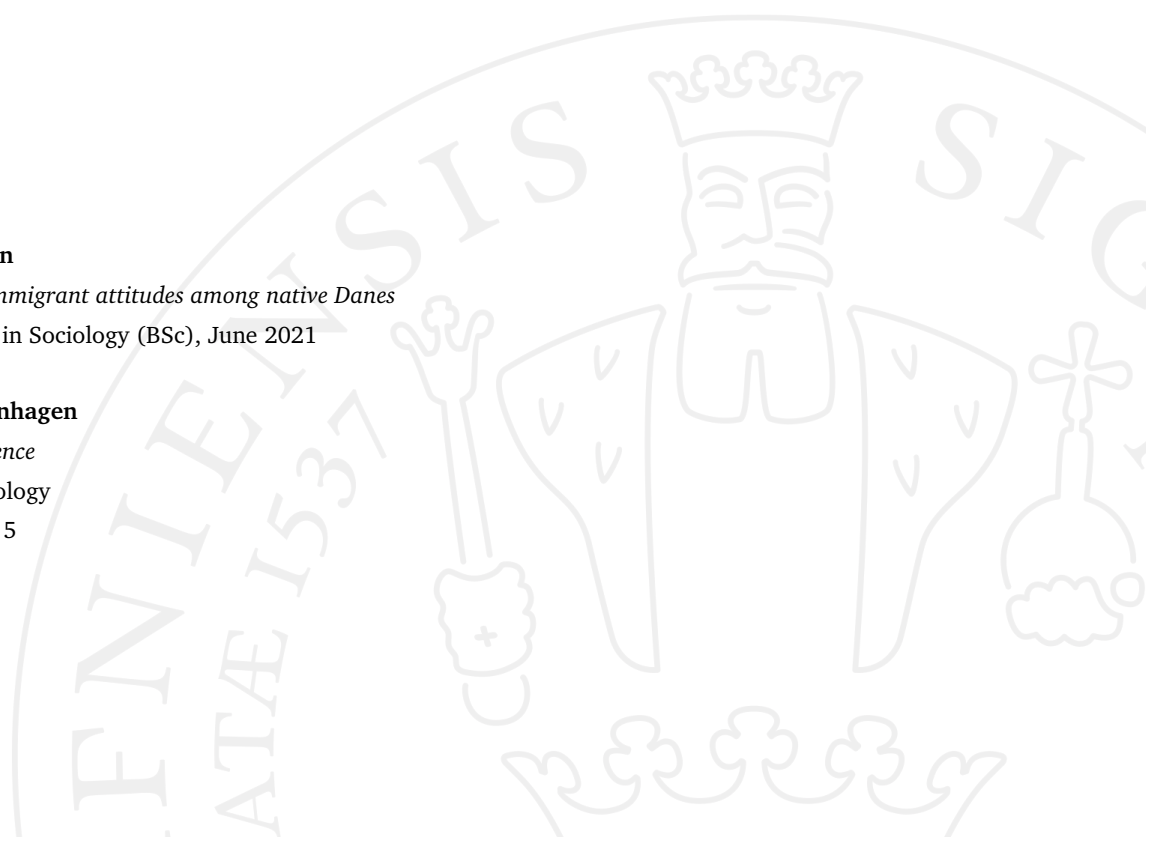
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# Contents

|          |   |           |
|----------|---|-----------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Introduction</b>                                       | <b>1</b>  |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Theoretical background</b>                             | <b>3</b>  |
| 2.1      | Literature review . . . . .                               | 3         |
| 2.1.1    | Xenophobia and nativism . . . . .                         | 4         |
| 2.1.2    | Economic group threats . . . . .                          | 4         |
| 2.1.3    | Cultural group threats . . . . .                          | 5         |
| 2.2      | Differences in anti-immigrant attitudes . . . . .         | 6         |
| 2.3      | Prejudices against particular ethnic minorities . . . . . | 7         |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Data &amp; Methods</b>                                 | <b>9</b>  |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Results</b>  | <b>13</b> |
| 4.1      | Descriptive results . . . . .                             | 13        |
| 4.2      | Latent Class Analysis . . . . .                           | 14        |
| 4.2.1    | Describing the latent classes . . . . .                   | 15        |
| 4.3      | Regression analysis . . . . .                             | 18        |
| 4.3.1    | Restrictive Class . . . . .                               | 18        |
| 4.3.2    | Economical Threat Class . . . . .                         | 20        |
| 4.3.3    | Cultural Threat Class . . . . .                           | 20        |
| 4.3.4    | Comparing results . . . . .                               | 21        |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Conclusion</b>   | <b>23</b> |
| <b>6</b> | <b>Bibliography</b>                                       | <b>26</b> |

# Introduction

A Muslim woman is assaulted in a parking lot. "Fuck off back where you came from, towelhead-bitch!", says the assaulting couple. An older man defends her, but following the assault he comments that after all, her headscarf is in fact a bit "provoking". The assaulting couple is eventually charged with a hate crime (Ekstra-Bladet 2021; Jyllands-posten 2021).

This is an example of a recent assault in Denmark with anti-immigrant motivations. Since the late 1990s, immigration have been one of the most salient political topics in Denmark, especially the effects of immigration from 'non-Western countries' (Hervik 2011; Hervik 2015a). A new discourse emerged, emphasising non-Western immigrants as fundamentally opposed to Danish values, and arguing for more restrictive policies. Opposing immigration turned out to be a popular opinion and a possible route to political success. At the same time, politicians as well as laymen holding anti-immigrant attitudes are prone to criticism for being xenophobic or racist (TV2 2016; Nye Borgerlige 2018; Alfter 2004; Danish Broadcasting Corporation 2007). There has also been an increase in the number of hate crimes in Denmark in the last half of the 2010s (National Crime Prevention Centre 2020). This increase have been associated with the development of anti-immigrant attitudes, underlining the severity of and potential violence related to the topic.

A great amount of work has been done researching the explanations of anti-immigrant sentiment. Having anti-immigrant attitudes are often found to be associated with factors such as ideology, age, education, area of residence, and the characteristics of immigration in the receiving country as well (Quillian 2006; Ceobanu & Escandell 2010). Highly salient events also affect immigration attitudes, where the topic have reemerged with renewed intensity a number of times following highly noticeable events such as terrorist attacks, peaks in immigration waves, and the Danish Muhammad Cartoon Crisis. Such events have been shown to cause an increase in anti-immigrant sentiment among the native population (Legewie 2013; Stockemer et al. 2020; Hervik 2012).

Attitudes among native Danes are the focus of this paper. There has been a tendency to emphasize the similarities between Nordic countries (Meuleman et al. 2009; Simonsen & Bonikowski 2020), but Brochmann & Midtbøen (2021:155) argue that the Nordic countries differ from one another in their "philosophy of integration". Top-level bureaucrats and politicians in Denmark believe restricting immigration a tool to "preserve the nation" and guarantee the Danish majority population is not "replaced". However, Bail (2008) finds that these "official philosophy of integration" does not correspond to attitudes held by the general public. As a result, the configuration of attitudes among the general public are a relevant topic on their own, independent from the more ideological country policies towards immigration.

Most research studying immigration attitudes share a potential issue. Research into anti-immigration sentiment have often perceived the phenomenon in terms of the degree of opposition. However, studies suggests that the type of immigrant *opposition* can be affected by the type of *immigration* (Bohman 2018:284). Attitudes are usually understood as affected by multiple factors, such as the origin of the immigrants, their occupational status, cultural and ethnic background, migration

motivation, and so on, and immigration thus consists of different kinds of immigration. This means the opposition towards immigration potentially also vary, and not just in the degree of opposition, but also in distinct character or type of opposition. The distinct and discrete differences between immigration opposition are not thoroughly studied, and understandings of the motivation for immigration opposition can be expanded through this line of research. In this paper, I argue that immigration opposition is not only a matter of the degree of opposition. Instead, people's restrictive attitude towards immigration also differ from one another in character. This paper intends to examine Danish patterns of immigration attitudes in order to identify conceptual differences between immigration opposition. This results in the following research question: *Are anti-immigration attitudes a multifaceted phenomenon in the general public?*

The paper is structured as follows. First, I will present theoretical framework for explaining immigrant opposition. Although some research suggests a distinction between immigration and immigrants is fruitful for further investigation (Geobanu & Escandell 2010), data constraints does not allow me to make the same distinction. Immigration and immigrants will be used interchangeably. As a part of this chapter, I will also discuss potential prejudices that native Danes associated with different immigrant groups. This also allows me to develop hypotheses regarding my research question. Then I will present the empirical data from the European Social Survey (ESS) from 2014-15 and the analytical strategy. To analyse the differences in character between Danes with anti-immigrant attitudes, I investigate attitudes towards different types of immigration using latent class analysis. After interpreting the classes, I compute a logistic regression of the probability of membership for each class. This allows me to further test my hypotheses, as this lets me consider the motivations for opposing different types of immigrants.

# Theoretical background

In this chapter, I will review empirical findings that makes use of the group threat theory as theoretical framework. Group threat theory is a framework, which in part is used to explain xenophobia and nativism, i.e. variations to anti-immigrant sentiment or restrictive and negative outgroup opinions. I then turn on to section 2.2, where I argue that differences in perceived threat can cause distinct differences in anti-immigrant attitude. I highlight studies that have made similar arguments, and what empirical results they have found. Next, I turn my attention to empirical research on the attitudes towards culturally distinct immigrant groups. Together with the previously mentioned studies, who have made similar arguments, these are used to generate hypotheses about my empirical analysis and provide the tools to interpret the findings.

## 2.1 Literature review

Research on black-white relations in the United States have had a great influence on contemporary studies of anti-immigrant attitudes in Europe. These American studies saw racial relations and attitudes as attitudes and relations between ingroups and outgroups (Ceobanu & Escandell 2008). One theory hypothesises that under certain conditions, increased contact with an outgroup will result in less negative attitudes about this group (Allport 1954). This hypothesis is fairly positive about relations between different groups – as members of different groups get to know one another, tensions and negative perceptions will decrease. There more outgroup members there is in a society, the more prejudices and negative attitudes will decline. This is known as the contact hypothesis. However, not all theoretical approaches share the same optimism.

Another highly influential theory is known as group threat theory, which can be considered the theory competing with the contact hypothesis. Group threat theory build from the work by Blumer (1958) and Blalock (1967), and states that negative effects or perceived negative effects of immigration causes immigrant opposition. In short, individuals identify with an ingroup, and different groups pose a potential threat to the ingroup. Threats to the status, position, or privileges of the ingroup or the dominant group in society causes the ingroup to hold anti-immigrant attitudes. This leads to conflict, producing negative attitudes of the opposing group. Compared to the hypothesis of increased contact, group threat theory predicts that increased contact will result in more negative attitudes towards the outgroup. Blumer (1958:4) posits that the negative attitude is a backlash to threats to the position of the dominant group. The framework originated in studies of black-white relations and prejudice in the United States, but have been applied to understanding anti-immigrant attitudes and ethnic prejudice in Europe as well.

### 2.1.1 Xenophobia and nativism

An important part of outgroups attitudes, anti-immigrant attitudes, and contemporary prejudices directed at culturally distinct ethnic groups, is found in the two related concepts of xenophobia and nativism (Hervik 2015b). Xenophobia is in layman's terms simply referring to a dislike of foreigners or particular groups, while the concept have undergone semantic changes in the social sciences in the last twenty years, according to Hervik (ibid.). As reported by him, xenophobia ought to be understood as not merely a fear of strangers or outsiders, but also a hatred towards them (ibid.:796). Due to their 'foreignness', these groups are met with fear and hatred, which results in a "call for cultural self-defense" (ibid.:797). Related to this is nativism, which is when people see different cultures as equal but incompatible with one another (ibid.:797). When these two concepts are combined in peoples attitudes, they will see their hostile reactions to foreigners as an expected and "natural" attempt at self-defense, and especially as a necessary defense of their culture.

The result is an exclusionary ideology, where people divide human beings into distinct groups based on cultural background. Assigning people into hereditary groups are usually criticised for being examples of racist attitudes, but the xenophobic and nativist position holds that the cultures and members of different cultures are all of equal value. This diverges the concept from the idea of hierarchy associated with biological racism. As mentioned, cultures are instead merely seen as incompatible with each other. Hervik (ibid.:799) claims that this idea is used to reject any accusations of racism. However, he also argues that the combined ideology should instead be understood as a variation of cultural racism.

Although the anti-immigrant attitudes can be argued to come down to exclusionary perceptions of ethnic and/or cultural belonging, there is also evidence of these perceived threats understood in relation to economy. Below, I outline how group threat theory have found empirical support when seeing threats in terms of both economic and cultural threats.

### 2.1.2 Economic group threats

Group threat theory have been applied to a large body of empirical studies of anti-immigrant attitudes in Europe. The framework of threat is often applied in economic terms. For example, Quillian (1995) found that the actual economic conditions and the size of immigrant population in a country generates anti-immigrant attitudes. The argument states that natives will oppose immigration if their jobs are prone to competition from immigrants of similar skill-level, competition induced by an increased number of immigrants. This labour market competition model argues that low-skilled natives will oppose immigration because immigrants tend to be low-skilled. By increasing the supply of low-skilled labour, wages would decrease for native low-skilled labour, or perhaps they would even be replaced in the labour market. Similarly, high-skilled natives would oppose high-skilled immigrants entering the labour market. Also considering threat in economic terms, Hainmueller & Hiscox (2010) found partial support this hypothesis. In their paper, opposition is only directed at low-skilled migration, but both low- and high-skilled natives oppose low-skilled immigration.

This line of research is concerned with real threats, as opposed to perceived threats. For example, the objective economic conditions and the possibilities on the labour market are real conditions, whereas other lines of group threat theory considers the perceived threats to be of main interest.

However, real as opposed to perceived threats are not necessarily excluding mechanisms. One can be correctly perceiving the economic conditions to be worsening. The important difference is that when considering perceived threats, it is assumed that the effect of a perceived threat is still there even though the threat is in fact not real, i.e. that the economic conditions are not worsening.

Where some scholars argue for a labour market competition model of explaining opposition to low-skilled immigration, others argue for a fiscal burden model. In this model, opposition is not generated by a concern over the position in the job market. Instead, the economic threat is against the welfare system. This model assumes low-skilled immigration increases the burden on the public finances and welfare system, and eventually leads to either raised taxes or welfare privileges being cut, as argued by Naumann et al. (2018). In their study, they find that both low- and high-skilled natives oppose low-skilled immigration, which the authors argue supports the fiscal burden model (ibid.:1025f).

### 2.1.3 Cultural group threats

Studies understanding group threat in economic terms helped explain why less-skilled natives are more negative towards labour immigrants. However, according to Heath & Richards (2020), this does not explain other correlations with anti-immigrant attitudes, such as age or educational level. In order to explain this, scholars have applied the concept of cultural threats as well. When group threats are understood in cultural terms, it is argued that anti-immigrant attitudes are generated by perceiving the immigrant group as undermining certain values, traits, and traditional ways of life. Because these are associated with strong feelings by the native population, the native population will hold negative opinions about immigration, as argued by Sides & Citrin (2007). Indeed, they do find that cultural threat have a greater explanatory power in explaining negative immigration attitudes in Europe. Immigrant groups such as non-Western and Muslim immigrants are groups more prone to be perceived as cultural threats in various European countries (Scheepers et al. 2002).

Considering the Danish context, Hervik (2015a:67) also find a public discourse that emphasise *"Danish values as opposed [to] 'non-Western' migrants, particularly Muslims with a 'democratic deficit'..."*. In Denmark, a large share of the immigration flow originates in what is labelled as 'non-Western countries' and/or 'Muslim countries' (Tawat 2014). Although being two different terms, non-Western immigrants and Muslim immigrants have been shown to often be perceived as overlapping categories in Western countries, making attitudes directed at either tightly intertwined with each other (Anderson & Antalíková 2014:598). The anti-immigrant sentiment directed at either group is rooted in a neo-nationalist discourse, marking Muslim or non-Western culture as a cultural opposition to the Danish identity and culture (Hervik 2015a:67). This symbolically marks these immigrant groups as impossible to integrate into Danish society, emphasising a perceived cultural incompatibility between members of each group.

In short, immigration attitudes in Denmark are highly influenced by the discourse around non-Western and Muslim immigration. The majority population of receiving societies often perceive immigrants as inherently outsiders to society (Gorodzeisky & Semyonov 2009:415-16). Does this mean that immigration attitudes in Denmark are similar to other countries? Not necessarily. In their paper, Simonsen & Bonikowski (2020) ask if conceptions of nationhood, either civic or ethnic conceptions, are associated with similar anti-Muslim attitudes across European countries. Among their results,

they conclude the Nordic countries are an exception to the patterns found in other countries. Civic nationalism is negatively associated with anti-Muslim attitudes in most countries, but in the Nordic countries, civic nationalism is instead positively associated with anti-Muslim attitudes. This suggests that there are indeed substantial differences between the Nordic countries, including Denmark, and other countries in Europe, warranting further investigation of immigrant attitudes in Denmark.

In sum, group threat theory is a widely applied framework for explaining immigrant attitudes in Europe. I have also briefly commented on the composition of migration coming to Denmark, as well as public discourse and attitudes on non-Western and Muslim immigrant groups.

## 2.2 Differences in anti-immigrant attitudes

As the previous section outlined, group threat theory have found evidence of the effect of both cultural and economic threats on anti-immigrant sentiment in Europe.

These studies have nevertheless not given much attention to the possibility that different types of threat can lead to categorical differences between the anti-immigrant attitudes of natives. Instead, studies of anti-immigrant attitudes have conceptualised the attitudes in terms of the degree of opposition. This assumes the attitudes towards immigrants functions as a continuum, ranging from welcoming to unwelcoming (Bobo 1983:1200). When the analytical framework perceive immigration opposition to vary only in the degree of opposition, this obscures the distinctions in regard to type of immigration (Bohman 2018:284). In other words, the framework will fail to acknowledge how the native population create distinctions between different types of immigrants, and additionally which types of immigrants they prefer over others. In this paper, I argue that the group threat perspective allows for different perceived threats to result in different types of immigrant opposition. As most studies have not taken discrete differences in immigrant attitudes into account, these studies can have conflated an anti-immigrant attitude as equivalent to another anti-immigrant attitude, even though these attitudes are in fact conceptually different from each other.

Although studies today measure anti-immigration attitudes as varying only in degree, criticism of this framework have already been proposed by Bobo (1983). In his study, he notes that outgroups attitudes understood as a continuum is too reductive. Citing Jackman (1977:165), Bobo argues it is likely that outgroups attitudes "vary considerably from one context to another". This makes it likely that the type of perceived threat most salient to the native member of society will generate a distinct type of opposition, according to the most salient perceived threat. Similarly, Blalock (1967:144f) argues that the relationship between different outgroup attitudes and the motivations for these attitudes will differ from one case to another. Approaching anti-immigrant attitudes as not only varying in degree is thus not a completely novel idea.

Even though not typical, some scholars have proposed that immigrant attitudes differ from each other in terms of character. Heath & Richards (2020:502ff) finds evidence of distinct within-country variation. They identify three distinct classes of immigrant attitudes across countries – an open class, a selective class, and a restrictive class. Based on the proportion of each class in different countries, they locate three country-models, with the Nordic model containing the greatest within-country differences. In their paper, they also point out the Danish case as a population being "rather [evenly] split between the restrictive, selective, and open classes" (ibid.:505). This sets up the Danish case to be of particular interest for further study, as it contains significant within-country variation, compared to other countries. As a result, my first hypothesis is as such:

*Hypothesis 1: Different threat perceptions among the general public will lead to corresponding different types of immigration opposition*

This hypothesis implies that the opposition to different types of immigration will be associated with different threat perceptions. In turn, this also implies that there exists anti-immigrant groups in the population that vary from each other in character.

As explained above, public discourse surrounding immigration constructs immigrants as culturally distinct. In addition, Danish politicians have for years emphasised the economic expense of immigration when arguing for stricter policies (Rydgren 2004). This concerns both the labour market competition and stress put on the welfare system. For this reason, I expect that both cultural threats and economic threats have their independent contribution to different types of immigration opposition.

In his paper, Bohman (2018) asks which immigrant groups are in fact welcome in the Nordic countries. Using similar statistical techniques as Heath & Richards (2020), five different classes of immigrant attitudes are found. Other than a consistently open class and a consistently restrictive class, one class hold what is labelled as nativist opposition, while another class is characterised by economic opposition. The nativist opposition is particularly restrictive towards immigrants of a different ethnicity or race, while the economic position mostly restricts immigration from poorer countries. The final class hold ambiguous attitudes about immigration, but only make up about 3% of the Danish population.

For the theoretical reasons outlined, I will hypothesise that some native Danes will motivate their opposition through perceptions of cultural threat, while other Danes will be opposed due to perceptions of economic threats. This does not imply that everyone opposing immigration fit into one of these categories, only that I expect to find at least these two patterns. This leaves me with the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 2: There is a conceptual difference between those opposing cultural threats and those opposing economic threats*

Although Bohmans paper is relevant, his results only distinguish between same or different race, and immigrants from poorer countries. This does not let one consider the attitudes toward specifically mentioned immigrant groups, such as Muslims, who are often perceived as culturally distinct from Danish identity (Hervik 2015a:67). Hence, the current analysis include attitudes towards three immigrant groups who can be perceived to be ethnically and culturally distinct – Jewish immigrants, Muslim immigrants, and Romani immigrants. Each culturally distinct immigrant group is associated with prejudices. Knowledge about these prejudices will allow me to nuance the relationship between attitudes in the public. Hence, I will below outline discussions of which ethnic prejudices are associated with each immigrant group. This will help me formulate additional hypotheses.

## 2.3 Prejudices against particular ethnic minorities

Intolerance towards ethnic minorities and ethnically or culturally distinct immigrant groups are related, but are also not entirely identical (Quillian 2006). I have mentioned how citizens with non-Western origins or Muslim Danes are perceived as outsiders (Gorodzeisky & Semyonov 2009:415-16). Similar to this, natives Danes will not necessarily distinguish between a Romani and a Romani immigrant, because both can be perceived as outsider to society.

This does, however, not necessarily make one holding anti-Romani attitudes equivalent to one opposing anti-Romani immigration, and so on. Nevertheless, this distinction will not be possible for

the current paper, due to data constraints. This will be elaborated on in chapter 3 when discussing the data utilised in this paper.

Modern antisemitism have ties to the ideology of Nazism. In this view, Jews are a dangerous and subhuman group, and hence a threat to the German people, much in line with conceptions of biological racism (Dencik 2019:234). According to Dencik (ibid.), the most salient antisemitism in Denmark today is classic antisemitism. This is similar to the stereotypes and attitudes held by (Neo-)Nazis, i.e. conspiracies of Jews having control over global affairs, being responsible for wars, race inferiority, etc. When considering antisemitism, I will be referring to classic antisemitism as outlined here. As the number of overt anti-Semites is at a low level in Denmark, I will argue that his group is not associated with any ideas of cultural threats. In addition, antisemitic prejudices believe Jewish people to be financially well-off. Even when considering others than overt anti-Semites, implicit prejudices would not associate Jewish people with either low-skilled labour or being a welfare recipient (ibid.:214). For this reasons, I do not expect a particular opposition to Jewish immigration to be associated with either perceived cultural threats or economic threats.

Prejudice and racism against Romanies is referred to as antiziganism (sometimes anti-Gypsyism). Although Romanies are one of the biggest ethnic minorities in Europe, research on antiziganism is sparse compared to research on antisemitic and anti-Muslim sentiment (Nicolae 2006:22). Romanies have been the victims of both allegations of child kidnapping and violent assault across Europe, where the allegations were legitimized by the apparent 'otherness' and incompatibility with European values (Van Baar 2014; Nicolae 2006). In addition, they have also been subject to prejudices of not contributing to society, instead taking advantage of social benefits. Whereas other contemporary racist attitudes diverge from the biological conception, prejudices towards the Romani minority are expressed through ideas of negative animal-like traits (Marcu & Chryssochoou 2005). This suggests antiziganism is closer to biological racism than cultural racism.

The social situation of the Romani minority is not well studied. Even though they constitute a small minority, studies have found up to 15% of the Danish population would oppose having a Romani neighbour (Nicolae 2006:26). Similar results in other countries thus suggest that a substantial Romani minority is not necessary for antiziganistic attitudes to be present.

Drawing on the concept of nativism, Betz (2007) argue contemporary anti-Muslim attitudes see Islam as inherently foreign and incompatible with Europe, and thus a threat to Western Countries. Fundamental traits of Islam is seen as inherent to Muslims, making the incompatibility inherent to Muslim people (ibid.:47). Islamophobic attitudes is thus a xenophobic reaction to Muslims, and not just Islam as a concept. However, discourse in the Danish public have also been increasingly associating Muslim immigration with financial deficits, arguing that they allegedly abuse the universal welfare system Eger & Valdez (2015).

As both Muslim and Romani minorities face stigmatisation concerning cultural incompatibility, welfare abuse, and crime, I will expect similarities between the two immigrant groups. Thus, when one opposes Romani immigration, I expect one to also oppose Muslim immigration. In addition, I also expect that opposition of both groups will be associated with those concerned with cultural threats, as well as those concerned with economic threats.

## Data & Methods

In this paper I make use of the seventh round of the European Social Survey (ESS), conducted in 2014-15. The ESS conducts biannual surveys on a range of topics each year. In addition to the questionnaire issued every round, each round also contains a specific topic of interest. The topic of special interest in this round was attitudes to immigration, a survey module designed in collaboration with Heath et al. (2020). Thus, included in this survey round are both attitudes towards immigration dependent on type of immigrant, ethnic background of immigrants, and attitudes of biological and cultural racism. The survey makes use of face-to-face interviews based on a representative probability sample. In total, this particular round is a unique combination of questions designed specifically for research on immigration attitudes, supporting my choice of data (Ceobanu & Escandell 2010:316).

I remove respondents born outside of Denmark as well as respondents with both parents born outside of Denmark. This removes non-native respondents from the analysis as well as most ethnic minorities, as these tend to have fairly different attitudes towards immigrants (Simonsen & Bonikowski 2020:119). Missing observations are also removed. This leaves me with 1,111 respondents. Other background statistics are presented in table 3.1.

**Table 3.1:** Sociodemographic statistics

|                            | Min. | Median | Max | Mean  | SD    |
|----------------------------|------|--------|-----|-------|-------|
| Age                        | 15   | 48     | 92  | 47.09 | 18.16 |
| Years of education         | 0    | 14     | 35  | 13.28 | 4.73  |
|                            |      |        |     | %     | SD    |
| Female                     |      |        |     | 47%   | 0.49  |
| Capital Region             |      |        |     | 26%   | 0.44  |
| Region Zealand             |      |        |     | 14%   | 0.34  |
| Region of Southern Denmark |      |        |     | 24%   | 0.43  |
| Central Denmark Region     |      |        |     | 26%   | 0.44  |
| North Denmark Region       |      |        |     | 10%   | 0.31  |
| <i>N = 1,111</i>           |      |        |     |       |       |

The standard ESS round includes measures of attitudes towards four types of immigrants. The first question is: "To what extent do you think Denmark should allow people of the same race or ethnic group as most of Denmark's people to come and live here?" In addition, the respondents are asked "How about people of a different race or ethnic group from most of Denmark's people?", "How about people from the poorer countries in Europe?", and "How about people from the poorer countries outside Europe?"

The questions cover the attitudes towards immigrants similar or different to the respondent, being poor or not. The questions are intended to capture immigration attitudes without explicitly mentioning the term (Card et al. 2005:12). The respondents answer on a range from 1, allowing many

to come live here, to 4, allowing none. In order to clarify interpretations, the questions have been dichotomized. Immigrants who are similar to the respondent are expected to be more welcomed than those more different. The question regarding immigrants of same race or ethnic group can then serve as a benchmark for immigration attitudes, ignoring topics such as cultural and economic threat, as noted by Heath & Richards (2020). These immigrants should be the group most likely to be welcomed by respondents, so this should measure a more general opinion of immigration. The other three questions are intended to capture variations in type of immigration. Making a distinction between immigrants of same and different race help to measure whether one opposes immigration *per se*, or if immigration is opposed due to the immigrant characteristics. Similarly, the questions about immigrants from poorer countries help to identify attitudes based on economic concerns. Migration from European countries can be seen by respondents as equivalent to migration from countries culturally similar to native Danes (Anderson & Antalíková 2014), and these questions will then differentiate between attitudes towards immigration of people, who are and are not seen as a part of society (Gorodzeisky & Semyonov 2009).

Attitudes towards three salient ethnic minorities are included as well. Respondents are asked "To what extent should Denmark allow Gypsies/Muslims/Jewish people from other countries to come and live in Denmark?" The respondents answer on the same scale as with the previous questions.

I turn to latent class analysis (LCA) in order to investigate differences in attitudes more thoroughly, using the R software package 'poLCA' developed by Linzer & Lewis (2011). LCA allows me to test if similarities between manifest or observed variables can be attributed to latent factors, in order to explore clusters or classes of respondents with response patterns similar to each other (McCutcheon 1987). Techniques of data reduction similar to LCA have been used previously to study immigrant attitudes. As I am interested in cases or classes, factor analysis is not well-suited. This would cluster variables associated with each other and assign factor scores to individual observations. Instead, I postulate a model in compliance with group threat theory, where individuals belong to distinct attitudinal groups conceptually different from others. Bail (2008) made use of cluster analysis when studying the configuration of symbolic boundaries. Similar to LCA, this method also classify individuals into homogeneous groups through inductive techniques. However, the latent classes and output of analysis is not dependent on the scale of the manifest variables (Heath & Richards 2020:493). Magidson & Vermunt (2002) also find that LCA have statistical advantages over other similar clustering techniques.

My research design is intended to capture discrete differences between groups of Danes, based on their views on immigrants. In this way, different groups of respondents are identified solely on their response patterns which would help identify which latent class each respondent belong to (Bonikowski & DiMaggio 2016:951). Even though LCA is usually seen as an exploratory technique, this paper also uses LCA as in some way confirmatory. I am theoretically arguing there exists a difference in type of immigration attitudes, and investigating the latent classes serves as a test of this argument. In addition, LCA is also characterized by assuming the latent variables are categorical. This makes LCA well-suited for this paper, because I argue that group threats different from each other will lead to groups of immigration attitudes categorically different from each other. This assumption is similar to the assumption of a latent construct explaining observed variables that LCA is founded on (Heath & Richards 2020; Bohman 2018). As a result, LCA is useful for studying differences and similarities in how different kinds of immigration opposition is distributed in society.

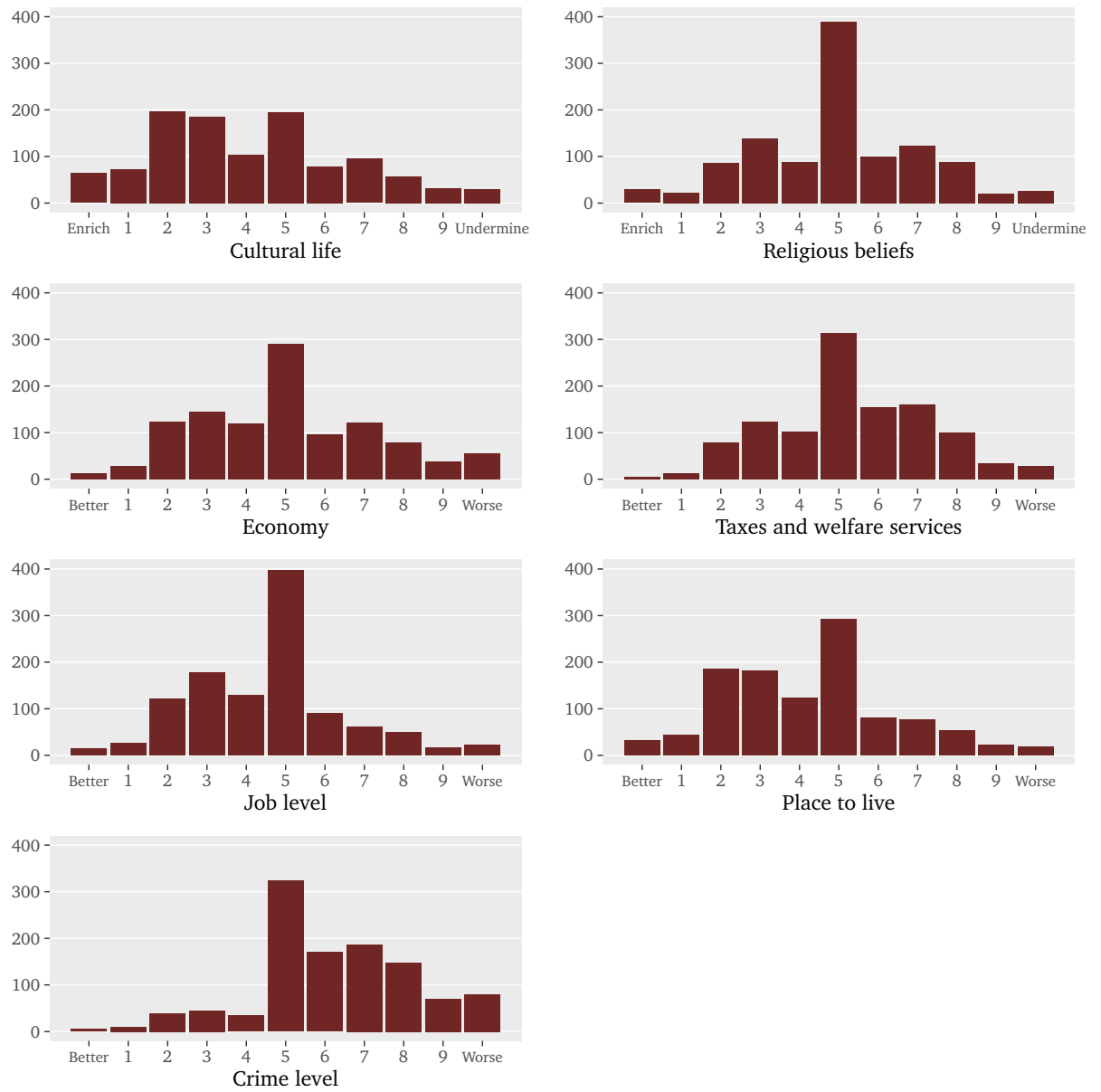
After exploring the class configurations found in the LCA, I move on to test the hypotheses derived through the group threat theory using latent class regression. In this technique, the probability of class membership is predicted by additional covariates using multinomial logistic regression.

My argument state a causal relationship between threat perceptions related to immigration, and the type of immigration opposition one expresses. These threat perceptions will be measure though seven questions from the ESS questionnaire. In the following, I comment on these variables.

Each respondent is asked to answer what effect they believe immigration have on different areas of Danish society, using a scale from 0 to 10. 0 indicates the most normatively positive effect, while 10 indicates the normatively most negative effect. The different topics are cultural life, religious beliefs and practices, the economy, taxes and welfare services, the job level, if immigration makes the country and worse or better place to live, and whether immigration increases or decreases crime the crime level. The distribution of respondents is presented in figure 3.1.

The variables included in the regression analysis mostly emphasise attitudinal predictors, i.e. different threat perceptions. Some sociodemographic variables are included as well, but these are all on the individual level. Other contextual variables with not be included, as these would only contain country-level variations. I have narrowed the scope of this paper to focus only on Denmark, which will not allow me to include additional real (as opposed to perceived) contextual variables such as variation in GDP, variation in immigration level and so on. Hence, my analysis is limited by this fact.

**Figure 3.1:** Distribution of respondents for each measure of threat perceptions



# Results

In this section, I will present the empirical findings and analytical results. First, I present descriptive statistics of the variables of interest. Then I move on to the latent class analysis, which will help me investigate the differences in immigrant opposition more thoroughly. Based on the item scores, I will describe the members of the different latent classes and what characterises their immigrant attitudes. Based on the interpretation of the different classes, I formulate three additional hypotheses regarding the motivation for anti-immigrant attitudes for members of each class. Finally, I conduct a logistic regression analysis, where I use different perceptions of immigration threat as predicting variables for membership of each class, while controlling for relevant sociodemographic variables. This allows me to investigate what drives the probability of membership for each class, and thus test which threat perceptions lead to what kind of immigration opposition.

When conceptualising immigrant opposition as ranging from tolerance to intolerance, the established literature states that perceptions of the group threat have a causal effect on anti-immigrant attitudes. I find evidence that these perceptions of threat indeed contain statistically significant relations with anti-immigrant attitudes, after controlling for related sociodemographic variables. However, I also find evidence of the existence of conceptually different classes of natives opposing immigration, and that different threat perceptions are important drivers of membership of different classes. Membership of some classes are associated more with some concerns than others. In Heath & Richards (2020) and Bohman (2018), the authors similarly state that immigration attitudes vary in degree. The findings of the current paper overall supports this claim, but also questions some of the arguments put forth.

## 4.1 Descriptive results

If attitudes towards immigrants similar to the majority population is a useful benchmark for general acceptability of immigration, then the Danish population is overall willing to accept immigrants. 85% is willing to allow more immigrants of same race or ethnic group as the majority to come and live in Denmark, meaning 15% are not willing to allow more, as reported in table 4.1. This is expected, as several studies have indicated, the Nordic countries are a particular European case, consistently more willing than many other European countries to accept immigration (Bail 2008; Heath & Richards 2020). However, the willingness to allow immigration declines when the type of immigrant changes. For example, 55% would allow either few or none immigrants from poorer non-European countries. Furthermore, the opinion towards other immigrant types are more dividing and controversial, as the standard deviation of these increases compared to immigrants similar to the respondent.

As for the case of specific ethnic minorities, the descriptive statistics are somewhat in line with expectations. Attitudes towards Jewish immigrants are similar to the general acceptability of immigration. This could be related to stereotypes of Jewish minorities as being financially well-off

**Table 4.1:** Opposition for different types of immigration

| Percentage not willing to allow more | %   | SD   |
|--------------------------------------|-----|------|
| Same race/ethnic group               | 15% | 0.36 |
| Different race/ethnic group          | 38% | 0.48 |
| From poor EU countries               | 42% | 0.49 |
| From poor non-EU countries           | 55% | 0.50 |
| Jews                                 | 19% | 0.39 |
| Muslims                              | 45% | 0.50 |
| Romanies                             | 62% | 0.89 |
| <i>N</i> = 1,111                     |     |      |

(Wodak 2018:2), as well as the estimates of a low overtly antisemitic population in Denmark (Dencik 2019:241).

Muslim immigrants, on the other hand, face a greater opposition. A great deal of immigration from non-Western parts of the world is perceived to be overlapping with Muslim immigration, even though this is not necessarily the case (Anderson & Antalíková 2014:598). Muslim immigration could by this logic be perceived as immigrants from non-affluent countries, with economic concerns causing the opposition. Having said that, the literature on Islamophobia states that opposition to Muslim immigration is concerned with the cultural consequences to the native values (Betz 2007). This suggests that the higher opposition directed at Muslim immigration is caused not by economic concerns, but caused by concerns of cultural incompatibility.

Finally, immigrants of Romani origins are the least welcomed group of the three ethnic minorities. 62% would only allow few or none Romanies to come and live in Denmark. Even though antiziganism is a understudied phenomenon compared to other prejudices, a significant opposition towards Romanies is not unexpected Nicolae (2006:26).

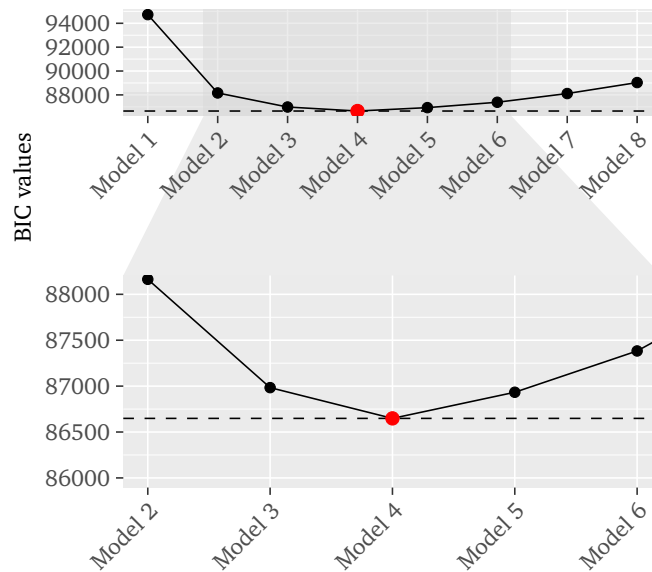
To summarise the simple descriptive results, the number of people opposing immigration is not consistent for every type of immigration in question. The anti-immigrant sentiments appear to vary depending on type of immigration. Next, using latent class analysis I ask how natives in Denmark cluster when considering differences in their anti-immigrant attitudes.

## 4.2 Latent Class Analysis

According to the Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) of the latent class analysis, a four-class model provides the best representation of the data. The BIC value for each model is visualised in figure 4.1.

Figure 4.2 visualises the latent classes. Each row shows the item scores for each manifest variable for the different classes. The yellow bar of each row represent the probability that a class member agrees with a more welcoming opinion, i.e. allowing more immigrants. Thus, the orange bar of each row represent the probability of agreeing with more restrictive opinions or negative attitudes towards immigrants. The LCA support that immigration opposition in Denmark consists of more than one type of opposition. Three out of four latent classes of the current analysis is characterised by opposing immigration.

**Figure 4.1:** BIC-values for each Latent Class Models

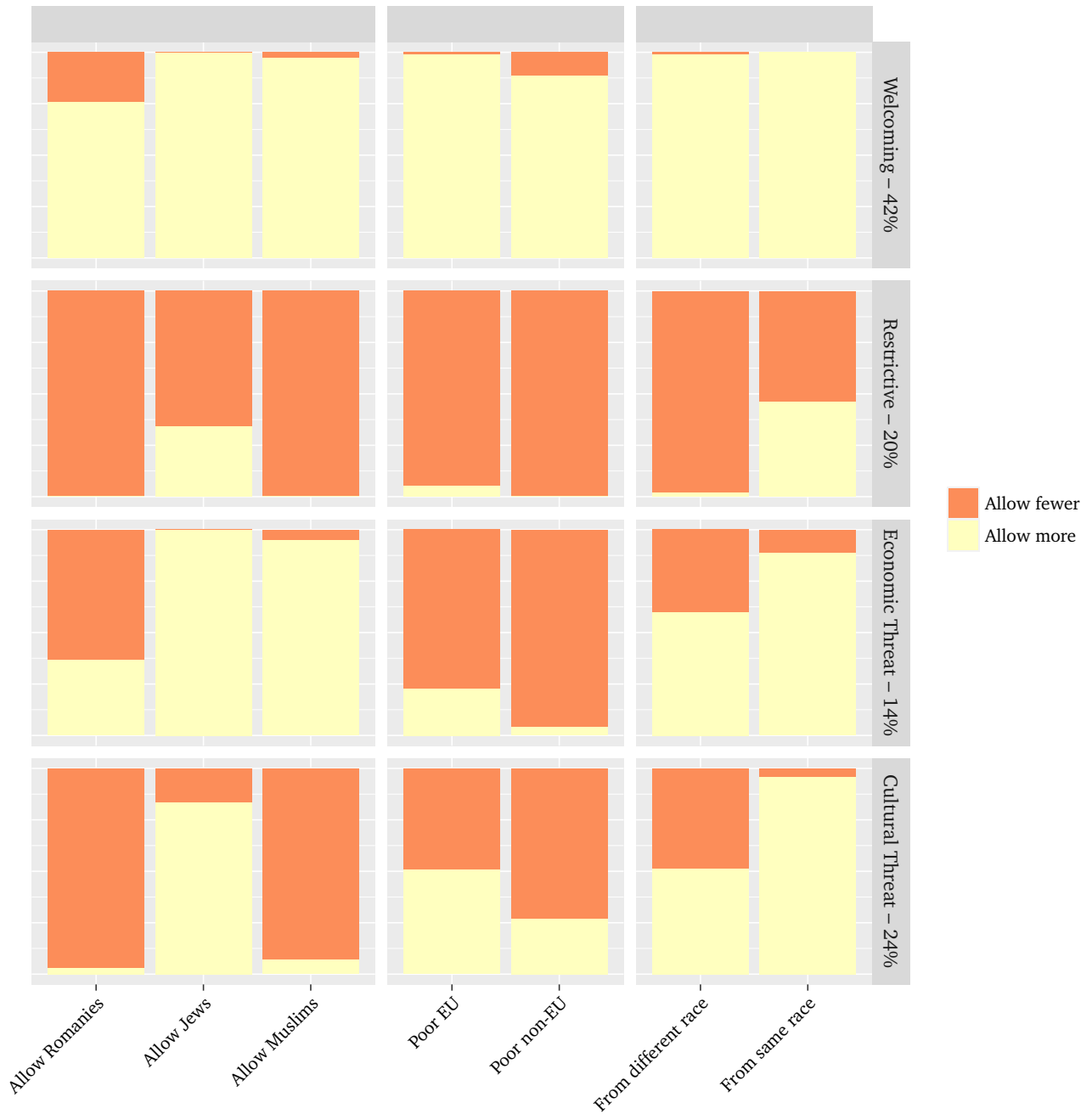


The following section will more thoroughly explore and describe how members of members of different classes distinguish between different types of immigrants, and which types they prefer over others.

#### 4.2.1 Describing the latent classes

First, it can be noted that about 58% are placed in one of three classes, of which all express anti-immigrant attitudes. If the attitudes were to be understood as a continuum ranging from tolerance to intolerance, then one would perhaps say 15% oppose immigration (as mentioned in table 4.1), whereas about 58% of this sample belongs to a latent class, that can be characterised as opposing immigration in some way. As the meaning of opposition can here include more variations, a larger share of the sample is associated with opposing immigration. This emphasises how answering apparently simple questions, such as how many oppose immigration, is not always straightforward, and that conceptual discussions are important. This also means that I identify a separate class that makes up 42%. Members of this class are characterised by welcoming immigration, hence why the class is labelled the Welcoming Class. Members are consistently positive towards immigrants, with a majority of class members allowing immigrants of any kind to live in Denmark. The probability of allowing immigrants reaches almost 100% for both Jewish and Muslim immigrants, immigrants of same and different race, as well as poor immigrants from either inside or outside the EU. Even though all other types of immigrants are welcomed, Romani people are welcomed to a smaller degree. However, this paper is interested with anti-immigrant sentiment, why I move on to the three classes opposing immigration.

Figure 4.2: LCA plot



Here, it is noted that the three classes opposing immigration consists of members with distinct types of anti-immigrant attitudes. These classes differ from one another in conceptual ways, providing evidence that it is insufficient to understand immigrant attitudes only in the degree of opposition. Members of the first anti-immigrant cluster are overall the class most opposed of immigration, and make up 20% of the sample. Having the most restrictive views on immigration, this class is named accordingly as the Restrictive Class, because they show nearly universal support for restricting the entry of foreigners. Although members appear to be more ambiguous about immigrants of the same race and of Jews, members of this class universally support restrictions on any other kind of immigrant.

Because members of this class both oppose immigration in general and support restricting almost all types of immigration, I expect that the motivations driving this opposition are not only a few factors. Instead, I expect a broad range of concerns to motivate members of this class.

*Hypothesis 3: Members of the Restrictive Class are motivated by a broader range of threat perceptions, compared to the other classes*

The next row of the figure contains the smallest class, making up 14%. Members of this cluster oppose immigration from poorer countries, opposing poor non-EU immigration slightly more than from European countries. Members also have a high chance of opposing Romani immigration, although the second lowest of the three classes. However, members also show no opposition directed at Jewish or Muslim immigration, and tend to be more welcoming than restrictive concerning immigration of a different race. Hence, this class appear to make a distinction between immigrants who are and are not poor. In other words, this opposition is mainly directed towards immigrants who can be perceived as a cost to the Danish economy. If true, this could explain the intolerance to Romani immigrants. Prejudices about Romani people included prejudices of not being an economical contributor to the society they live in (Kende et al. 2021).

The final row in the figure make up about 24% of the sample, and represents those that appear to direct their immigrant opposition to immigrants who are culturally distinct from the natives Danes. Members of this class are opposed of immigration, but not when the immigrants of the same race as the majority population. Members also oppose Romani and Muslim immigration, but not Jewish immigration. They are ambiguous about immigrants of different races, and immigrants from other EU countries, but support restrictions concerning non-European immigrants. When combined, all of this indicate that the members of this class are motivated by a nativist concern of cultural threat, because the distinction between welcomed and not welcomed seem to be based on the cultural distinctiveness of the immigrant.

Identifying a class opposing culturally distinct immigrants and a class opposing economically non-contributing immigrants support the second hypothesis from the theoretical chapter. The hypothesis predicts a conceptual difference between one class opposing culturally distinct immigrants, while another class will oppose immigrants who are seen as an economic threat or liability. If the different classes, including the Restrictive Class, could be ranked from opposing immigration the least to opposing immigration the most, then the hypothesis would be rejected. This would include a somewhat similar variation in attitudes for each class when considering different types of immigration. But the fact that both the Economic Threat and the Cultural Threat Class appear to hold intense restrictive attitudes while they disagree as to which immigrants should be denied entry, supports my hypothesis. Implicitly, this also supports the first hypothesis. This stated that different types of immigration opposition are caused by different perceptions about the threat of immigration. I have

already explained how I expect the motivation for the members of the last two classes. However, as the restrictive class can be seen as yet another variation of immigration opposition, the first hypothesis is also supported by the data so far. This leads me to the following hypotheses, which along with the hypothesis concerning the Restrictive Class will be tested in the regression analysis in section 4.2.

Hypothesis 4a: *Members of the Cultural Threat Class is motivated by concerns over cultural threats*

Hypothesis 4b: *Members of the Economic Threat Class is motivated by concerns over economic threats*

The analysis so far does not test or answer what motivates the opposition of each class. To test this is basically to test if the description so far, along with the hypotheses, have been accurate I now move on to the regression analysis. Testing the relationship between threat perceptions and class membership also allows me to test the description as well.

## 4.3 Regression analysis

In addition to describing the different latent classes, I compute a multinomial logistic regression of the probability of membership for each class, dependent on seven perceptions about the effect immigrants have on Denmark. Estimated coefficients are reported in table 4.2, with the Welcoming Class as the omitted category. The regression models include relevant sociodemographics as control variables. Geographic location is included as dummy variables of the five administrative regions of Denmark, with North Denmark Region as a reference group. Neither of the region dummies are statistically significant, and the coefficients are not included in the table. Gender is included as a dummy variable with male as the reference group. Education is included as the years of education, while income is included as the household's total net income measured as decile.

To test whether the hypothesised motivations for the different classes have a statistically significant relationship with membership of each class, I go over the theoretically relevant and statistically significant estimates from each regression model. After this, I discuss the regression results from each class, comparing each class to one another. The classes opposing immigration are the main focus of this paper, which is why the following section is mostly concerned with the Restrictive Class, the Economic Threat Class, and the Cultural Threat Class.

### 4.3.1 Restrictive Class

The probability of being a member of the Restrictive Class is positively and significantly associated with concerns of both cultural and religious threats of immigration. For each unit increase in concern over cultural threat, the log-odds of being in the Restrictive Class increases by 0.421, at a statistical significant level of 0.1%. The coefficient estimates are the lowest of the three classes, but not very different from the estimates of the other classes. Concerns over religious threat are also significant at a level of 0.1%, with an estimate of 0.360 log-odds. Hence, the Restrictive Class is the class with the most significant relationship between class membership and religious concerns, as well as the highest coefficient estimate. The fact that religion appear such an important driver for this class is unexpected for this paper. Religion is often an important part of cultural identity, and other authors have pointed

**Table 4.2:** Covariates of opposition class

|  | Restrictive<br>b/se | Economic threat<br>b/se | Cultural threat<br>b/se |
|--|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Perceptions of threat  |                     |                         |                         |
| Culture  | 0.421***<br>0.096   | 0.430***<br>0.103       | 0.462***<br>0.095       |
| Religion   | 0.360***<br>0.086   | -0.108<br>0.091         | 0.227*<br>0.091         |
| Economy  | 0.044<br>0.092      | 0.249***<br>0.092       | 0.273*<br>0.084         |
| Taxes & welfare  | 0.149<br>0.087      | -0.050<br>0.088         | 0.029<br>0.091          |
| Jobs   | 0.042<br>0.089      | -0.017<br>0.084         | 0.182<br>0.088          |
| Place to live  | 0.232*<br>0.111     | 0.051<br>0.121          | 0.578***<br>0.116       |
| Crime  | 0.125<br>0.066      | 0.155<br>0.077          | 0.148*<br>0.069         |
| Sociodemographic covariates  |                     |                         |                         |
| Age  | 0.044***<br>0.007   | 0.025**<br>0.009        | 0.033***<br>0.008       |
| Female   | 0.275<br>0.248      | 0.139<br>0.279          | -0.116<br>0.277         |
| Years of education   | -0.003<br>0.029     | -0.039<br>0.027         | -0.028<br>0.032         |
| Income   | 0.029<br>0.043      | 0.056<br>0.049          | 0.044<br>0.048          |
| Intercept  | -8.872***<br>1.117  | -5.174***<br>1.186      | -10.578***<br>1.203     |
| Region dummies   | Yes                 | Yes                     | Yes                     |
| N  | 222                 | 155                     | 267                     |
| Percentage of sample   | 20%                 | 14%                     | 24%                     |
| Logistic regression with the Welcoming as omitted category.<br>Region dummies included but coefficients not shown.<br>* $p < 0.05$ , ** $p < 0.01$ , *** $p < 0.001$ |                     |                         |                         |

out that especially immigrants constructed as non-Christian are met with restrictive attitudes (Hervik 2015a). So even though religion is not necessarily important in itself, the Christian heritage of Danish cultural values could be associated with the Danish culture as a whole, linking the two together. Either way, the findings allow me to reject the hypothesis regarding the Restrictive Class. This class is not motivated by a range of concerns, or is even ambiguous. Instead, members are concerned about the effect of immigration on culture, including religion. Obviously, this questions the interpretation of the Cultural Threat Class. If the Restrictive Class is the one motivated by concerns over culture, then what motivate members of the other class? This will be addressed later on.

### 4.3.2 Economical Threat Class

The regression estimates provides evidence that the class opposing poor immigrants is indeed concerned with the economic consequences of immigration. The regression model estimates a positive correlation between economic concerns and the likelihood of being membership of the Economic Threat-class, with a level of significance at 0.1%. For every unit increase in believing immigration harms the Danish economy, the log-odds of being a member increases by 0.43. Thus, being concerned about the effects of immigration on the Danish economy predicts a higher probability of being in the Economic Threat Class. In addition, this is also the only class with a statistically significant correlation with economical concerns under 0.1%, and the other classes are not significant for any other economically related variables. This suggests that members of the Economic Threat Class are motivated by economical concerns as the only class. However, the mechanisms behind this relationship are unsure. Theory of economic group threat have found evidence for both the labour market competition model, as well as the fiscal burden model. These models argue that immigration results in immigration opposition due to competition over jobs or due to the anticipated negative effects on the welfare system (Hainmueller & Hiscox 2010). Eger & Valdez (2015) claim that neo-nationalist discourses have pointed to how the universal welfare benefits have been taken unfairly advantage of by immigrants, who take out more than they put in. This indicates that the concerns of the fiscal burden model have increased, making one expect this model would be the most important variable. A positive correlation with concerns over taxes and welfare would support the fiscal burden model, while a correlation with concerns over job level would support the labour market competition model. However, both measurements for the Economic Threat-class end up with negative, insignificant coefficient estimates, providing support for neither model.

In sum, the hypothesis regarding this class stands. In their anti-immigrant attitudes, members of this class are motivated by economic concerns. However, the mechanisms behind are unsure, as I find support for neither the competition or the fiscal burden model.

In addition to the economical concern, the class is also associated with a cultural concern, which unexpectedly is statistically significant for the Economic Threat Class as well. The coefficients are even higher, indicating that the cultural threat might have greater explanatory power than economic threats. This is unexpected, as this class was believed to be motivated by more economic concerns than cultural concerns.

### 4.3.3 Cultural Threat Class

As with the two other classes in table 3.1, the correlation between membership of the Cultural Threat Class and cultural concern is statistically significant. Moreover, the coefficient estimates are the highest of all classes, suggesting cultural concern is more important for this class. This supports the idea that members of this class are opposed of Romani and Muslim immigration due to the perceptions of cultural threat, which the class members associate with these specific immigrant groups. It could be caused by perceiving Romani and Muslim immigration as undermining Danish culture, which makes them oppose immigrants from these ethnic groups.

Moreover, the Cultural Threat Class is both significantly and positively correlated with concerns over immigration making Denmark a worse place to live, with higher coefficient estimates than for

cultural concerns. Taken together, these results question whether or not this class is correctly labelled. If this class was indeed motivated by the cultural concerns, then the immigration effect on Denmark as a place to live would not be higher than the cultural concern. When saying that immigration makes Denmark a worse place to live, natives opposing immigration could be expressing that they believe increased amount of immigrants in itself is negative and unwanted. Thus, one would then believe immigration makes Denmark a worse place to live solely due the fact that immigration increases. If this interpretation is valid, then members of this class could in fact be the ones holding more intense anti-immigrant attitudes, which was expected to be found in members of the Restrictive Class. This is elaborated further on below, when I compare the results of the different classes.

#### 4.3.4 Comparing results

Two variables<sup>1</sup> have a positive and significant correlation with membership of all classes opposing immigration - cultural concern and age. The fact that all three classes opposing immigration is in some way associated with cultural concern contains both surprising and expected results. But first the sociodemographics.

Considering that studies often find positive correlation between several sociodemographic variables, it is somewhat unexpected that neither gender, years of education, income, or area of residence results in a significant correlation. However, a significant correlation with age is estimated for all three classes. The positive correlation with age varies from 0.025 to 0.44 log-odds, suggesting that the older the respondent is, the higher the likelihood of not being a member of the Welcoming Class, i.e. the higher the likelihood of being a member of one of three classes opposing immigration. This is in accordance with established literature, that finds a positive correlation between age and immigrant opposition (Quillian 1995; Gorodzeisky & Semyonov 2009).

Obviously, the Cultural Threat Class was expected to be associated with concerns over cultural threat. This initially support the description and assumptions about this class. However, concerns over cultural threat are both positive and significant for the two other classes, although the coefficient estimates found here are also smaller. This finding raises some issues about which class to associate most with cultural concerns. If the immigrant opposition for members of the Cultural Threat Class was motivated by cultural concerns, then one would expect the cultural concern to be the highest and most important coefficient, and to clearly be the class most concerned with this. The results contrarily suggest that cultural concern is important for all classes, and that cultural concern is not the most important motivator for the Cultural Threat Class. In addition, because both cultural and religious concerns are important drivers of membership of the Restrictive Class, this class might in fact be mislabelled.

In section 4.2, it was argued that the Cultural Threat Class should be described in this way because of a lower opposition to poor immigrants, and a higher opposition towards Muslims and Romanies, compared to the Economic Threat Class. It was also argued that the Restrictive Class should be described in this way due to the tendency to oppose all kinds of immigration. Testing these ideas through the logistic regression analysis questions the validity of these arguments and labels.

Even though the Cultural Threat Class appear to have been mislabelled, the main findings are not negatively affect by this fact. The first formulated hypothesis predicted conceptual differences in

<sup>1</sup>Excluding the intercept term, which contain no meaningful interpretation.

immigration opposition. I have found latent classes that vary in character in terms of anti-immigrant attitudes. In addition, I have found that members of these different classes are motivated by different threat concerns. However, the analysis was not able to identify the relationship between every class and their related threat perceptions. Whether this is due to poor research design or something else is unknown. Furthermore, when looking at the Cultural and Economic Threat Class, attitudes concerning immigrants the same and different race does in fact not provide anything other than variation in terms of degree. In short, welcoming immigrants indicates race means nothing, being culturally or economically concerned indicates race means some more, and being restrictive towards immigration indicates race means even more. This show that some of the variables do in fact appear to function in matter of degree, in contradiction with the main hypothesis. But when the rest of the variables are included, these do express a difference in type of attitude. For these reasons, I argue the first hypothesis is somewhat confirmed.

The second hypothesis predicted at least a class motivated by economic concerns, and a class motivated by cultural concerns. The analysis did find both of these classes, but when it comes the Cultural Threat Class, the motivating threat perceptions did not appear in line with the hypothesis. However, because the analysis found another class to be motivated by these concerns, the hypothesis still stands.

With these results in mind, I approvingly answer my research question. According to this paper, when studying anti-immigrant sentiment, the attitudes of the general public should be understood in terms of type of opposition as well as degree of opposition, as it is a multifaceted phenomenon among native Danes.

## Conclusion

In this paper I examine whether natives Danes opposing immigration consists of more than one distinct type and which anti-immigrant groups can be found. In accordance with group threat theory, I argue that immigrant opposition is motivated by threat perceptions concerning immigrant type. A particular threat perceptions will result in immigrant opposition directed at types of immigrants, that the respondent associate with this particular threat. For example, if one is concerned with the economic effect of immigration, their opposition to immigration will be directed at whoever they associate with this particular group threat. Variation in immigrant type thus leads to variation in threat perception, which in turn leads to variation in the character of immigration opposition. It follows then, that the native population can be divided into separate and distinct clusters, based on their anti-immigrant attitudes, and that the attitudes found in these clusters are influenced by how they believe immigration affects the receiving society.

By analysing cross-sectional survey data of native Danes using the European Social Survey from 2014-15, I present evidence that it is preferable to discern anti-immigrant natives in terms of character of opposition, compared to in terms of degree of opposition. Based on my analysis, I conclude that understanding anti-immigrant natives as consisting of multiple and distinct groups is conceptually fruitful. LCA show that when considering immigration attitudes, Danes cluster into four distinct latent classes, of which three can be characterized as opposing immigration in some way. One class is overall welcoming of immigration of any kind. The three classes opposing immigration differs from each not only in their degree of opposition, but also in type of opposition. More specifically, they differ in the type of immigration they would allow into society. One class, labelled the Restrictive Class, is opposed to most immigration, although somewhat ambiguous when it comes to immigrants of the same race as the majority Danes. Secondly, the class of Economic Threat is best characterized by opposing immigration from poorer countries, while not discriminating against the perceived cultural threat of Muslim immigrants. The third and final class opposing immigration appear mostly opposed of immigration perceived as a cultural threat. This demonstrate that studying immigrant opposition solely in terms of degree of opposition can be too reductionist. However, this does not appear to apply to the measurements of biological and cultural racism. Instead, the findings support that it is conceptually fruitful to regard racist attitudes in terms of degree. Note that this does not suggest that racism should not be studied as a multidimensional phenomenon (Ramos et al. 2020).

While I argue that the approach found in this paper contains advantages, there are also limitations to the results and to the applicability of this conceptualisation of anti-immigrant attitudes. In the following paragraphs I consider some limitations of this paper and directions for future research. First, criticism of survey methods previously put forth (Ceobanu & Escandell 2010) apply to this paper as well. One line of criticism concerns the validity of measuring opposition to immigration. When the survey questions are worded as in the ESS, distinctions have not been made between immigration and immigrants. One can be opposed of immigration for political reasons, without holding any restrictive or negative attitudes toward the particular minority group. Thus, one opposing Muslim immigration

due to concerns of cultural threat does not necessarily think negatively of Muslims when encountering them in their everyday life. Similarly, one can be prejudiced against Muslims while acknowledging humanitarian arguments in favor of immigration. In addition, the data does not allow one to consider the differences in perceptions between immigrants and refugees. Refugee-positive attitudes are usually motivated in a humanitarian urgency and moral responsibility, which is not always extended to other types of immigration, even though refugees make up a considerable amount of immigration in the last decade (Ceobanu & Escandell 2010). In a similar way, this paper addresses some part of attitudes to ethnic minorities, but does not address whether or not attitudes toward ethnic minorities should be understood in the same way as well.

Secondly, the regression results is restricted by the available data, which does not include within-country variation concerning GDP and similar contextual predictors. This is due to the analytical focus on Denmark. To handle this, cross-country comparison is needed. Including contextual predictors could enhance the analysis by considering if different circumstances are relevant for different classes. For example, whether or not being in a cluster opposing poor immigrants is caused by economic downturn, and so on. Additionally, including between-country variation could improve the analysis, making it possible to compare circumstances of different countries with (potentially) different latent class models. As Simonsen & Bonikowski (2020) and Heath & Richards (2020) find a distinct Nordic cluster of immigrant attitudes, comparing Nordic countries with each other could reveal highly relevant similarities and differences in attitude clusters. The Nordic countries contain different histories of immigration policies, which makes it plausible that attitudes in these countries have developed differently from each other.

Furthermore, cross-country comparison could improve results from the LCA as well as the methodological approach. Bohman (2018) finds that Swedish immigrant attitudes could be understood as a continuum, whereas Danish and Norwegian attitudes should be understood as varying in character, suggesting that generalisation should be considered carefully. Although the current paper confirms that Danish attitudes vary from each other in character, it does not suggest an answer as to why this would not be the case in Sweden. Further research is needed to address which contexts and circumstances lead to which composition of immigrant attitudes. That is, to answer in which circumstances immigrant attitudes should be seen as linear and which circumstances they are not.

If anti-immigrant attitudes are best understood as varying in character, then implications on policy and social sciences follow. First, policies aimed at reducing discrimination and hate crimes could consider the different effect on different groups of anti-immigrant natives. When writing these pages, a video of a verbal assault has gained attention in both Danish media and among Danish politicians. The assailant directs the abuse at the skin color of the victims, yelling that he wants them to leave the country (TV2 2021). Following the video, several political actors call for action in order to reduce the level of hate crimes and anti-immigrant attitudes. The findings of this paper have implications for such political action. If discrimination and hate crimes are only associated with some groups opposing immigration, then policies could be improved by designing policies to be addressing these groups specifically. For example, if discrimination is mostly associated with groups concerned by the cultural threat of immigration, then the cultural element should be taken into account by policy makers. Simultaneously, the results of this paper also suggest that initiatives not considering the differences between groups opposing immigration could end up inefficient. More specific initiatives could be uncovered by further research.

Secondly, considerations are necessary for subsequent research on anti-immigrant attitudes. As mentioned above, is it plausible that correlations between different predictors and immigrant attitudes can vary for different latent clusters. For this reason, established relationships between immigrant attitudes and economy, education, number of immigrants, and so on, could be reconsidered if these findings rely on understanding immigrant attitudes as a continuum. Reconsidering these findings could result in narrowing in the number of people that are anti-immigrant due to the 'traditional' causes, but also potentially uncover a group opposing immigration due to reasons that were previously considered irrelevant or insignificant. Future research will hopefully help to investigate further if and when the most common measure of anti-immigrant attitudes should be reconsidered.

This paper is not intended as an empirical test of the group threat theory, although the results support this theoretical approach. Instead, the paper encourages research to further consider the differences in anti-immigrant attitudes. Denmark is a polarised country in terms of immigration attitudes, and mutual understanding across political disagreement is hindered when people and their opinions are not correctly understood. Even though the negative effects of immigration might be exaggerated for various reasons, it would not be sound to simply dismiss all anti-immigrant concerns as the same phenomenon.

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