Testing the Group threat theory in an European context

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1 Summary

This thesis has the aim to better understand the variations in attitudes towards migrants. It will do so using the group threat theory introduced by Lincoln Quillian in 1995. This theory suggests an interaction between GDP and the percentage of non-EU migrants in society. He argues that this interaction is important for explaining attitudes to migrants. More specifically, when the product of an interaction between the inverse of GDP and the percentage of non-EU migrants is high, attitudes towards migrants are predicted to be negative. As such, this thesis asks ''To what extent can group threat theory help explain the attitudes towards migrants in European countries?''. To analyse this research question open source data for European countries are used, with data about the attitudes of national populations towards migrants derived from the European Social Survey (ESS) and data about the percentage of non-EU migrants and GDP are collected from Eurostat. Applied in the context of contemporary Europe, the results typically support the predictions of group threat theory, though there are important outliers. Estonia and the Czech Republic do not fit the typical relationship. The group threat theory assumes that non-EU migrants have a different set of cultural threats than the European migrants. Therefore, the attitudes towards those migrants will be more negative. But the non-EU migrants in Estonia are mostly Russians and they have largely the same cultural background as the host country. In the case of the Czech Republic no conclusive reason could be found. Once these outliers are removed, the remaining countries do show a negative relationship between low gdp, high shares of non-EU populations and negative attitudes to migrants. So to conclude the group threat theory seems to hold true for most of the cases. But it fails to explain two specific cases. The theory has to be extended to include the factors playing a role in those cases. A option could be to combine the historical and political context, suggested by other literature, with the economic and demographic context, represented in the group threat theory. This combination could offer

another inside than the economic and demographic alone, represented in the group threat theory.

2 Introduction

2.1 Background

In 2015 and 2016 more than 1 million people, either migrants or refugees, entered the European union (European union, 2017). This so-called 'migration crisis' has led to a range of different policy responses between the member states of the EU. Germany, for example, was relatively welcoming with Angela Merkle's ''*wir shaffen das*'' statement fuelling a heated discussion in German society and marking a uniquely open policy towards refugees (Trouw, 2016). A completely different policy approach is being undertaken by the Hungarian government where, in opposition to EU values, the government decided to physically close the borders by building fences (Trouw, 2016). At the wider EU-scale, and equally surrounded by heated public discussion, the ''turkey deal'' was passed, bringing the high influx of migrants to a relative standstill. As of March 20th 2016, all new irregular migrants crossing from Turkey into the EU, via Greek islands, are returned to Turkey (Seeberg, 2016).

In addition to the migration crisis, Europe is also recovering from the biggest economic crisis since 1930 (European Economy, 2009). The economic crisis did not hit all of the European countries evenly, some countries have fared better than others. For example Greece, Ireland and the UK experienced severe GDP drop while the effects for the Netherlands and Germany where relatively small (Kickert, 2012). In section *4.2* of this paper the economic fluctuations will be further assessed. This crisis is also said to have had an influence on public and political attitudes towards migrants and refugees. During the economic crisis support for nationalistic, and often anti-immigrant, right-wing parties emerged all over Europe (Garcia faroldi, 2009). Examples can be seen in Germany with the

Alternative for Germany (AfD), the UK with the rise to prominence of the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) and in France with the growth of the Front National (Bertz 2013). due to the differences in impact of the economic crisis it is expected that the changes in attitudes will also be fluctuating between countries.

At the same time, Europe is facing up to the reality of an ever aging population. The burden of the non-productive share of the society on the productive share of the population is growing (European union, 2017). which may lead to problems in sustaining the social support systems that are currently in place (Smith 2015). One of the solutions to this problem could be to increase the productive part of society. Pantuliano (2016) argues that refugees and migrants can significantly contribute to society when they are given the opportunity. So the migration crisis could also be an opportunity for those countries facing a demographic crisis in terms of an ageing population and a shrinking population. A key factor that influences the extent to which refugees and migrants are given these opportunities is public attitudes. Whenever organisations are trying to get funds for projects, create job opportunities or help out refugees and migrants in other ways, the overall effectiveness will depend highly on the attitudes in society towards migrants and refugees.

With this in mind, to better understand differences in policies and to better respond to migration or even use it to an advantage, it is important to understand what factors determine the public attitudes towards migrants.

2.2 Research problem

This thesis has the aim to better understand attitudes towards migrants. It will do so using the group threat theory, a theory that acknowledges specific economic and demographic factors that, as noted, are of particular relevance in the context of Europe today. The question

that this thesis will be trying to answer is: ''To what extent can group threat theory help explain the attitudes towards migrants in the European countries ?''

In order to give an answer to this overall research question, four subsequent sub-questions must be addressed:

1. How did the GDP change over time in different European countries?
2. How did the percentage of non-EU-migrants in European countries change over time?
3. How did the attitude towards migrants change over time in European countries?
4. Do these trends follow the same path as the group threat theory predicts?

2.3 Structure of the thesis

This thesis will start with a review of the literature and the subsequent development of a theoretical framework (Section *2.4*), wherein some of the main factors that influence the attitudes towards migrants will be addressed. It will continue with a more in depth explanation of the group threat theory by Quillian. These theories will be combined in to a conceptual model describing the factors influencing the attitudes towards migrants (Section *2.5*). From this conceptual modal three hypotheses are derived (Section *2.6*). Following this, the methodology section (Section *3*) will explain the choice of research method, where and how the data is collected and the quality of the data. In the results section (Section *4*) the data analysis will be discussed. First, GDP changes are discussed (Section 4.1) , both on a European (Section *4.1.1.*) and country level (Section *4.1.2*) . Second, an assessment of the percentage of non-EU migrants in the European countries is given (Section 4.2), before the attitudes towards migrants across Europe are described (Section *4.3*). These three factors combined form the basis for the last part of the results addressed, in section *4.4*, where the

interaction introduced by Quillian is analysed. In this analyses the correlation between the product of the inverse of GDP and share of non-EU migrants and attitudes to migrants is tested. Finally, the thesis is concluded with a summary of the findings (Section *5*), recommendations for policy and a reflection on the limitation of the research undertaken herein.

2.4 Theoretical framework

A lot of research has been done about what influences the attitude of people towards migrants. A distinction that has been made is between the attitude of individual people, a good example is Mayda (2006) or O'Rourke and Sinnott (2006), and that of a nation as a whole like McCollum et al. (2014) did. This thesis will focus on the national level. The factors that have been indicated by previous research can roughly be grouped in to four main factors: political, historical, demographic and economic (Dempster et al., 2017). Given time constraints, this thesis will focus on the latter two and in doing so will employ the group threat theory that focuses on these factors in particular.

The group threat theory focuses on two key factors: GDP per capita (economic) and the relative size of the ''subordinate'' group (demographic) (Quillian, 1995). Quillian identifies an interaction between these two factors, where the higher the relative levels in this interaction the more negative the national population's attitude will be towards immigrants.

Quilian's fist argument about the demographic factor is that when the relative size of the minority group grows it will increasingly compete with the dominant group for scarce resources like jobs. Secondly he argues that as the relative size of the minority group grows it will increase the potential for political mobilization. This political mobilization will create a threat to the establishment from the dominant group and fuel resistant from this group. Quillian regards non-EU migrants to be the minority group. He supposes that this group has a

different cultural background than the dominant group in the host country. The difference in cultural background makes that the resistance against non-EU migrants will be greater than towards EU-migrants.

Quilian's argumentation for the economic factor is mainly focused on the assumption that the connection between the economic circumstances and result from either scapegoating the minority group for economic hardship, or again from the increased competition between the minority group and the dominant group. In the latter instance because the resources become increasingly scarce through economic downfall. The group threat theory implies that when the economic circumcises worsen the dominant group fears it will lose their economic advantages over the minority group. In cases where economic circumstances improve this group feelings of threat also diminishes.

Historical factors influence the attitudes towards immigrants and refugees. South Africa for example is one of the most hostile countries in the world towards immigrants and refugees. This attitude towards migrants can only be understood when you take in to account the apartheid history (Crush et al. , 2015). Another example is the luso-tropicalism in Portugal.

''Luso–tropicalism is based on the hypothetical existence of a specific Portuguese cultural trait: the natural capacity and ability of Portuguese to relate to people that are seen as different—a trait that would explain the unique character of colonial relationships and that would, nowadays, have a positive impact on the relationships between Portuguese and immigrants.'' (Vala, Lopes, and Lima,2008)

Vala, Lopes, and Lima (2008) argue that luso-tropicalism has been developed because of the specific colonial history. Due to the luso-tropicalism the traditional association between

national identity and overt prejudice is weaker in Portugal compared to other European countries.

Political factors also play a role in the attitudes towards migrants and refugees. In recent years many political parties have linked migration with economic, security and cultural issues (Crawley and McMahon, 2016). This kind of scapegoating has taken place in several political debates over the past years. A good example of this was Donald Trump during his presidential election campaign where he linked drugs and crime to Mexican immigrants (Andreas, 2009. doves, 2016. Edwards et all., 2017). A critical note that must be takin into account is that political debate is being influenced by the attitudes that are already present in the society. The Brexit campaign was a good example of a political debate fuelled by a sense of dissatisfaction in society. So political debate influences attitudes but also the other way around (Edwards et all., 2017)

This thesis will try to validate if the group threat theory holds true in the European context and also to what extent. Due to limited time and resources this thesis will focus on the attitudes of nations as a whole. Duffy et al. (2015) do give a critical side note to the national level approach. She argues that it is too simplistic to just take an average attitude of a country because it discards geographical and social differences within a country. In spite of the argument of Duffy et al. analysing changes and revealing interesting geographical variations at a cross-country scale can be important in cases such as the EU where each country has the ability to delay EU-wide policy formation (Morano-Foadi et all., 2015). De la Porte (2002) argues that assessing the attitudes in society is crucial for creating effective European policy.

2.5 Conceptual model
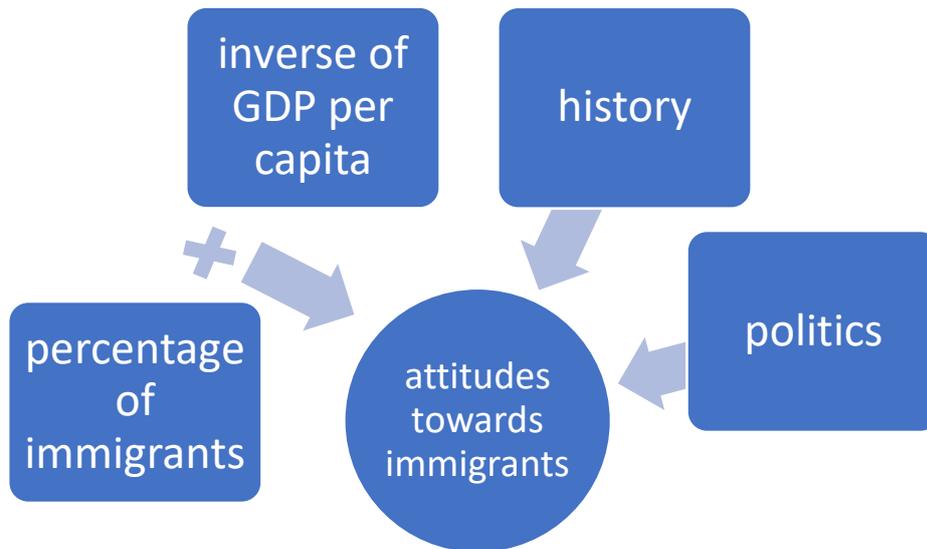
Quillian (1995) argues that the interaction between the inverse of the GDP and the percentage of immigrants is a good indicator for the attitudes towards immigrants, where the higher the relative levels in this interaction the more negative the national population's attitude will be towards immigrants. To test this model, a comparison of trends between two points in time will be performed. One being 2014 before the start of the ''migration crisis'' and 2016, the year the ''turkey deal'' was struck. The literature suggest that factors like history and politics do also play a role in shaping attitudes towards migrants. Due to the limited scope of the thesis it will only focus on the factors addressed by Quillian in his group threat theory.

2.6 Hypotheses

H1 attitudes between countries that experience economic decline will see an increase in negative attitudes, while those who experience growth will see an increase in positive attitudes.

H2 countries that have the greatest increase in non-EU migrant population will show an increase in negative attitudes.

H3 Where GDP drops and the inflow of migrants increases, negative attitudes towards migrants will increase most sharply.

3 Methodology

3.1 Data collection

The research questions has been analysed with European open source. The main data about the attitudes of national populations towards migrants are derived from the European Social Survey (ESS) . The data about the percentage of non-EU migrants in the population and GDP have been collected from Eurostat. This data set is analysed over time to look for trends in attitudes for specific countries. The correlation between the attitudes toward migrants and the interaction proposed by Quilian has been tested.

3.2 GDP levels

The first factor assessed is the level of GDP. To make the change in GDP comparable between countries an index number is created. For this analysis 2007 will be taken as an index base year. This base year is chosen to better display the drop in average GDP that occurred during the latest financial crisis. To set this drop in perspective, data from 2006 and onwards is shown in Figure 3. The change between the index number in 2009 and in 2016 is calculated to show the development of GDP in this period of time. The year 2009 has been chosen because this was the low point in the financial crisis, when looking at GDP. A critical note has to be made about the use of GDP to measure economic development. Giannetti et all (2014) argue that defining economic growth as merely an increase in total value of goods and services produced and traded in a country is too simplistic. However, in

following the group threat theory, GDP is the most appropriate indicator because it is the indicator described by Quillen.

3.3 Percentage of non-EU population

The second factor assessed is the percentage of non-EU population. In each country, the percentage has been calculated for 2014 and 2016. These points in time have been chosen because this was before and after the ''Turkey deal''. In this period of time the media gave a lot of attention to the ''migration crisis'' so the public became aware of the problems. Harteveld et all (2018) suggest that from that point onwards people's attitudes will start changing. It should be noted that these data do not include pending asylum requests. So the actual size of the non-EU population may differ. Again this choice has been made to stay in line with the interaction that Quillian suggests.

Attitudes towards migrants are collected from the European social survey. This survey contains the statement ''immigrants make the country a better place to live''. Subjects are asked to rank this statement between 0: ''Immigrants make the country a worst place to live'' and 10: ''immigrants make the country a better place to live''. Where answers are recorded for each respondent in each country, an average score is calculated for each country.

3.4 Attitudes towards migrants

To analyse the change of the attitudes over time, two points in time where selected, 2014 and 2016. One being 2014 before the start of the ''migration crisis'' and the other 2016, the year the ''turkey deal'' was struck. To better analyse the change in attitudes the change is calculated through an index number, with 2014 being the base year. The fact that the data seems to centre around 5.0, the neutral option. It may be the case that people find it difficult to express a more extreme stand point on such a controversial topic (Presser and Schuman, 1980).

3.5 testing the group threat theory

The final analyses is to compare the collected data to the predictions of the group threat theory. Quillian (1995) argues that the interaction between the inverse of the GDP (1/GDPx1000) and the percentage of non-EU immigrants in the society is a good indicator for the attitudes towards non-EU immigrants. The higher this interaction is the more negative the attitudes towards immigrants. To test the theory the inverse of the GDP is calculated for every single European country in the data set for the year 2014 and 2016. The inverse is multiplied by the percentage of non-EU-immigrants in in the corresponding societies. This results in the interacting suggested by Quillian.

4 Results

4.1 Change of the attitudes towards migrants over time

The first step taken in assessing the group threat theory is analysing the change of attitudes towards migrants. In Figure 1 the attitudes towards migrants in 2016 are displayed. The categories are formed from best to worst in this data set. From dark green being the most welcoming towards migrants to dark red being the least welcoming. So when the data set would have been more extensive than countries could have been in other categories. There is no clear geographical distribution of positive and negative attitudes across the European countries. In Figure 2, the changes in attitudes are displayed with the base year being 2014. The attitudes seem to be relatively stable (Figure 2).
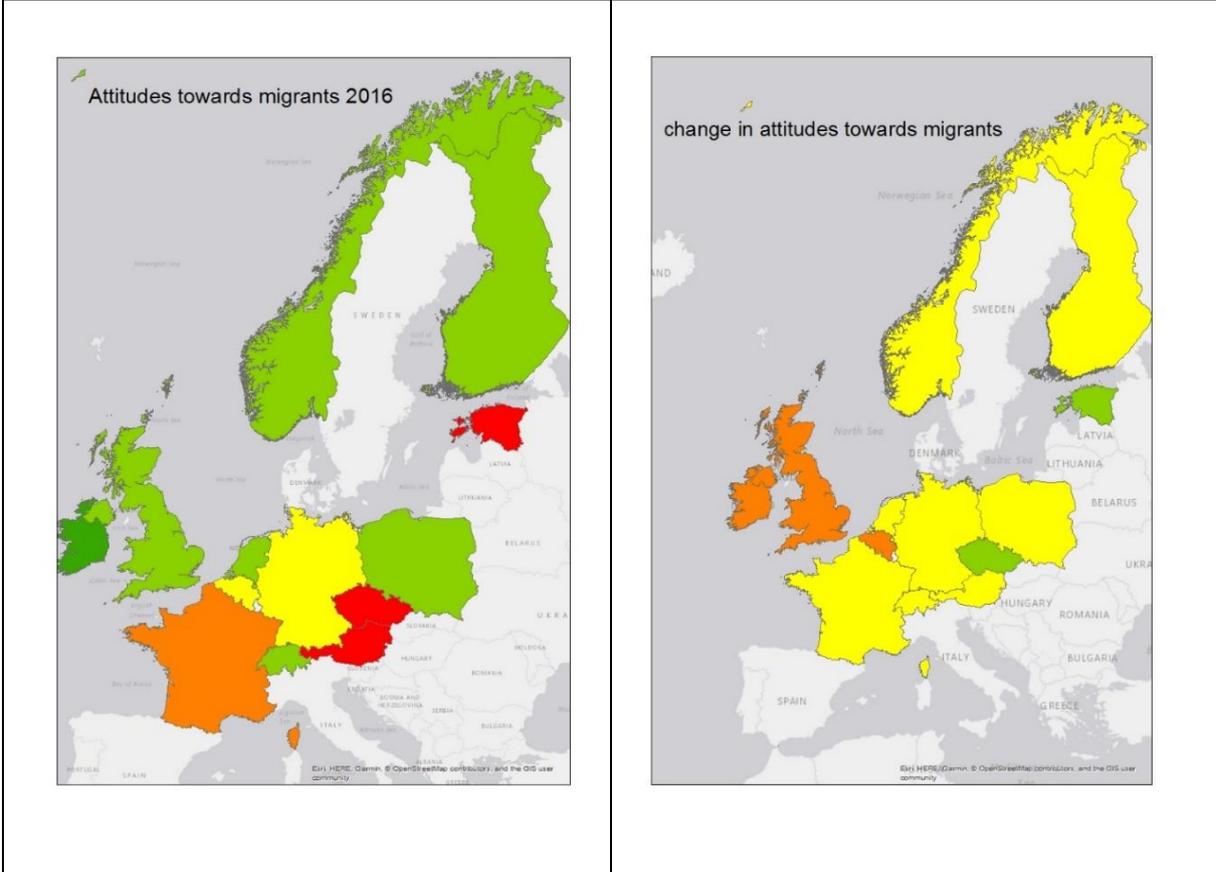
Figure 1: Map attitudes towards Migrants 2016

Figure 2: Mapchange in attitudes towards migrants

Legend	Attitudes towards migrants (2016
	Lower than 85
	Between 85 - 95
	Between 95 - 105
	Between 105 - 115
	Higher than 115

Legend	Change in attitudes towards migrants (Base year 2014)
	Lower than 85
	Between 85 - 95
	Between 95 - 105
	Between 105- 115
	Higher than 115

4.2 Change of the GDP over time

4.2.1 Europe as a whole.

The second step taken in assessing the group threat theory is analysing the GDP fluctuations in Europe. As show in Figure 3, between 2006 and 2007 the average GDP grew rapidly after that it stabilized between 2007 and 2008. In 2008 the crisis hit and the average GPD plummeted to levels below that from 2006. From 2009 onwards the GDP has been recovering and is still growing at the moment far beyond the levels before the crisis.
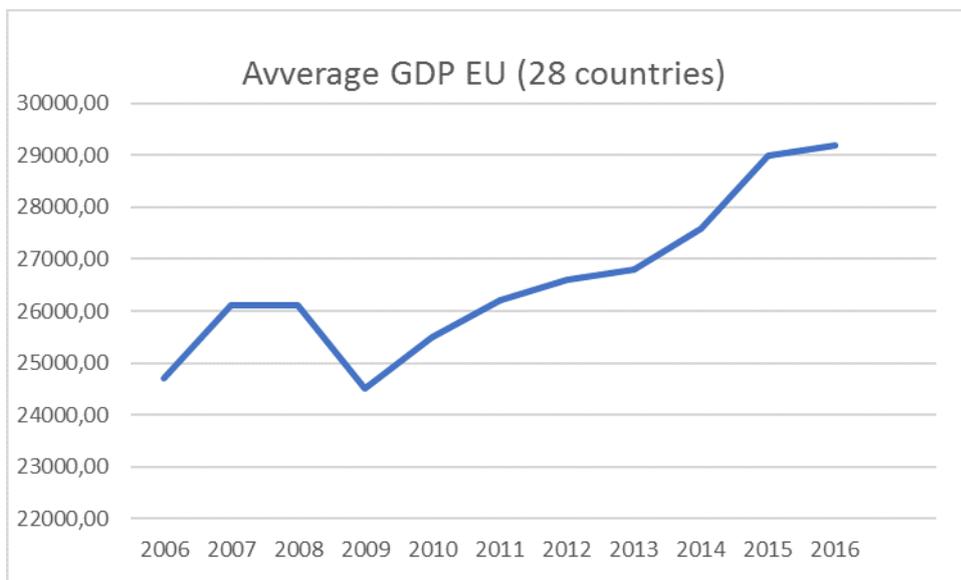

Figure 3: Average GDP 28 EU countries

4.2.2 At the country level.

The argument of Duffy (2015) is also relevant in respect to the European scale. When looking at the average GDP fluctuations you discard geographical differences within Europe. So to better understand the GDP fluctuations you have to look at the country level. The same argumentation could be used to zoom in even more to the regional level, but this would surpass the scope of this research. At the country level the fluctuations are more diverse. In Figure 4 and 5 below you can see the change in the index of the GDP in 2009 and 2016, with the index base year of 2007. In 2009 the GDP growth in almost all the European countries

came to a standstill (Figure 4). The Scandinavian countries together with the Baltic states and Hungary already experienced a decline in their GDP from more than 5 percent. The UK, Ireland and Iceland experienced even lager decline of over 15 percent. On the other side of the coin their where still some countries experiencing GDP growth namely Slovakia, Czech Republic, Switzerland and Bulgaria. With the last one even experiencing growth exceeding 15 percent.

In 2016 large part of Europe was again experiencing GDP growth apart from the UK, Spain, Italy and Norway with are stable around the level of GDP in 2007 (Figure 5). Special attention should go to Greece that has still a GDP that is below the pre-crisis level and is even lower than that in 2009. To conclude, even though the average GDP for Europe is giving a promising image of growth and seems to overcome the drop of the crisis. Some countries are clearly still struggling with the aftermath of the financial crisis.
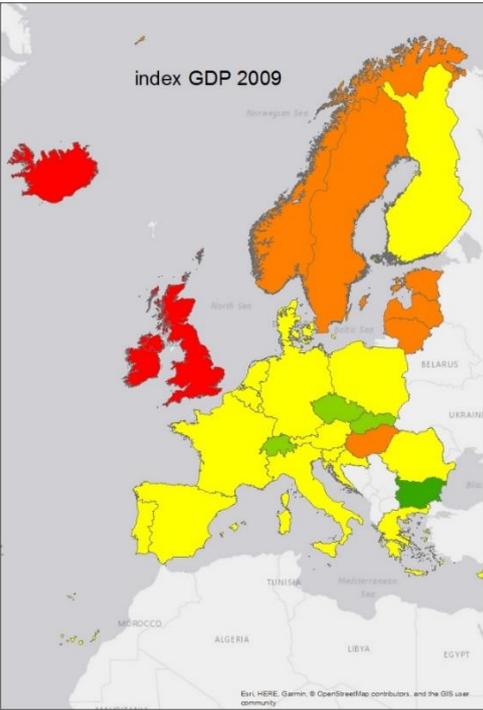
Figure 4:Map Index GDP 2009
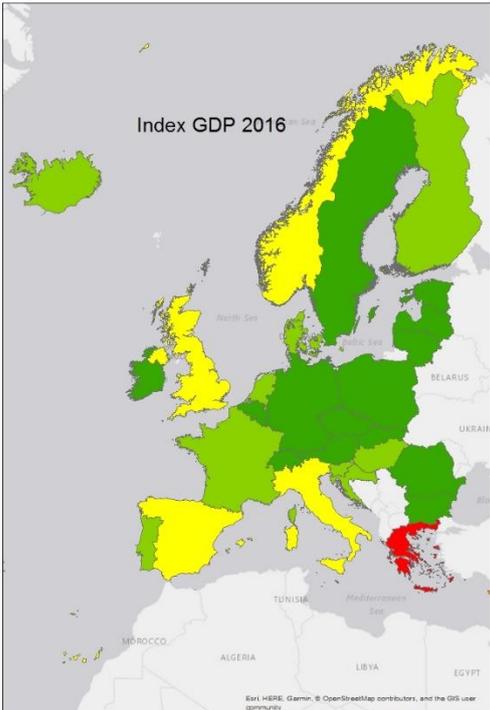
Figure 5: Map Index GDP 2016

Legend	Index of GDP (Base year 2007)
	Lower than 85
	Between 85 - 95
	Between 95 - 105
	Between 105 - 115
	Higher than 115

4.2.3 Relation between GDP and attitudes towards migrants

The first hypotheses (H1) expects that : countries that experience economic decline will see an increase in negative attitudes, while those who experience growth will see an increase in positive attitudes. To test this hypotheses, the GDP is compared to the attitudes in the corresponding years. The results are tested for a correlation between the change in

attitudes, between 2014 and 2016, and the change in GDP in the same period. For the change

between 2014 and 2016 no significant correlation has been found (table 1). The 2-tailed

significant level is >.05. The relation is positive as the hypotheses would expect, 0,277. But

no real value can be attributed to this results because the results are not significant. When

looking at the scatterplot (figure 6)from the data no real upwards or downwards sloping line

can be identified. It seems that H1 is not valid for this set of countries.

Correlations

		change in attitudes 2014-2016	change gdp 2014-2016
change in attitudes 2014-2016	Pearson Correlation	1	,277
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,360
	N	13	13
change gdp 2014-2016	Pearson Correlation	,277	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,360	
	N	13	13

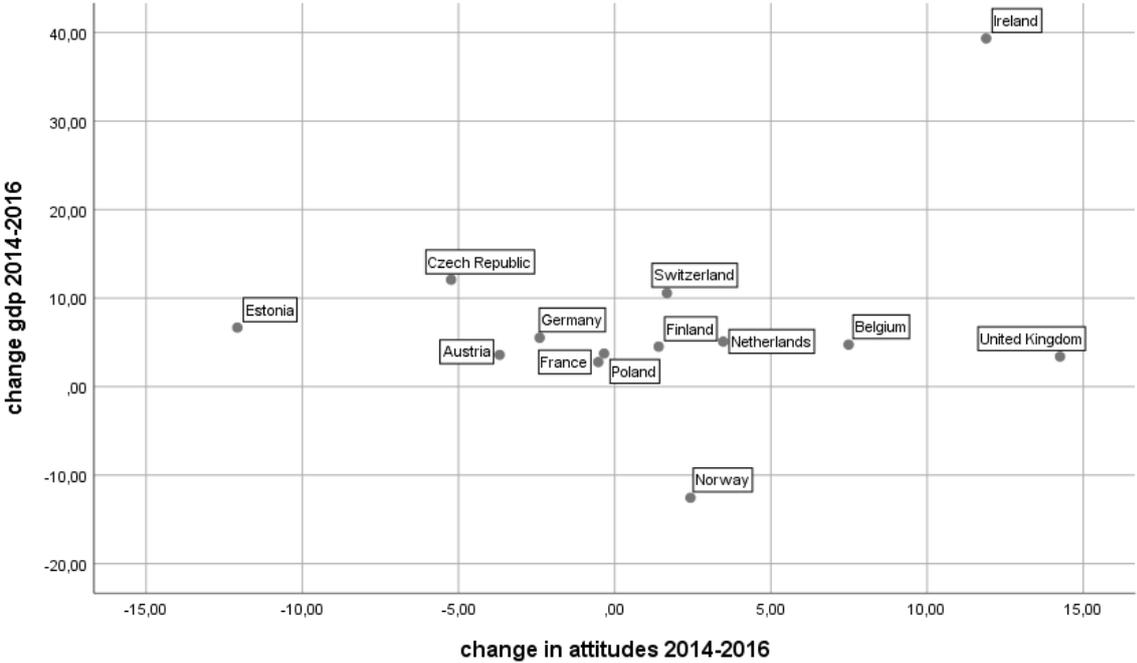*Table 1: correlation between change in attitudes and change in GDP (2014-2016)*

Figure 6: scatterplot, change in attitudes and change in GDP (2014-2016)

4.3 Change of the non-EU-immigrant population over time

4.3.1 At country level

The last part of the group threat theory is the share of the non-EU immigrant population in society. Again, the picture at country level is diverse. In general, the share of this population increased in the north-east of Europe and decreased or remained stable in the south-west of Europe. The Baltic states are the exception. Estonia and Latvia remained relatively stable and in Lithuania the population decreased with more than 15 percent (Figure 8). The data displayed is the change between 2014 and 2016. In 2016 Estonia and Latvia top the list on non-EU population. Both the countries have a percentage of non-EU migrant population of over 12 percent (Figure 7). This big share of non-EU migrants can be explained by the history of the nations. These Baltic states were part of the Soviet Union. Because of this origin the amount of Russian migrants in the Baltic states is relatively high (kirch, 2007).

Figure 7: Map percentage of non-EU population
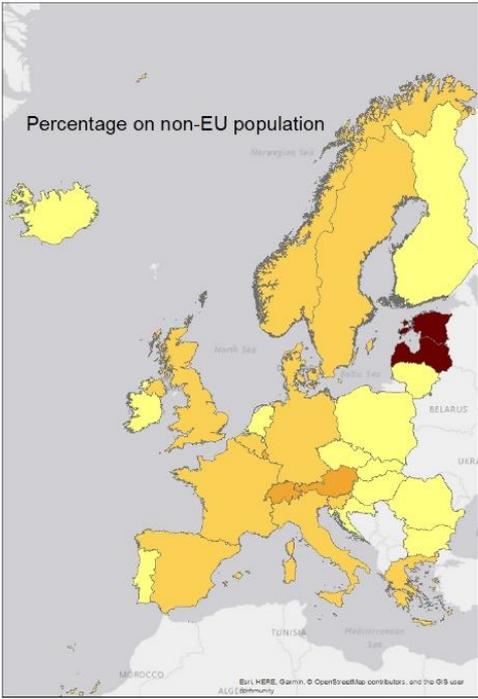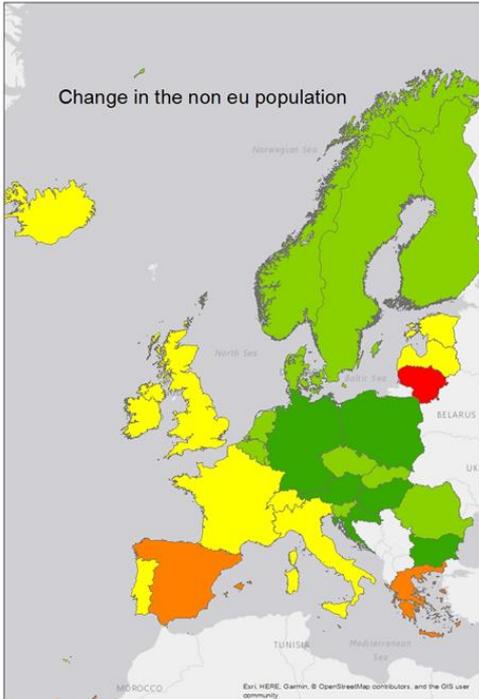

Figure 8: Map change in the non-EU population

legend	Percentage of non-EU population in 2016	Legend	Index of non EU population (Base year 2014)
	0-3 percent		Lower than 85
	3-6 percent		Between 85 - 95
	6-9 percent		Between 95 - 105
	9-12 percent		Between 105 - 115
	12-15 percent		Higher than 115

4.3.2 Relation between the percentage of Non-EU migrants and attitudes towards migrants

The second hypotheses (H2) expects that : Countries that have the greatest increase in non-EU migrant population will show an increase in negative attitudes. To test this hypotheses, the percentage of non-EU migrants is compared to the attitudes in the corresponding years. The results are tested for a correlation between the change in attitudes, between 2014 and 2016, and the change in the percentage of non-EU migrants in the same period. For the change between 2014 and 2016 no significant correlation has been found (table 2). The 2-tailed significant level is >.05. The relation is negative as the hypotheses would expect, but only slightly , -,005. At first sight no real value can be attributed to this results because the results are not significant.

Correlations

		change in attitudes 2014-2016	change non eu population 2014-2016
change in attitudes 2014-2016	Pearson Correlation	1	-,005
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,987
	N	13	13
change non eu population 2014-2016	Pearson Correlation	-,005	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,987	
	N	13	13

Table 2: correlation between change in attitudes and change in non-EU population (2014-2016)

When looking at the scatterplot from the data there are some indications of a negative correlation (figure 9). The data seems to display a downward sloping line. One outlier is disturbing the image, Estonia. the percentage of the non-EU population declined, -4,4 percent. Following the reasoning of the group threat theory this should result in better attitudes towards migrants. But this is not the case, the attitudes towards migrants worsened, -12 percent.
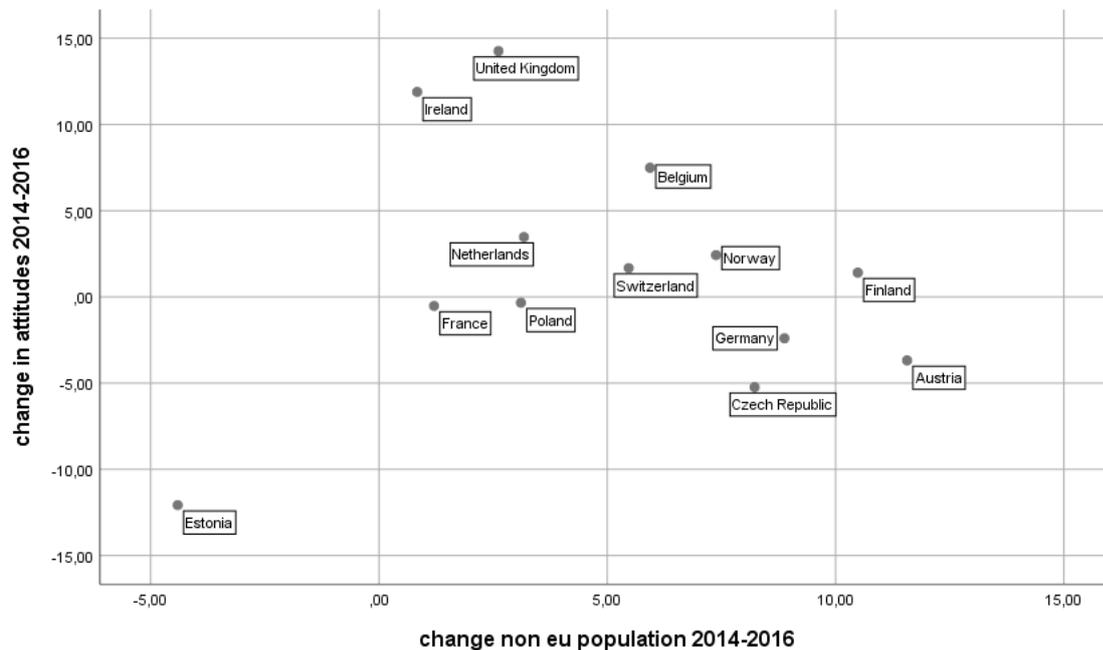
Figure 9: scatterplot, change in attitude and change in non-EU population (2014-2016)

When excluding Estonia from the analyses the image changes significantly (table 3). The relation becomes more negative, -,585. And the correlation becomes significant p<0,05. An explanation could be in the composition of the non-EU migrant population. The group threat theory assumes that non-EU migrants have a different set of cultural threats than the European migrants. Therefore, the attitudes towards those migrants will be more negative. But the non-EU migrants in Estonia are mostly Russians and they have largely the same cultural background as the host country (kirch, 2007). It could be the case that the total percentage of non-EU population declined, less Russians, but the percentage of migrants with another cultural background increased. This would worsen the attitudes towards migrants as is the case. Islam (2017) argues that the amount of non-EU immigrants, that are not Russian, have increased in the time period of 2014-2016. In another research he did he classified Estonia as being one of the most hostile towards receiving migrants that are not European or former

soviet union (Islam, 2016). This could explain the relatively big change in attitudes towards

migrants, -12 percent. H2 seems to hold true when excluding Estonia from the analysis.

Correlations

		change in attitudes 2014-2016	change non eu population 2014-2016
change in attitudes 2014-2016	Pearson Correlation	1	-,585[*]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,046
	N	12	12
change non eu population 2014-2016	Pearson Correlation	-,585[*]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,046	
	N	12	12

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 3: correlation between change in attitudes and change in non-EU population (2014-2016)

4.4 Analyses of the group threat theory

The group threat theory would expect a negative correlation between the product of

the interaction and attitudes to migrants. This suggestion of the group threat theory results H3:

Where GDP drops and the inflow of migrants increases, negative attitudes towards migrants

will increase most sharply. To test the group threat theory, the interaction is compared to the

attitudes in the corresponding years. The results are tested for a correlation between the

attitudes and the calculated interaction. For the year 2014 no significant correlation has been

found (table 4). The 2-tailed significant level is >.05. For the year 2016 no significant

correlation has been found (table 5). The 2-tailed significant level is >.05. For both years the

correlation is negative as the group threat theory would expect , -,236 in 2014 and -,489 in

2016, at first sight no real value can be attributed to this results because the results are not

significant.

Correlations

		attitude 2014	interaction 2014
attitude 2014	Pearson Correlation	1	-,236
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,437
	N	13	13
interaction 2014	Pearson Correlation	-,236	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,437	
	N	13	13

Table 4: correlation between attitudes and interaction (2014)

Correlations

		interaction 2016	attitude 2016
interaction 2016	Pearson Correlation	1	-,489
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,090
	N	13	13
attitude 2016	Pearson Correlation	-,489	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,090	
	N	13	13

Table 5:correlation between attitudes and interaction (2016)

When looking at the scatterplot from the data of 2014 there are some indications of a negative correlation (figure 10). The data seems to display a downward sloping line but two outliers disturb this image. One of them is Estonia. In 2014 13,9 percent of the Estonian population were non-EU migrants. This high percentage, in combination with a GDP of only 40 percent of the average in the data set, creates a high interaction of 0,9. Following the reasoning of the group threat theory this should result in a negative attitude towards migrants. However, this is not the case, with an attitude score of 4,8 the attitudes seems to be relatively neutral. The second is the Czech Republic. In 2014 2,5 percent of the Czech population were non-EU migrants, the second lowest percentage in the data set. This low percentage, in combination with a GDP of only 40 percent of the average in the data set, creates a relatively low interaction of 0,15. Following the reasoning of the group threat theory this should result

in a positive attitude towards migrants. However this is not the case, the attitude score of 3,8 is the most negative attitude score in the data set.

When looking at the scatterplot from the data of 2016 there is again some indications of a negative correlation (Figure 11) . The data seems to display a downward sloping line but two outliers disturb this image. The two countries are Estonia and the Czech Republic. When looking at the date the same image appears as in 2014. Estonia has a high percentage of non-EU migrants, 13,4 percent. The GDP is only 41 percent of the average of the data set. These two factors combined result in an interaction of 0,83. Following the reasoning of the group threat theory this should result in a negative attitude towards migrants. In 2016 the attitudes towards migrants seem to develop in the direction predicted by the group threat theory. The attitudes worsen from 4,8 in 2014 to 4,2 in 2016 a decline of 12,5 percent. Ranking Estonia among the three worst countries in the data set (figure 2). But still the attitudes are relatively positive compared to the high interaction. The Czech Republic has a low percentage of non-EU migrants, 2,5 percent. The GDP is only 39 percent of the average of the data set. These two factors combined result in an interaction of 0,15. Following the reasoning of the group threat theory this should result in a positive attitude towards migrants. However this is not the case, the attitude score of 3,8 is the most negative attitude score in the data set.
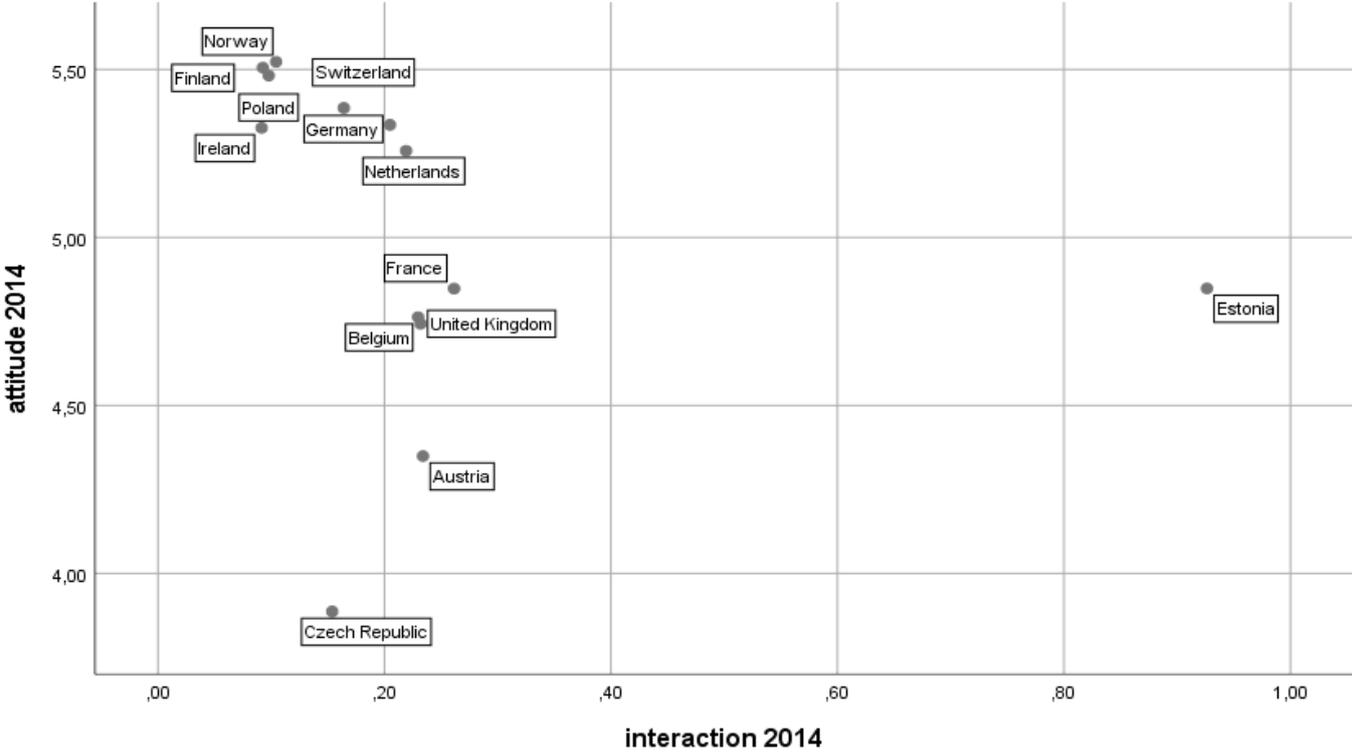
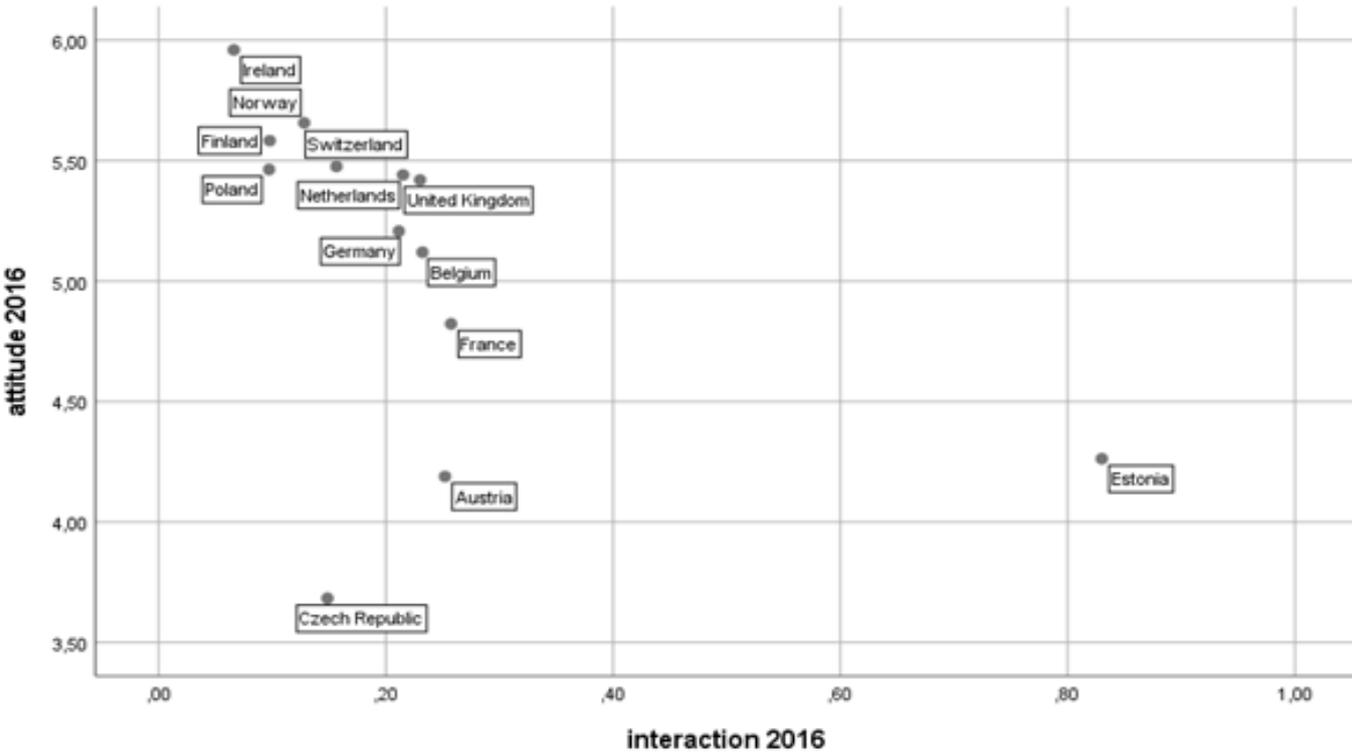*Figure 10: scatterplot, attitudes and interaction (2014)*

Figure 11: scatterplot, attitudes and interaction (2016)

When excluding Estonia and the Czech Republic from the analyses the image changes significantly. For both 2014 and 2016 the correlations turn out to be strong negative correlations, -,780 for 2014 and -,769 for 2016 (table 6, table 7). And both the correlations are significant even on a P<0,01 level. For Estonia the explanation could again be in the composition of the non-EU migrant population. The group threat theory assumes that non-EU migrants have a different set of cultural threats than the European migrants. Therefore, the attitudes towards those migrants will be more negative. But the non-EU migrants in Estonia are mostly Russians and they have largely the same cultural background as the host country (kirch, 2007). So the assumptions from the Group threat theory may result in the deviating scores of Estonia. For the Czech Republic no decisive explanation could be found. Other literature do point out that Czech Republic society heavily support homogeneity. In addition there is significantly more concern both about the economic costs of immigrants and about their effect on crime in the Czech Republic, compared to other European countries (Citrin and Sides, 2008) . Another explanation could be that the data concerning Estonia and the Czech Republic does not give an accurate representation of reality. In conclusion the group threat theory seems to hold true when excluding Estonia and the Czech Republic. The same can be said of H3.

Correlations

		attitude 2014	interaction 2014
attitude 2014	Pearson Correlation	1	-,780[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,005
	N	11	11
interaction 2014	Pearson Correlation	-,780[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,005	
	N	11	11

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 6: Correlation between attitudes and interaction (2014, Without Estonia and Czech Republic)

Correlations

		interaction 2016	attitude 2016
interaction 2016	Pearson Correlation	1	-,769[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,006
	N	11	11
attitude 2016	Pearson Correlation	-,769[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,006	
	N	11	11

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 7: Correlation between attitudes and interaction (2016, Without Estonia and Czech Republic)

5 Conclusion

This thesis had the aim to better understand attitudes towards migrants. The recent economic, migration and ageing problems in Europe all need policy actions, though the attitudes towards migrants could play a crucial role. In an attempt to increase the understanding of variations in attitudes towards migrants across Europe, the group threat has been applied and tested.

There is no clear geographical distribution of positive and negative attitudes across the European countries available in the data set. A side note that has to be made is that the data set might be too small to identify geographical patterns. In addition the attitudes towards migrants seem to be relatively stable between 2014 and 2016. And no clear distribution across Europe

In 2008 the crisis hit and the average GPD plummeted to levels below that from 2006. From 2009 onwards the GDP has been recovering and is still growing at the moment far beyond the levels from before the crisis. Even though the average GDP for Europe is giving a promising image of growth and seems to overcome the drop of the crisis. The situation for every single country is very diverse. The first hypotheses (H1) expects that : countries that experience economic decline will see an increase in negative attitudes, while those who experience growth will see an increase in positive attitudes. The conclusion that can be made is that this hypnotises does not hold true for this data set.

The second part of the group threat theory is the share of the non-EU immigrant population in society. Again, the picture at country level is diverse. In general, the share of this population increased in the north-east of Europe and decreased or remained stable in the south-west of Europe. The second hypotheses (H2) expects that : Countries that have the

greatest increase in non-EU migrant population will show an increase in negative attitudes. H2 seems to hold true when excluding Estonia from the analysis.

When assessing the group threat theory, some interesting results emerge. When all countries are included, the correlation tests show a weak (non-significant) negative relationship between the product of the inverse of GDP and the share of non-EU migrants and attitudes to migrants. However, this relationship seems to be strongly influenced by two outlier countries, Estonia and the Czech Republic. When these countries are removed, the expected negative relationship increases in strength, reaching statistical significance. In the case of Estonia and the Czech Republic, the theory seems fail to explain the attitudes towards migrants.

The failing of the group threat theory could be explained by the fact that it assumes that non-EU migrants have a different set of cultural threats than the European migrants. Therefore, the attitudes towards those migrants will be more negative. But the non-EU migrants in Estonia are mostly Russians and they have largely the same cultural background as the host country. So the assumption of the group threat theory does not hold true for Estonia. In the case of the Czech Republic no conclusive reason could be found. Further research could be aimed at assessing why the attitudes in Estonia and the Czech Republic differ from what the group threat theory would expect. Besides this it would be interesting to test the group threat theory on the regional scale, something that surpasses the scope of this research.

So to conclude the group threat theory seems to hold true for most of the cases. But it fails to explain two specific cases. The same can be said of H3. The theory has to be extended to include the factors playing a role in those cases. A option could be to combine the historical and political context, suggested by other literature, with the economic and demographic

context, represented in the group threat theory. This combination could offer another inside than the economic and demographic alone, represented in the group threat theory.

5.1 Reflections

Reflecting on the research process, there are a number of limitations that should be recognised. The limitations of this thesis are mainly formed by the missing countries in the data set. The eastern and southern European countries did not participate in the European social survey, so no data was available on the attitudes for these countries. Some interesting cases are missing, for example Greece. Following the reasoning from the group threat theory it would have been interesting to see the effect of this economic downfall in Greece on the attitudes towards migrants.

The fact that the data is not available for all European countries can bias the analyses made in this thesis. Another critical point is that the data seems to center around 5.0, the neutral option. It may be the case that people find it difficult to express a more extreme stand point on such a controversial topic (Presser and Schuman, 1980).

In addition the group threat theory is only tested at the country level. The results may be different when assessing the theory at regional level.

When conducting this research some ethical issues should be taken in to consideration. The fact that I am an unexperienced researcher may increase the opportunity that mistakes are being made throughout the research. Besides that, my personal view about attitudes for different countries may cloud my judgement in analysing the data from specific countries. This should be countered by the fact that I am not collecting my own data and that the analyses of the data will be the same for all the counties in the data set. Finally, it is impossible to identify individuals from the data so there are no privacy issues or risk of disclosure.

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Peer review formulier - Bachelorthesis

Algemeen	
Is de opbouw van de thesis duidelijk?	Ja

Is de samenhang tussen de verschillende onderdelen duidelijk?	Ja, na verduidelijking van de Threat Theory in het begin + Turkey deal helemaal (zie comments later in dit formulier)
Is de meerderheid van de bronnen wetenschappelijk? Zo niet, is daar een goede reden voor?	Ja, wetenschappelijk
Is de gebruikte literatuur recent? Zo niet, is daar een goede reden voor?	Ja, recent
Zijn alle gebruikte bronnen vermeld in de literatuurlijst?	Ja
Worden bronnen correct geciteerd?	Ja, veelal wel. De thesis moet uiteraard nog even worden doorgelezen en controleert.
Wordt correct verwezen naar bronnen, volgens het Harvard systeem?	Ja, in de bronnenlijst moeten de titels nog schuingedrukt worden gemaakt. Maar dat komt vast nog goed.
Verduidelijken gebruikte figuren en tabellen de tekst?	Ja

Zijn figuren en tabellen correct genummerd en wordt ernaar verwezen in de tekst?	Ja, ook.
Is de tekst duidelijk en leesbaar?	Ja, op een aantal spellingsfouten etc na, maar dat komt ook goed.
Hoe is de opbouw van de zinnen?	Prima
Zijn de spelling, grammatica, en interpunctie correct?	Veelal wel. Zoals gezegd, het moet nog even worden doorgelezen, dit is de draft.
Vragen/ Opmerkingen	

Samenvatting	
Worden de belangrijkste elementen uit het onderzoek besproken?	Misschien in plaats van te vertellen waar de data vandaan komt (Kan wel kort erin) kort

	uitleggen in 1 zin wat de group threat theory is.
Worden onderwerp, doelstelling, onderzoeksvragen, methoden, resultaten en conclusies samengevat?	Ja, duidelijk. Het enige wat ik mis is een korte uitleg van de group threat theory. Dit is ook fijn om alvast te weten bij het lezen van de introductie etc.
Vragen/ Opmerkingen	

Inleiding	
Is het onderwerp duidelijk afgebakend?	Ja
Wordt de relevantie van het onderwerp duidelijk uiteengezet?	Ja, de houding tegenover migranten is van belang om te weten ivm met integratie van migranten en vluchtelingen.

Wat is het doel van het onderzoek, geformuleerd in je eigen woorden?	Het doel van het onderzoek is om te kijken wat voor houding europa heeft tegenover de komst van migranten en vluchtelingen en of deze houding overeenkomt met de group threat theory van Lincoln Quillan.
Zijn het doel en de onderzoeksvragen ingebed in wetenschappelijke literatuur?	Ja, het doel van het onderzoek wordt gelinkt met de group threat theory van Lincoln Quillan.
Wekt de inleiding je interesse op? Waardoor (niet)?	Ja, het is een relevant thema wat op dit moment een grote rol speelt in Europa.

Vragen/ Opmerkingen
Opnieuw misschien in de introductie kort iets zeggen over de group threat theory. Daarover gaat je onderzoek, maar wordt pas iets over gezegd in het theoretisch kader.

Theoretisch kader

Vormen de besproken theoretische inzichten een relevante basis voor het beantwoorden van de onderzoeksvraag/-vragen?	Ja theoretische inzichten zijn besproken op 4 verschillende aspecten die van invloed zouden kunnen zijn.
Worden de theoretische inzichten op een begrijpelijke manier uiteengezet?	Ja er worden voorbeelden genoemd wat ik fijn vind. Alleen misschien nog enkele voorbeelden die echt betrekking hebben op de EU. Aangezien daar de focus ligt.
Wordt verwezen naar relevante internationale wetenschappelijke literatuur? (artikelen uit wetenschappelijke tijdschriften en wetenschappelijk boeken)	Ja
Is het theoretisch kader logisch opgebouwd?	Ja zeker. Eerst duidelijk de 4 verschillende influences genoemd en die dan per alinea uitgewerkt.
Sluit het conceptueel model aan bij de onderzoeksvragen en theorie?	Ja sluit aan op de theorie, alleen in de eerste alinea van de theorie zeg je demography, politics, history and economy en in het conceptueel model zijn de termen demography en economy ineens weg (ik snap dat het percentage of immigrants and

	gdp is) maar misschien kan je gewoon economy and demograpy doen en dan in de tekst uitleggen? Of Demography (% immigrants) in het blokje oid. Dan komt het helemaal goed overeen met je theory stuk.
Vragen/ Opmerkingen	

- misschien bij political debate nog wat relevante voorbeelden met betrekking tot de EU.

- de eerste zin van het theoretisch kader noem je an individual and a national attitude towards migrants. Misschien nog goed/duidelijk om in die alinea dan even te zeggen dat je in het onderzoek focust op alleen national attitude towards migrants, je zegt het ook op het einde van het theoretische kader maar nu noem je het aan het begin en dan ineens helemaal niks erover.

- De 'Turkey Deal' komt een beetje uit de lucht vallen in het conceptual model. Misschien kan je hierover een alinea schrijven in de inleiding, dat het een deel is van de probleemstelling. Voor Turkey Deal grote stroom richting Europa, na de Turkey deal in 2015/16? Is dit veranderd door dit en dit. Even kort uitleggen wat het is. ☺

- Je hebt in het theoretische kader ook de politieke en historisch invloed. Dit bespreek je als eerste. Misschien is het handiger/fijner voor de lezer om te beginnen met de theory

van Quillian omdat daar je onderzoek over gaat. En dan als soort side note dat ook historische en politieke interactie van invloed kan zijn om deze en deze reden maar dat je dat verder in deze analyse niet gaat onderzoeken.

Methodologie	
Wordt de keuze voor de gebruikte methoden van dataverzameling en data-analyse goed toegelicht?	Ja, dit wordt goed uitgelegd, elke variabele in een aparte alinea.
Sluiten de manieren van dataverzameling en data-analyse aan bij doelstelling en onderzoeksvragen?	Ja, volgens mij wel
Zijn de gebruikte vragenlijsten, lijsten met observatiepunten, etc. opgenomen in bijlagen?	Nog niet, maar dat komt vast nog wel. Ook is er geen eigen vragen lijst gebruikt, dus deze kan ook niet worden opgenomen in de bijlage.

Wordt duidelijk uitgelegd hoe te werk is gegaan bij het verzamelen en analyseren van de gegevens?	Ja dit wordt duidelijk uitgelegd.
Wordt gereflecteerd op de kwaliteit van de verzamelde gegevens?	Ja, ook.
Is voldoende uiteengezet welke ethische vraagstukken in het onderzoek relevant zijn, en hoe hiermee is omgegaan?	Ja, ook.
Zijn de paragrafen over methodologie logisch opgebouwd?	Ja, de paragrafen zijn per variabele opgebouwd. Dat is volgens mij een logische manier.
Vragen/ opmerkingen	

Resultaten	
Worden de meest relevante resultaten besproken?	Ja, inclusief mooie kaarten.
Worden de resultaten grondig geanalyseerd (en niet alleen beschreven)?	Naar mijn mening wel, mogelijke oorzaken worden meerdere malen besproken.
Worden de resultaten in verband gebracht met de onderzoeksvragen?	Ja
Zijn de paragrafen met resultaten logisch opgebouwd?	Ja, beschrijvende resultaten eerst, correlatie als laatst
Vragen/ opmerkingen	

- Ik heb niet zoveel verstand van de berekeningen etc maar het ziet er allemaal goed uit.

Ik snap ook niet zo goed hoe je de resultaten al grondig moet analyseren, dat lijkt me iets

voor in de conclusie. Ik denk dat je dat zo dan prima hebt gedaan.

Conclusie/discussie	
Worden de onderzoeksvragen beantwoord?	Ja, de Group Threat theory komt waarschijnlijk niet overeen met de werkelijkheid (resultaten niet sig).
Worden de resultaten in een breder theoretisch perspectief geplaatst?	Ja.
Worden de resultaten vergeleken met andere onderzoeksresultaten?	Nee, maar ik weet ook niet hoe je dit zou moeten doen.
Worden aanbevelingen gedaan voor toekomstig onderzoek?	Ja, een grotere data set met ook de europese landen die nu ontbraken of een analyse op regionaal niveau wat ook de N vergroot.

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Vragen/ opmerkingen
- Ik zou de conclusie weer beginnen met een alinea over de Theory van Quillan/ de instroom van migranten naar de EU/ de invloed van de Turkey deal/ economische recessie/ vergrijzende populatie → houding mensen tegenover immigranten.   - eerste alinea zou ik dus anders doen, vervolg is gewoon goed. Alleen even een aparte alinea maken vanaf 'further research' dit is het begin van de discussie.

Modificaties after peer review

- In the summary I included a part about the group threat theory

- In the background I included a short introduction about ''the turkey deal''

- In the theoretical framework I pointed out that the thesis focusses on the national level

- In the conclusion repeated the reason for the thesis. The recent crisis, better understand the attitudes towards migrants for.

- In the literature list: I forgot the make the titles of the journals cursive

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