

# How integration regimes explain the success of anti-immigrant parties

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**Abstract:** *In the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Europe has witnessed the rise of a new party type on the extreme right of the political spectrum, the anti-immigrant party. However, anti-immigrant parties are not equally successful across or even within all countries. While most studies rely on unemployment rates or immigration levels to explain these differences, we examine whether the policy context in which voters are embedded influences anti-immigrant voting. We draw on research on immigration attitudes and integration regimes to explain regional differences in anti-immigrant voting. The inclusiveness or exclusiveness of integration regimes are argued to have an effect on voting for anti-immigrant parties, with more inclusive regimes predicting fewer anti-immigrant votes either directly or indirectly through the reduction of anti-immigration attitudes. These predictions were tested with multilevel regression models using data from the 2011 Swiss Electoral Studies. The federal political system, where each sub-national unit (here the canton) has a different integration regime, makes Switzerland an ideal setting for examining variation in anti-immigrant voting. We find that Swiss cantons with more inclusive integration regimes experience less anti-immigrant voting. This effect is partially mediated by individual support for integration of immigrants.*

## 1. Introduction<sup>1</sup>

The relationship between individual anti-immigrant attitudes, immigration scepticism, xenophobia, racism and voting for anti-immigrant parties<sup>2</sup> is widely demonstrated in recent comparative studies (Arzheimer, 2009; Lubbers, Gijsberts, & Scheepers, 2002) and numerous country studies (see for example Cutts, Ford, & Goodwin, 2011; Mughan & Paxton, 2006; Rink, Phalet, & Swyngedouw, 2009). While the connection between immigration attitudes and voting has been firmly established the differences in vote shares received by anti-immigrant parties across countries and within countries remain debated (van der Brug, Fennema, & Tillie, 2005). Why anti-immigrant parties are rather successful in some countries – like Switzerland or Austria – and rather unsuccessful in other countries like Germany and Spain continues to draw scholarly interest. Even within countries the success of anti-immigrant parties can be very different between regions, for example the Italian *Lega Nord* in northern Italy, the Belgian *Vlaams Blok* in Flanders or in our case the *Swiss People's Party* (SVP) in the German speaking parts of Switzerland.

Regional and national differences in anti-immigrant voting have been explained in multiple ways. The most prominent explanations are based on macro-economic and macro-demographic factors like unemployment rates and levels of immigration (Arzheimer, 2009). In this vein, ethnic competition theory states that competition for limited material resources like social benefits, accommodation and jobs between immigrants and the majority population leads to anti-immigrant voting (Rink et al., 2009; Rydgren, 2008). Cross-national studies, in turn, have demonstrated that properties of the electoral system (e.g., a majoritarian system), the party system (e.g., a strong conservative party) and the organizational strength and leadership of the anti-immigrant parties themselves explain differences in electoral success of anti-immigrant parties (Lubbers et al., 2002; van der Brug & Mughan, 2007). Basic differences in the electorates of countries, for example average levels of education and average attitudes towards immigrants also explain differences in electoral success across countries (Arzheimer, 2009; Jesuit, Paradowski, & Mahler, 2009;

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<sup>2</sup> While there is no convention on the naming of “far-right” parties, “radical right” parties or “extreme right” parties, we use the term anti-immigrant party because it describes the most common property of this new wave of right-wing parties (Fennema, 1997).

Lubbers et al., 2002). Up to now research has thus focussed on socio-economic contexts and contextual electoral system or party characteristics while paying less attention to the impact of the policy context in which voters are embedded. In particular, subnational studies have not examined the role of institutional and cultural contexts. While exclusionary country-level integration regimes have been linked to anti-immigrant attitudes (Ariely, 2012; Weldon, 2006), as far as we know, their impact on anti-immigrant voting is yet to be studied.

The purpose of this article is therefore to examine whether integration regimes explain cantonal<sup>3</sup> differences in vote shares received by the SVP during the 2011 elections and which mechanisms are responsible for this relationship.

For two decades SVP had steadily increased its vote share in Swiss national elections, making it one of the most successful populist anti-immigrant parties in Europe. The SVP's election campaign primarily used anti-immigrant rhetoric most evident in the typical red, white and black posters with simple messages and imagery. In Switzerland, the link between voting for the SVP and anti-immigrant attitudes is thus evident (Coffé & Voorpostel, 2010; Oesch, 2008; Skenderovic, 2007).

Switzerland is examined because in a single country study, as opposed to a cross-national comparison, we can investigate one anti-immigrant party. This eliminates the risk of unintentionally omitting explanations referring to anti-European, separatist or anti-democratic tendencies that account for cross-national variation in the agendas of anti-immigrant parties. Moreover, in cross-national research there are more factors that need to be accounted for than in a single country study<sup>4</sup>, for example national elections do not take place at the same time in every country. As Switzerland is a **federal** country in which the cantons enjoy a great deal of political autonomy, the cantons have distinct integration regimes. This makes Switzerland an ideal case for studying the effect of integration regimes on voting behaviour while excluding many alternative explanations.

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<sup>3</sup> Cantons are the largest political and administrative units in the federal political system of Switzerland.

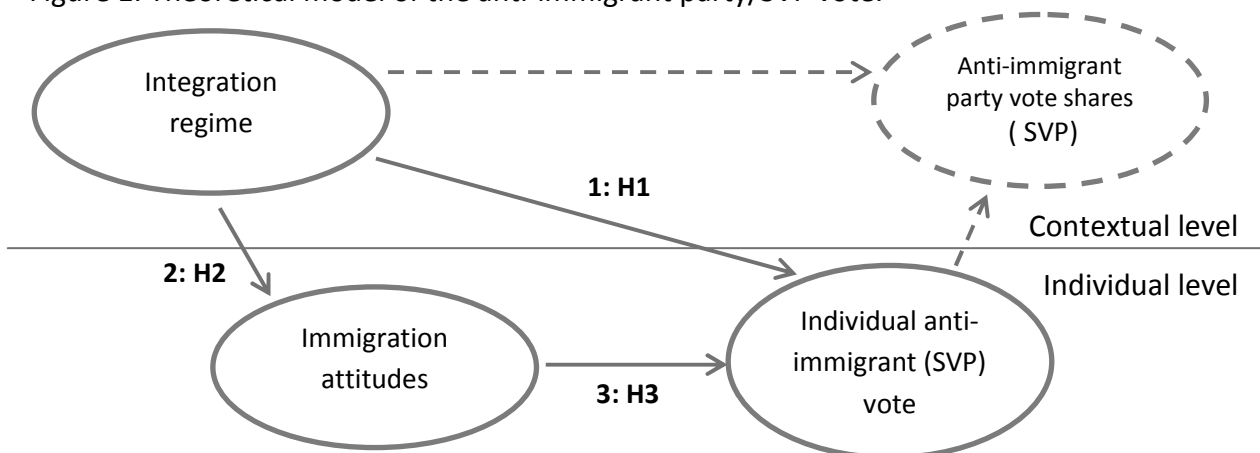
<sup>4</sup> Our research design approximates a *Most Similar Systems Design* in which many factors are held constant while other factors vary.

In the following we elaborate the connection between integration regimes and vote shares received by the anti-immigrant parties. We highlight two mechanisms; a direct effect of integration regimes on anti-immigrant vote shares and an indirect effect where integration regimes influence immigration attitudes which in turn influence voting for anti-immigrant parties. We conclude the theoretical section with an overview of other explanations of differences in anti-immigrant voting and individual explanations of an anti-immigrant vote.

## 2. Explanations of anti-immigrant voting

Our theoretical model is illustrated in Figure 1 (Snijders & Bosker, 2012). Our interest is in the relationship between integration regimes and vote shares received by anti-immigrant parties – or in other words the explanation of differences in vote shares across regions. However, we do not run an aggregate model. Integration regimes cannot directly determine vote shares because Swiss citizenship and integration laws do not specify rules that affect the vote shares a party receives. But in the highly proportional electoral system of Switzerland vote shares are a function of the individual number of votes cast for a party. Empirically we test whether integration regimes influence the probability of an individual living in a canton to vote for the **SVP** (path 1). This relationship can also be indirect and therefore partially or fully mediated. In this case integration regimes influence immigration attitudes (path 2) that in turn influence the vote for the SVP (path 3).

Figure 1. Theoretical model of the anti-immigrant party/SVP vote.



### *Integration regimes and anti-immigrant voting*

Citizenship regimes have traditionally been defined as a collection of policies that define the boundaries of who belongs to a nation state or who is a citizen of a state. Being a citizen grants certain privileges, the most important being the right to vote and run for office. Citizenship regimes and integration regimes are frequently considered simultaneously. Previously, citizenship regimes were considered to be either *jus sanguinis* regimes that require ancestry from a member of the nation state – being of the right bloodline – to become a member or *jus soli* regimes that require being born within the borders of a nation state to become a citizen (Brubaker, 1992). *Jus soli* regimes provide easier access to citizenship for immigrants than *jus sanguinis* regimes. However, naturalization is now considered one facet of integration regimes. While naturalization criteria determine the requirements for becoming a citizen, integration regimes determine the rights people who are not (yet) naturalized members of a nation state. These regime areas are thus two sides of the same coin. If there were no hurdles to becoming citizen integration regimes would be unnecessary since everyone could become a citizen. And if integration regimes granted the same rights to citizens and non-citizens, naturalization would not provide any advantage. We use the term integration regimes to describe both citizenship regimes and integration regimes<sup>5</sup>.

A direct relationship between integration regimes and an individual probability to vote for the SVP occurs when people vote according to the degree of inclusiveness of the integration regime in their canton (path 1 in Figure 1). When an individual votes it evaluates not only party positions on policies but also currently existing policies – the Status Quo – and how party positions and the Status Quo relate to each other. Parties can be close to the Status Quo or further away. For example the SVP prefers exclusive integration regimes. This implies that the distance between the Status Quo of cantonal integration regimes and the SVP position is small when integration regimes are exclusive and high when integration regimes are inclusive. Irrespectively of individual attitudes people have a tendency to prefer the Status Quo – or positions that are closer to the Status Quo – over alternatives, this is called the Status Quo bias (Samuelson & Zeckhauser, 1988). Similarly incumbent candidates have

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<sup>5</sup> The variability among integration regimes between countries has been assessed with *Migrant Integration Policy Index* or MIPEX (<http://www.mipex.eu/>). But integration regimes can also be different between subnational political units, especially within federal countries like Canada, the United States, Germany (Akgün & Thränhardt, 2001) and Switzerland (Manatschal, 2011).

an advantage over political challengers in elections (Bernhardt & Ingerman, 1985). There are rational and non-rational reasons of voting for the Status Quo instead of alternative political positions. Individuals vote for the Status Quo because they anticipate costs that are associated with changing the Status Quo (for example structural adaptations, new personnel or material expenses). Unlike the hypothetical alternative, the performance of the Status Quo is already known and for risk-averse voters this means that the Status Quo has an advantage over alternatives (Christin, Hug, & Sciarini, 2002). Additionally, regret avoidance and repeated exposure underlie the Status Quo preference (Crandall & Eidelman, 2012). Indeed, in Swiss direct democratic ballots, voters have a Status Quo bias (Christin et al., 2002). We assume that the preference of individuals for the Status Quo extends to voting behaviour in national elections. This means that the SVP will receive fewer votes in cantons with more inclusive integration regimes because it opposes the Status Quo of inclusive integration regimes.

**H1: In cantons with more inclusive integration regimes individuals are less likely to vote for the SVP.**

As shown in Figure 1 by paths 2 and 3 integration regimes can indirectly influence average vote shares of parties through immigration attitudes. In other words, integration regimes influence immigration attitudes that then have an effect on voting behaviour.

*Integration regimes and individual attitudes*

We will now address the relationship between integration regimes and immigration attitudes as depicted by path 2 in Figure 1. Indeed Weldon (2006) found that citizenship regimes influence individual tolerance judgements of majority members towards minorities. Individualistic-civic regimes predicted more tolerant judgements and collectivistic-ethnic regimes predict less tolerance while collectivistic-civic predicted average tolerance. Ariely (2012) showed that countries with jus soli regimes have lower levels of xenophobic attitudes, that is the effects of immigrants on the economy, on the job market, on culture and on crime are seen less threatening. Similarly Wright (2011) found that jus soli regimes predicted more immigrant-inclusive definitions of the national community.

Weldon (2006) argues that the influence of institutions such as integration regimes on individual attitudes is explained by processes of political or democratic learning as postulated by political culture theory (Almond & Verba, 1963). From a neo-institutional perspective institutions are the 'rules of the game' that can influence individual attitudes (Bühlmann & Freitag, 2006; Lijphart, 1999; March & Olsen, 1984). Political learning occurs when individuals are influenced by institutions through the public discourse in the media, education and socialization. Public discourse refers to actual local policies; integration regimes thus serve as a reference or starting point for such discourse.

Although attitude differences due to political learning are most evident in cross-national comparisons, attitude differences can also occur within countries like Switzerland under the right circumstances: integration regimes must differ within Switzerland and individuals should mainly be exposed to the integration regimes of their own cantons. It has already been established that integration regimes vary between cantons (Manatschal, 2011). Political learning takes place in the Swiss educational system and the Swiss media.

The educational system is one of the most decentralized worldwide (see Hega, 2000); indeed Switzerland does not have a federal education department. Educational policy and curricula is determined by cantons and it can thus be assumed that curricula are influenced by local customs, traditions and institutions like integration regimes. The content taught in schools should then vary from canton to canton and accordingly attitudes which are generated or transmitted in school can be different from canton to canton dependent on whether the cantonal integration regimes are inclusive or exclusive.

Furthermore, the Swiss media print and television media is very fragmented and most cantons have their own newspaper or a local newspaper edition. Tresch (2008) finds that although the Swiss media landscape is more integrated across language borders than the European public there still are differences between language regions. This ensures that the discourse on immigration in the media is localized and often concerned with local immigration issues which are framed in the context of the inclusiveness or exclusiveness of the cantonal integration regimes. Additionally, the Swiss media is separated along lingual lines. This means that most individuals read newspapers that are exclusive to their cantons and watch television that is exclusive to their language region. A voter would therefore formulate opinions and attitudes on sources that are different from canton to canton.

Consequently, due to political learning individuals living in different cantons should have attitudes that are influenced by the integration regimes in their respective cantons.

**H2a: In a canton with inclusive integration regimes individuals experience less economic, cultural and physical threat.**

**H2b: In a canton with more inclusive integration regimes individuals are more supportive of integration, minority rights and multiculturalism.**

#### *Immigration attitudes and voting behaviour*

Finally, immigration attitudes predict anti-immigrant voting (path 3 in Figure 1). For example, individuals who feel economically and culturally threatened by immigrants are more likely to vote for an anti-immigrant party than people who do not feel threatened (Lucassen & Lubbers, 2012). Economic threat implies perceiving that immigration depresses wages, immigrants compete with the majority population for jobs or strain the social security system. Symbolic threat involves perceiving immigration as a threat to local values and the traditional culture of a country. Both economic and cultural arguments are common in the political discourse of the populist anti-immigrant party. For example, the SVP depicts asylum seekers as highly prone to criminality, violence and vandalism. The SVP also claims that crime has increased due to the opening of borders that followed the Swiss joining of the Schengen area<sup>6</sup>. Linking immigrants to crime is a particularly effective strategy for anti-immigrant parties (Rydgren 2008). Threat perceptions should increase the probability to vote for the SVP.

**H3a: Individuals that experience more economic, cultural and physical threat are more likely to vote for the SVP.**

Furthermore, research has revealed that anti-immigrant voting is influenced by other factors like support for multiculturalism, multicultural policies and integration (Rydgren, 2008; Weldon, 2006). Anti-immigrant parties are indeed opposed to multiculturalism. In

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<sup>6</sup> Compare <http://www.tagesanzeiger.ch/schweiz/standard/SVP-macht-Stimmung-mit-falschen-Zahlen/story/28214443> (Accessed: 16.4.2013) or <http://www.tagesanzeiger.ch/schweiz/standard/Nationalrat-will-DNATests-fuer-bestimmte-Asylbewerber/story/21039574> (Accessed: 17.4.2013).



Switzerland Muslim immigrants are especially important in the SVP discourse since they are considered hardest to integrate (Skenderovic, 2007). Unlike threat, support for multiculturalism and integration should then reduce the likelihood of a SVP vote.

**H3b: Individuals that are more supportive of integration, minority rights and multiculturalism are less likely to vote for the SVP.**

*Alternative explanations of cantonal differences in anti-immigrant voting*

Along with integration regimes and immigration attitudes many other attitudes, socio-demographic factors and contextual characteristics have been put forward to explain anti-immigrant voting. These factors need to be considered.

Men typically are more likely than women to vote for anti-immigrant parties (Fontana, Sidler, & Hardmeier, 2006). Higher levels of education are assumed to decrease the probability of an anti-immigrant vote. Whether this is due to increased tolerance or an increased conformity to what is considered socially desirable behaviour is debated (Hainmueller & Hiscox, 2007). Euro-scepticism can underlie anti-immigrant vote since many anti-immigrant parties also display a strong opposition to the European Union and European integration (McGann & Kitschelt, 2005). European integration, much like immigration, is a subject with a strong globalization component and the SVP has used anti-European rhetoric in the 2011 election campaign. Voting for anti-immigrant parties is sometimes considered to be a form of protest voting due to dissatisfaction with the democratic system or the established parties. Evidence for this relationship is mixed at best, suggesting that only some anti-immigrant parties receive protest votes (van der Brug & Fennema, 2003) while other studies find anti-immigrant voting to be independent of protest voting (Arzheimer, 2008). A stronger national identity or a high degree of national attachment are assumed to underlie anti-immigrant attitudes and consequently anti-immigrant voting (Rydgren, 2005). Finally, the SVP vote has been considered more likely among Protestants and less likely among Catholics than among non-religious people (Fontana et al., 2006).

With respect to these individual-level characteristics populations can be differently composed. In some regions inhabitants are older or have more education while other regions have populations that are on average more sceptical towards immigration.

Table 1. Overview of hypotheses, the associated variables and expected effects

Hypothesis	Dependent variables	Independent variables	Expected effect
H1: Individuals living in a canton with more inclusive integration regimes are less likely to vote for the SVP.	SVP voting probability	Integration regimes (higher values: more inclusive)	-
H2: Individuals living in a canton with more inclusive integration regimes are less likely to have anti-immigrant attitudes.	Economic threat Cultural threat Violence threat Integration support Muslim rights Multiculturalism	Integration regimes	- - - + + +
H3: Individuals with anti-immigrant attitudes are more likely to vote for the SVP.	SVP voting probability	Economic threat Cultural threat Violence threat Integration support Muslim rights Multiculturalism	+ + + - - -

Note: The variables we summarily call immigration attitudes (economic threat, cultural threat, physical threat, integration support, Muslim rights and multiculturalism) are mediators and therefore dependent variables in models that address H2 and independent variables in models that test H3.

To explain differences in vote shares received by anti-immigrant parties many recent studies of anti-immigrant voting now include contextual characteristics. We control for the most common factors. In the labour market immigrants compete with the native population. This increases the competition for jobs and puts pressure on salaries. Additional pressure occurs when immigrants are eligible to receive unemployment and other benefits. High unemployment and a large immigrant population have been assumed to reinforce competition between immigrants and the native population because unemployment entails that there are fewer jobs and the presence of immigrant population entails that there is more competition for both jobs and other resources (Arzheimer, 2009; Blalock, 1967; Dinas & van Spanje, 2011; Lubbers et al., 2002; Rink et al., 2009).

Large immigrant populations may evoke threat in the native population when they are seen not sharing language, traditions and values with the native population. The presence of culturally more distant, stigmatised immigrants have been shown to increase threat (Green, Fasel, & Sarrasin, 2010). Indeed, the proportion of asylum seekers, frequently coming from non-European countries, has been found to significantly increase anti-immigrant voting (Arzheimer, 2009; Lubbers & Scheepers, 2001; Werts, Scheepers, & Lubbers, 2012).

Other authors investigating differences in anti-immigrant voting examine modernization and social disintegration (Werts et al., 2012), social capital, crime rates and population density

(Dinas & van Spanje, 2011) and the degree of redistribution and income inequality (Jesuit et al., 2009). Since the SVP traditionally has rural roots we account for population density<sup>7</sup>. We also control for aggregate crime rates and the proportion of recipients of social benefits because the SVP campaigns on the frame of “criminal immigrants” and the abuse of the social systems by immigrants.

The SVP has traditionally been more successful in the German speaking part of Switzerland. We assume that the cleavage between linguistic regions is correlated with the predicted cause of differences in voting for the SVP – the degree of inclusiveness of integration regimes. The linguistic cleavage is therefore a reasonable empirical approximation of the relationship between integration regimes and SVP voting.

### **3. Data, operationalization and method**

The individual data is taken from the post-election survey of the SELECTS. Swiss laws require residents of Switzerland to register their residence with the municipality. This entails an automatic voter registration which guarantees an almost perfect overlap between eligible and registered voters. Basic demographic data like age and gender as well as addresses and telephone contact information are made available to repeated surveys like SELECTS by the Swiss Federal Statistical Office<sup>8</sup>. 4391 individuals completed the telephone survey and 1786 completed an optional follow-up survey that could be taken online or requested as paper questionnaire<sup>9</sup>. This subsample included additional immigration related items and is therefore our primary interest. Listwise deletion reduces the number of observations to 1419. The core variables of our analysis are highly similar for both the respondents who participated exclusively in the telephone interview and those who also participated in the follow-up survey (see Table 2). Several models of our analyses can be run with the entire telephone-survey sample and the result patterns are similar with regard to direction and statistical significance of the effects. The majority of the cantons are German speaking. Neuchâtel, Jura, Genève and Vaud are French speaking and Fribourg and Valais are largely French speaking with German speaking minority populations. Ticino is the only Italian

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<sup>7</sup> Cantons are not exclusively rural or urban; most cantons have both urban and rural areas. Consequently the effect of urbanization may not become evident in a canton level design and Steenbergen (2010) has shown that voting for the SVP does not only vary across cantons but also across municipalities.

<sup>8</sup> Unlike in most other electoral surveys a specific individual is contacted instead of randomly drawn individual from a household.

<sup>9</sup> For response rates and sample sizes: [http://www2.unil.ch/selects/IMG/pdf/Selects\\_2011\\_Brochure\\_D.pdf](http://www2.unil.ch/selects/IMG/pdf/Selects_2011_Brochure_D.pdf)

speaking canton. The average number of respondents per canton is 55, ranging from a minimum of 28 to a maximum of 186 observations.

Table 2. Variables and summary statistics

Variable group	Variable name	Mean	Std. dev.	Range
Dependent variables	Probability to vote SVP	3.38 (3.46)	3.63 (3.63)	0 – 10
Individual variables	Economic threat	3.33 (3.41)	1.36 (1.39)	1 – 5
	Cultural threat	2.88 (2.96)	1.48 (1.5)	1 – 5
	Physical threat	3.36 (3.33)	1.33 (1.38)	1 – 5
	Integration support	2.94	1.22	1 – 5
	Muslim rights	2.47	1.28	1 – 5
	Multiculturalism	3.31	1.06	1 – 5
Individual controls	Age	51.77 (47.8)	16.48 (17.64)	18 – 92 (94)
	Gender (ref: male)	48.3 % (49.6 %)	.5 (.5)	0 – 1
	Catholic (ref: not Catholic)	42.2 % (43.6 %)	.49 (.5)	0 – 1
	Protestant (ref: not Protestant)	32.8 % (22.6 %)	.47 (.42)	0 – 1
	Migration background (ref: none)	10.1 % (18.3 %)	.3 (.39)	0 – 1
	Education	7.82 (7.69)	3.39 (3.47)	1 – 13
	Financial situation	3.33 (3.22)	1.07 (1.06)	1 – 5
	Democratic dissatisfaction	1.96 (2.02)	.61 (.64)	1 – 4
	Euroscepticism	3.79 (3.95)	1.23 (1.17)	1 – 5
	National identity	3.54	.6	1 – 4
Contextual variables	Cantonal integration regime	0	.35	-.54 - .76
Contextual controls	Unemployment rate (%)	2.68	1.33	.9 – 6
	Immigrant population (%)	20.12	6.99	9.74 – 39.11
	Muslim population (%)	2.2	1.13	.55 – 5.2
	Asylum seeker population (%)	.44	.08	.26 - .56
	Foreigner law crimes	2.81	2.46	.1 – 12
	Social benefits recipients (%)	2.43	1.45	1 - 6.5
	Urbanization (people per km <sup>2</sup> )	512	1035	46.7 - 5257
	German speaking canton	Non-German 7, German-speaking 19	.45	0 – 1

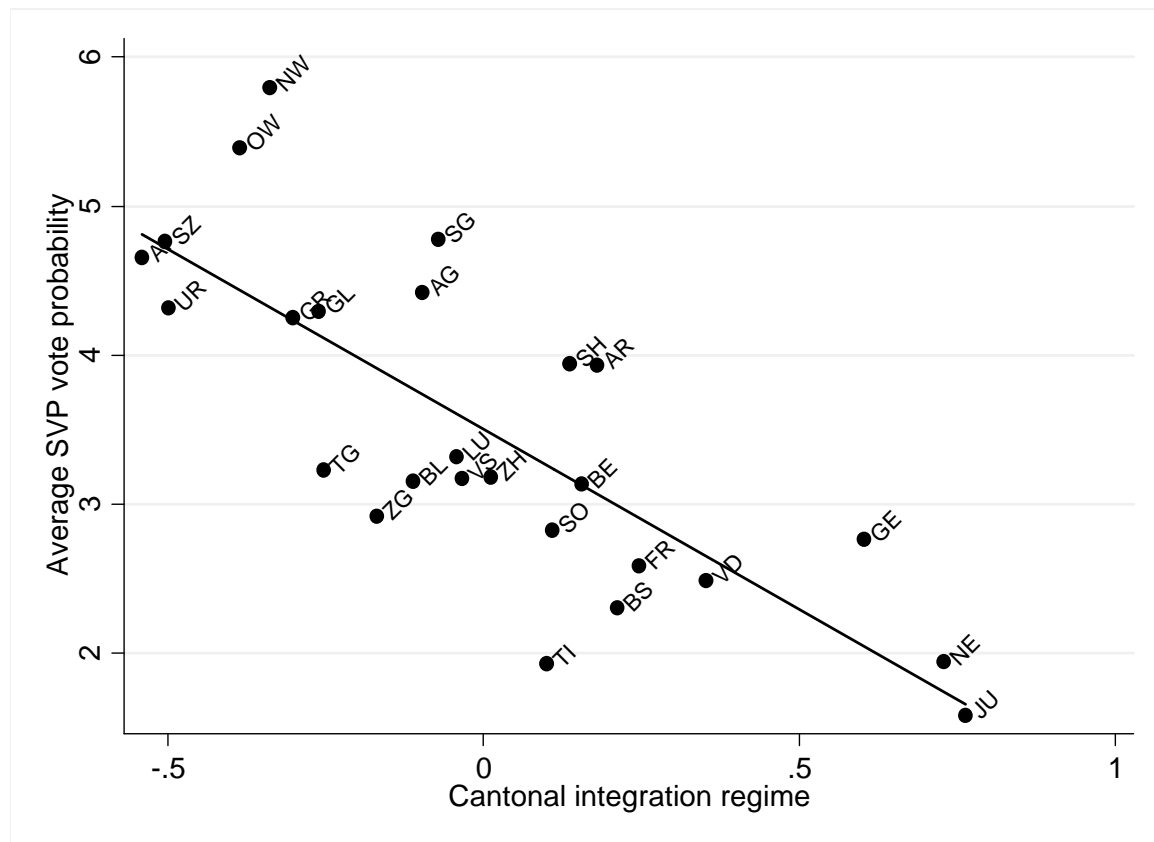
Note: Values in parentheses are values of respondents who only participated in the telephone survey. The wording of individual level variables is provided in Table 6 in the appendix.

In our study the dependent variable is the vote share received by the SVP in a canton in the national council elections of 2011. We use the self-declared **probability of an individual to ever vote for the SVP** which is approximately metric and allows us to work with simpler linear regression models. On average the German speaking cantons have a higher Probability to vote SVP than Latin cantons as can be seen in Figure 2.

Our main independent variable is **Cantonal integration regimes**. To capture regimes we use the Cantonal integration policy index constructed by Manatschal (2011). To capture

integration regimes Manatschal draws on MIPEX indicators that describe *access to nationality, anti-discrimination measures, political participation rights, labour market access and family reunion conditions* for immigrants in Swiss cantons (see Koopmans, 2010). Additional dimensions, not included in MIPEX, describe *cultural requirements for naturalization, religious rights outside public institutions, cultural rights in public institutions, political representation rights and group specific affirmative action in the labour market* (Koopmans, Statham, Giugni, & Passy 2005). Using factor analysis Manatschal identifies four underlying policy categories; political and civic rights, religious rights, socio-structural rights and cultural rights and obligations. Since none of these factors individually capture the concept of integration regimes, they are aggregated into a comprehensive index of cantonal integration policies. This index varies across cantons with the German speaking cantons having more exclusive integration regimes than the French and Italian speaking cantons. Figure 2 shows preliminary evidence for our main prediction: The relationship between cantonal integration regimes and the average Probability to vote SVP is negative. The average Probability to vote SVP is lower in cantons with more inclusive integration regimes. The French speaking cantons are largely in the lower right corner of the graph with the exception of Valais which is located closer to the middle. The German speaking cantons are in the upper left corner and the centre of the plot.

Figure 2. Scatterplot of the average Probability to vote SVP and Cantonal integration regimes by canton (the slope depicts a linear prediction without covariates)



Note: Higher values indicate more inclusive integration regimes.

Hypotheses 2 and 3 address mediating factors between integration regimes and Probability to vote SVP<sup>10</sup>. **Economic, Cultural and Physical threat** which are frequently mentioned in the political discourse are assessed with items ranging between the values of 1 and 5 with higher values indicating more threat. **Integration support, Muslim rights and Multiculturalism** are additive indices of two highly correlated items each. They range from 1 to 5 and higher values indicate more Integration support, more support for Muslim rights and more Multiculturalism. Table 4 provides an overview of the correlations of the immigration related variables. Normally the high correlation would be a reason to create a single factor but one of the aims of this study is to investigate which immigration related variables mediate the effect of cantonal integration policy on the Probability to vote SVP.

We control for basic demographic variables at the individual level. The **gender, Protestant or Catholic** confession as well as **Migration background** – meaning that an individual was not

<sup>10</sup> For the question wording see Table 8 in the Appendix.

born with Swiss citizenship but acquired it later in life – are captured with dichotomous variables. Furthermore, we control for **Age**, the relative **Financial situation** of the individual’s household, **Democratic dissatisfaction** as an indicator of a protest vote, **Euroscepticism** and the strength of the **National identity**.

Table 3. Correlations of immigration related variables

	Economic threat	Cultural threat	Physical threat	Integration support	Muslim rights
Cultural threat	.46	1			
Physical threat	.42	.48	1		
Integration support	-.34	-.38	-.42	1	
Muslim rights	-.38	-.44	-.43	.55	1
Multiculturalism	-.38	-.45	-.46	.58	.61

On the contextual level we control for several variables received from the Swiss Federal Statistical Office. Economic competition is controlled for by the average **Unemployment rate** in 2011 and the change of unemployment since 2010. Since average unemployment dropped in all cantons between 2010 and 2011, **Reduction of unemployment** is controlled for. We control for several variables that represent immigrant group sizes and their changes. **Immigrant population** measures the proportion of immigrants out of the total population of a canton. Because Muslims are often brought up in the Swiss political debate we have constructed the variable **Muslim population**<sup>11</sup>. **Asylum seeker population** and the **Growth of the asylum seeker population** are also proportions out of the total population. **Foreigner law crimes** describes how many violations of the Swiss foreigner law occurred for every 1000 residents of a canton. **Social benefit recipients** measures the proportion of residents who receive social benefits. **Urbanization** describes the population density or number of people living on a square kilometre of habitable land (e.g. not mountains) in a canton. Finally, we control for the language area or more specifically for whether a canton is a **German speaking canton**<sup>12</sup>. The language status of a canton and integration regimes are highly correlated at -.69. German speaking cantons have rather exclusive integration regimes. Traditionally, this language difference - also known as Röstigraben - has been

<sup>11</sup> Because information on the number of Muslim immigrants is not available we instead use the proportion of immigrants from countries in which the majority of the population is Muslim. If more than 50% of the population are Muslim the country is considered predominantly Muslim (see CIA World Factbook).

<sup>12</sup> The bilingual cantons Valais and Fribourg that have French speaking majorities are not considered German speaking.

accounted for by the inclusion of a dichotomous variable in statistical models and is used to explain differences in cantonal vote shares received by the SVP. Differences in integration regimes may be the actual cause of differences in vote shares between the linguistic regions and, if so, should explain the same or more variance.

#### **4. Results**

We use multilevel regression models to investigate our hypotheses and are primarily interested in the effects of integration regimes and individual immigration attitudes as well explained variance at the contextual level and indirect effects. Before exploring the contextual relationships further, multilevel models are built step by step, starting with individual-level variables as commonly done in multi-level modelling and then adding contextual predictors<sup>13</sup>. All models are estimated with 1419 observations – the remaining sample size after listwise deletion – and 26 contextual observations.

In Table 4 we present models with individual predictors, several of which have a significant influence on the Probability to vote SVP. In Model 3 containing all individual predictors, older individuals and women are less likely to vote for the SVP. Religious orientation, migration background, education, the financial situation of the household, democratic dissatisfaction and national identity do not have an effect on the Probability to vote SVP. Education does have the predicted negative effect when attitudes are not included in the model (Models 1 and 2) but it becomes insignificant once they are accounted for (Model 3). This suggests that it is not the educational level itself but the associated more positive attitudes towards immigrants that reduce the anti-immigrant vote among highly educated individuals. Eurosceptics have a higher Probability to vote SVP. Importantly, individuals that perceive Cultural threat or Physical threat from immigrants have a higher Probability to vote SVP. This confirms hypothesis 3A for Cultural and Physical threat but not for Economic threat (path 3). Hypothesis 3B is confirmed for all variables; Integration support, support of Muslim rights and Multiculturalism reduce the Probability to vote SVP. Model 3 explains 42% of the variance at the individual level. Furthermore, the individual predictors explain a substantial part of the variance at the contextual level through composition effects caused by euroscepticism and the immigration related variables.

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<sup>13</sup> The usual notation of mediation models and the order of our hypotheses follows another order than the common building of multilevel models.



Table 4. Multilevel regressions on Probability to vote SVP – individual predictors

	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Constant	3.47*** (.2)	6.95*** (.55)	-.65 (.41)	3.81*** (.88)
<b><i>Socio-demography</i></b>				
Age		-.03*** (.01)	-.02*** (.01)	-.02*** (.0)
Gender		-1.07*** (.19)	-1.01*** (.17)	-.73*** (.15)
Catholic		.37 (.24)	.17 (.22)	-.25 (.19)
Protestant		.5** (.25)	.33 (.23)	.04 (.2)
Migration background		-.12 (.31)	.03 (.28)	.23 (.25)
Education		-.25*** (.03)	-.17*** (.03)	-.02 (.02)
Financial situation		.0 (.09)	.03 (.08)	.07 (.07)
<b><i>Right wing ideology</i></b>				
Democratic dissatisfaction			.22 (.14)	-.03 (.12)
Eurocepticism			1.12*** (.07)	.51*** (.07)
National identity			.58*** (.15)	.15 (.13)
<b><i>Immigration variables</i></b>				
Economic threat				.09 (.06)
Cultural threat				.41*** (.06)
Physical threat				.28*** (.07)
Integration support				-.41*** (.08)
Muslim rights				-.39*** (.08)
Multiculturalism				-.43*** (.1)
Intercept variance	.776	.581	.25	.16
Residual variance	12.57	11.64	9.68	7.28
Intra-Class-Correlation	5.8%	-	-	-
R <sup>2</sup> individual level	-	7%	23%	42%
R <sup>2</sup> contextual level	-	25%	68%	79%
AIC	7661.319	7562.22	7295.129	6901.531

Note: \*\*\* p<.01, \*\* p<.05, \* p<.1 (Standard errors in parentheses)

### *Integration regimes and contextual effects*

Model building is pursued in Table 5 by adding Cantonal integration regimes as a contextual predictor of differences in the Probability to vote SVP across cantons. When entered without contextual controls inclusive Cantonal integration policy significantly reduces the average Probability to vote SVP (Model 4a). The remaining intercept variance is substantially reduced. We then control for the alternative explanations of cantonal differences in the average Probability to vote SVP. Since there are only 26 observations at the contextual level, control variables at the contextual level cannot be added simultaneously but rather sequentially in order to avoid problems of multicollinearity (compare Bühlmann & Freitag,

2006). Throughout Models 4b – 4i, the effect and the significance of the effect of integration regimes remain stable when controlling for these competing explanations. This strongly supports our main hypothesis (H1): inclusive Cantonal integration regimes reduce average Probability to vote SVP. Concerning the controls at the contextual level we find that a larger Immigrant population and a higher number of Foreigner law crimes have a positive relationship with average Probability to vote SVP as predicted. However, these effects are only significant at the 10% level and do not substantially change the effect of Cantonal integration regimes. The other contextual predictors do not have effects that are significant at conventional levels<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> If tested individually without integration regimes average Unemployment and the proportion of Social benefits recipients have a significant negative effect on the Probability to vote SVP and being German speaking canton has a significant positive effect on the average Probability to vote SVP.

Table 5. Multilevel regressions on Probability to vote SVP – contextual predictors (individual predictors omitted from table)

	Model 4a		Model 4b		Model 4c		Model 4d		Model 4e	
Constant	3.79***	(.87)	3.6***	(.9)	3.44***	(.88)	3.65***	(.87)	3.76***	(.99)
<b>Contextual predictors</b>										
Cantonal integration regime	-1.13***	(.25)	-1.29***	(.36)	-1.31***	(.26)	-1.21***	(.25)	-1.13***	(.26)
Unemployment rate			.06	(.09)						
Immigrant population					.02*	(.01)				
Muslim population							.01	(.08)		
Asylum seeker population									.05	(1.05)
Intercept variance	.018		.003		.0		.0		.018	
Residual variance	7.28		7.29		7.29		7.29		7.28	
R <sup>2</sup> contextual level	98%		100%		100%		100%		98%	
AIC	6887.613		6889.3		6886.843		6888.097		6889.611	

	Model 4f		Model 4g		Model 4h		Model 4i	
Constant	3.63***	(.88)	3.66***	(.89)	3.77***	(.87)	3.72***	(.87)
<b>Contextual predictors</b>								
Cantonal integration regime	-1.29***	(.26)	-1.29***	(.33)	-1.18***	(.25)	-.98***	(.35)
Foreigner law crimes	.05*	(.03)						
Social benefits recipients			.06	(.08)				
Urbanization					.0	(.0)		
German speaking canton							.16	(.26)
Intercept variance	.0		.018		.004		.022	
Residual variance	7.28		7.28		7.29		7.28	
R <sup>2</sup> contextual level	100%		98%		99%		97%	
AIC	6886.661		6889.088		6888.468		6889.222	

Note: \*\*\* p<.01, \*\* p<.05, \* p<.1 (Standard errors in parentheses)

*Indirect effects of integration regimes on Probability to vote SVP*

To determine whether there is an indirect effect of Cantonal integration regimes on the average Probability to vote SVP two effects have to be present. The first is the effect of Cantonal integration regimes on the mediating variable (H2). The second effect required – that the mediating variable has an effect on the dependent variable – has already been established for all variables except Economic threat (see hypotheses 3A and 3B).

Table 6. Influence of cantonal integration regimes on the mediating variable

	Model 5a		Model 5b	
	Integration support		Euroscepticism	
Constant	2.91***	(.28)	3.96***	(.32)
<b>Basic demography</b>				
Age	-.0	(.0)	-.01***	(.0)
Gender	.08	(.05)	.06	(.06)
Catholic	-.06	(.06)	-.04	(.07)
Protestant	-.05	(.07)	-.02	(.08)
Migration background	.12	(.08)	-.03	(.1)
Education	.01	(.01)	-.01	(.01)
Financial situation	-.04*	(.02)	-.02	(.03)
<b>Right wing ideology</b>				
Democratic dissatisfaction	-.05	(.04)	-.05	(.05)
Euroscepticism	-.13***	(.02)	-	
National identity	-.15***	(.04)	.24***	(.05)
<b>Immigration items</b>				
Economic threat	-.02	(.02)	.07***	(.02)
Cultural threat	-.02	(.02)	.06***	(.02)
Physical threat	-.08***	(.02)	.08***	(.03)
Integration support	-		-.18***	(.03)
Muslim rights	.2***	(.03)	-.15***	(.03)
Multiculturalism	.35***	(.03)	-.03	(.04)
<b>Contextual predictors</b>				
Cantonal integration regimes	.46***	(.1)	-.29***	(.11)

Note: \*\*\* p<.01, \*\* p<.05, \* p<.1 (Standard errors in parentheses) Variance components omitted.

We thus examined whether Cantonal integration regimes influence average values of the immigration attitudes (Economic, cultural, physical threat, multiculturalism, integration support and Muslim rights support). The main conclusion of these models is that Cantonal integration regimes only have a significant effect on individual integration support (b-coefficient = .45, Standard error = .1). Therefore, a significant mediating effect is only assessed for one variable – Integration support – out of three variables addressed in

hypothesis 2B while there is no support for hypothesis 2A and therefore these variables are not considered mediators. We used bootstrapping to determine the proportion of the total effect that is mediated and whether the indirect effect is significant. When Integration support is considered the mediator (see Tables 6 and 7), controlling for the other immigration attitudes, 13.3% of the total effect of Cantonal integration regimes on the average Probability to vote SVP is mediated (Total effect -1.313, direct effect -1.138, indirect effect -.175 (Confidence interval: -.268 to -.082), significant at  $p < .01$ , 500 bootstraps)<sup>15</sup>. Since we control for the other attitudes and these attitudes are highly correlated this proportion can be considered a conservative estimate of the indirect effect. If Integration support is considered without the other immigration related variables the proportion of the indirect effect is increased to 34.9%.

While we do not address Euroscepticism in our hypotheses as a mediating variable we do find that it also mediates the effect of cantonal integration regimes on the average Probability to vote SVP, indicating a close relationship between anti-immigration attitudes and Euroscepticism in Switzerland.

Table 7. Total, direct and indirect effect of integration regimes via the mediators on Probability to vote SVP

Mediator	Total effect	Indirect effect	Direct effect	Proportion of mediated effect
Integration support	-1.31***	-.17***	-1.14***	.133
Euroscepticism	-1.28***	-.145***	-1.138***	.113

Note: Using the command ml\_mediation in STATA. \*\*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*  $p < .05$ , \*  $p < .1$ . 500 Bootstraps.

## 5. Conclusion

This study shows that integration regimes relate to the average Probability to vote for the SVP across Swiss cantons when accounting for several alternative explanations. Voters who live in cantons with more inclusive integration regimes are less likely to vote for the anti-immigrant SVP because it opposes the Status Quo of inclusive integration regimes. Additionally to the direct effect the attitudes of voters are influenced by integration regimes in their cantons, creating an indirect effect of integration regimes on Probability to vote SVP via individuals' support for integration. However, integration regimes do not influence

<sup>15</sup> As the indirect effect is based on the Integration support index, we tested the items of the index separately as mediators and achieved similar results.

average levels of Multiculturalism, support for Muslim rights or average perceptions of threat. Why is only Integration support a mediator? A possible explanation for this might be that the French speaking cantons are influenced by French ideas of cultural monism that promote and incorporation or integration of immigrants but less so multicultural ideas while the German speaking cantons are generally less inclined towards either multicultural or integration policies due to the legacy of “guest worker” type segregationist integration regimes (compare Manatschal, 2011). Integration regimes do not influence average threat levels, most likely because they are primarily concerned with the treatment of immigrants and do not address perceptions of threat.

Applying the conclusions of this research to other countries should nevertheless be done cautiously. Many countries have unique conditions that influence anti-immigrant voting. Germany for example has anti-immigrant parties but none of these parties are successful at the national level. This may be a consequence of the German national socialist past and the consequent political and societal shunning of related policy positions which makes it hard for right-wing anti-immigrant parties to achieve any broad successes. Furthermore our research is based on Switzerland, a country with a federal political system. If the integration regime of a country is centralized and does not vary between regions it cannot influence differences in anti-immigrant voting. Though even when a de jure integration regime is unvarying, the de facto policy implementation may vary.

While a cross-sectional design does not allow firm causal claims, we can offer some evidence for the link between integration regimes and anti-immigrant voting. First integration regimes have been exclusive long before the rise of populist anti-immigrant parties, suggesting that the parties did not create the exclusive integration regimes. Manatschal (2012) has shown that integration regimes in Switzerland are relatively stable and not directly dependent on SVP vote share in cantonal parliaments or SVP participation in cantonal government<sup>16</sup>. This highlights that Swiss integration regimes are “sticky” institutions and not subject to spontaneous changes due to changes in government and therefore not directly dependent

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<sup>16</sup> Even in cantons in which the SVP is strongest, the party does not manage to win more than 40% of the votes. There is no incumbent cantonal government that is run exclusively by the SVP or in which the majority of government members are members of the SVP. Consequently, the SVP is not capable of toughening integration regimes without the cooperation of – at least some of – the other parties.

on vote shares (Manatschal, 2012). In recent years there have been restrictive referendums on integration related issues, for example the construction ban on minarets in Switzerland in 2009 and asylum limitations in 2013. Through direct democracy attitudes can influence integration regimes without influencing vote shares. This suggests that the relationship between integration regimes and popular attitudes is circular. However, the influence of direct democracy is often at the national level and leaves cantonal regime differences intact. When considering the relationship between individual anti-immigrant attitudes and the Probability to vote SVP there clearly is a strong relationship between both variables. This provides us with strong support for the hypothesis that anti-immigrant attitudes influence SVP voting<sup>17</sup>.

The overlap between integration regimes and language regions also requires thought. We suggest that integration regimes, and not language differences, explain the difference in anti-immigrant voting. The language regions may be conducive to the effect of integration regimes because they create separate regions for public discourse and media distribution. Additionally, Swiss citizens are more likely to move within their language regions instead of across language regions thereby reducing exchange of attitudes across language regions. Furthermore, the SVP is a party that originated in German speaking Switzerland, so the differences could be path dependent – the vote shares have not yet converged – or a sign of a remaining historical proximity to German speaking Swiss. However, the SVP does not postulate a specific closeness with German speaking Switzerland, the party makes efforts to increase its vote share in French and Italian speaking Switzerland and it does not advocate autonomy or preferential treatment of German speaking Switzerland. This is the case in other western multilingual countries like Belgium (New Flemish Alliance) and Canada (Quebec Bloc) that have parties which are stronger in one language region than another language region.

In this paper we made assumptions about the conditions that allow integration regimes and political learning processes to cause cantonal differences in support for integration. Further research should examine whether the discourse in the media, educational systems or

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<sup>17</sup> Long-standing party affiliation may affect attitudes due to political cues that voters receive from their parties. Since the SVP has only grown stronger when it started to express more anti-immigrant attitudes we consider that a majority of SVP voters have not formed their attitudes according to a previously existing party affiliation.

socialization processes in family and work environment are actually responsible for these differences.

Given the results of this study future research into the relationship between integration regimes immigration attitudes an anti-immigrant voting should consider other countries with federal political systems. Especially countries that have a single national language can provide further insights into the relationship between integration regimes and anti-immigrant voting.

Despite these caveats, the current paper goes beyond studies that demonstrate the impact of economic and structural conditions on anti-immigrant voting. We revealed that the institutional context, here depicted by integration regimes, underlies anti-immigrant voting.

## 6. Appendix

Table 8. Wording and variable construction

Variable	Wording or content of variable
Voting probability SVP	What is the probability that you will ever vote for the SVP?
Economic threat	Immigration proposition: Migrants exacerbate the job market situation.
Cultural threat	Immigration proposition: Swiss culture vanishes due to immigration.
Physical threat	Immigration proposition: Violence and vandalism due to young immigrants.
Integration support (additive index)	(1) Immigrants living in Switzerland for at least 10 years should be granted the right to vote on cantonal level. (2) Government should financially support language classes for immigrants.
Muslim rights (additive index)	(1) Muslim women should have the right to wear a religious headscarf in public. (2) Muslims should have the right to construct minarets.
Multiculturalism (additive index)	(1) Cultural life is enriched by people coming from other countries. (2) Immigrants may keep their own traditions and values when they come to live in Switzerland.
Gender	Male = 0, Female = 1
Catholic	Non-Catholic = 0, Catholic = 1
Protestant	Non-Protestant = 0, Protestant = 1
Migration background	Born as Swiss citizen = 0, Naturalized citizen = 1
Education	What is the highest degree or level of education that you have achieved?
Financial situation	How do you perceive your household income, compared to the average Swiss household?
Democratic dissatisfaction	Are you satisfied with the way democracy works in Switzerland?
Euro scepticism	Are you for Switzerland entering the European Union or do you prefer Switzerland staying out of the European Union?
National identity	How strong is your attachment to Switzerland?

Note: Approximate translation. The original questions were asked in German, French and Italian.



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