

Facing Cultural Diversity

Anti-Immigrant Attitudes in Europe

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Abstract. Negative attitudes toward immigrants are widespread in Western societies, and research has repeatedly attempted to explain such attitudes with the presence of cultural diversity arising from a high number of immigrants. Highlighting how political psychology integrates individual and contextual levels of explanation, the present paper aims to overview research that reaches beyond this narrow focus of diversity (i.e., immigrant proportion) to understand anti-immigrant attitudes in culturally diverse societies. First, we present research that reconciles two opposing intergroup mechanisms – contact and threat – both triggered by a high proportion of immigrants. Second, emphasis is placed on ideological climates, a novel contextual antecedent of anti-immigrant attitudes understood as collectively shared norms and values permeating all spheres of social life. Ideological climates influence anti-immigrant attitudes beyond individual characteristics and further shape individuals' responses to cultural diversity. Third, the paper extends existing research on a Person \times Context interaction approach to anti-immigrant attitudes and suggests how cultural diversity and ideological climates differentially impact the link between individual-level ideologies and anti-immigrant attitudes. The growing field of multilevel research on anti-immigrant attitudes is overviewed and empirical illustrations of our recent research in Switzerland are provided. We conclude by discussing the benefits and further challenges of integrating individual and contextual antecedents in political psychology and beyond.

Keywords: immigration attitudes, ideologies and values, cultural diversity, threat, multilevel approach

Over the past decades, Western countries have faced a steady increase in immigrants from a growing number of countries around the world. In the media, everyday discourse and political debates, cultural diversity is often presented as threatening, which in turn, serves as justification for prejudice and discrimination directed at immigrants. These concerns are also reflected in a shift toward more restrictive immigration policies and immigrants' ongoing experiences of discrimination and exclusion in their everyday lives (e.g., Zick, Pettigrew, & Wagner, 2008). Research has heavily focused on the role of cultural diversity, typically tapped with the proportion of immigrants, to understand negative stances toward immigrants. Yet, evidence on the effect of cultural diversity for attitudes toward immigrants in Europe is mixed (e.g., Green & Staerklé, 2013; Wagner, Christ, & Heitmeyer, 2010). In the heyday of exclusionary mobilization by rightwing populist parties, it is crucial for psychologists to understand when cultural

diversity does, and when it does not, elicit prejudice in order to help prevent the pernicious consequences of discrimination. This paper emphasizes the complex nature of cultural diversity as an antecedent of anti-immigrant attitudes.

There is now a substantial body of research on anti-immigrant attitudes in Europe (Pettigrew, 1998; Wagner et al., 2010). While this research owes greatly to experimental approaches in social and political psychology studying racism, stereotypes, and intergroup relations, it also draws on theories and methodologies from related disciplines such as sociology or political sciences. The continent's diverse political, economic, and historical landscape provides a unique setting for studying anti-immigrant attitudes of individuals embedded in real-world contexts (e.g., in nations, districts, municipalities, or neighborhoods), as there are often as many differences between regions within countries as there are between countries. It is

precisely by studying the effect of structural and sociocultural characteristics of contexts (i.e., proportion of immigrants, economic conditions) and linking them with well-known proximal individual-level antecedents of prejudice (e.g., perceived threat, conservative ideologies) that political psychology has substantially contributed to research on immigration attitudes (Pettigrew, 2010; Sibley et al., 2013). Such integrative research spans over at least two levels of analysis, thereby calling for multilevel theories and methodology (Christ, Sibley, & Wagner, 2012).

Adopting a multilevel perspective, this paper presents recent developments of research on the impact of cultural diversity on host society members' attitudes toward immigrants in Europe. The paper is organized into three main parts, each one of them going beyond the narrow focus of immigrant proportion. First, we show how more fine-grained examinations of cultural diversity account for both of the well-known mechanisms triggered by cultural diversity – intergroup threat and contact. Second, we argue that research can benefit from considering normative characteristics of context, *ideological climates*, as antecedents of anti-immigrant attitudes. Such ideological climates predict anti-immigrant attitudes above individual characteristics and offer further insight into individuals' responses to cultural diversity. Third, by drawing on a multilevel perspective to extend a Person \times Context interaction approach to anti-immigrant attitudes, we discuss the different effects cultural diversity and ideological climates bear on the link between individual-level ideologies and anti-immigrant attitudes. Empirical examples of our recent research in Switzerland (Study 1, Green, Fasel, & Sarasin, 2010 and Study 2, Sarasin et al., 2012) are provided to illustrate these developments. We conclude by discussing the further challenges and potential avenues of anti-immigrant attitude research that seeks to bridge the individual with the contextual level.

Confronting Intergroup Contact and Threat Assumptions

To explain the consequences of living in a culturally diverse society characterized by a large immigrant proportion, two main theories with opposing predictions for anti-immigrant attitudes have been advanced. Intergroup threat theories (e.g., Blalock, 1967; Riek, Mania, & Gaertner, 2006 for an overview) posit that a large presence of ethnic or immigrant minorities increases competition and anticipated negative consequences for the national majority, which in turn, translate into prejudice targeted at the minority. Such consequences refer to tangible goods such as jobs, housing, and social benefits, or to non-tangible goods related to values, religion, and status (Stephan & Renfro, 2003). The threat hypothesis has received support from multilevel research in Europe by linking immigrant proportion with higher perceived threat, thereby strengthening anti-immigrant attitudes (e.g., Green, 2009; Quillian, 1995; Scheepers, Gijsberts, & Coenders, 2002).

Extensions of intergroup contact theory (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006), on the other hand, have shown how a strong presence of immigrants provides contact opportunities, thereby stimulating positive intergroup contact (i.e., friendships), which in turn, reduces anti-immigrant attitudes (e.g., Wagner et al., 2008). Moreover, the effect of intergroup contact has also been shown to improve outgroup attitudes indirectly by attenuating perceived threat and anxiety (McLaren, 2003; Schlueter & Scheepers, 2010).

Explaining the Threat vs. Contact Conundrum

The central question regarding the impact of cultural diversity on anti-immigrant attitudes has shifted from whether cultural diversity triggers contact or threat, to the circumstances under which one mechanism (i.e., contact or threat) dominates over the other. First, difficult economic circumstances have been suggested as a decisive factor for a large immigrant proportion to increase perceived competition (i.e., regarding housing, jobs), thereby eliciting threat and hampering positive contact experiences. Indeed, cultural diversity appears to be related to threat perceptions in harsh economic circumstances (Quillian, 1995). Economic prosperity, in turn, has been linked to more positive intergroup contacts (Semyonov & Glikman, 2009).

Second, studies investigating various units of analyses suggest that in smaller units of analysis (e.g., neighborhoods, municipalities) where immigrant proportions reflect actual interaction opportunities, contact effects are more likely to occur than in larger units (e.g., regions, countries; Wagner et al., 2008). In line with this reasoning, a European study showed that in culturally diverse *neighborhoods*, more frequent intergroup contacts were found, whereas cultural diversity of a *country* was not related to intergroup contact, but to increased threat (Semyonov & Glikman, 2009).

Third, the actual proportion of immigrants may not necessarily reflect the salience of immigrants in a given context. Instead, changes in the proportion of immigrants are likely to receive more media attention and translate into an impending competition between groups. Indeed, a *recent influx* in immigrants has been shown to increase anti-immigrant attitudes whereas a *prevailing high proportion* of immigrants attenuated anti-immigrant attitudes (Tolsma, Lubbers, & Coenders, 2008). Increased salience of immigrants is likely to find further expression in host society members' perception of the immigrant proportion. In fact, the *perceived* number of immigrants has been shown to fuel anti-immigrant attitudes more strongly than the *actual* proportion of immigrants (e.g., Schlueter & Scheepers, 2010).

Finally, a comprehensive understanding of the impact of cultural diversity may benefit from differentiating between the predominant immigrant groups. Indeed, in everyday thinking, immigrants are often ranked as more or less attractive social partners, and there is general consensus on this so-called hierarchy of valued versus devalued ethnic

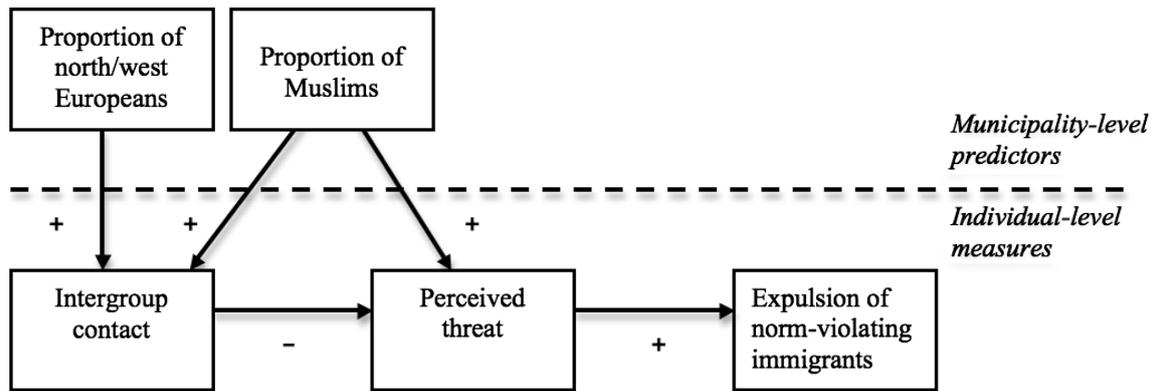


Figure 1. Multilevel path model for contact, threat, and expulsion of norm-violating immigrants. (Adapted from Green, Fasel, & Sarrasin, 2010, p. 186.)

and immigrant groups (Hagendoorn, 1995; Montreuil & Bourhis, 2001). This perceived hierarchy may explain why culturally distant or devalued immigrants have been found to trigger increased threat compared to immigrants as a whole (e.g., Scheepers et al., 2002). As demonstrated in the next section, we took a further step in our research and argued that studying valued versus devalued minority groups is yet another way to help solve the contact versus threat conundrum.

Valued vs. Devalued Immigrants: Study 1

Study 1 (Green et al., 2010) compared the impact of the presence of a devalued immigrant group with the presence of a valued, culturally close immigrant group on the intergroup threat and contact processes underlying anti-immigrant attitudes in Swiss municipalities. Switzerland holds the second largest number of immigrants in Europe (22% in 2009). Muslim immigrants – the majority stemming from Turkey, former Yugoslavia, and Albania – are among the fastest growing groups, often holding low-status positions and generally regarded at the bottom of societal hierarchy (Wimmer, 2004). High skilled immigrants from the neighboring northern and western European countries are perceived as culturally closer due to their shared traditions, religion, and often language and tend to enjoy higher prestige. Experiencing everyday encounters with immigrants is plausible in municipalities, making municipalities a relevant contextual unit for examining both, intergroup contact and threat effects.

Data of Study 1 were drawn from the first round of the European Social Survey (ESS) which contained a module on immigration and included $N = 1,472$ Swiss citizens across $N = 185$ municipalities. *Intergroup contact* was based on self-reported measure of friendships with immigrants (from 1 = none to 3 = several), *perceived threat*

was a score calculated on eight items including threats related to the economy or cultural life ($\alpha = .76$), and anti-immigrant attitudes were tapped with *support for the expulsion of norm-violating immigrants* – a score based on three items related to social norm violations (i.e., crime, unemployment, $\alpha = .65$). *Type of immigrants* (i.e., proportion of Muslims and proportion of immigrants from northern and western European countries¹) were based on 2000 census data.

Figure 1 summarizes the findings of multilevel path analyses (Hox, 2010).² Perceived threat increased support for the expulsion of norm-violating immigrants ($\beta = .40$, $p < .001$). Intergroup contact lowered perceived threat ($\beta = -.21$, $p < .001$), thereby reducing support for expulsion of norm-violating immigrants indirectly (indirect path $b = -0.04$, $p < .001$). The direct effect of intergroup contact on support for expulsion was nonsignificant when threat was accounted for. Furthermore, results revealed that the effects of proportion of northern and western European immigrants and Muslims on support for expulsion were mediated differently by contact and threat. The proportion of northern and western European immigrants increased intergroup contact ($\beta = .55$, $p < .001$), thereby attenuating perceived threat (indirect path $b = -1.32$, $p = .03$). The proportion of Muslims, in turn, heightened perceived threat ($\beta = .34$, $p = .005$), thereby marginally increasing support for expulsion (indirect path $b = 1.32$, $p = .06$). Importantly, it should be noted that the proportion of Muslims also marginally increased intergroup contact ($\beta = .23$, $p = .06$).

These findings suggest that for valued immigrants, the prejudice-attenuating effect of intergroup contact through reducing threat was confirmed. The presence of devalued immigrants, however, revealed more complex, as it elicited both, perceived threat and intergroup contact. For devalued immigrants, only perceived threat translated into anti-immigrant attitudes (see also Savelkoul, Scheepers, Tolsma, & Hagendoorn, 2011 for similar findings on proportions of Muslims in Dutch regions).

¹ Based on the United Nations classification of geographical subregions, retrieved from <http://unstats.un.org>.

² A series of variables was included to control for individual-level socio-demographic and ideological stances (i.e., age, gender, education, income, political orientation).

So far, we have shown how more fine-grained examinations of cultural diversity (e.g., in harsh economic conditions, perceived cultural diversity, type of immigrants) point to dynamics underlying anti-immigrant attitudes that are unlikely to be captured by the immigrant proportion alone. However, despite their greater precision, all the aforementioned factors reflect structural realities of contexts. Normative, institutional, and historical characteristics of contexts are also likely to determine whether cultural diversity elicits threat or encourages contact (i.e., Allport, 1954; Blumer, 1958), yet their joint impact has rarely been tested. To respond to this call, we now turn to the role of contextual ideologies – conceptualized as *ideological climates*.

Beyond Cultural Diversity – Introducing Ideological Climates

Ideological climates consist of a system of collectively shared norms and values that guide individuals in their understanding and evaluation of social phenomena such as immigration (Green & Staerklé, 2013). They include shared conceptions of the desirable goals, behaviors, and practices in a given context (Schwartz, 2006) and assert a particular social order between groups (Blumer, 1958; Cohrs, 2012; Sidanius, Pratto, van Laar, & Levin, 2004). Ideological climates permeate all spheres of social and political life, such as shared values, norms, practices, institutions, laws, and policies (Deaux, 2006; Elcherth, Doise, & Reicher, 2011).

Conservative vs. Progressive Ideological Climates

The most widely used individual-level ideological differentiation – conservative versus progressive/liberal – also exists on the contextual level. Conservative ideological climates are characterized by hierarchy enhancing and status quo preserving norms and values that enforce status differences between groups and promote social cohesion, obedience, and respect for tradition. Progressive ideological climates, in turn, are characterized by egalitarianism and endorsement of individual autonomy, promoting greater expression of diversity and tolerance (Cohrs, 2012; Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, & Sulloway, 2003; Schwartz, 2006; Sidanius et al., 2004).

Given that ideological climates are ingrained in all domains of social life, many ways of assessing them have been proposed. For instance, conservative versus progressive ideological climates tapped with country-level cultural values have been related to anti-immigrant attitudes across European countries (Leong & Ward, 2006). Especially cultural values implying a narrow conception of the ingroup have been associated with anti-immigrant attitudes

(Schwartz, 2007). Likewise, exclusionary conceptions of who belongs to the national ingroup measured either by collective representations of nationhood (Pehrson, Vignoles, & Brown, 2009) or immigration policies (Schlueter, Meuleman, & Davidov, 2013; Weldon, 2006) have been shown to underlie anti-immigrant attitudes. Because they often associate immigration trends with apocalyptic prognostics for the nation, the presence of rightwing populist parties has also been suggested as an indicator of conservative climates (Pettigrew, 1998). In fact, the presence of rightwing parties has been associated with heightened anti-immigrant attitudes (Semyonov, Raijman, & Gorodzeisky, 2006; see however Hjerm, 2009).

Overall, there is empirical evidence that ideological climates shape anti-immigrant attitudes. However, few studies have addressed the interplay between ideological climates and cultural diversity (i.e., proportion of immigrants). Such undertaking is nonetheless critical, as the impact of ideological climates on attitudes is likely to be greater in culturally homogenous contexts where anti-immigrant attitudes are not informed by personal encounters with immigrants (Schlueter & Davidov, 2013; Wagner et al., 2008). To fill this gap, Study 2 examined the joint effects of cultural diversity and ideological climate.

Interplay Between Cultural Diversity and Ideological Climate: Study 2

Study 2 (Sarrasin et al., 2012) set out to simultaneously assess the role of cultural diversity and conservative versus progressive ideological climates on anti-immigrant attitudes and their antecedents (i.e., intergroup threat, contact) across Swiss municipalities (see also Hjerm, 2009 for a study in Swedish municipalities). Compared to countries, municipalities within countries provide a comparable setting as they share the larger institutional and legislative context. Indeed, Switzerland is a decentralized federal state where much of political discourse and decision-making (i.e., naturalization) is taking place on the municipality level, making it a relevant unit of analysis for the assessment of ideological climates. The study was based on data from the first wave of the ESS ($N = 1,711$, $N = 176$ municipalities). Anti-immigrant attitudes were tapped with two items assessing *opposition to antiracism laws* ($\alpha = .75$). *Intergroup contact* was measured with number of immigrant friends (1 = none to 3 = several) and *perceived threat* was based on six items ($\alpha = .75$). *Conservative versus progressive ideological climate* was measured on the basis of national referenda results in a municipality between 1995 and 2006. Referenda results cover a wide spectrum of political topics and thus represent a more nuanced measure of ideological climate as, for example, rightwing party presence or election results. The measure ($\alpha = .75$) was based on three thematic scores (Hermann, 2006) loading on the same municipality-level factor: foreign policy (6 referendums),

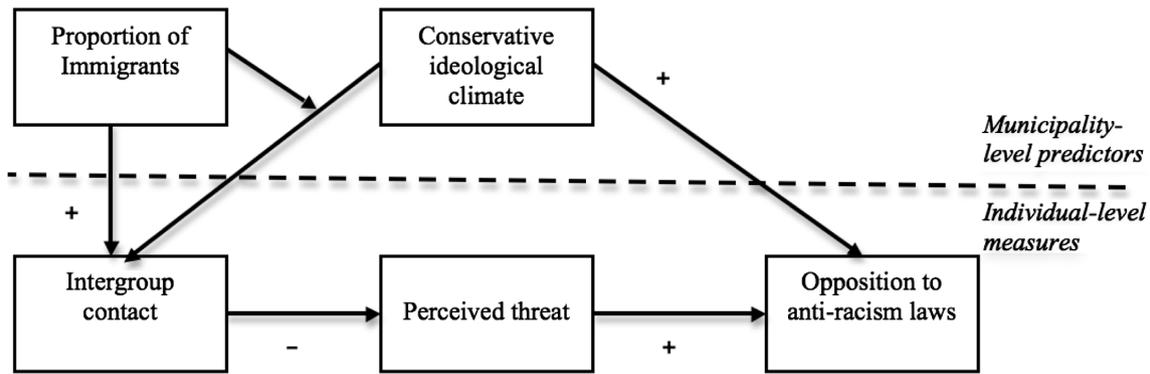


Figure 2. Summary of multilevel regression results for contact, threat, and opposition to anti-racism laws. (Adapted from Sarrasin et al., 2012, p. 665.)

changes in government and parliament (4 referendums), and social liberalization (11 referendums). *Cultural diversity* was assessed using the percentage of immigrants (i.e., nonnationals) per municipality in 2002.

Figure 2 summarizes the findings of the Study 2 analyses.³ First, intergroup contact lowered perceived threat ($b = -3.93, p < .001$), while perceived threat increased opposition to anti-racism laws ($b = 4.71, p < .001$).⁴ Intergroup contact did not directly reduce opposition to anti-racism laws; yet it had an indirect impact through reducing perceived threat (indirect path $b = -1.06, p < .001$). Moreover, after accounting for individual-level antecedents (e.g., contact, perceived threat), opposition to anti-racism laws was greater in conservative ideological climates ($b = 1.85, p = .015$). Cultural diversity (i.e., proportion of immigrants) was not directly related to perceived threat and opposition to anti-racism laws, but increased intergroup contact ($b = 0.06, p = .01$). In addition, an interaction between municipality-level climate and proportion of immigrants ($b = 0.05, p = .01$) revealed that in municipalities with a high immigrant proportion, conservative climate was unrelated to the reported number of contacts with immigrants ($b = 0.01, p = .76$), whereas in municipalities with a low proportion of immigrants, the more conservative the climate, the less respondents reported friendships with immigrants ($b = -0.09, p < .001$).

In sum, Study 2 indicated that conservative ideological climates promoting social cohesion and reinforcing the status quo translated into anti-immigrant attitudes among host society members and became particularly predictive for individuals' responses to cultural diversity (i.e., intergroup contact) when intergroup interaction opportunities were sparse.

A Person \times Context Interaction Approach

Up to now, we have discussed the impact of cultural diversity and ideological climates on anti-immigrant attitudes and responses to diversity (i.e., contact, threat). The interplay between individuals' ideological orientations and the context in which they live remains to be addressed. Indeed, a *Person \times Context* or *Person \times Situation interaction* approach has occupied a central place in experimental social and political psychology (Mischel, 2004). For anti-immigrant attitude research, the *person* generally refers to motivational constructs related to ideological beliefs, values, and goals of an individual that figure in the causal chain prior to specific attitudinal or behavioral outcomes (Duckitt & Sibley, 2010; Sagiv & Schwartz, 1995). In a multilevel approach that studies individuals embedded in their real-world contexts, these motivational constructs (e.g., ideological orientations) are assessed on the individual level. The *situation* in experimental research refers to conditions depicted by categorical groupings or treatments (e.g., a manipulated exposure to high vs. low cultural diversity). Multilevel methodology, in turn, considers contextual characteristics (e.g., proportion of immigrants, ideological climate) of higher level units – in this strand of research communities or nations – in which individuals are nested (Christ et al., 2012). A *Person \times Context* interaction in the multilevel approach thus allows modeling the link between individuals' ideological orientations and anti-immigrant attitudes with context-level factors (so-called *cross-level interactions*; Mathieu, Aguinis, Culpepper, & Chen, 2012).

³ Individual socio-demographic variables and ideological stances (i.e., age, gender, education, income, political orientation) were controlled for.

⁴ While in Study 1 we present standardized coefficients, in Study 2 we report unstandardized coefficients to remain consistent with the original publications.

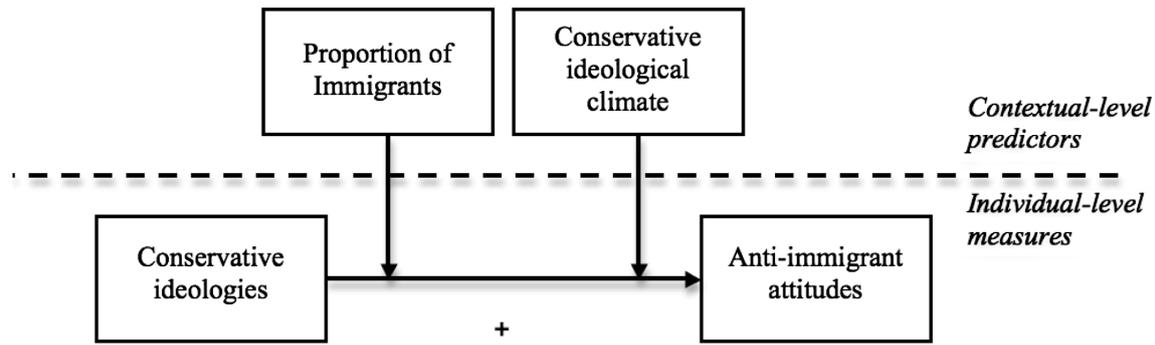


Figure 3. Theoretical multilevel model for Person \times Context interaction to conservative ideologies and anti-immigrant attitudes.

Galvanising vs. Mobilizing Effects – The Role of Cultural Diversity and Conservative Ideological Climates

Individuals' conservative ideological orientations – characterized by acceptance of inequality and resistance to social change⁵ – explain a wide range of political attitudes (Jost et al., 2003). Indeed, individual-level conservative ideologies determine whether individuals express anti-immigrant attitudes (Davidov, Meuleman, Billiet, & Schmidt, 2008), perceive immigrants as threatening (Cohrs & Asbrock, 2009), or avoid intergroup contact (Sagiv & Schwartz, 1995).

To date, the Person \times Context interaction approach has focused on experimentally manipulating the link between conservative ideologies (e.g., high rightwing authoritarianism or social dominance orientation) and anti-immigrant attitudes and has largely neglected the impact of real-world contexts (see however Cohrs & Stelzl, 2010; Sibley et al., 2013). Two interaction hypotheses can be distinguished: A threatening context can either galvanize (i.e., provoke a strong reaction) individuals prone to prejudice, or mobilize (i.e., extend support) across the ideological spectrum (Sniderman, Hagendoorn, & Prior, 2004), with the greatest leverage on those least likely to express prejudice. The galvanizing hypothesis has most frequently been examined, suggesting that conservative individuals express stronger outgroup prejudice when facing cultural diversity (Duckitt & Sibley, 2010; Feldman & Stenner, 1997). This assumption is based on conservative individuals' concern for social cohesion, conformity, and security and their sensitivity to threats (Jost et al., 2003). Individuals endorsing liberal ideologies, in turn, are not expected to react negatively to cultural diversity as their values (i.e., autonomy, tolerance) are not undermined by a strong presence of immigrants. Indeed, individuals endorsing conservative ideologies (i.e., high in rightwing authoritarianism) have been shown

to express heightened anti-immigrant attitudes when they perceive immigrants as norm-violating (Cohrs & Asbrock, 2009; Thomsen, Green, & Sidanius, 2008). Moreover, the mere exposure to cultural diversity has been shown to trigger anti-immigrant attitudes in individuals endorsing conservative ideologies, whereas more positive immigrant attitudes have been evidenced for individuals endorsing liberal ideologies (Roccas & Amit, 2011).

Despite these important findings resulting from a Person \times Context interaction, it is unlikely that the galvanizing of conservative individuals fully accounts for the widespread rise in anti-immigrant attitudes and support for exclusionary policies in Europe (Semyonov et al., 2006). Instead, conservative ideological climates may also mobilize individuals across the ideological spectrum (Sniderman et al., 2004), with their greatest impact on liberal individuals. Conservative ideological climates are characterized by rigid and consistent rhetorical messages that are easily communicated and taken up by mass media (Jost, Ledgerwood, & Hardin, 2008; Pettigrew, 1998). These messages convey norms related to social cohesion and the maintenance of the status quo (Schwartz, 2006), which encourage conformist responses in individuals. Moreover, such messages – often portraying outgroups as threatening the social order and pivotal Western values – have been shown to exert their strongest effect on individuals generally least likely to express prejudice (Hetherington & Suhay, 2011; Smeekes, Verkuyten, & Poppe, 2011).

In an ongoing line of research examining these assumptions with a multilevel approach on survey data, we consider both, cultural diversity and ideological climates when investigating the link between individual-level conservative ideologies and different types of anti-immigrant attitudes (see Figure 3). Findings point toward the existence of both galvanizing and mobilizing effects depending on the contextual characteristics under study. In line with intergroup threat assumptions, cultural diversity galvanized conservative individuals, thereby fueling anti-immigrant

⁵ Though several conceptualizations of the two dimensions associated with conservative ideologies exist, they generally refer to an authoritarian dimension distinguishing tradition, security, and conformity values from autonomy and freedom values, and a social dominance dimension distinguishing hierarchy and power values from egalitarianism and social justice values (Cohrs, 2012; Duckitt & Sibley, 2010).

attitudes (Fasel & Green, 2013; see also Sibley et al., 2013). For individuals endorsing liberal ideologies, in turn, cultural diversity stimulated tolerant immigration attitudes (Fasel, Green, & Sarrasin, 2013). Moreover, in conservative ideological climates, anti-immigrant attitudes were widespread across the ideological spectrum, that is, among individuals endorsing conservative as well as liberal ideologies (Fasel & Green, 2013). This finding reflects a mobilizing effect. In line with previous research, conservative climates thus had the greatest impact on individuals endorsing liberal ideologies, heightening their anti-immigrant stances.

In sum, a Person \times Context interaction approach using multilevel methodology has the potential to deepen our understanding of how the real-world context in which individuals are embedded shapes their anti-immigrant stances. Findings from our ongoing research suggest that while the actual presence of immigrants is likely to elicit anti-immigrant attitudes in certain (e.g., conservative) individuals and foster tolerant attitudes in others (e.g., liberal individuals), the prevailing exclusionary ideological climate may hold the greater mobilization potential for the larger society.

General Discussion

As one of the most central concerns in Western societies, the implications of cultural diversity represent a rich field of investigation for social and political psychologists. The present paper set out to demonstrate how a multilevel approach that bridges the individual and the contextual level of analysis makes a valuable contribution to an integrative understanding of anti-immigrant attitudes in culturally diverse societies. By overviewing multilevel research on anti-immigrant attitudes in Europe, we outlined various developments explaining the impact of cultural diversity on anti-immigrant attitudes. First, we discussed research overcoming the limits of using a generic immigrant proportion as an indicator of cultural diversity. A recent influx in immigrant proportion, the larger socioeconomic context, the unit of analysis and perceptions of cultural diversity were considered. In our own research (Study 1), we demonstrated how distinguishing between valued and devalued immigrant groups sheds light on the opposing predictions of intergroup threat and contact mechanisms. Next, by looking beyond structural contextual characteristics, we overviewed research showing how ideological climates shape host societies' anti-immigrant attitudes. Our research (Study 2) indicated that the impact of ideological climate is particularly marked when direct encounters with immigrants are rare. Finally, we discussed how a Person \times Context interaction approach can be applied to multilevel research on anti-immigrant attitudes. Findings from our ongoing research suggest that ideological climates are more apt to fostering anti-immigrant stances across the ideological spectrum, whereas the prejudice-enhancing effect of cultural diversity remained limited to those individuals already prone to prejudice.

On these grounds, we conclude that research restricted to the impact of cultural diversity risks to fall short of tapping collective ideological dynamics that drive anti-immigrant attitudes beyond – and even against – individuals' personal values and beliefs. In the past, social and political psychologists have largely focused on reactions of individuals particularly susceptible to prejudice, however in politics, the aim is frequently to mobilize individuals across the ideological spectrum to broaden the basis of supporters (Reicher, 2012; Sniderman et al., 2004). Because such mobilization has proved successful in countries differing widely in the amount of cultural diversity they face (Pettigrew, 1998), it may be timely for psychologists to further investigate individuals' reactions to cultural diversity in changing ideological contexts.

Future Avenues

Notwithstanding the contributions a multilevel approach has made to the study of anti-immigrant attitudes, several theoretical and methodological challenges still need to be addressed. It is evident that neglecting to consider the multiple levels of antecedents underlying anti-immigrant attitudes can lead to flawed conclusions (Christ et al., 2012). Yet, the sophisticated methodological advancement owed to the multilevel approach stands in great contrast to the limited theoretical frameworks available that integrate the individual with the contextual level (Pettigrew, 2010; Wagner et al., 2010). Such theorizing is essential as many concepts undergo a substantial shift in meaning when they are translated from one level to the other (Howarth, 2006). Fallacies such as inferring contextual-level relationships from individual-level relationships (*atomistic fallacy*) or translating individual-level relationships from contextual-level relationships (*ecological fallacy*) are still commonplace (Hox, 2010). A multilevel approach can help avoid these fallacies by allowing researchers to theorize and test the relationships between anti-immigrant attitudes and their antecedents on different levels of analysis (see Pehrson et al., 2009 for opposing relationships found on the individual and national level). Furthermore, integrated theories are needed that not only simultaneously conceptualize the individual and the societal level but aim to interrelate these levels (Doise, 1986). Such theories explain how higher level collectives provide individuals with meaning of societal phenomena such as cultural diversity – and vice versa – they clarify how individuals' perceptions and responses jointly contribute to producing and reproducing social reality (e.g., Moscovici, 1988).

Moreover, the examples we presented from our recent research were based on relatively small-scale units of analysis (i.e., municipalities). The choice of unit of analysis (e.g., neighborhoods, municipalities, districts, countries) depends however on the researcher's theoretical interests and assumptions. To enable this, survey design planning needs to acknowledge the growing interest in fine-grained, small-scale contextual units such as municipalities or neighborhoods when conceiving representative sampling frames for future data collection.

Finally, we have argued that it is crucial to examine context not solely by its structural characteristics, but to consider representational, normative, and institutional dimensions of context. To date the study of ideological climates remains underdeveloped, even though they serve a central function in enforcing and legitimizing a given social structure (Sidanius et al., 2004). It is therefore important to understand how exclusionary climates are constructed and used by political leaders to protect the interests of the powerful at the expense of the powerless. Encouraged already by Allport (1954) and Blumer (1958), the study of leadership in prejudice research has yet a long way to go (Reicher, 2012). Furthermore, the role of consensual versus debated ideological climates has been underscored (Elcherth et al., 2011; see also Moscovici, 1988), however rarely empirically investigated. For instance, ideological climates characterized by consensus and agreement are likely to override individuals' values and beliefs, while ongoing political and public debates along the value divide should entail anti-immigrant stances anchored in pre-existing values and beliefs. We hope to see future multilevel research addressing these challenges in the field of political psychology and beyond.

Acknowledgments

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