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Values, Economic Crisis and Democracy

Edited by Malina Voicu, Ingvill C. Mochmann and Hermann Dülmer

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Part I

Introduction

1 Values and attitudes in times of economic scarcity

Malina Voicu and Hermann Dülmer

Values and attitudes are acquired during early socialization, but they are exposed to changes during adult life. Special transformative historical moments, such as economic crises, wars or revolutions, imprint upon individual values and attitudes. Great transformations in an individual's life, such as changes in the life cycle or migration, can also reshape values. Sometimes a combination of both contextual and individual factors leads to a deep restructuring of an individual's value system. European countries over the last decade have experienced a severe economic crisis which has had many consequences both for individuals and for governments. Unemployment and rising poverty have compelled individuals to reconsider their own priorities and goals, while governments have been forced to rethink social policies on the national level, as well as their international economic and political agreements. Some countries have been more deeply affected by the crisis than others, and the impact of economic shortage on individuals and governments has differed, not only because of the different magnitudes of the crisis, but also because individuals react differently to the contextual changes.

The most recent economic crisis began in 2008 and has since affected countries in Europe and North America to different extents. Some, like Germany, recovered rather quickly, while in others the effects of the crisis can be traced over a much longer period of time. To what extent has the crisis reshaped individual value orientations and the connection between values and attitudes? Do Europeans even share the same value orientations after having undergone a period of economic shortage and societal transformations? And what about attitudes towards different political objects? The literature on values and attitudes points out that values are more stable, while attitudes are rather volatile and easily changed under the impact of environmental changes. However, most of the scales intended to measure value orientations use attitudes as indicators for latent value orientations. So if attitudes have changed as a result of the economic crisis, what has happened to the relationship between values and attitudes, and what is the impact on the 'classical measurement models' of values? Moreover, does the magnitude of the crisis actually matter?

Although the impact of wealth and economic contexts on social values is a long-standing topic in the social sciences, previous works have approached the topic more at the aggregate level, elaborating general explanations (Weber,

Marx, Inglehart, Welzel, Wilensky). In contrast, the present volume tries to benefit from the particular circumstance produced by the last economic crisis and to make use of the cross-national survey data that provides relevant information concerning this topic. We do not attempt to explain how aggregate changes occur; instead we focus on micro level effects, interrogating more deeply the interplay between attitudes and values and the way both can change as a result of the transformation in economic context. In sum, this book elaborates on several dimensions of value change. The first dimension is the measurement model and the way it changes under the impact of economic shortage. The second aspect is related to the connection between universal value orientations (such as materialism/post-materialism as conceptualized by Inglehart, or basic human values as proposed by Schwartz) and attitudes towards different objects, such as national and EU government, the welfare state, or immigrants and ethnic groups. A third aspect concerns the effects of economic factors and economic vulnerability on values and attitudinal orientations. The last aspect treated in the book is how particular political and economic contexts produce changes in political orientations, focusing on transformations that have occurred in the countries most affected by the crisis.

This introductory chapter is structured in three sections. The first describes the economic crisis and how it evolved over time, while the second elaborates on the theoretical background of values and values change, paying special attention to the dynamic of values, attitudes, and the connection between the two under the impact of changes in economic circumstances. The third section lays out the plan of the book, with brief introductions to each part and chapter.

Economic crisis and its impact on European markets and societies

The crisis of 2008 was the biggest financial crisis since World War II. It was triggered by events in the American banking sector, where subprime mortgage lending had sharply increased during the years 2004 to 2006 (Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission, 2011, p. 70). When interest rates began to rise (the U.S. base rate increased steadily from 2.50 percent in the beginning of 2005 to 5.25 percent in August 2007; Fubra Limited, 2015), more and more people were unable to pay their mortgages, leading to the bursting of the U.S. housing bubble. The financial crisis in the housing market rapidly extended to bank investments. In order to prevent its bankruptcy, Bear Stearns, one of the largest U.S. investment banks, was acquired in March 2008 by JP Morgan Chase. That takeover, however, was possible only by means of special financing provided by the U.S. Federal Reserve System (Fed). Thus, the U.S. government bailed out the investment bank, sparing shareholders a total loss (Michel, 2013). At the same time – 2008 – Lehman Brothers, the fourth-largest U.S. investment bank, faced unprecedented losses. This time, however, the British bank Barclays and the Bank of America were unable to acquire the investment bank in order to protect it against losses (Michel, 2013). Without special financial support from

the U.S. Federal Reserve System, Lehman Brother went into bankruptcy on September 13, 2008.

As a result, the European banks that had invested heavily in the American mortgage market were also seriously affected by the financial crisis. The fear that more banks could go bankrupt made both investors and banks extremely cautious. Diminishing trust within the financial sector stopped banks lending to each other, which in turn triggered rises in market interest rates. In response European governments provided urgent support to the European banks to protect the banking system from a potential collapse. However, the costs of these bail-outs were very high. By the time Europe began slipping into a deep recession in 2009, some governments in the Eurozone had already accumulated massive debts in their efforts to save the local financial market (European Commission, 2015). Because the markets worried that some countries would be unable to afford to rescue struggling banks, they became less willing to lend them money, which in turn raised the costs of borrowing from the governments. This resulted in increased government debts: the banking crisis thus turned into a sovereign debt crisis (European Commission, 2015), affecting to different degrees all the countries of Europe. Figure 1.1a illustrates the development of the gross debt as a percentage of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) between 2005 and 2013 in those countries frequently called 'PIIGS' (Portugal, Italy, Ireland, Greece, Spain) by the mass media, as well as that of Romania, a non-Eurozone country

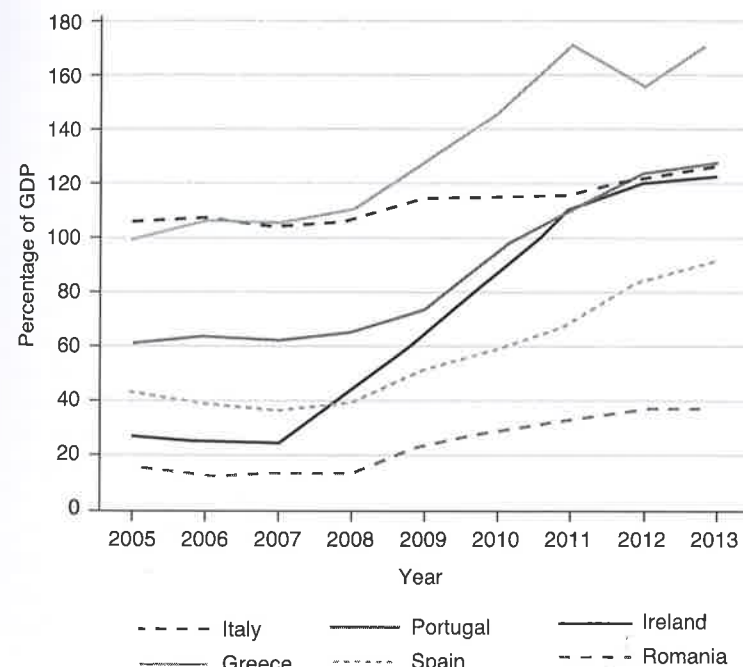


Figure 1.1a Gross debt of government in 'PIIGS' and Romania, 2005–2013 (% of GDP).

which suffered severely from the economic crisis. For the purposes of comparison Figure 1.1b illustrates Eurozone countries which were less affected by the crisis.

The differences between the two groups of countries in 2005 were not particularly significant. That proves that the gross public debt was only one risk factor among several others contributing to the Eurozone crisis. The Eurozone crisis started in 2009; when the center-left PASOK party in Greece won the national election in October 2009, the new government revealed that the previous Greek government had under-reported their budget deficit (Nelson *et al.*, 2012, p. 4).¹ Subsequently the financial distress spread to Ireland and Portugal, while concerns escalated about Italy and Spain and more generally about the European banking system and the Eurozone (Nelson *et al.*, 2012, p. 4). Greece was the first Eurozone country unable to borrow from the financial markets at reasonable interest rates, soon followed by Ireland, Portugal, Spain, and Cyprus (European Commission, 2015). Greece had requested financial assistance in April 2010, and the Eurozone Member States and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) began providing financial support to Greece through an Economic Adjustment Program in May 2010. The Greek parliament in return accepted a series of policy measures, including further reductions in public sector wages and pensions (European Commission, 2010c, pp. 8–9, 15). In November 2010

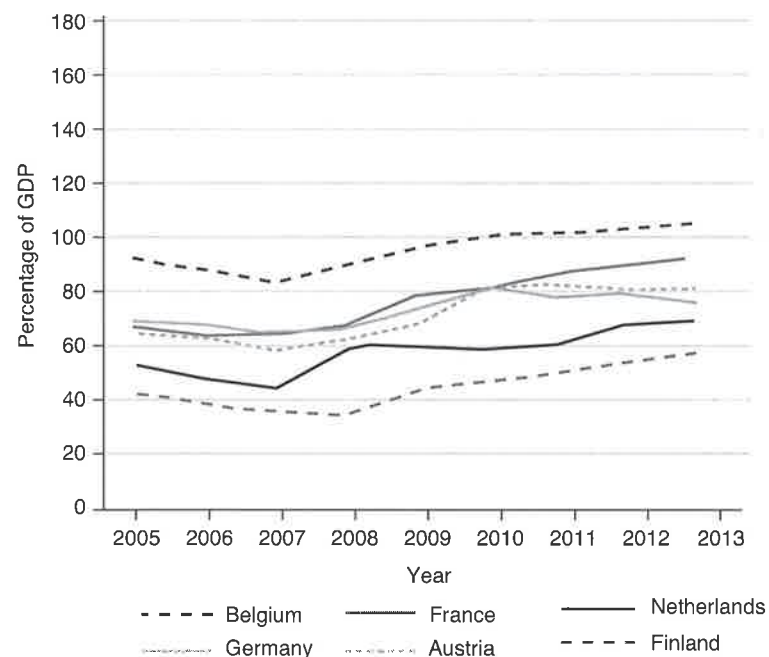


Figure 1.1b Gross debt of government in EU countries less affected by the economic crisis, 2005–2013 (% of GDP).

Ireland requested financial support (European Commission, 2011a, pp. 5, 17), followed by Portugal in April 2011 (European Commission, 2011b, pp. 4, 15), Cyprus and Spain in June 2012 (European Commission, 2015). Whereas Ireland and Spain were both affected when their housing bubbles burst (European Commission, 2011a, pp. 5–9), Portugal had large fiscal imbalances and higher private debts. Italy did not ask for international assistance since a larger part of the government's debts were locally owned (European Commission, 2010c, p. 11).

In addition to these Eurozone countries, the financial crisis also severely affected other EU countries. Latvia, Hungary, and Romania received financial assistance from the EU (through its Balance of Payment program), from the International Monetary Fund, and from the World Bank (European Commission, 2015). Hungary was the first one to ask for international financial support in October 2008. Faced with a rapidly deteriorating economic situation and concerns over its banking sector, Latvia did the same in November 2008. Romania was the third country to follow. The increasing risk aversion during the financial crisis made market players more and more concerned about Romania's large budget deficits. The consequence was a marked drop in capital inflows which in turn led to falling exchange rates from RON to Euro of more than 30 percent between August 2007 and January 2009. In spring 2009 the Romanian government applied to the EU, the IMF, and other international financial institutions for financial aid (European Commission, 2015).

While the economic crisis initially had a financial character, it also touched on human rights (Saiz, 2009) and consequently heightened social insecurity. Increasing unemployment and insecurity in working conditions affect the right to work and reduce incomes, while cuts in public spending hinder access to education and healthcare. The changes in the unemployment rate highlight some of the social consequences of the previously mentioned economic trends (see Figure 1.2). European Union (EU) countries, undergoing deep economic crises, reacted in different ways depending on their welfare regime, the ideological perspective of their governments, and the pressures they felt from their EU partners.

Faced with the effects of the economic breakdown, governments were confronted with 'difficult' options: they had to reduce public spending or increase taxation or do both (Immervoll and Llena-Nozal, 2011). Welfare regimes played an important role in this decision. Liberal regimes preferred to decrease public spending, while the social-democrat and the continental/corporatist ones chose to increase taxation. More seriously affected Mediterranean regimes combined decreasing public spending with increased taxation. A similar pattern was followed by some post-communist countries. The level of economic and existential insecurity varied from one country to another depending on the magnitude of the crisis and how each country reacted. Accordingly, the present volume attempts to capture the general impact of economic scarcity on values and attitudes and to understand how this impact varies depending on the country's characteristics. Beyond the cross-sectional analyses, the current research project employs three different cases studies intended to illustrate the differing impact of economic hardship on political values and attitudes in different political and economic contexts.

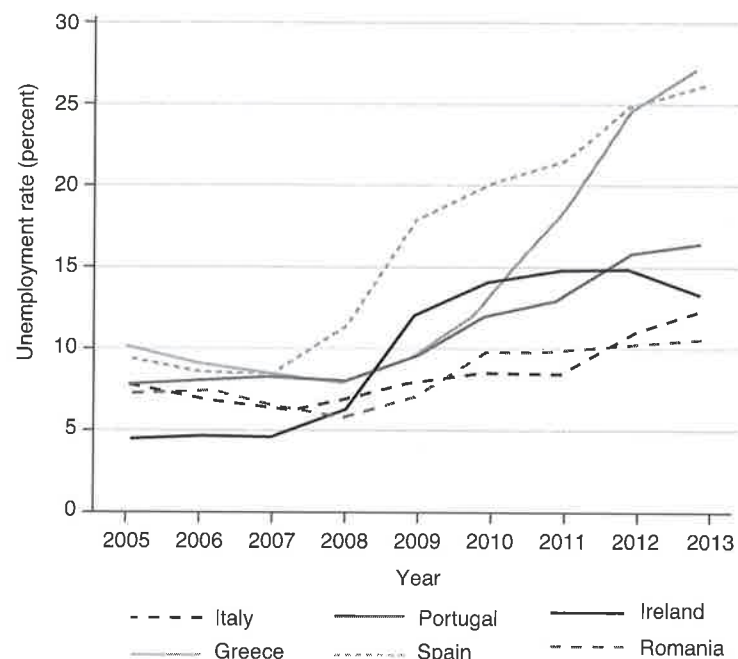


Figure 1.2 Trends in unemployment rate in 'PIIGS' countries and Romania, 2005–2013.

Values and attitudes

Values and attitudes are closely connected but not completely overlapping concepts. They differ with respect to generalizability, stability, and availability for direct measurement. "A value is a conception, explicit and implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influence the selection of available modes, means and ends of actions" (Kluckhohn, 1951, p. 395). Values help in selecting goals and determine the means to attain these goals while serving as latent guides in order to evaluate the social world (Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004). Values operate as a guiding mechanism, motivate behavior (Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004; Bardi and Schwartz, 2003), and are hierarchically organized at the level of the individual.

Attitudes are "organizations of beliefs focused on a specific object or situation, predisposing one to respond in some preferential manner" (Rokeach, 1972, p. 159). Values are more abstract than attitudes (Rokeach, 1973) because they refer to the general selection of goals or to modes of action, outreaching a specific situation (Schwartz, 1992). While attitudes are more exposed to change, values are durable over time and they change at slower pace (Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004).

Because they are connected to a specific action or object, attitudes can be directly measured. Values are latent concepts, difficult to capture by themselves.

Consequently some direct measurable proxies are needed. Values and attitudes are strongly linked, the connection being a bidirectional one (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). Values influence the assessment of a specific situation or object and are re-shaped by attitudes. Therefore, attitudes are used as proxies in order to measure values. Moreover, attitudes can turn into behavioral predisposition and can influence action; consequently, behavior can serve as a proxy for measuring value orientations.

Social change: cohort replacement versus intra-cohort change

Social change is usually attributed to two different mechanisms: cohort replacement and intra-cohort change. These two mechanisms can be used to explain how aggregate change in values and attitudes occurs. The first mechanism relies on the assumption that values and beliefs are formed during childhood and youth and remain stable during adult life. Thus, early formative experiences leave an imprint on the values and attitudes of generations or cohorts (Mannheim, 1952; Ryder, 1965). Each cohort significantly differs from the others depending on the context experienced during the formative period. Social change results from cohort replacement, younger cohorts socialized in a different social and political context replacing the older ones. Inglehart (1991, 1997) found empirical support for cohort replacement in the case of post-materialist value orientation among the population of countries in Western Europe and North America. Similar results have been reported for political attitudes (Sears and Valentino, 1997).

The second mechanism is based on the assumption that both values and attitudes might change during adult life under the combined effect of switching from one individual life-cycle to another and of contextual effects (Voicu and Tufiş, 2012). Regarding the first path towards changing, studies show that aging makes people more religious (Argue *et al.*, 1999; Greeley, 2003) and more conservative regarding gender roles (Misra and Panigrahi, 1996), while marriage produces an alignment in attitudes shared by partners. When partners have divergent attitudes, they may change their attitudes directly or they can change their view as consequence of behavioral change (Kalmijn, 2005). Additionally, parenthood and labor market experiences reshape family values and gender ideology (Vespa, 2009). Contextual effects such economic, political, or social transformations might occur at a definite moment in time and exert similar effects across all birth cohorts, changing values and attitudes in the same direction for the entire population (Crockett and Voas, 2006, p. 567). Large-scale and highly salient events such as the Great Depression, World War II, the Velvet Revolution, or even regular elections may cause changes in early orientations, because they involve exposure to new contexts and make different issues salient for individuals reshaping the orientations they acquired in early formative years (Dalton, 1994; Mason and Lu, 1988; Sears and Valentino, 1997).

Mechanisms that produce changes in values and attitudes during adult life are different. As mentioned previously, values are less open to change and are more

stable over time. After they have been acquired in early socialization, they tend to stay the same over the life course (Fjellvang, 2011). However, changes in values can occur due to acclimation and compensation (Schwartz and Bardi, 1997). The acclimation mechanism is connected to contingencies that life circumstances afford at one moment in time, for example, people upgrading the importance of those values they have attained and downgrading the importance of those values they have been unable to attain (p. 387). Therefore, the position of values inside the individual value system might change due to external circumstances that transform individual priorities. The second mechanism, compensation, occurs mainly in connection with material well-being and security that are beyond the control of the individual (Schwartz and Bardi, 1997). In the case of deprivation, the strength of these needs increases and pushes toward the value goals to which they point (Bilsky and Schwartz, 1994). Consequently, in the case of economic shortage and social insecurity, individuals give priority to materialist values, such as the achievement of affluence and preservation of social order (Inglehart, 1990).

Social learning theory provides another framework for explaining changes of values and attitudes during adult life. According to Bandura (1977), human behavior should be understood within the framework of "the reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioral and environmental determinants" (Bandura, 1977, p. vii). Consequently, individual orientations change when the environment changes. Direct interaction with others exposes individuals to different values, norms, and attitudes and may lead to the adoption of these orientations via the process of imitation or the process of vicarious reinforcement (Akers and Jennings, 2009; Bandura, 1977). Social identification with spouses, work groups, friends, or even with virtual groups, such as mass media or social media, reshapes individual value orientation because people tend to observe and imitate their fellows (Akers and Jennings, 2009). According to the social learning theory, people do not necessarily need first-hand experiences of one specific situation; they can learn from others' experiences (Bandura, 1971). Therefore, values shared by those who were not directly exposed to higher vulnerability may nevertheless become more materialistically orientated as a result of the effects experienced by their fellows.

Several different models are used to explain how individuals change their attitudes and beliefs. These include cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957), interest-based explanations, ideological learning (Brooks and Bolzendahl, 2004), and control models (Kroska and Elman, 2009). Cognitive dissonance occurs when external circumstances change, creating a gap between attitudes shared by individuals and the external world. If the individual cannot change the context, then an adaptation mechanism takes place to put the attitudes in line with the external world. The control models explanation builds on the cognitive dissonance theory and relies on the assumption that individuals seek to maintain meanings and that "they adjust their attitudes to match their behavior" (Kroska and Elman, 2009, p. 379). Thus, if the background and the behavior are in contradiction to the attitudes, the attitudes will change accordingly to preserve internal consistency.

The ideological learning perspective assumes that changes in attitudes are linked to each other and consequently that changes in attitudes towards one object may produce changes in other attitudes (Brooks and Bolzendahl, 2004). Therefore, stronger support for gender equality occurs as a result of a larger process that increases individualism and civic liberalism (Brooks and Bolzendahl, 2004). Interest-based explanations rely on the idea that individuals maintain positive attitudes towards a specific object when they can benefit by it, and their attitude will change depending on the gratification that they can get (Bolzendahl and Myers, 2004).

From previous studies one can conclude that although both attitudes and values are exposed to change during adult life, such change may occur at a different pace and under different circumstances. However, changes in one may produce changes in the other. Since values are more enduring and attitudes more volatile, attitudes towards an object occur more often without necessarily generating a change in the latent value orientation. For instance, in the case of political attitudes, a political system's negative actions can have negative consequences on attitudes towards that political system without eroding support for the general principles guiding it (Lipset, 1960). However, if the political system produced negative outputs for an extended period of time, then the negative attitude engendered may change the latent value orientations, ultimately eroding support for the general principles supporting it (Easton, 1965).

On the other hand, changes in values can reshape attitudes towards specific objects. As a result of acclimation or compensation, value priority may change at some point, and the motivational goals associated with these values will change as well. In such a context, values will influence the attitudes towards specific objects that are relevant for the attainment of the motivational goals (Davidov *et al.*, 2008). In this way, the reorganization of the general value system has an impact on attitudes reshaping them.

Social values and economic development

The connection between culture and economy is already well documented in the social sciences. Although there is no consensus regarding the direction of causality between the two phenomena, scholars agree on the existence of this relationship. While Max Weber stated that culture and values shape economic development, Marx and his successors emphasized the opposite relationship. Weber shows that religious culture and the values promoted by it can boost economic development, pointing out the role of the Protestant ethic on the development of capitalism (1992). In contrast, Marx (1976) underlined the impact of technological development on culture, arguing that technological development shapes the economic system which in turn transforms culture and society. Inglehart's revised version of modernization theory makes no claim regarding the direction of causality. For Inglehart "economic development, cultural change and political change are linked in a coherent and even, to some extent, predictable pattern" (1997, p. 10).

Various versions of modernization theory focus on what happens in cases of economic prosperity and how wealth can occur under certain circumstances. For Weber (1992), Protestant culture contains key elements allowing the development of capitalism and boosting economic growth. Inglehart (1990, 1997) points out that wealth and stability during early socialization incline people to share post-materialist values as opposed to materialist values. Prosperity during the early years of life makes individuals more concerned about self-expression and environmental protection; furthermore they are more tolerant because their basic needs are fulfilled and they can focus on post-materialist values.

On the other hand, economic shortage experienced in early life socializes individuals into more materialist values, because they are mainly concerned with the fulfillment of basic needs (Inglehart, 1990). Moreover, if economic scarcity occurs later in life, individual value orientation might turn more materialist as a result of existential insecurity. Consequently, one can assume that changes in the economic context will usually associate with changes in value orientation; this holds for the younger generation as well as for adults experiencing scarcity later in their life. Although too little time has passed since the last economic crisis for it to be investigated in terms of its effect on early socialization under economic shortage, research on value transformation can focus on what has happened over the last decade to values shared by adults experiencing economic scarcity and social vulnerability.

Although all European countries have been affected by the economic recession since 2008, the level of economic hardship, the timing, and the social and political consequences have not been the same everywhere. In some countries the recession lasted just for few months or a year, while in others, such as those in Southern Europe, the crisis deeply affected economic, political, and social life for a longer period of time. Thus, this context provides the opportunity to investigate how values and attitudes and the nexus between them change under the impact of economic hardship. Moreover, the varying degrees of economic scarcity from one country to another provides the opportunity to investigate whether differences in economic deprivation translate into comparable transformations in values and attitudes and the connection between them.

Contributions to this book

The last economic crisis provided a good basis in order to investigate the impact of economic hardship on values and attitudes. Values and attitudes are both exposed to changes during adult life, especially in times of economic vulnerability. However, values change more slowly than attitudes, and in times of severe economic hardship changes in attitudes may be highly significant. Therefore, the classical model employed to measure values via attitudes might be outdated or incompatible with the social reality. Accordingly, our approach takes into account three different dimensions in the investigation of such changes: the measurement model, the nexus between values and attitudes, and the particular contextual effects. As a consequence, the present volume is structured in three

parts, the first one being dedicated to measurement issues. The two chapters of Part II assess the validity of the model used to measure basic human values and trust. Part III investigates the changing nexus between values and attitudes, targeting domains such as political life, attitudes towards the European Union, and attitudes towards immigrants. Part IV includes case studies focused on countries most affected by the last economic crisis, namely Greece, Portugal, and Romania. All these chapters approach values connected to political life, investigating how economic scarcity affects left-right ideological orientation in Greece, how values shared by politicians have been reshaped by the crisis in Portugal, and how economic conditions have influenced support for democracy in Romania.

Stability and change of measurement model

In Chapter 2, Rudnev, Magun, and Schmidt test the measurement invariance of the Basic Human Values Scale proposed by Schwartz using Latent Class Analysis. The chapter uses three successive waves of the European Social Survey to test the stability over time of the Latent Class Models. The results point out that the measurement model is configurally invariant in both cross-sectional and longitudinal design. However, in spite of the economic crisis, the empirical results do not indicate a change in the measurement model, which proved to be stable over time. The authors conclude that either the economic crisis was an insufficiently relevant event to bring about the reshaping of social values, or the effects of the crisis have yet to occur and will be observable only after more time has elapsed.

Chapter 3 by Coromina and Bartolomé Peral focuses on political trust, investigating both the changes over time of the measurement model and the covariates of political trust. The chapter makes use of two waves of the European Social Survey (2008 and 2010) in order to compare the effect of the crisis on political trust in six countries, three deeply affected by it (Greece, Spain, and Portugal) and three less affected (Germany, the Netherlands, and Sweden). The results of the Structural Equation Models show no changes of measurement model of political trust overtime, but point out a decrease in political trust in countries experiencing higher levels of economic hardship.

Values and attitudes in time of crisis: nexus and variation over time

Kulin and Seymer investigate the nexus between two basic value dimensions, namely self-transcendence and conservation, and political attitudes. Their Chapter 4 makes use of multi-group structural equation models and growth curve models run on five consecutive waves of the European Social Survey to capture changes in the link between basic human values and attitudes towards redistribution and towards immigrants, and thus to capture the 'crisis effect'. The empirical data indicate that the crisis has had an impact on the nexus between basic value orientations and political attitudes, but different mechanisms are employed

to reshape the connection depending on the attitude's object. While the connection between values and attitudes towards redistribution changed immediately as a result of the crisis, the linkage seems to be more durable in the case of attitudes towards immigrants.

Chapter 5 by Ramos, Pereira, and Vala focuses on the connection between social values and attitudes towards immigrants. Using data from five rounds of the European Social Survey (2002 to 2010), their chapter investigates how the relationship between social values and attitudes towards immigrants changed as a result of economic hardship. They consider two different dimensions of attitudes towards immigrants: immigrants as an economic threat and immigrants as a cultural threat, investigating trends over time concerning these two dimensions. Using multilevel regression models, the authors show that economic threat changed over time depending on the cultural values shared by the majority of population, while cultural threat remained unchanged. Economic threat decreased in countries with a greater number of post-materialists, but stayed at the same levels in countries with a larger share of materialists in their population.

In Chapter 6 Harzenetter and Kurti approach the relationship between basic human values and attitudes towards the European Union in times of crisis. Using data from two waves of the European Social Survey (2006 and 2008), they show that although value orientation remains stable, its effect on political attitudes changes over time. Using empirical data, they conclude that economic crisis shifts the impact of security and universalist value orientation onto attitudes towards European Union. The relation between basic human values and attitudes towards European Union is moderated by the economic context and varies together with it. For instance, higher levels of unemployment reduce support for European Union among those who favor security values.

Chapter 7 by Kern, Marien, and Hooghe investigates the change over time in non-institutionalized political participation during times of economic hardship. Using European Social Survey data coming from four successive waves (2002 to 2010), they investigate the overlap between the heterogeneity in the social composition of groups of citizens affected by the crisis and the social composition of citizens who participate in the political process. The authors prove how economic context moderates the impact of individual socio-economic status on participation in protest activities and that this alters the traditional composition of the protest movements' standard audience.

In Chapter 8 Eichhorn, Hensing, and Hübner investigate the political legitimacy of national parliaments and of the European Union, namely the overlap between national political culture and institutional architecture. Using data from the 2008 European Values Study and a two-stage hierarchical model, they first establish whether individual-level factors influence evaluations of confidence in national parliaments and the European Union and then proceed to identify which national-level domains of political culture moderate these individual-level relationships. The empirical results point out that the differences in national political culture among the European Union member states are highly relevant for understanding how legitimacy evaluations are constructed differently across the European Union.

Case studies: increased scarcity and value change

Katsanidou in Chapter 9 approaches the effect of economic crisis on ideological left-right political identification in one of the most affected countries, namely Greece. Using data from the Voting Advice Application 'Choose4Greece', she investigates how crisis reshapes the content of left-right political identification and imposes a new dimension of political identification. Due to particular factors such as high salience of economy, low clarity of blame allocation, and absence of party loyalties, left-right political identification is based on an additional dimension related more to cultural factors than to economic ones.

Freire, Tsatsanis, and Lima focus on the Portuguese case and test 'representation from above' theory in times of economic crisis. Using surveys carried out before and after the crisis on the general population and on Parliament members, their Chapter 10 investigates the match between the value orientations shared by the voters and those shared by the political elite. The empirical data highlight a disconnection between elite and voters in times of crisis, with the radical left being more affected than those on the right of the political spectrum. Moreover, the increase in polarization exists mainly at the elite level, while the voters are less affected.

In Chapter 11 Comşa and Tufiş focus on support for democracy during the economic crisis in Romania, still a fragile and unconsolidated democracy. Using panel data collected between 2009 and 2013, the authors test Easton's classical theory of support of democracy in the context of economic decline. The empirical data point out that in spite of a relatively short democratic past, the Romanian population prove to have a strong diffuse support for democracy that remained unaffected by the economic crisis. The economic shortage has produced a decline only in specific support and in the combination of elements of specific and diffuse support.

Note

- 1 According to the EDP (European Deficit Procedure of EUROSTAT) notification of April 2009 the estimated general government deficiency was 3.7 percent of GDP; in October it amounted 12.7 percent (European Commission, 2010c, p. 6).

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5 Economic crisis, human values and attitudes towards immigrants

Alice Ramos, Cicero Roberto Pereira and Jorge Vala

The importance of studying threat perceptions associated with immigrants

Recent decades have seen some European countries experiencing a new wave of migratory rates that have sustained economic growth and simultaneously contributed to changes in the patterns of customs, life styles, values and religions. Alongside this new European setting, ambivalent positions in the attitude domain have emerged. This occurs because in contemporary democratic societies people are embedded within cultural environments that disseminate a social discourse stressing that good people are egalitarian and non-discriminatory.

The normative discourse of anti-racism and tolerance towards immigrants has become more salient and an increasing number of people do not feel comfortable, or 'educated', simply saying that people from other 'races' or ethnic groups are inferior. These feelings are motivated by egalitarian values that people have integrated into their self-concept and they therefore consider that acting in a prejudiced-based manner may lead to them receiving negative reactions with damaging personal and social consequences. For instance, when people are asked why they are not in favour of more immigrants entering their country, they tend to deny the prejudiced base of their opposition. Otherwise, they would be acting inconsistently with the anti-prejudice norm prescribing that the correct way to act is to promote egalitarianism and fight discrimination. However, individuals can reframe the meaning of their opposition to immigration by saying that it is not motivated by prejudice but rather that it reflects their genuine concern about the values, customs and traditions of their country. They may even argue that the socio-economic situation of the country means that it can no longer receive more people because immigration rates increase competition for very scarce resources (see Pereira *et al.*, 2010; Stephan and Stephan, 2000).

These strategies indicate that there exist alternative ways to transmit concern about the presence of the 'Other' which are perceived as more 'correct'. Instead of arguing that immigrants have a natural inferiority compared to the country's citizens, people say that those humans are so different from 'us' that a co-existence without tension is impossible. In other words, people tend to use the perception that immigrants represent a threat as a justification for the discriminating attitudes

they hold against them, and they do so because threat perceptions are conceived as a legitimate argument to discriminate against out-group members (see Crandall *et al.*, 2002; LaPierre, 1936; Pereira *et al.*, 2009). Threat-based discrimination against immigrants can be used by people as a legitimate reason because it is grounded in immigrants' different ways of life, different values, different perspectives on marriage, raising children, religion; it is grounded in everything that characterises 'our' western, civilised, way of life. This discourse lives in the streets, in the bakery, on public transport, in the newspapers, on the afternoon TV shows. But it also inhabits the 'educated' world:

Western culture is challenged by groups within Western societies. One challenge comes from immigrants from other civilizations who reject assimilation and continue to adhere to and to propagate the values, customs, and cultures of their home societies.

(Huntington, 1996, pp. 304–305)

In face of such a scenario, "the principal responsibility of western leaders is not to attempt to reshape other civilizations in the image of the West, which is beyond their declining power, but to preserve, protect, and renew the unique qualities of Western civilisations" (ibid., p. 311). Although dated, these remarks about the incompatibility (and hierarchy) of cultures are alive, and the idea that immigrants bring more trouble than benefits to Europe continues to be frequently expressed in European societies.

What this means is that people perceived as belonging to a different race or ethnic group represent a threat in the economic, security and identity domains (e.g. Coenders, Gijsberts and Scheepers, 2004; Green, 2009; Vala *et al.*, 2006), a threat that is pervasive across European countries.

These aspects reflect distinct dimensions through which threat can be expressed. One dimension is realistic threat perceptions, i.e. threats to the existence, the (economic and political) power and the (physical or material) well-being of the in-group (Stephan *et al.*, 2002). The other is symbolic threat perceptions, i.e. threats that are related to differences between groups in terms of values, morals and standards, and the way these differences challenge the in-group's worldview (Sears and Henry, 2003). These two types of threat represent two theoretically differentiated dimensions: while realistic threat is more affected by the economic aspects introduced by immigrants, symbolic threat is mainly influenced by cultural aspects of the host society and by the need to defend a unique identity, distinct from all others.

Our immediate concern is to investigate whether threat perceptions have been increasing or not during the last decade and to identify the individual and contextual factors that are related with the different types of threat associated with immigrants by European citizens. Since each type of threat represents a specific aspect of economic and cultural life domains it is likely that realistic threats are mainly sensitive to economic changes while symbolic threats are mainly affected by changes in value patterns.

In this chapter, we intend to answer these questions by proposing a multilevel model in order to understand the impact of two dimensions on threat perceptions associated with immigrants over the last decade: one is objective – the individual socio-economic situation and the national socio-economic situation; one is symbolic – the individual adherence to human values and the national salience of materialism/post-materialist values. Is the perception of the ‘Other’ as an enemy mainly a result of individual motivations or does the context have an influence in some way? To what extent does the economic crisis that has been affecting European countries over recent years increase feelings of threat from immigrants? Is this impact similar in materialist and post-materialist countries? Does the interaction between individual values and cultural values produce specific outcomes on threat perceptions? This chapter is an attempt to contribute to the existing literature on threat perceptions associated with immigrants by carrying out an analysis that, as far as we know, has not been carried out before: the role of individual and cultural values and of individual and contextual economic situations on public threat perceptions associated with immigrants, from a comparative and longitudinal perspective. This analysis will focus on the 16 European countries that participated in all five rounds of the European Social Survey (2002 to 2010), allowing for the introduction of time as a criterion to assess attitudinal changes.

How values shape perceptions of ‘the Other’

Values as individuals’ guiding principles

According to our analytic model, human values are central elements in the construction of threat perceptions, particularly in their symbolic dimension. This hypothesis follows the idea that values constitute a set of structuring principles acting upon peoples’ lives and societies’ organisation. A number of different definitions of values have been offered. Kluckhohn (1951) defined values as explicit or implicit conceptions of the desirable. Parsons (1952) described the concept according to their functional characteristics: a value is an element of a “shared symbolic system which serves as a criterion or standard for selection among the alternatives of orientation which are intrinsically open in a situation” (Parsons, 1952, p. 12). Rokeach characterised values as individual beliefs, a perspective that has guided most of the empirical research on values over the last four decades. “A ‘value’ is an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to a diametrically opposed or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence” (Rokeach, 1973, p. 5).

Some years later, Schwartz and Bilsky (1987, 1990) proposed a theory about the nature and organisation of human values that integrated the main characteristics identified by Kluckhohn (1951) – a value as a conception of the desirable, by Parsons (1952) – a value as an element of the cultural system that transcends specific situations – and by Rokeach (1973) – a value as a belief about a mode of

conduct or end-state of existence. The conception of the model began with Schwartz and Bilsky’s studies (1987, 1990) and was based on the assumption that values represent three universal needs of human existence, to which all individuals and societies have to respond: the needs of individuals as biological organisms; the requisites of coordinated social interaction; and the survival and welfare needs of groups. One of the main challenges was to identify the basic motivations that determine individuals’ adherence to a set of values and how they integrate them into their own value system.¹

The model organises values in a bidimensional structure representing the incompatibilities and congruencies between four types of high-order values, which form two basic and bipolar conceptual dimensions. Two values are compatible insofar as they express similar psychological motives. For example, according to Schwartz (1992), autonomy and creativity values are compatible because both represent individuals’ motivation to promote the free expression of thought and the search for new experiences. A conflict between values occurs when they represent two contrasting motivations, for instance in the opposition between the values that reflect individuals’ motivation for *openness-to-change* (representing the compatibility of self-direction, stimulation and hedonism) and their motivation for *conservation* (representing the compatibility between enhancing security, tradition and conformity). The axiological principle that organises this opposition is a conflict between the individuals’ motivation to express their thoughts by engaging in activities that promote social change, and the motivation to behave in a submissive manner to the authorities and to promote stability in their personal and social life by engaging in activities that maintain and preserve cultural traditions and the religious family. A typical example of this conflict is individuals’ contrasting adherence to the values of autonomy and tradition, in that the first serves the motivation to engage in action promoting the free expression of thought and action regardless of what others think or do, while the second denotes a contrasting motivation, characterised by the individuals’ desire to maintain cultural traditions as they are.

The other motivational conflict opposes the values of self-transcendence (representing the compatibility between universalism and benevolence) to the values of self-enhancement (representing the compatibility between power and achievement). The axiological principle that organises this dimension is the conflict between the motivation to accept others as equals by promoting universal fairness and transcending personal interests in favour of the common good, and the motivation to achieve personal success and achieve means to exercise dominion over other individuals and social groups. A prototypical example of this conflict is the contrasting adherence to *equality* and *power* values, since the value of equality represents the motivation to promote social equity, while the value of power denotes the motivation to promote mastery over others and social groups through the control of material and social resources.

Of special interest for our model, previous research has shown different relationship patterns between the motivational values type and attitudes toward immigrants (e.g. Davidov and Meuleman, 2012; Davidov *et al.*, 2008; Green,

2009). The most consistent pattern concerns the role played by self-transcendence and conservation motivational types. For instance, because self-transcendence values motivate individuals to pursue equality, high adherence to these values is associated with more positive attitudes towards immigration. Indeed, those who ascribe to humanitarian-egalitarian values are sensitive to the difficulties experienced by disadvantaged groups, are more likely to support affirmative action programmes, are more receptive to diversity (Leong and Ward, 2006) and are less prejudiced towards minority groups (Biernat *et al.*, 1996). According to Feldman's findings, "support for equality leads to support for a broad range of government social service spending and aid to minorities" (Feldman, 1988, p. 429). The result of the effect of self-transcendence in more positive attitudes towards minority groups is mainly due to the effect of universalism rather than that of benevolence, since the motivational principle of universalism is specifically oriented to the pursuit and promotion of egalitarian relationships between social groups. On the other hand, the principles underlying benevolence encompass motivations more focused on the good functioning of the in-group, such as the promotion of happiness, trust and well-being of family members and close friends. For this reason, we will include in our analytical model only universalism as a representative of self-transcendence motivations.

There is, then, enough evidence to expect that those who value the humanitarian principles of *universalism* should also look at people of different groups as sources of diversity and enrichment, and not as dangers to society, in other words, as enemies. Therefore, we hypothesise:

H1: The higher the adherence to universalism, the lower the perception of economic and cultural threat.

In contrast, people who hold conservative values are more likely to display negative attitudes towards minority groups (e.g. Rokeach, 1960) because these values motivate individuals to preserve the *status quo* by engaging in activities aiming to maintain and preserve cultural traditions. This motivation is expressed in the individuals' support for the superiority of the *status quo* of their own culture. Moreover, conservative political rhetoric often refers to the past, and emphasises stability and tradition. Political conservatism is based, in part, on a preference for stability and the maintenance of the *status quo*, which in turn can support the relative elevation of whites, heterosexuals, males and so on, compared to other groups (e.g. Lambert and Chasteen, 1997). Conservatism is associated with a social dominance orientation (Pratto *et al.*, 1994), as well as Protestant Ethics (e.g. Feather, 1984). Endorsing these values, and perceiving their violation, can form the basis of the justification of a wide range of prejudice (e.g. Kinder and Sears, 1981) and of the feelings of threat that arise from prejudice.

Accordingly, we derive the following hypothesis for the role played by conservation values on threat perceptions:

H2: The higher the adherence to conservation values, the higher the perception of economic and cultural threat.

Unlike *universalism*, that is a human value in itself, *conservation* is a dimension of human values that represents those who praise their family and religious traditions, who believe that one must follow the rules and obey authority, who give importance to living in safe surroundings and ensuring that the authorities ruling their countries have as a priority national defence against enemies (e.g. terrorism). People who identify themselves with *conservation* values are more motivated to agree with the anti-immigration discourses that use fear and threat as rhetorical weapons. As a consequence of the strong relevance of aspects linked to the maintenance of traditions that are present in *conservation*, we admit that its effect on the perception of immigrants as a cultural threat may be higher than the effect on the perception of immigrants as an economic threat.

Note that our hypotheses predict that values underpin the two types of threat perceptions. However if, as the theory predicts, cultural threat is mainly related to symbolic aspects of social life, then the impact of values should be greater on cultural threat than on economic threat.

Additionally, based on previous research (Duriez *et al.*, 2002; Sagiv and Schwartz, 1995), there is not enough evidence to justify the inclusion of the human values pertaining to the high-order dimensions of *self-enhancement* and *openness to change* values as predictors of threat perceptions associated with immigrants.

As already stated, intergroup attitudes are primarily motivated by two different value domains, representing a tension between egalitarian motivations and *status quo* preservation motivations. The values pertaining to the dimensions of *self-enhancement* and *openness to change* do not express those motivations: *self-enhancement* represents individualistic motivations towards personal success and *openness to change* represents the need for excitement and sensual gratification through the pursuit of change and adventure.

Values as cultures' guiding principles

Two main assumptions guide research in the field of values: (1) values represent fundamental principles that guide people in their different life domains, leading to the study of individual differences; (2) the importance that a society in general attributes to values also reflects the fundamental principles that guide that society, leading to the study of shared values in different countries and cultures.

Accordingly, the role of values may be analysed on two different (although not independent) levels. They represent individual motivations, serving as

guiding principles for personal actions and choices. However, at a country level, values express shared conceptions of what is good and bad, what is considered to be desirable and unfavourable in the culture; consequently, they serve as guiding principles for national priorities and public policies. Geert Hofstede (1980) and Ronald Inglehart (1977, 1997) called this second conception of values, cultural values. This distinction has important implications not only from a conceptual point of view but also concerning its measurement, as we will show in the methodology section.

In developing the study of cultural values, Ronald Inglehart (1977, 1997) proposed that cultural differences reflect a complex interaction between socio-economic development and the priority that society attributes to each of two sets of socio-political values, so-called 'materialist' and 'post-materialist' values. Inglehart's proposal derived from an interpretation of Weber's theses about the relationship between values and the rise of capitalism. According to Inglehart (1977, 1997), materialist values represent a change that occurred in modern industrial societies, characterised by the decreasing importance of religious values as societal guiding principles and by the rise of a secular state mainly oriented towards the fulfillment of populations' basic needs. Societal priorities were economic growth and promotion of safety and order, both at the individual level (interpersonal and family relationships) and the national level (national security and control of crime). In this sense, the transition from the traditional feudal productive system to the capitalist one typical of modern societies would have been followed by successive changes in cultural values: religious values were giving place to materialist values.

The main assumption of Inglehart's theory (1977, 1997) is that economic development produces changes in the cultural values' system that, in turn, produces a feedback effect, changing the economic and political systems. Once economic stability and population security is achieved, a silent revolution of values will rise, transforming peoples' priorities to more abstract needs and aspirations. Self-direction, freedom of speech, aesthetic and political expression and environmental protection will then be the priorities the country should achieve; post-materialist values will represent this phase of the cultural change process.

Based on these assumptions, it is plausible to expect that in countries where materialistic needs are guaranteed and societal priorities are oriented towards the achievement of higher levels of citizens' well-being, people will be more open to immigrants and less predisposed to feel threatened by their presence. Therefore, our hypothesis is:

H3: In countries where post-materialism is more salient than materialism, people will show lower perceptions of economic and cultural threats associated with immigrants.

Finally, it is important to keep in mind that the role of values in attitudes and behaviours may involve a highly complex process when individual motivations

interact with the specific socio-economic conditions of each social context. This means that individuals' motivation to promote equality may be expressed through a lower feeling of threat only when that same motivation is part of the cultural values commonly shared by the society. For instance, a greater adherence to universalism implies lower threat perceptions in the cultural contexts where post-materialist values are more prominent because individual motivations will be compatible with the cultural axiological principles. In contrast, in more materialist contexts individuals with greater motivation towards equality may find it harder to express their own values because they may be incompatible with the cultural values that promote attitudes contrary to the individual motivation to promote equality. In other words, the cultural context can function as a buffer to equality-based individual attitudes towards immigration. Following this reasoning, we derive our next hypothesis:

H4: The expression of economic and cultural threat is affected by a cross-level interaction between universalism (individual-level values) and materialism/post-materialism (country-level values).

Similarly, individuals' motivation to preserve the *status quo*, expressed by a greater feeling of threat, may find social support in cultural contexts where the values compatible with that same motivation are shared. For instance, in more materialist contexts, conservation values may imply greater perceptions of threat because the adherence to those values is compatible with the axiological principles that characterise more materialistic cultures. However, in contexts where post-materialism is more salient, and therefore value priorities are incompatible with the motivation to maintain the *status quo* and to preserve cultural unity, individuals who hold conservation values will find more obstacles to express feelings of threat. Therefore, according to our argument, we derive the following hypothesis:

H5: The expression of economic and cultural threat is affected by a cross-level interaction between conservation (individual-level values) and materialism/post-materialism (country-level values).

Socio-economic determinants of threat perceptions

Economic self-interest and material deprivation

The belief that immigrants are a threat to the economic well-being of the populations of the host countries is still transmitted by the media and is present in common-sense discourse. This belief reflects, for instance, the perception that

immigrants “take jobs”, “make salaries fall” and “abuse the social security system”. We thus put forward the question: to what extent is the perception of immigrants as a threat actually determined by economic factors?

Some studies conclude that the opposition towards immigration results from the perception of an unfavourable economic position (Harwood, 1983; Simon and Alexander, 1993); moreover, the experience of economic fragility facilitates the expression of the perception of threat, namely of realistic threat (for example, Fetzer, 2000, in the case of the USA, France and Germany; and in the case of Portugal, Vala *et al.*, 1999). Other studies, framed by the theories of relative deprivation (Gurr, 1970; Walker and Pettigrew, 1984), regarding either competition for material resources (e.g. wages) or for social resources (e.g. education, health and social security) (Malchow-Møller *et al.*, 2006; Muller and Espenshade, 1985; Vala *et al.*, 1999), also found a relationship between the perception of economic disadvantage and feelings of threat. Moreover, in the present context of economic crisis, it is plausible to think that those who have felt a severe degradation of their economic situation over the last few years will be more prone to see immigrants as a threat.

In contrast, research and theorising have suggested that economic resources are not the main explicative factor of negative attitudes towards immigrants but, rather, the way individuals actively interpret their social-economic environment in order to legitimise negative attitudes towards minority groups (Dustmann and Preston, 2004; Hainmueller and Hiscox, 2005; Vala *et al.*, 2006).

From our point of view, many of the models based on economic factors concentrate on individual perceptions, either regarding people’s interests, in-group (natives) interests or out-group (immigrants) needs and behaviours. In this sense, the measures used are not reflecting an objective situation, but a subjective perception of economic threat, since they result from subjective assessments in contexts of competition for economic resources. In order to overcome this limitation, we will focus on the impact that objective economic conditions have on the explanations given by people who consider immigrants as a threat to their lives. We therefore decided to include only objective indicators of individual economic resources (household income and employment situation) in our models, and derived the following hypotheses:

H6: People with lower incomes express higher levels of economic and cultural threat.

H7: The unemployed express higher levels of economic and cultural threat.

Considering the wide range of implications that immigration has in the domestic landscape of receiving countries, it is reasonable to predict that perceptions of

immigrants will also vary between social categories. The feelings of competition for resources may be more salient among those who hold similar social positions to the immigrants. Younger people, as well as those with higher levels of education are, for contrasting reasons, expected to show lower levels of threat perceptions associated with immigrants. They do not compete in the same areas and, being younger or more educated, they may be more ‘disposed’ to look at issues from the immigrants’ point of view and to develop more open attitudes concerning their presence in the country.

Micro-level non-attitudinal predictors are certainly important to understand the way people perceive immigrants, and they cannot be excluded from our analysis. Moreover, several studies have already shown that they are relevant predictors of opposition to immigration (Fetzer, 2000; Harwood, 1983; Malchow-Møller *et al.*, 2006; Muller and Espenshade, 1985; O’Connell, 2005; Scheepers *et al.*, 2002; Semyonov *et al.*, 2006, 2008; Simon and Alexander, 1993).

However, some studies support the hypothesis that symbolic factors may have a more important impact on opposition towards immigration than socio-economic aspects or material interests (Davidov *et al.*, 2008; Dustmann and Preston, 2004; Hainmueller and Hiscox, 2005; Sides and Citrin, 2007; Vala *et al.*, 2006). Our idea follows this direction: although important, non-attitudinal variables lose a significant share of their predictive power in the presence of the representations people construct about people from different racial and ethnic groups and the values they hold (universalism and conservation). Therefore, they will be introduced in the models as control variables.

Socio-economic performance

According to Blumer (1958), the dominant group develops a sense of group position according to which some resources are viewed as belonging exclusively to them. Bobo (1983, 1988) goes a step further and postulates that the subordinate group represents a threat to the real resources of the dominant group (see also Sherif and Sherif, 1953). The scapegoat theory (Hovland and Sears, 1940) states that the perception of declining opportunities and the perception of competition in the labour market can generate blaming attitudes towards immigrants.

Following the same line, Semyonov *et al.* (2006) found some evidence of a negative relationship between GDP and anti-foreigner prejudice in Western Europe. Framing his hypotheses within group-threat theories (Blalock, 1956, 1967; Blumer, 1958; Bobo and Kluegel, 1997), Quillian (1995) concluded that the higher the GDP, the lower the racial prejudice. Nevertheless, when in interaction with immigrant population size, the effect became positive (the higher the GDP, the higher the racial prejudice). Moreover, concerning the impact of a country’s unemployment rates on attitudes towards immigrants, Scheepers *et al.* (2002) found no effects.

Although GDP has been used frequently as a single measure of socio-economic development, we decided to use a broader measure, the Human

Development Index (HDI).² Based on these theories, we will consider HDI and unemployment rates not only in a comparative perspective but also in a longitudinal one, assessing the possible effects of their evolution and interaction, between 2002 and 2010. Our hypotheses are:

H8: The higher the HDI, the lower the perceptions of economic and cultural threats associated with immigrants.

H9: The higher the unemployment rate, the stronger the perceptions of economic and cultural threats associated with immigrants.

Immigration rates

Up to now, empirical evidence has not been consistent concerning the relationship between the number of immigrants in a country and the attitudes people endorse about them. For instance, a multilevel analysis carried out by Gijsberts *et al.* (2004) showed that an increase in the size of minorities generated a feeling of threat and of competition for rewards and resources. They concluded that discriminatory attitudes have a higher probability of rising when the number of immigrants increases. Against these findings, however, based on data from the Eurobarometer-30/1988, Quillian (1995) showed that an anti-immigrant orientation was not associated with the percentage of non-European Union residents. A multilevel analysis using data from Round 1 and Round 3 of the European Social Survey also showed that opposition towards immigrants in Europe was not influenced by their presence in the country (Ramos, 2011).

Following the same line of research, Semyonov *et al.* (2008) and Strabac and Listhaug (2008) concluded that the perceived size of immigrant populations determines anti-immigrant sentiments to a much greater extent than their actual size, the latter often being non-significant in statistical models.

Another theoretical perspective associating size of minority with anti-immigrant attitudes can be retrieved from contact theory. According to this theory (e.g. Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1986), different kinds of contact may produce different effects on attitudes towards minorities: while close, cooperative, equal status contact with individual newcomers (e.g. at the workplace) may have a positive effect and may reduce discriminatory attitudes and behaviours (Schneider, 2008), more casual forms of contact may have an inverse effect. In this study, we will only consider the casual level of contact induced by the mere presence of foreigners in each country.

Taking all these different theoretical perspectives into account, we put forward the following hypothesis:

H10: The higher the number of immigrants, the stronger the feeling of economic and cultural threat.

Notice that our hypotheses predict that socio-economic determinants have an impact on both types of threat perceptions. However, as argued above (see also Pereira *et al.*, 2010), since realistic threat is mainly sensitive to economic changes, then the impact of socio-economic determinants will be stronger on economic threat than on cultural threat.

Methodology

Data

To analyse the impact of individual characteristics and contextual circumstances on economic and cultural threat perceptions over time, data from five rounds of the ESS³ was used (2002–2010). The methodological standards followed in all participating countries guarantee a strong level of confidence in the data produced to perform comparative and longitudinal analysis, namely the strict probability sampling of the 15-year-old or older resident population and the rigorous translation process of the questionnaire into the several languages of participating countries. The countries used in the analysis are the following (total sample for the five rounds): Belgium (6,788); Denmark (6,142); Finland (7,726); France (6,262); Germany (10,213); Hungary (2,734); Ireland (1,717); Netherlands (7,730); Norway (7,395); Poland (5,679); Portugal (3,745); Slovenia (4,120); Spain (5,168); Sweden (6,977); Switzerland (6,749) and United Kingdom (7,742), making a total of 96,887 respondents. Only 16 countries participated in all five rounds.⁴

Variables

Dependent variables

ECONOMIC THREAT

Economic threat was measured by the only indicator common to all ESS Rounds:

Would you say it is generally bad or good for [country]'s economy that people come to live here from other countries? (Scale: 0 – bad for the economy to 10 – good for the economy)

Scales were reversed in order to have a measure of threat (the higher the score, the higher the perception of threat).

Cultural threat was measured by the single indicator available on the ESS questionnaire:

Would you say that [country]'s cultural life is generally undermined or enriched by people coming to live here from other countries? (Scale: 0 – cultural life undermined to 10 – cultural life enriched)

The scale was reversed in order to have a measure of threat (the higher the score, the higher the perception of threat).

It is important to stress that the use of a single indicator to measure each type of threat may be problematic and constitute a limitation in several respects. First, the use of a single indicator does not allow for the estimation of measure reliability or distinguishing between random error and method effect. A second limitation is the impossibility of testing empirically the separation of the two threat dimensions. In fact, studies using ESS data have shown that these two items are loaded in a common factor, measuring a diffuse feeling of threat (see Billiet *et al.*, 2014).

However, there is also evidence that these items are measuring two different factors. Using ESS R1 data, Pereira and colleagues conducted a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) with the indicators of threat perception, in which they specified a solution with two correlated latent variables (symbolic threat and realistic threat). They compared the goodness-of-fit of this solution with the goodness-of-fit of a unifactorial solution. Results indicated that the bi-factorial solution had a better fit than the unifactorial one. This means that the solution specifying symbolic threat perceptions as a latent variable different from realistic threat perceptions is more appropriate than the solution that specifies threat perceptions as a single factor. Moreover, the predictive validity of the items we are using to measure cultural and economic threat perceptions was demonstrated in Pereira *et al.* (2010), since economic threat predicted opposition towards immigration more strongly, while cultural threat predicted opposition to naturalisation more strongly.

Besides, the separation of the two types of threat is more consistent with research and theorising about intergroup threat (Stephan *et al.*, 2002) because it allows for the measurement not only of a diffuse feeling of threat but also to address different contents from which feelings of threat towards out-groups are expressed.

Independent variables – individual level

At the individual level, the independent variables considered in the analysis were: individual 'control' variables (age, gender, household income, unemployment, educational level and left-right orientation) and human values (*universalism* and *conservation*).

The measurement of individual values was made from the Schwartz Portrait Value Questionnaire included in the ESS questionnaire. Past research showed that values we are using are equivalently measured throughout ESS countries (Davidov, 2010). Respondents were asked to say to what extent persons described as having specific characteristics are alike her/him (scale: 1 – very much like me to 6 – not like me at all).

According to the Schwartz model, universalism is a combination of three indicators. However, we used only two of them:

- (1) Please listen to each description and tell me how much each person is or is not like you. A person who thinks it's important for everyone to be treated equally. Believing that everyone should have the same opportunities in life.
- (2) A person for whom it's important to listen to people who are different from oneself. Even when disagreeing with someone, there's still the desire to understand that person.

The third indicator measures environmental concerns. Since we do not have theoretical reasons to establish a link between this motivation and feelings of threat associated with immigrants, we decided to exclude it from the index.

Conservation is a high-order value composed of three basic values:

- a Conformity
 - (1) A person who thinks that people should do as they're told. People should always follow the rules even when no one is watching.
 - (2) A person for whom it's important always to behave properly. Doing things others would say were wrong must be avoided.
- b Security
 - (1) A person who gives importance to living in a place where people feel safe. Anything that can put his/her security at risk is avoided.
 - (2) A person for whom it's important that the Government guarantees his/her security, against all threats. A strong State is needed, so it can defend its citizens.
- c Tradition
 - (1) A person for whom it's important to be humble and modest. He/She tries not to attract attention.
 - (2) A person who gives importance to tradition. Everything is done in accordance with religion and family.

Independent variables – aggregate level

Two aggregate levels will be introduced in the models: round level and country level. At the round level, the following variables will be used: time, human development index (HDI); unemployment rate; and immigration rates (proportion of foreigners). Data was collected from Eurostat.⁵ At the country level, we introduced cultural values (materialism/post-materialism).

The indicator of materialism/post-materialism was produced from the 2008 wave of the European Values Study. The questionnaire includes four out of the 12 indicators of Inglehart's original scale. Respondents were asked to answer these two questions:

There is a lot of talk these days about what the aims of this country should be for the next ten years. On this card are listed some of the goals which different people would give top priority. If you had to choose, which of the things on this card would you say is most important? And which would be the next most important?

- (a) maintaining order in the nation;
- (b) giving people more say in important government decisions;
- (c) fighting rising prices;
- (d) protecting freedom of speech.

The measure of materialism/post-materialism was operationalised as follows: first a score was attributed to each item (2 if the item was first choice, 1 if the item was second choice, 0 if the item was not chosen); then the materialism and post-materialism items were averaged; finally, the score of materialism was subtracted from the post-materialism score. Thus, for each respondent, we obtained a scale ranging from -2 to 2, where -2 stands for higher materialism and 2 for higher post-materialism. In order to have a country-level measure, the individual scores were aggregated by country. For us, it is important to use this indicator obtained from independent data set for two reasons: (1) cultural values are really measuring societal priorities, since the questions the respondents were asked addressed goals to be achieved by the society and not by the respondents themselves; (2) the independence of individual from cultural values is guaranteed, since they were measured from the answers of different respondent samples. In fact, the lack of independence is a 'chronic disease' of survey data in comparative research (Billiet, 2013). Using the country-level measure of values is theoretically meaningful because individual values are different from cultural values: while the first measure basic individual motivations (Schwartz, 1992), the second measure priorities that people believe are important as societal goals (Inglehart, 1977).

Results

Economic and cultural threat perceptions in Europe

Figure 5.1 and 5.2 show the mean values of threat perceptions in the 16 countries over five rounds of the ESS. Although there have been statistically significant changes between rounds in some countries, and a mean value erases that information, the figures give a general picture of the relative position of each country in the set of countries.

The first comparative result shows that economic threat is stronger and more uniform among the selected countries than cultural threat. Whereas, in the case

of some countries we can state that they express low levels of cultural threat (namely Finland and Sweden), the same cannot be said concerning economic threat perceptions (the lower value, for Germany, is very near the midpoint of the scale). It is also very interesting to see that there is no clear tendency in the relationship between flux of immigrants and threat perceptions. For instance, Spain was the country that registered the highest annual variation rate of immigrants during the period under analysis (65.7 per cent) and scores lower than the midpoint of the scale in both types of threat. A contrasting example can be given by Belgium, a country that registered an annual variation of 4.9 per cent of

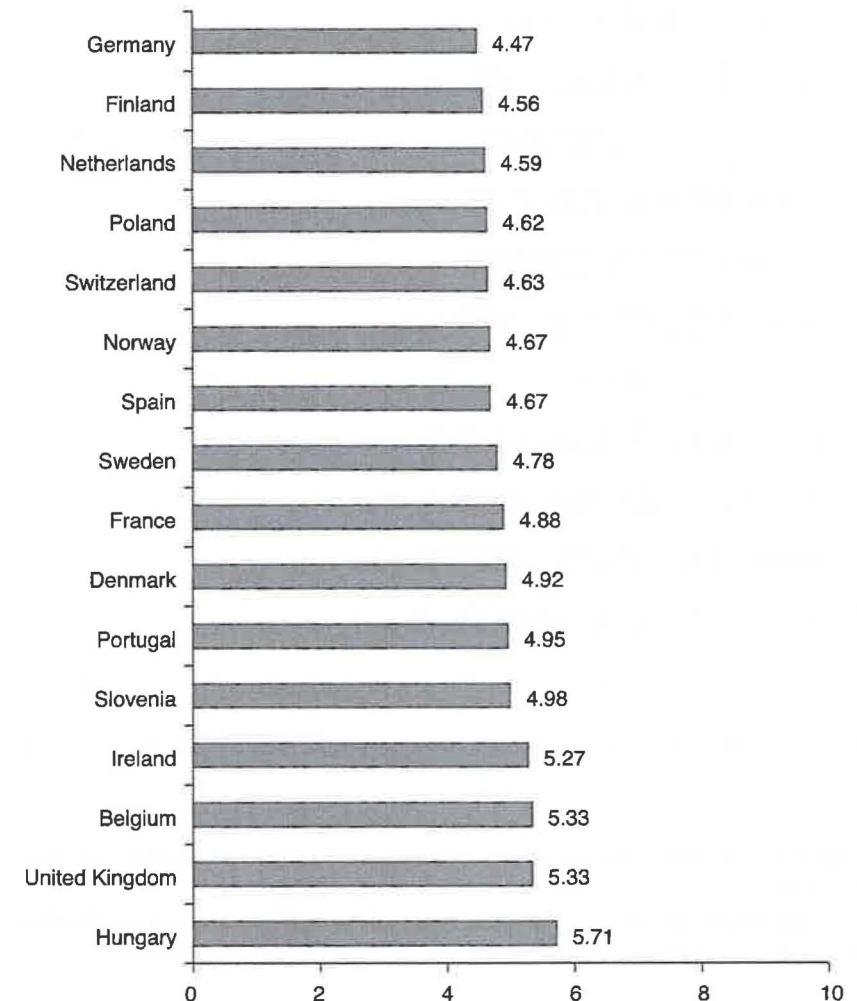


Figure 5.1 Economic threat in 16 European countries (mean value for the five rounds of the ESS).



Figure 5.2 Cultural threat in 16 European countries (mean value for the five rounds of the ESS).

immigration but that is among those that express stronger perceptions of economic threat.

To understand the predictors underlying these differences, we performed three-level interaction analyses that will be described in the next section.

Impact of individual determinants and contextual conditions on economic and cultural threat perceptions

In order to test our prediction, we estimated a series of multilevel random models (see Tables 5.1 and 5.2) using the Hierarchical Linear and Nonlinear Modelling (HLM) software (version 7.01; Raudenbush, Bryk and Congdon, 2013). Since our main aim was to analyse the expression of economic and cultural threat in Europe over time, we used the five rounds of the ESS in a multilevel model, where individual data (level 1) is nested by round (level 2) and these are subsequently nested by country (level 3). We have then a three-level hierarchical structure. At level 1, data is composed by 96,887 individuals, nested in 5 rounds and 16 countries, which gives origin to 74 observations at level 2. Data from level 2 is nested in the 16 selected countries.⁶

We first ran one single intercept model for each threat perception aiming to describe how much of the total variance of these threats is allocated to each level of analysis, on the basis of which we calculated the intra-class correlations corresponding to levels 2 and 3 of data structure. We then estimated an exploratory model aiming to analyse the expression of economic and cultural threat in Europe over time. In this preliminary analysis, two models were run (one for each type of threat) including time as unique predictor in order to estimate the changes in threat across time. Results show that time had a significant effect only concerning economic threat perceptions (Figure 5.3), which decreased from 2002 to 2010.⁷

We then estimated five models, including the three levels of analysis. The level 1 models estimate the effect of the control variables (sex, age, education, individual unemployment, income and left-right political positioning; Model 1) and individual values-based explanatory variables (universalism and conservation value types; Model 2) on the outcome variables (i.e. cultural and economic threat perceptions). The level 2 models add the estimation of the effect of time-varying contextual predictors (time of round, country unemployment rate, country HDI and country foreigner rate; Model 3). In Model 4, we added a level 3 variable that estimates the effect of cultural materialism/post-materialism values (Model 4). Finally, cross-level two-way and three-way interactions were added in Model 5, aiming to test specific hypotheses concerning the conditional effect of each individual and contextual valued-based variables on each threat perception. In all models the time, universalism, conservation and materialism/post-materialism variables were grand-mean-centred in order to facilitate the interpretation of main and conditional effects (see Aiken and West, 1991; Nezlek, 2001). Finally, we estimated the models as either fixed or random slope error terms on the basis of the statistical significance from preliminary analyses to ensure the convergence of the models (see Nezlek, 2001).

Parameters estimated in Model 1 indicate that all individual control variables are significantly associated with economic threat, and only unemployment is not related with cultural threat. Looking at the impact of these variables in each threat perception, we verify that the more respondents place themselves on the

Table 5.1 Predictors of economic threat in 16 European countries over time (parameter estimates)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	4.85 (0.140)***	4.83 (0.134)***	4.84 (0.142)***	4.83 (0.127)***	4.84 (0.124)***
<i>Individual level (control variables)</i>					
Left-right	0.10 (0.003)***	0.06 (0.003)***	0.06 (0.015)***	0.06 (0.003)***	0.06 (0.003)***
Gender	0.29 (0.014)***	0.34 (0.013)***	0.34 (0.026)***	0.34 (0.014)***	0.34 (0.014)***
Education	-0.13 (0.00)***	-0.11 (0.002)***	-0.11 (0.007)***	-0.11 (0.002)***	-0.11 (0.002)***
Unemployment	0.25 (0.037)***	0.27 (0.036)***	0.27 (0.059)***	0.27 (0.036)***	0.27 (0.036)***
Income	-0.08 (0.003)***	-0.07 (0.003)***	-0.07 (0.007)***	-0.07 (0.003)***	-0.07 (0.003)***
Age	-0.00 (0.009)***	-0.01 (0.000)***	-0.01 (0.001)***	-0.01 (0.001)***	-0.01 (0.000)***
<i>Individual level (explanatory variables)</i>					
Universalism (Un)		-0.45 (0.009)***	-0.45 (0.028)***	-0.45 (0.009)***	-0.43 (0.009)***
Conservation (Co)		0.39 (0.009)***	0.39 (0.015)***	0.39 (0.009)***	0.38 (0.010)***
<i>Round level</i>					
Time (T)			-0.04 (0.023)	-0.04 (0.023)	-0.03 (0.023)
Unemployment rate			0.06 (0.013)**	0.06 (0.012)***	0.06 (0.013)***
HDI			0.00 (0.100)	-0.00 (0.098)	0.02 (0.096)
Foreigners rate			0.15 (1.82)	-0.38 (1.75)	-1.33 (1.77)
<i>Country level</i>					
Materialism/Post-materialism (M/PM)				1.08 (0.571)*	1.05 (0.559)*
<i>Cross-level interactions</i>					
Un*T					-0.00 (0.001)
Un*PM					-0.38 (0.043)***
Co*T					-0.00 (0.007)
Co*PM					0.11 (0.046)**
T* PM					-0.14 (0.075)*
Un*T*PM					0.01 (0.031)
Co*T*PM					0.02 (0.033)
<i>Variance components</i>					
Individual level, e	4.50	4.34	4.34	4.34	4.34
Round level, r_0	0.06 ($\chi^2_{58}=1,121.25$, $p<0.001$)	0.06 ($\chi^2_{58}=1,033.41$, $p<0.001$)	0.03 ($\chi^2_{54}=626.89$, $p<.001$)	0.03 ($\chi^2_{54}=630.26$, $p<0.001$)	0.03 ($\chi^2_{54}=590.83$, $p<0.001$)
Country level, u_{00}	0.30 ($\chi^2_{15}=300.12$, $p<0.001$)	0.28 ($\chi^2_{15}=309.40$, $p<0.001$)	0.32 ($\chi^2_{15}=584.54$, $p<0.001$)	0.25 ($\chi^2_{14}=445.40$, $p<0.001$)	0.24 ($\chi^2_{14}=460.01$, $p<0.001$)

Notes

Level 1: $N=96,887$; level 2: $N=74$; level 3: $N=16$.

Intraclass correlation at round level=0.07; intraclass correlation at country level=0.06.

* $p<0.05$; ** $p<0.01$; *** $p<0.001$ (one-tailed).

Left-right (0 left to 10 right); Gender (Man=0; Woman=1); Education (0 to 30 years of schooling); Unemployment (Unemployed=1); Income (0 lower to 9 higher); Age (15 and over).

Table 5.2 Predictors of cultural threat in 16 European countries over time (parameter estimates)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	4.03 (0.154)***	4.02 (0.151)***	4.02 (0.149)***	4.02 (0.148)***	4.02 (0.148)***
<i>Individual level (control variables)</i>					
Left-right	0.16 (0.003)***	0.11 (0.003)***	0.11 (0.003)***	0.11 (0.003)***	0.11 (0.003)***
Gender	-0.09 (0.014)***	-0.02 (0.014)	-0.02 (0.014)	-0.02 (0.014)	-0.02 (0.014)
Education	-0.13 (0.002)***	-0.11 (0.002)***	-0.11 (0.002)***	-0.11 (0.002)***	-0.11 (0.002)***
Unemployment	0.07 (0.037)	0.09 (0.036)*	0.09 (0.036)*	0.09 (0.036)*	0.09 (0.036)*
Income	-0.07 (0.003)***	-0.07 (0.003)***	-0.07 (0.003)***	-0.07 (0.003)***	-0.07 (0.003)***
Age	0.00 (0.000)***	0.00 (0.001)**	0.00 (0.000)**	0.00 (0.000)**	0.00 (0.000)**
<i>Individual level (explanatory variables)</i>					
Universalism (Un)		-0.57 (0.009)***	-0.57 (0.009)***	-0.57 (0.009)***	-0.54 (0.009)***
Conservation (Co)		0.44 (0.009)***	0.44 (0.009)***	0.44 (0.009)***	0.42 (0.009)***
<i>Round level</i>					
Time (T)			0.02 (0.020)	0.02 (0.019)	0.01 (0.006)
Unemployment rate			-0.00 (0.011)	-0.00 (0.011)	-0.00 (0.011)
HDI			-0.00 (0.083)	-0.00 (0.083)	-0.01 (0.084)
Foreigners rate			1.35 (1.67)	1.40 (1.67)	1.79 (1.74)
<i>Country level</i>					
Materialism/Post-materialism (M/PM)				-0.24 (0.625)	-0.29 (0.661)
<i>Cross-level interactions</i>					
Un*T					0.00 (0.006)
Un*PM					-0.29 (0.043)***
Co*T					-0.01 (0.006)*
Co*PM					0.23 (0.046)***
T* PM					0.05 (0.066)
Un*T*PM					-0.02 (0.031)
Co*T*PM					0.01 (0.033)
<i>Variance components</i>					
Individual level, e	4.59	4.36	4.36	4.36	4.35
Round level, r_0	0.03 ($\chi^2_{58}=543.50$, $p<0.001$)	0.03 ($\chi^2_{58}=507.09$, $p<0.001$)	0.02 ($\chi^2_{54}=465.53$, $p<0.001$)	0.02 ($\chi^2_{54}=465.76$, $p<0.001$)	0.02 ($\chi^2_{54}=462.42$, $p<0.001$)
Country level, u_{00}	0.37 ($\chi^2_{15}=906.91$, $p<0.001$)	0.36 ($\chi^2_{15}=986.94$, $p<0.001$)	0.35 ($\chi^2_{15}=1,033.57$, $p<0.001$)	0.35 ($\chi^2_{14}=1,024.39$, $p<0.001$)	0.34 ($\chi^2_{14}=1,017.37$, $p<0.001$)

Notes

Level 1: $N=96,887$; level 2: $N=74$; level 3: $N=16$.

Intraclass correlation at round level=0.08; Intraclass correlation at country level=0.07.

* $p<0.05$; ** $p<0.01$; *** $p<0.001$ (one-tailed).

Left-right (0 left to 10 right); Gender (Man=0; Woman=1); Education (0 to 30 years of schooling); Unemployment (Unemployed=1); Income (0 lower to 9 higher); Age (15 and over).

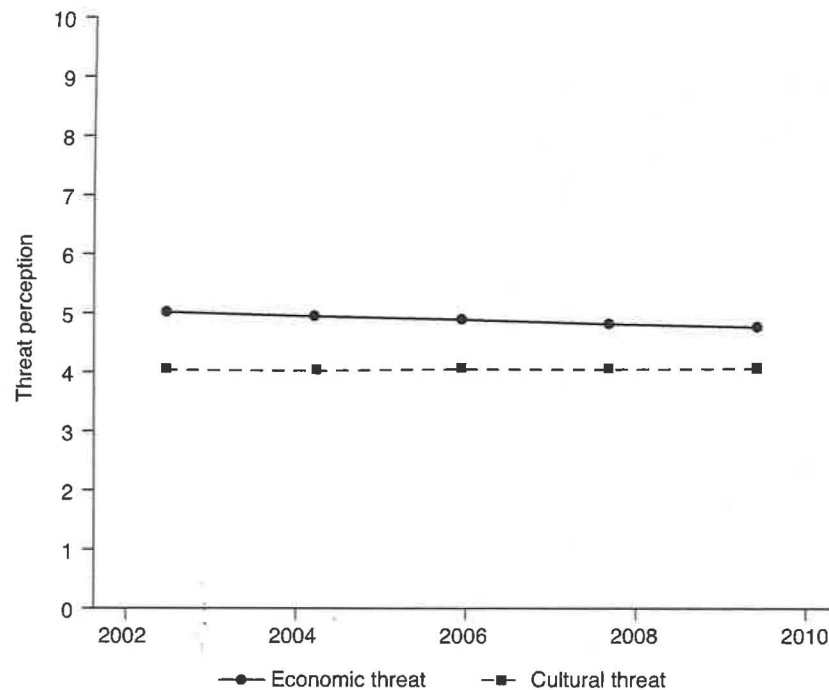


Figure 5.3 Evolution of economic and cultural threat perceptions over time.

right side of the ideological scale, the more they declare economic threat perceptions, but even more cultural threat. Higher schooling and higher income are associated with lower levels of both types of threat. The gender and age of respondents play a contrasting role according to the kind of threat: while economic threat is more perceived by women and younger people, cultural threat is more salient among men and older people. This pattern of findings holds equally through the other four estimated models and the aim of including them was precisely to take into account their effects and avoid spurious interpretations between variables for which we have specific hypotheses to test feelings of threat.

Model 2 shows that both individual-based values predict each threat perception. As we predicted, adherence to the values of universalism is associated with lower threat perceptions (H1), while adherence to the values of conservation boosts that same perception (H2). Notice that the impact of values was more expressive in the case of cultural threat than in that of economic threat.⁸ Moreover, people with higher income expressed lower levels of economic and cultural threat. Concerning the unemployed, they expressed higher economic threat but not cultural threat, a finding that partially confirms H7 and that gives empirical support to our idea that the two kinds of threat are differently predicted by socio-economic factors.⁹

Model 3 results show that the impact of individual-level variables remained significant even after we added the four predictors at level 2. From the set of variables included at this level, only the unemployment rate showed a significant effect on economic threat. This finding confirms our hypothesis, according to which the higher the unemployment rate, the higher the perception of economic threat (H9). Moreover, it confirms the idea that economic threat is more sensitive to socio-economic change than cultural threat. However, hypotheses H8 and H10 were not confirmed because the effects of HDI and foreigner rate were not statistically significant. Model 4 indicated a reliable positive effect of materialism/post-materialism values on economic threat perception, but not on cultural threat perception. Nevertheless, the effect goes in the opposite direction of the one predicted by us and by the theory of cultural values (Inglehart, 1997), since it is in more post-materialist countries that we find the highest expression of feelings regarding economic threat.

Also important for our prediction, the results of Model 5 demonstrate that the effect of cultural values on economic threat is qualified by a two-way cross-level interaction involving the time of the round (Figure 5.4). This interaction means that the impact of cultural values on economic threat perceptions is changing over time. More specifically, it means that the feeling of economic threat has been decreasing over time in the countries with higher scores on post-materialism (defined as those with +1SD from the mean of the M/PM measure), while it has

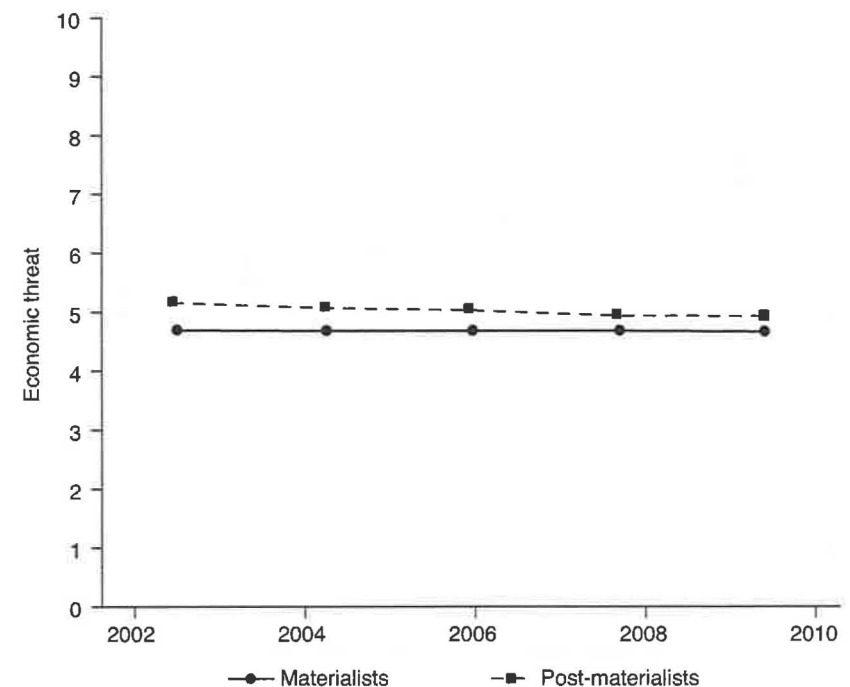


Figure 5.4 Effect of time and cultural values on economic threat perceptions.

been keeping stable in the more materialist countries (defined as those with $-1SD$ from the mean of the M/PM measure).¹⁰ This interaction is also important to better understand the positive correlation between post-materialism and economic threat perceptions. It means that in more post-materialist societies, the expression of economic threat was higher in the first rounds of the ESS (2002, 2004 and 2006) and became lower than in more materialist societies during the last rounds (2008 and 2010). More importantly, the decrease of economic threat observed in these countries is in line with the theory of cultural values (Inglehart, 1997) and corroborates our hypothesis (H3), according to which threat perceptions would be lower in post-materialist societies than in materialist ones.

The interactions between individual values and cultural values are also an important key to interpret the reason why the more post-materialist societies express more threat (economic and cultural) than the materialistic ones. In fact, this stronger feeling occurs only in individuals less identified with universalism values. Analysing the interaction from a different perspective, we found that in post-materialist societies only individuals who have a low identification with universalism reveal more threat feelings (Figure 5.5). The lower expression of economic threat actually occurs in individuals with higher adherence to universalism

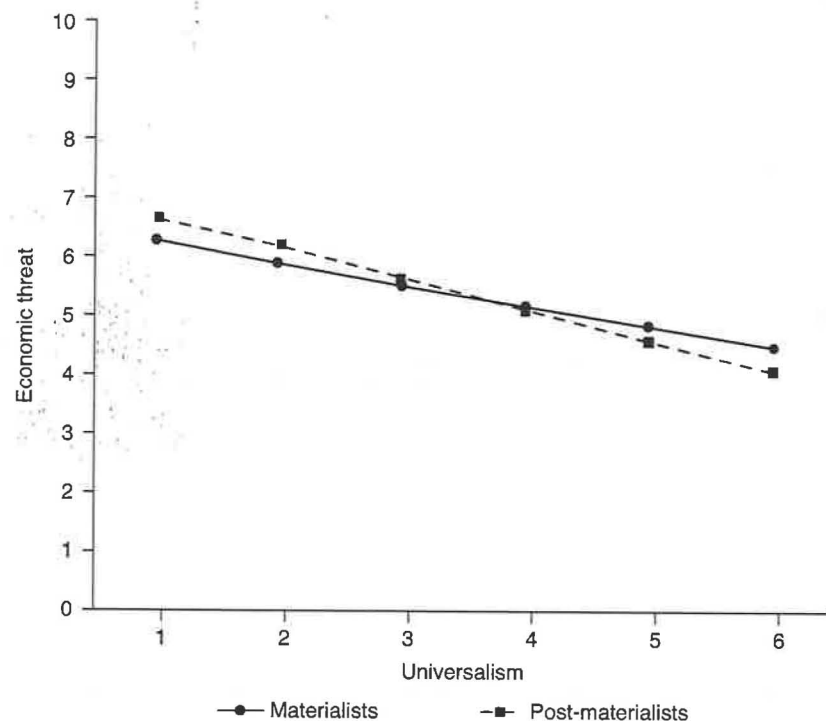


Figure 5.5 Predicted economic threat by individual universalism and collective materialism/post-materialism values.

living in more post-materialist societies. This reflects the limitations that a single level of analysis can introduce in the understanding of the motivations underlying intergroup attitudes. As we have already mentioned, threat feelings encompass a more complex process, where individual motivations find the grounds to be easily expressed in social contexts with axiological principles compatible with individual motivations. The inexistence of a three-way interaction between these values and time indicates that the effects observed in Figure 5.5 are constant over time.

The interaction between M/PM and conservation values complements the understanding of the impact of values on threat perceptions. The pattern of relationships observed indicates that the threat perceived in more post-materialist countries occurs mainly in individuals with higher adherence to conservation values. In other words, living in post-materialist countries makes individuals who are more motivated to pursue the goals prescribed by conservation values feel they are more threatened by the presence of immigrants. From another point of view, we see that individuals with lower identification with conservation values express less threat, whether living in materialist or post-materialist societies, while those expressing higher levels of threat are highly identified with conservation values and live in more post-materialist societies (Figure 5.6). That

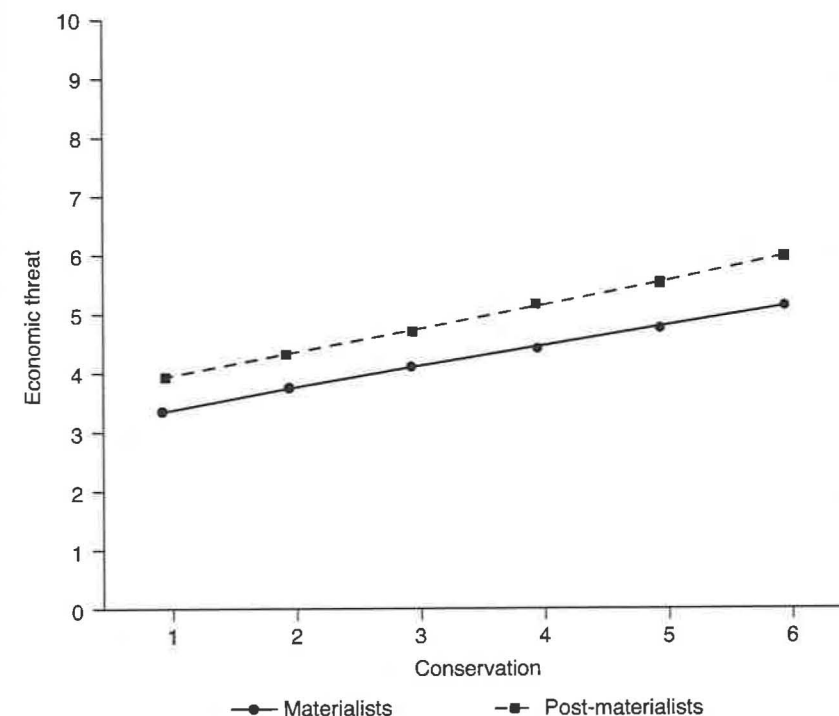


Figure 5.6 Predicted economic threat by individual conservation and collective materialism/post-materialism values.

is, the higher the adherence to the values of conservation, the higher the impact of M/PM on the feeling of threat. This also means that only strongly conservative individuals express more threat perceptions in post-materialist societies than in materialistic societies. Again, the inexistence of a three-way interaction between values and time indicates that the effects observed in Figure 5.6 are constant over time.

Looking at the interactions between individual and cultural values in cultural threat, the two-way interaction between universalism and M/PM measure indicates that post-materialism corresponds to lower perceptions of cultural threat only in the case of individuals who are more identified with universalism values (Figure 5.7). Corroborating our prediction (H4), this means that when analysed at the cultural level, post-materialist values may facilitate the expression of motivations represented by individual values based on equality, leading consequently to lower levels of threat. This interaction also means that individuals with less universalistic orientations always express higher feelings of threat, regardless of the cultural value orientation of the society where they live. Similar to what happened in the previous analysis, these results remain constant over time since the three-way interaction is not significant.

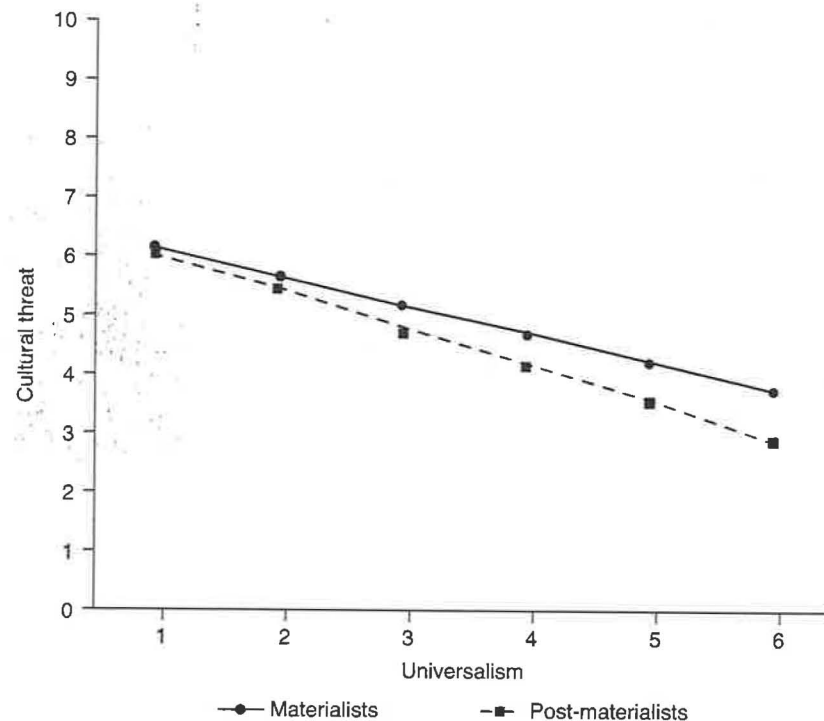


Figure 5.7 Predicted cultural threat by individual universalism and collective materialism/post-materialism values.

Finally, the interaction between M/PM and conservation values shows that those less motivated by those values show lower levels of cultural threat, whether living in materialist or post-materialist societies; while individuals living in more post-materialistic societies and holding conservation values express higher levels of cultural threat (Figure 5.8). This is a similar effect to the one obtained with economic threat, confirming our hypothesis H5. In fact, the increase in the adherence of conservation values goes along with the increase of the impact of M/PM on cultural threat. The consequence is that only individuals that strongly endorse conservation values express higher levels of cultural threat in post-materialistic societies than in materialistic ones. This tendency is also constant over time.

Conclusions

Threat perceptions have been analysed in multiple circumstances as a correlate of discriminatory attitudes and behaviour. In this chapter, we have analysed the two main forms of expression of threat feelings associated with immigrants over time. We were able to integrate in the same analytical model hypotheses drawn

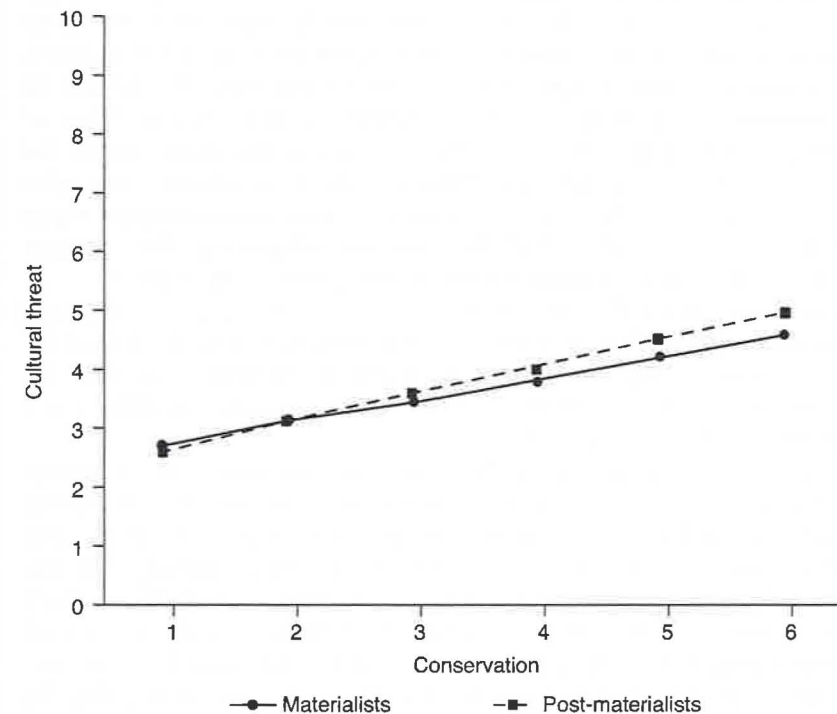


Figure 5.8 Predicted cultural threat by individual conservation and collective materialism/post-materialism values.

from different theoretical perspectives that predict that those feelings arise from peoples' objective living conditions, mainly regarding competition for scarce resources (Bobo, 1983, 1988; Sherif and Sherif, 1953) and hypotheses that accentuate the central role that individual and cultural values play as guiding principles in peoples' lives and in the course that societies must follow (Inglehart, 1997; Schwartz, 1992). As far as we know, there has never been a simultaneous study of the individual and socio-structural predictors of threat, in articulation with the influence of individual and cultural values on the rising of threat feelings in the context of immigration.

The first conclusion was that economic threat perceptions have changed over time (decreasing), while cultural threat perceptions remained at the same level between 2002 and 2010. Nevertheless, the effect of time on economic threat is totally explained by the variables that were included in the model and follows the proposed hypotheses and previous research on the impact of socio-economic variables on intergroup relations. For instance, we found an interaction between time and cultural values, meaning that the feeling of economic threat has been decreasing over time in the countries with higher scores on post-materialism, while it has remained stable in the more materialist ones.

Moreover, according to the theoretical assumptions that underlie threat theories (for instance, the scapegoat hypothesis of Hovland and Sears (1940), and the group conflict theory of Blumer (1958) and later developed by Bobo (1983, 1988)), the experience of material deprivation would be the principal predictor of economic threat. People with fewer material resources and the unemployed would then be those who would see immigrants as the ones to blame for their situation. When we look at the variables that operationalise objective material deprivation, we find that it is mainly at the level of individual differences that those variables have influence. Indeed, and as predicted in H6, people with lower incomes express higher levels of economic and cultural threat. However, unemployment predicted a higher level of economic but not of cultural threat, which partially corroborates H7.

From the set of variables included at level 2, only the unemployment rate showed a significant effect on economic threat. This finding is in line with our prediction (H9), according to which the higher the unemployment rate, the higher the perception of economic threat. None of the level-2 variables was a significant predictor of cultural threat.

More important, the analysis of the value-based predictors of threat perceptions also allowed us to confirm the endorsement of the principles of equality and social justice that characterise the ethic of *universalism* as one of the most important elements (together with education) to fight the perception of immigrants as a threat, either in terms of distribution of material resources or of their subversive impact on the culture of the hosting countries. Conversely, the need for security and preservation of the *status quo* that the endorsement of *conservation* values represent, boosts the belief that immigrants are endangering the culture and the economy of the hosting society.

The interactions between individual and cultural values allowed for very interesting conclusions: (1) in post-materialist societies, only individuals that

have a low identification with universalism show higher economic and cultural threat feelings; (2) individuals with lower identification with conservation values express less economic and cultural threat, whether living in materialist or post-materialist societies; while those expressing higher levels of economic and cultural threat are highly identified with conservation values and living in more post-materialistic societies; (3) these effects were constant over time.

In sum, by considering the temporal level of analysis in integration with individual and contextual correlates of threat perception, this study constitutes an important contribution in three ways: (a) it gives support to the hypothesis that human values are central elements in the process of developing the options that individuals make concerning their views about the world and about the relations between human beings; (b) it clarifies the individual attributes that are important in the rise of feelings of threat associated with immigration over time; (c) it brings new insights on the interaction between individual and cultural values and how this combination affects threat perceptions.

Concluding, it can thus be argued that the main message to be drawn from the findings presented is that the effect of individual and cultural values on threat perceptions seems insufficient to properly understand the complexity of the phenomenon. Our analysis shows that it is necessary to combine the study of individual motivations with those of the axiological principles ascribed by the cultures. In fact, in countries with higher post-materialism scores, the higher expression of economic threat, that could call into question the theory of cultural values, becomes understandable when we observe that this effect only occurs with individuals with lower motivation regarding the promotion of equality and social justice. This is also the case when we detect that this effect is boosted by highly motivated individuals regarding the preservation of the *status quo*, a motivation that is expressed by conservation values.

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Notes

- 1 The European Social Survey includes a reduced version of 21 indicators of the Schwartz's Human Values scale (Schwartz, 1992).
- 2 HDI is a 'composite measure that includes indicators along three dimensions: life expectancy, educational attainment, and command over the resources needed for a decent living' (HDI report 2013: 23).
- 3 ESS Rounds 1–5 (2002–2010). Norwegian Social Science Data Services, Norway – Data Archive and distributor of ESS data.
- 4 Detailed information on ESS methodological procedures can be found at www.europeansocialsurvey.org. The figures correspond to the number of respondents without missing values on the variables included in the models.
- 5 See <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/eurostat/home>.

- 6 It is important to notice that with 16 countries and 5 observations over time (round 1 to 5) we should have 80 units at level 2. However, due to missing values on the selected variables, data from France in 2002, Hungary in 2002 and 2006 and Ireland in 2002, 2008 and 2010 is missing, resulting in a base with 74 valid observations at level 2.
- 7 In this preliminary model we obtained the following estimated parameter for economic threat:
- intercept = 5.01, $SE = 0.144$, $p < .001$;
time effect = $-.06$, $SE = .025$, $p < .01$;
- variance component:
- $e = 4.88$ (level 1);
 $r_0 = 0.06$, $p < .001$ (level 2);
 $u_{00} = .33$, $p < .001$.
- And we obtained the following estimated parameter for cultural threat:
- intercept = 4.06, $SE = 0.159$, $p < .001$ (level 3);
time effect = $.01$, $SE = .014$, $ns.$;
- variance component:
- $e = 5.09$ (level 1);
 $r_0 = 0.02$, $p < .001$ (level 2);
 $u_{00} = .39$, $p < .001$ (level 3).
- 8 We ran a supplementary analysis comparing the regression weight of universalism and conservation on each type of threat, and results showed that differences are statistically significant in both cases: $t_{\text{universalism}} (96853) = -13.98$, $p < .001$; $t_{\text{conservation}} (96853) = 5.50$; $p < .001$.
- 9 The comparison between the effect of unemployment and income on economic and cultural threats revealed differences statistically significant: $t_{\text{income}} (96853) = 2.07$, $p < .05$; $t_{\text{unemployment}} (96853) = 4.90$; $p < .001$.
- 10 To understand the meaning of the interaction effects, we used the steps suggested by Aiken and West (1991) to decompose the interaction effect.

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