



EMPOWER FOR CHANGE OF STIGMATIZING ATTITUDES

Survey Analysis Report ¹ (Draft version for internal use only)

CDT Research Center
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Contents

1 Project Overview	2
2 The Study Design	3
2.1 Theory	3
2.2 Measurements	4
2.3 Sample Characteristics	5
3 Descriptive Comparison	6
3.1 Descriptive Statistics	6
3.1.1 Islam Knowledge	6
3.1.2 Contact & Political Interest	7
3.1.3 Islamophobia & Immigration	9
3.1.4 Violent Radicalization & Security	10
3.2 Multivariate Analysis	13
3.2.1 Islamophobia	13
3.2.2 Violent Radicalization	15
3.2.3 Immigrant Stigmatization	17
4 Discussion and Implications	20
References	23

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1 Project Overview

Within the European Union, nearly 20 million residents (4%) are non-EU citizens according to the Migrant Integration Policy Index (2015). Most of the migrants who have arrived to the EU in the previous years used to come in search of labour while now the majority is seeking humanitarian protection. Non-EU citizens are twice as likely to experience poverty and social exclusion than EU citizens as they are treated as second-class citizens. Far-right parties have gained power across the EU, and the general public is uninformed and over-estimates the number of migrants who are in some countries. At the same time, there is an increased risk of radicalization, which mostly affects the youth. An increasing number of young people are being drawn into extremist movements in their search for identity and a place in society. Profound feelings of injustice and frustration about their social exclusion are amongst the main root causes contributing to young people's vulnerability, and increase their willingness to adhere to extremist, sometimes violent groups, which offer an apparent social purpose for them. These challenges are faced equally by EU countries, as well as Western Balkan countries that have become the primary transit route of mixed irregular migratory flows from the Eastern Mediterranean to the EU.

A number of national and regional youth initiatives and strategies aim to improve social conditions of young people in general and to prevent them from drifting to the margins of society. This proposed project will, through carefully designed activities, analyze and explore the attitudes of the youth, as well as identify potential problems and threats. Additionally, it will provide valuable inputs for activity and policy planning, as well as seek to ensure that migrants and refugees are integrated and treated as equal members of society. While the goals of this project will be secured by various activities, the focus of this analysis report is on a cross national survey, which will result in new insights and provide data on youths' tendency towards discrimination and stigmatization of immigrants¹ on national and regional levels. The particular aim of cross-national online survey is to explore the complexities of the radicalization issue among youth. The survey is focused on youth perceptions and attitudes related to stigmatization and *islamophobia*. In this part of the project, we seek to explore the nature of youth's social attitudes and identify demographical and psychological profiles of young individuals who are radicalized, or who are likely to enter that path in the future. We see the practical purpose of such study in informing future educative programs that would hopefully prevent the development of such tendencies and foster de-stigmatization.

This report is organized in the following way: first, it discusses the essential features of the research strategy and theoretical rationale behind the design of the questionnaire. We also briefly discuss the nature of the data collection process and the main sample characteristics. The section is, thus, concluded by a detailed description of the concept operationalization and its measurements. The following section represents the most extensive part of this report as it deals with an in-depth analysis

¹While we are aware of conceptual difference between "refugees" and "immigrants", in this study we use terms interchangeably. In questionnaire, questions related to immigration were preceded by clarification that by "immigrants" we mean persons who has left their home country as a refugees and are seeking to settle in a given European country.

of the sources of different types of radical political attitudes among European youth. These phenomena are discussed on a general level, as well as by exploring the variation between two groups of countries *EU* countries and *Western Balkan* countries. Finally, in the last section, we take a step back and discuss the wider societal and policy implication of our findings.

2 The Study Design

2.1 Theory

As highlighted in the project overview, the goal of this study is to explore the nature of youth radicalization by identifying the demographical and psychological profiles of susceptible individuals. Needless to say, the list of potential factors that could contribute to the development of such extreme attitudes is fairly long; nonetheless, we focus on a set of variables that are equally applicable in all eight countries being studied in this project in order to ultimately prevent the development of such tendencies and to foster liberal values among European youth.

With regards to the socio-economic profiles of radicalized youth, we pay our attention to numerous potentially relevant factors. First, we are interested in the effect of basic *socio-economic* conditions on discriminatory attitudes towards immigrants and Muslims, as well as the general willingness of young people to engage in violent political acts. Therefore, we operationalized socio-economic backgrounds with multiple indicators: *household income*, *level of education*, and *employment status/type*. Typically, it is assumed that lower socio-economic statuses are connected to more negative opinions towards immigrants. One theoretical reason for such expectation stems from the fact that, low-income or unemployed citizens may feel more threatened by foreigners entering the job market or taking on social welfare. With respect to education, there are two main reasons one could hypothesize more negative opinions among the low-educated citizens. First, it is harder for lower-educated people to understand the potential consequences (both negative and positive) of increased immigration flows that Europe is currently facing. In addition, they are also less likely to have participated in educational programs designed to foster multiculturalism. Second, people with lower levels of education tend to be exposed to a less diverse pool of people (Gurin et al., 2002), which tend to nurture more nativist understanding of group membership.

Further, we explore a set of *demographic* variables, such as: *gender*, *type of settlement*, *religious denomination*, *citizenship*, and whether any *parent* was born in the country of residence. Generally speaking, the effect of these variables supposedly comes from the fact that certain demographic groups are more likely to be exposed to or affected by an influx of immigrants. In terms of religion, it is to be expected for some denominations, especially among those who regularly attend religious services, to have slightly more *islamophobic* attitudes. For instance, devoted Christians might have more negative opinions about immigration due to perceived threats of immigration affecting cultural uniformity of Europe. Similarly, rural and urban areas experience different exposures with respect to the homogeneity of their communities

and economic opportunities. This study is also interested in testing whether personal experiences, i.e. having parent(s) who, at some point, migrated to a given country, can play a mediating role.

When it comes to broader political and psychological characteristics, a range of variables we consider is even wider. First, we are interested in testing whether more *contact* can foster less stigmatizing attitudes towards immigrants seeking to settle in a given country. The underlying assumption here is supported by existing literature in political psychology that suggests that more intensive contact inhibits the dehumanization and exclusion of out-group members (McLaren, 2003). Second, we test how *Islam-specific knowledge* interacts with formal education. Despite the overwhelming focus on the general education level, we consider the possibility that topic-specific knowledge can match potential beneficial effect of formal education (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2008). Furthermore, we investigate how concerns regarding security in the country, and in the world, affect peoples' attitudes towards immigrants, Muslims, and violent radical actions overall. Also, in our analysis, we include a number of controlling variables, such as: *political interest, national identification, ideological position, attentiveness to political news*, etc.

2.2 Measurements

Due to the fact that we are exploring rather complex social concepts, such as - *islamophobia, violent radicalization*, and *anti-immigrant* attitudes - we opted for operationalization that combines multiple indicators.

For instance, ***violent radicalization*** is operationalized using five survey questions measuring (Moskalenko and McCauley, 2009): (1) *support for an organization that would sometimes resort to violence*; (2) *willingness to take part in protests that might turn violent*; (3) *preparedness to disturb orderliness in a society*; (4) *belief in armed struggle as a tool for youth to achieve their goals*; and (5) *belief that enemies learn lessons only when they are threatened and through suffering*. All survey items are measured on a 5-point scale where "1" refers to "strongly disagree" and "5" to "strongly agree".

The scale measuring ***stigmatization of immigrants*** is composed of eight survey items covering a wide range of subjects related to the immigration issue: (1) *crime rates*; (2) *country's economy* ; (3) *taking away jobs*; (4) *bringing new ideas and culture (R)*; (5) *undermining of one's country's culture*; (6) *legal immigrants should have equal rights as citizens (R)*; (7) *stronger measures to exclude immigrants are needed* ; and (8) *legal immigrants should have equal access to education as citizens (R)*. Again, all survey items are measured on a 5-point scale where "1" refers to "strongly disagree" and "5" to "strongly agree".

Islamophobic attitudes is operationalized using ten questions (3 reversed), which are found in the previous literature to be a reliable measure (Imhoff and Recker, 2012): (1) *the Islamic world is backward* ; (2) *the Islamic world cannot be uniformly characterized (R)*; (3) *Muslim cultures have fundamentally different values* ; (4) *Islam and Christianity share the same universal ethical principles (R)*; (5) *Islam is an archaic religion*; (6) *compared to Europeans, Muslims are irrational* ; (7) *compared to other*

religious approaches, Islam is rather primitive; (8) Islamic religion is predisposed to terrorism; (9) Muslims are too different to demand equal access to positions in society ; and (10) Islamic religious education should be offered in schools with Muslims (R). All survey items are measured on a 5-point scale where "1" refers to "strongly disagree" and "5" to "strongly agree".

It is important to note that due to space limitations, we only debated measurements of our dependent variables. For full wording of these questions, as well as for details on other measurements, please refer to the questionnaire.

2.3 Sample Characteristics

Data collection was conducted in the period between August 10th and September 1st. Samples in all eight countries were collected online. Evidently, this cast a shadow of doubt on the representativeness of our sample. In order to be part of the sample, an individual would have to have access to the Internet, which sometimes systematically excluded important portions of the population. Usually, online samples are biased in favor of people living in urban settlements, better educated youth with a more liberal worldview. With this in mind, we would like to refrain from making any general claims about the population of these countries. Nonetheless, with regards to the most relevant demographics, our samples appear to be fairly ordinary. Therefore, we believe our results would likely be replicated in a study with more a representative sample.

Sample characteristics across countries

Country	<i>N</i>	<i>Age (Avg.)</i>	<i>Female (%)</i>	<i>Muslim (%)</i>
Montenegro	157	24	61	29
Bosnia & Herzegovina	184	24	56	29
Macedonia	112	25	56	50
Serbia	104	26	70	7
Germany	131	24	45	8
Belgium	119	25	46	6
Italy	185	25	56	7
Hungary	160	23	52	11
Total	1152			

Table 1. shows basic characteristics of the sample across countries. Our samples seem comparable in terms of basic demographic characteristics. In total, the sample consists of 1152 observations. The largest sample comes from Italy where 185 young people took part in the study, whereas the least amount of participants was collected from Serbia (104). The average age varies from low 23 in Hungary to high 26 in Serbia. In most cases, the share of men compared to women is rather similar (45%-55%), with the exceptions of Montenegro and Serbia where women are slightly over-represented (61% and 70%). The major difference between the samples, as expected, comes from the fact that the share of Muslim population varies across countries. This

is, clearly reflected in the sample characteristics. The samples collected from EU countries are, unlike in other characteristics, marked with lower proportion of people practicing Islam. The share of Muslims in EU sub-sample averages 8% while in the Western Balkan sub- sample, there is approximately 29% of Muslim participants. The highest proportion of Muslim participants is found in the Macedonian sample (50%).

3 Descriptive Comparison

Before we move to more direct ways of testing "hypotheses" regarding the relationship between individual characteristics and tendencies towards exclusionary attitudes towards immigrants, we present a short overview and descriptive statistical comparison between two group of countries (EU and WB). In the following subsection, we briefly discuss distributional differences in all important variables.

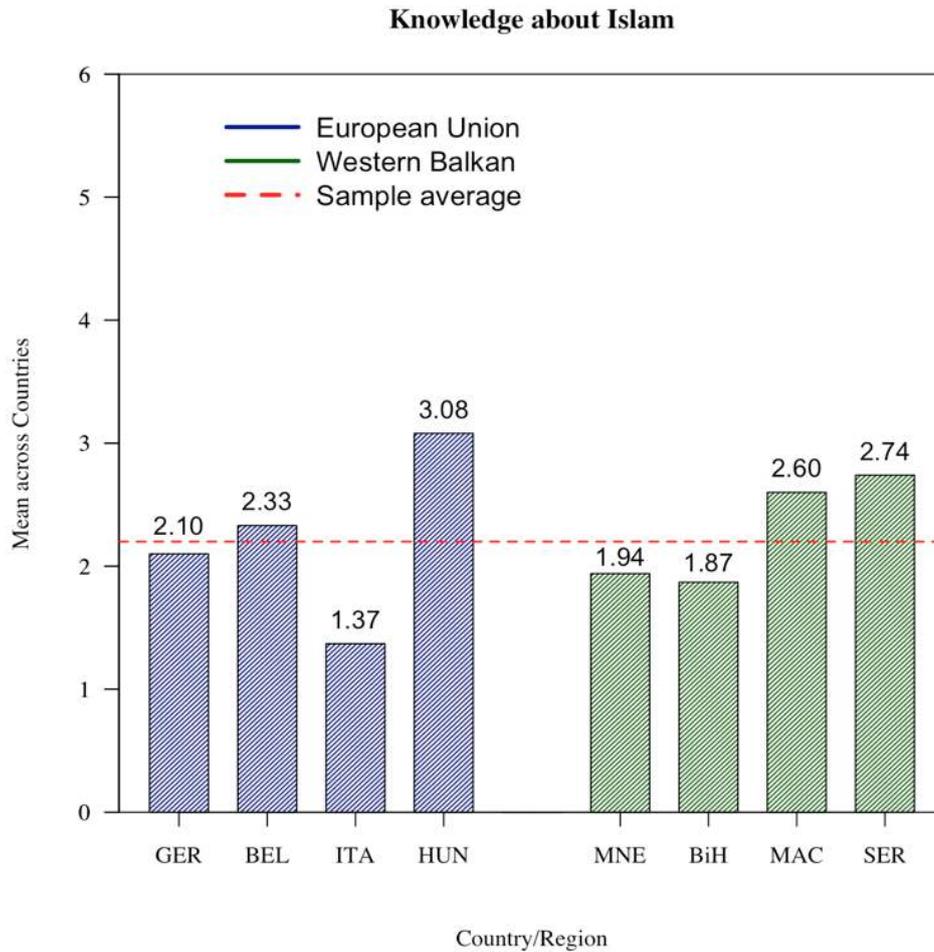
3.1 Descriptive Statistics

3.1.1 Islam Knowledge

Based on the results presented in Graph 1, we can conclude that young people in our sample possess a rather low level of knowledge about Islam. On average, respondents were able to correctly answer approximately two (2.19) out of six questions. It is worth noting that respondents from European Union countries (2.18) are as knowledgeable as those in the Western Balkan countries (2.20).

When we break data down to individual countries, we see that respondents from Hungary were the most informed about Islam. They, on average, gave correct answers to more than a half of the questions (3.08). In contrast, the lowest level of knowledge was observed among the Italian youth, with an average of 1.37 correct answers. Further support for the claim that the overall knowledge of Islam is at an unsatisfactory level comes from the fact that 16% of the respondents were unable to answer a single question! Equally striking, close to two-thirds (62%) of our sample was unable to provide an answer to more than 2 questions. This means that the vast majority of respondents (80%), for instance, are unfamiliar with the fact that Jesus and Abraham are prophets in Islam. Similarly, only 19% of the respondents knew the relative proportion of Sunni and Shia "branches" of Islam.

Nonetheless, there is small portion (merely 3%) of respondents who knew the answers to all questions. We will later debate the role of knowledge of Islam in greater detail, but for now we are interested in who these experts are. Clearly, the most intuitive guess would be that the most knowledgeable are actual Muslims. Surprisingly, most of those who managed to answer 5 or 6 questions (98 in total) are not Muslims (only 18%). The most knowledgeable individuals in our sample are Christians. It is also worth noting that these experts are equally likely to come from one of the EU or the WB countries. The initial analysis, however, shows that 60% of them hold a university degree or are on their way to obtain it, which suggest a certain level of correlation between formal education and specific knowledge of Islam.



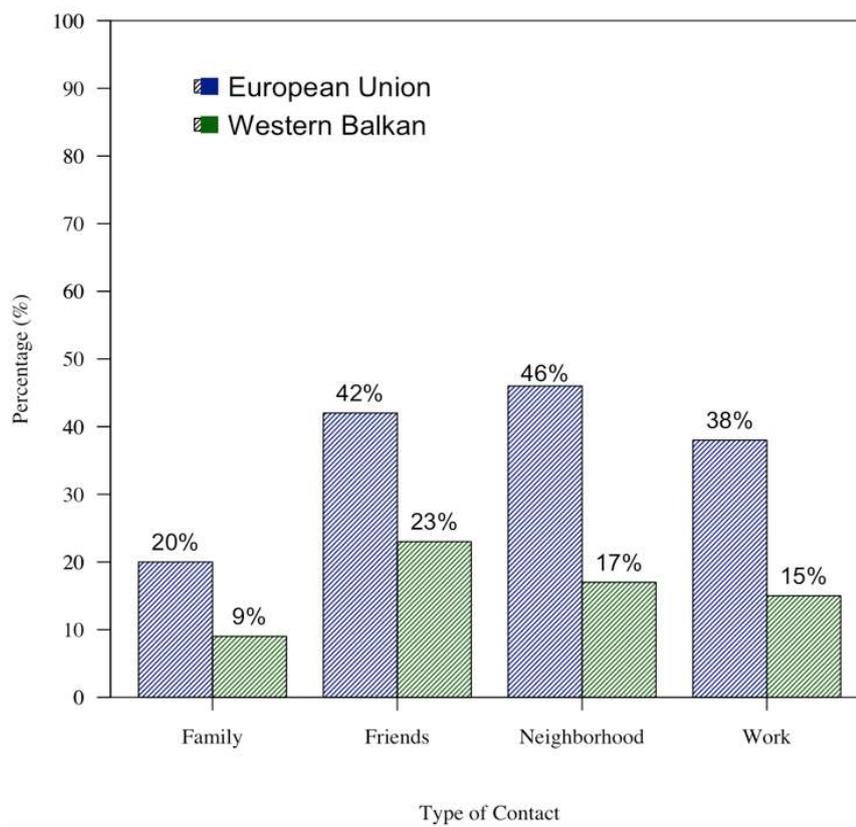
Graph 1.

3.1.2 Contact & Political Interest

In Graph 2. we display the percentage of respondents who reported to have had first-person contact with immigrants in various social contexts: family, work, neighborhood, or among friends. Two things are immediately apparent: first, more than a half of the respondents (52%) had no contact with immigrants whatsoever.

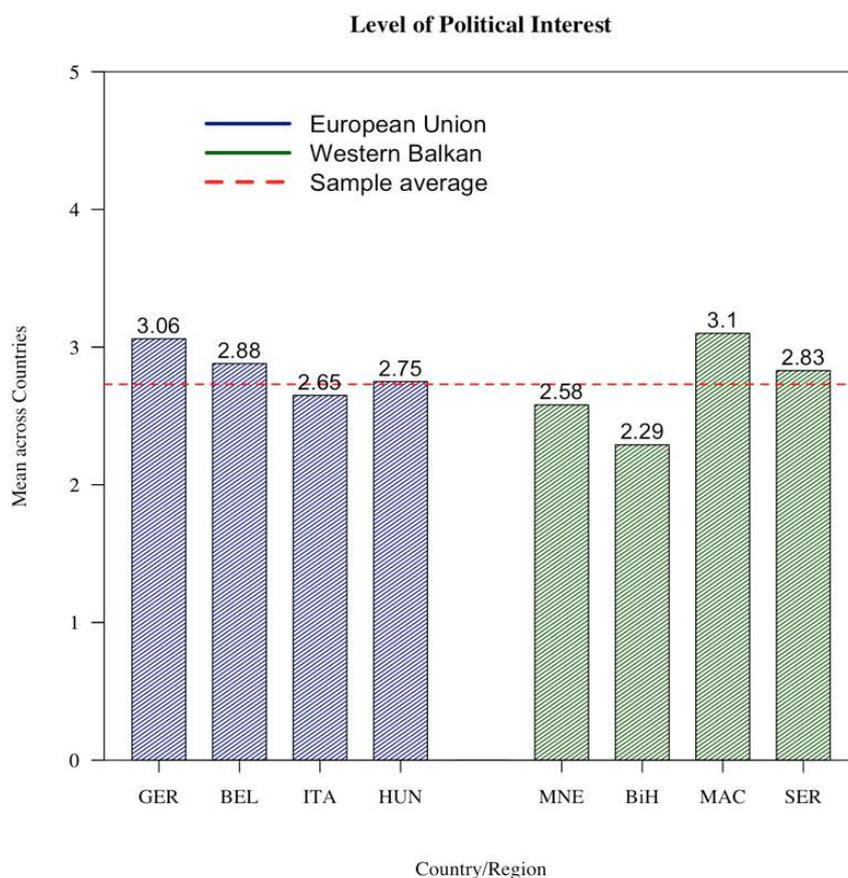
Second, there is a clear difference between the EU and the Western Balkan countries when it comes to the frequency of contact. Young people in the Western Balkans are significantly less likely to have experienced any contact with refugees who left their home country and are currently seeking to settle in new country. To be more precise, compared to 35% of EU respondents, around 67% youngsters from the Western Balkans reported complete lack of such experience. The frequency of contact, however, varies significantly across contexts, with the least amount of contact being experienced in families, as expected, and the most contact happening in friendship circles. We find these percentages mostly intuitive given that Western Balkan countries are transitional and asylum-seekers rarely purposefully remain there.

Contact with Immigrants



Graph 2.

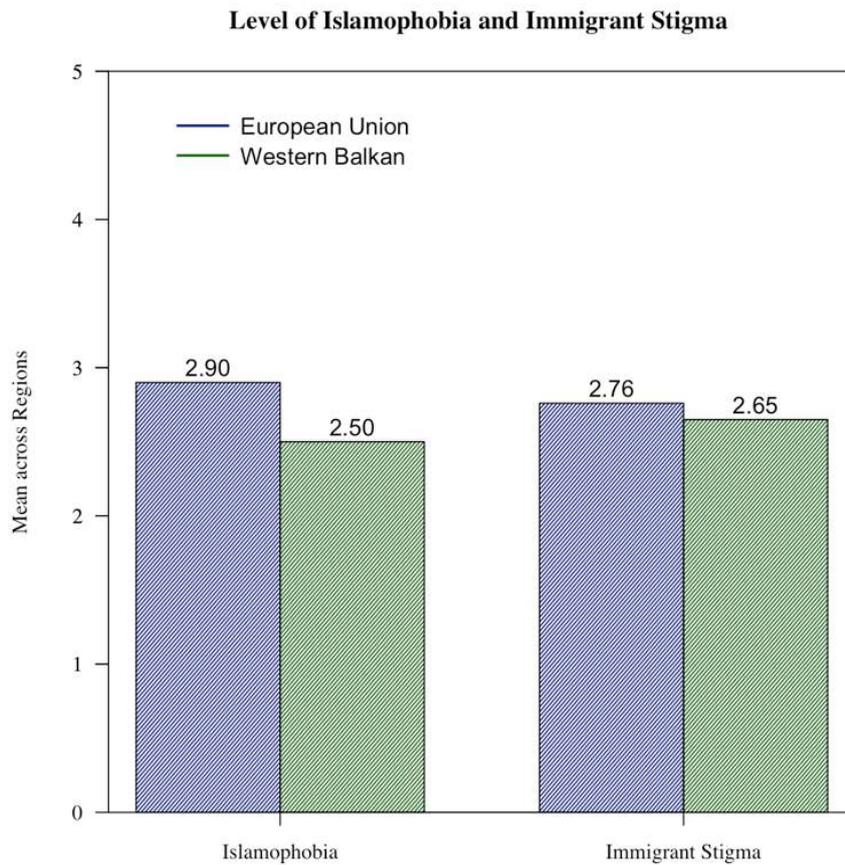
With respect to level of political interest, respondents from the European Union (2.64) and Western Balkan (2.82) countries are rather comparable, with slim advantage in favor for latter. The most politically interested sample was obtained in Macedonia (3.10) and Germany (3.06), while the least amount of interest was observed among respondents in Bosnia & Herzegovina (2.29). Given the above average level of political interest (2.73) we can say that our sample is likely to be slightly more interested than overall youth population.



Graph 3.

3.1.3 Islamophobia & Immigration

The central aim of this project is to examine sources of islamophobia, stigmatization of immigrants, and the relationship between the two among young people. While more complex statistical analyses follows in the subsequent section, we first present descriptive statistics on the levels of islamophobia and immigrant stigma. In the total sample, young people averaged 2.7/5 points on the islamophobia scale. It is worth recalling that the average knowledge of Islam 2.2/6, which points to the possibility that, in part, negative attitudes originate from pure lack of knowledge. Importantly, on average, participants from the Western Balkan countries are less islamophobic (2.5) than their counterparts from the EU (2.9). As there are significantly more Muslims in the WB sub-sample, this could provide the explanation for this difference. However, once we subset non-Muslims, the difference remains the same, which eliminates the religious denomination as an explanation. Interestingly, while we see significantly different levels of islamophobia in the two regions, Graph 3. makes evident that attitudes on immigrants match in the EU (2.76) and the WB (2.65).

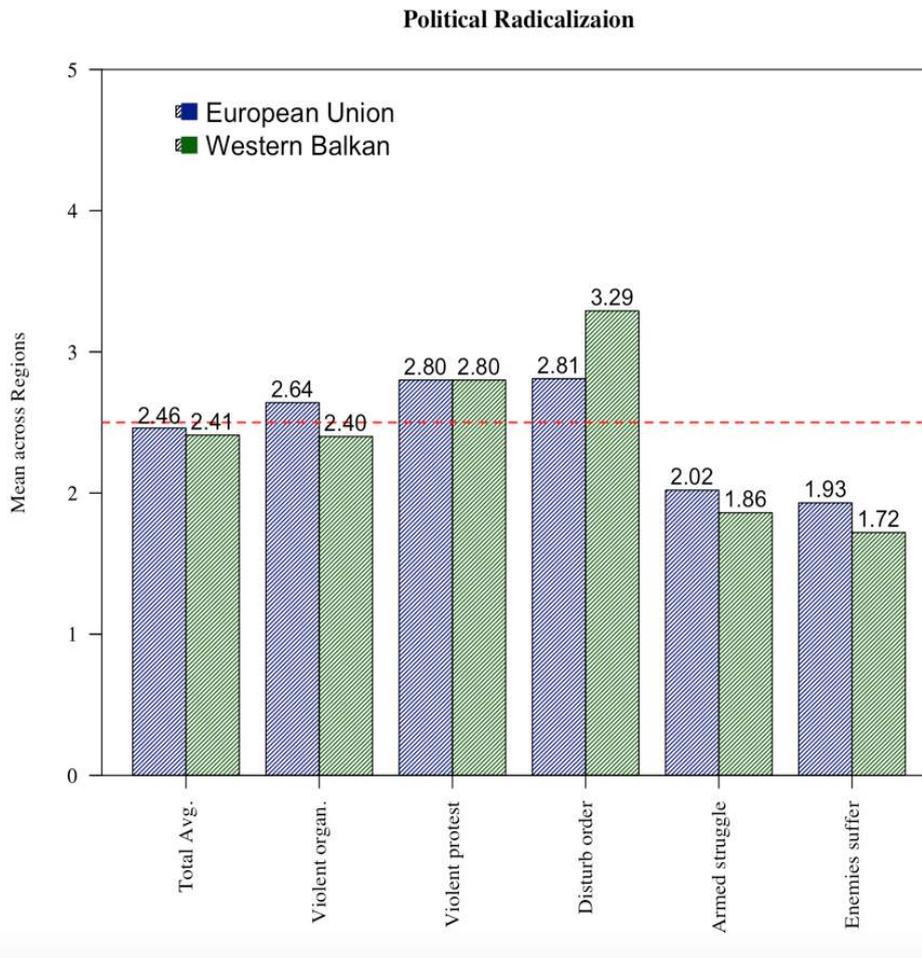


Graph 4.

3.1.4 Violent Radicalization & Security

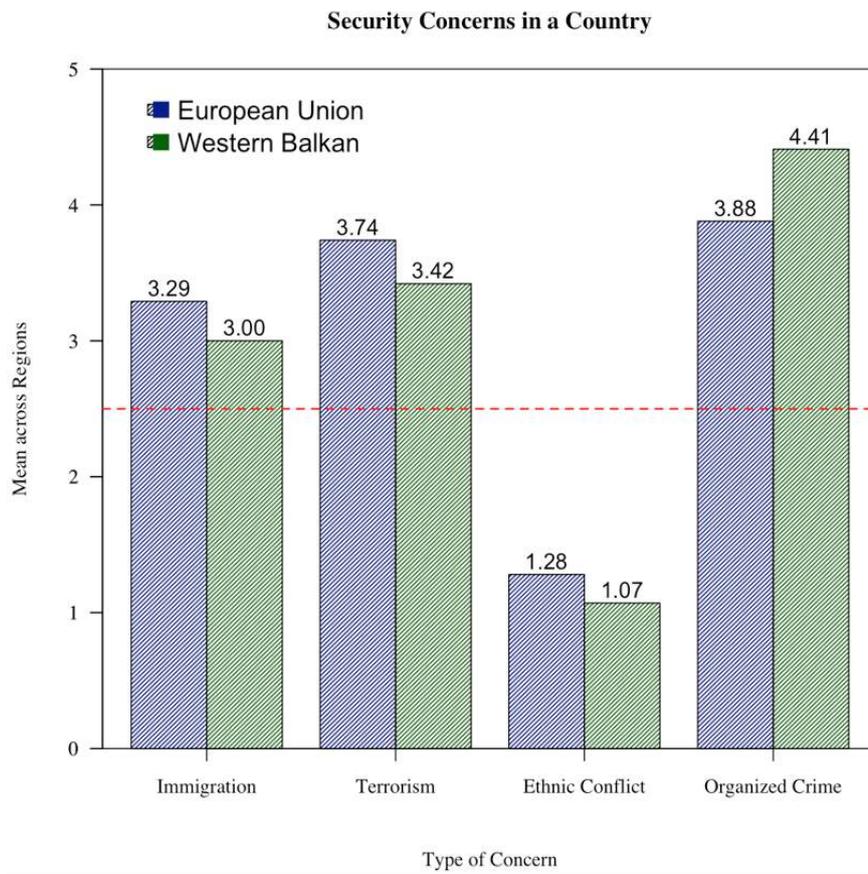
In this research project, we have operationalized political extremism as a separate variable external of the general islamophobia index, as an individual tendency to engage or provide support for violent acts as a mean to achieving political goals. With this in mind, people in our sample can be best characterized as moderate. On a five-point scale, respondents scored an average of 2.44, which puts them just below the mid-point.

There are clear differences with regards to what kind of political action young people are willing to engage in. The highest score was obtained on the question measuring general readiness to disturb orderliness with the purpose of achieving important political goals (3.05). In contrast, young people are least supportive of the idea that the only way to teach a lesson to your enemies is to threaten their lives and make them suffer (1.81). On average, however, respondents from the EU (2.46) and the WB (2.41) countries are equally prone to extreme political behavior. The only visible difference seems to come from EU youth being more supportive of violent protests, while respondents from the WB countries show more readiness to disrupt orderliness in general (3.30 to 2.80).



Graph 5.

Graph 4. demonstrates that youth in EU countries have increased security concerns compared to respondents from WB countries. They are, on average of approx. 0.30 points more worried about the issue of illegal immigration. The same holds for the concerns over the threat from international terrorism (0.32). Surprisingly, young people in WB countries are much less worried about the conflict in multiethnic communities. The only instance where respondents from Western Balkan countries were significantly more worried is with regards to organized crime in their country.



Graph 6.

3.2 Multivariate Analysis

Previously, we conducted simple univariate analysis. In the following section we use more complex statistical analysis that allows us to test our intuitions regarding questions that lie in the very foundation of this project. Specifically, we use multiple ordinary least square (OLS) regression to identify a profile of young people who are likely to stigmatize immigrants and hold islamophobic attitudes. The major benefit of multivariate analysis comes from ability to control for other potentially relevant variables. Meaning, now we can assess the impact of certain factor not only in isolation, but while taking into account the effect of all other factors. In order to maintain the most intuitive way of interpreting results, we opted for interpretation that focuses on average percentage difference between two extremes of the scale.

3.2.1 Islamophobia

Table 1. displays three models with personal levels of islamophobia as dependent variable. In Model 1, we estimate the effects of a large number of factors using the full sample. Model 2 and 3 essentially represent the same model yet tested separately on a subsample of respondents coming from the EU and the Western Balkan countries. Unfortunately, due to the small sample sizes and issues with missing data, the ability to replicate our analysis at the level of a single country is hindered. For this reason, our discussion remains focused either on general tendencies of European youth or on a comparison between two clusters of countries - EU and WB.

The models, overall, showed a satisfactory level of explanatory power. Model 1. explains around 22% of total variance in islamophobia while Model 2. explains around 34% and Model 3. explains approximately 19%, suggesting that model is slightly less "useful" in Western Balkan countries. As explained in the theory section, we test for the strength of numerous potentially relevant factors - from demographics and socio-economic variables to more complex personality traits - in order to identify profiles of young people susceptible to development of such socially undesirable political attitudes and behaviors. We start discussing our findings with the role of demographic variables.

Results in Model 1. suggest that gender plays an important role. With 99.99 % confidence, we can say that men are more likely to develop islamophobic attitudes than women. More precisely, on average, women in our sample have a 4% more positive take on Islam and Muslims, after we control for all other factors. This is in line with the research in social dominance theory showing that males are more prone to hierarchical representation of social groups than women (Sidanius et al., 1994; Pratto et al., 1997). However, by looking at the results from Model 2 and Model 3, we can clearly see that the gender effect mostly comes from the WB sub-sample, while men are not statistically more islamophobic in the EU sub-sample. Intriguingly, an individual/parents' citizenship, as well as the type of settlement one lives in, turn out to be much less indicative of the level of islamophobia. With the exception of urban youth in the EU countries (Model 2.) being somewhat less islamophobic than the ones living in rural area, these factors play rather an unimportant role. Similarly, despite the fact that socio-economic factors are often perceived as vital, our

results suggest that the employment status and the type of sector (public vs. private) mostly do not contribute to different levels of islamophobia, and when they do, they increase it (Model 2.). In short, once we control for all other factors, demographic and socio-economic variables have a limited ability to further our knowledge of sources of islamophobia in our sample.

In contrast, the group of variables related to personal traits, ideology and education are far more potent in explaining the individual level of islamophobia. For instance, both formal education and specific knowledge of Islam successfully contribute to lower levels of islamophobia. With completing each additional level of education, the personal islamophobia level decreases about 7%. The same can be achieved by educating people on basic facts about Islam. As a result of learning five additional facts about Islam, islamophobia drops for approximately 6%. These results suggest that, although often underestimated, topic-specific knowledge is equally efficient as general education in reducing discriminatory attitudes. While most of the other results replicated in both regions of Europe, findings suggest that educational consequences differ in the WB and EU countries. Namely, islamophobic attitudes of young people in the EU are successfully reduced only through formal education, and remain unaffected by individual knowledge about Islam. To simplify, a person holding an MA degree has, on average, 20% less negative attitude on Muslims than those holding only an elementary school degree. We see no such effect of formal education in the Western Balkan countries. If one is to successfully tackle this issue in the Balkans, educating young people with Islam-specific knowledge appears to be a superior strategy. Beyond mere knowledge, findings also support the idea that contact between young people and discriminated social group, such as immigrants, have beneficial consequences. All other things considered, person with very extensive contact with immigrants will have between 7% (WB) and 8% (EU) less islamophobic attitudes. With respect to political interest, once we control for education and knowledge, the effect is statistically insignificant.

As islamophobia is essentially a religious issue, one would expect ones attachment to a religious community to be predictive of his/her attitudes on Muslims and Islam. However, results show that two persons, one who never attends church services and one who does so multiple times a week, are equally likely to develop a negative take on Islam, all other factors considered. Instead, we find that islamophobia is primarily rooted in extreme identification with one's national group. For each unit increase in a person's closeness to a national group, we observe a 0.10 unit rise in the islamophobia level. Comparatively, this effect is one of the strongest. With regards to the traditional left-right ideology, effects go in an expected direction with right-wingers being more islamophobic than left-wingers. Person on the far right is for 18% more islamophobic than average young extreme left person. Further, we can say that the level of islamophobia is strongly tied to security concerns and propensity to take part in or justify extreme political action. As expected, the more concerned one is with international terrorism, the less favorable attitudes on Islam he/she expresses (for 10%).

Table 1: Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) Regression Results

	<i>DV: Islamophobia</i>		
	Full Sample	EU	WB
	(1)	(2)	(3)
<i>Intercept</i>	1.514*** (0.270)	1.789*** (0.401)	1.462*** (0.356)
<i>Education</i>	-0.052** (0.026)	-0.147*** (0.039)	0.021 (0.034)
<i>Islam Knowledge</i>	-0.043* (0.021)	-0.037 (0.032)	-0.063** (0.027)
<i>National Identity</i>	0.101*** (0.028)	0.119*** (0.042)	0.082** (0.036)
<i>Religiousness</i>	0.023 (0.022)	0.063** (0.029)	-0.012 (0.032)
<i>Left-Right</i>	0.086*** (0.017)	0.104*** (0.026)	0.055** (0.021)
<i>Political Interest</i>	-0.033 (0.035)	0.023 (0.055)	-0.032 (0.043)
<i>Immigrant Contact</i>	-0.055** (0.026)	-0.092** (0.036)	-0.074** (0.036)
<i>Political Radicalism</i>	0.171*** (0.040)	0.078 (0.055)	0.203*** (0.057)
<i>Terrorism Concern</i>	0.108*** (0.030)	0.163*** (0.055)	0.066* (0.035)
<i>Employed</i>	-0.072 (0.066)	0.283*** (0.105)	-0.126 (0.085)
<i>Public Employment</i>	0.119 (0.087)	0.114 (0.115)	-0.032 (0.125)
<i>Parents Citizen</i>	0.017 (0.083)	0.193* (0.114)	-0.093 (0.117)
<i>Male</i>	0.188*** (0.065)	0.050 (0.093)	0.206** (0.089)
<i>Urban</i>	-0.125 (0.096)	-0.299** (0.150)	-0.133 (0.119)
N	568	243	325
R ²	0.217	0.339	0.186
Adj. R ²	0.197	0.298	0.149
Res. SE	0.712 (df = 553)	0.685 (df = 228)	0.678 (df = 310)
F Stat.	10.928***	8.344***	5.061***

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

3.2.2 Violent Radicalization

In Table 2. we present models with political extremism/violence as a dependent variable. With only a few exceptions, models here are mostly comprised of the same

variables as before, and results largely go in a similar direction as in the case of islamophobia. Indeed, islamophobia is cumulatively the strongest factor in explaining youth's political extremism, although its strength is mostly derived from the WB sample.

Table 2: Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) Regression Results

	<i>DV: Political Radicalism</i>		
	Full Sample	EU	WB
	(1)	(2)	(3)
<i>Intercept</i>	2.266*** (0.282)	1.902*** (0.493)	2.385*** (0.335)
<i>Education</i>	-0.032 (0.028)	-0.057 (0.049)	-0.024 (0.034)
<i>National Identity</i>	-0.009 (0.030)	-0.047 (0.053)	0.039 (0.036)
<i>Religiousness</i>	-0.003 (0.024)	0.039 (0.037)	-0.047 (0.031)
<i>Left-Right</i>	-0.045** (0.019)	-0.029 (0.033)	-0.051** (0.022)
<i>Islamophobia</i>	0.187*** (0.045)	0.139 (0.086)	0.183*** (0.055)
<i>Immigrant Contact</i>	0.082*** (0.027)	0.086* (0.045)	0.082** (0.036)
<i>Political Interest</i>	0.103*** (0.037)	0.129** (0.066)	0.083** (0.042)
<i>Terrorism Concern</i>	-0.126*** (0.037)	0.035 (0.078)	-0.177*** (0.038)
<i>Islam vs. Christianity</i>	0.048 (0.033)	0.0002 (0.064)	0.068* (0.036)
<i>Employed</i>	-0.083 (0.071)	0.097 (0.132)	-0.190** (0.084)
<i>Public Employed</i>	-0.475*** (0.091)	-0.498*** (0.141)	-0.297** (0.123)
<i>Parents Citizen</i>	0.074 (0.088)	0.202 (0.139)	0.014 (0.115)
<i>Muslim</i>	0.015 (0.080)	0.001 (0.218)	-0.008 (0.084)
<i>Male</i>	0.248*** (0.069)	-0.051 (0.116)	0.522*** (0.082)
<i>Urban</i>	-0.224** (0.102)	-0.414** (0.185)	-0.098 (0.117)
n	563	243	320
R ²	0.172	0.151	0.305
Adj. R ²	0.149	0.095	0.270
Res. SE	0.760 (df = 547)	0.841 (df = 227)	0.663 (df = 304)
F Stat.	7.560***	2.686***	8.885***

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

In other words, the more extreme attitudes on Islam and Muslims one holds, the more likely he/she is to engage or support potentially violent political action. Going from individual who is completely free from islamophobia to one with the extremely high level it, there is a 38% increase in propensity to get engaged in violent political acts. This effect is followed by the diverging effect of security concerns due to international terrorism. Namely, as expected, the more concerned with terrorism a person is, the less likely he/she is to engage or support using violence for achieving political goals. Same as before, gender plays an important role, with men being 5% more prone to engage in political violence than women. However, education in this model does not contribute to explaining of youth's support for radical political acts.

We obtained interesting results regarding the role of first-person contact with immigrants. Unlike in case of islamophobia, the more contact one has with immigrants, the more likely that person is to engage in violent political action. Similarly, though expectedly, political interest contributes to propensity to engage in such acts. Last, there is a strong effect of public employment. Namely, young individuals working in a public company or administration are 10% less prone to disturb orderliness and take extreme action. This result is completely intuitive as those people are likely to have a stronger trust in institutional solutions and are in a position to see potential beneficial consequences of peaceful reforms. Unlike in the case of islamophobia, the strength of national and religious identities are both statistically insignificant.

3.2.3 Immigrant Stigmatization

Table 3. shows regression models with the level of immigrant stigmatization as a response variable. We are primarily interested in the extent negative opinions on Islam drive stigmatization of immigrants coming to European countries and what other personal characteristics induce such discriminatory attitudes and behavior. Results undoubtedly support the hypothesis that the main reason for negative views on immigrants comes from negative opinions on Islam as a religion. Precisely, Going from individual who is completely free from islamophobia to one with the extremely high level of it, we observe 45% rise in stigmatization of immigrants. This is, by far, the strongest effect we observe in our study (Figure 1).

The Effect of Islamophobia on Immigrant Stigma

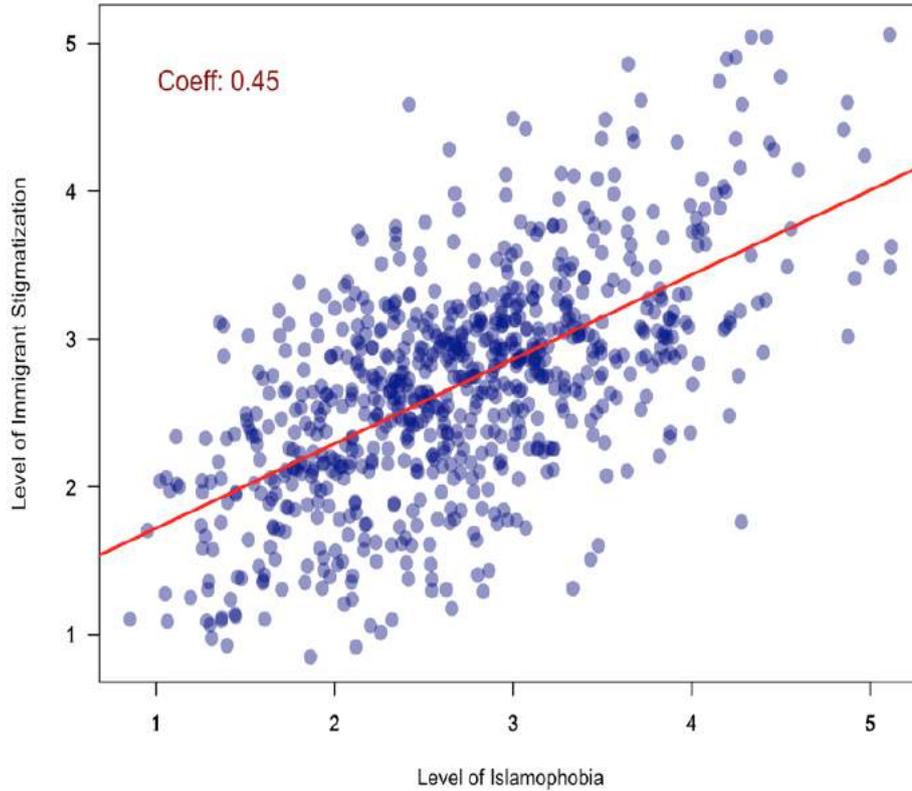


Figure 1.

To further corroborate this finding, it should be pointed out that individuals holding security concerns over the battle between Islam and Christianity in the world are even more prone to have negative attitudes on immigrants (0.06 per unit). We have already discussed the majority of the other statistically significant factors in the previous sub-section and the direction of their effects largely confirm previous finding. An increase in both formal education and Islam-specific knowledge play important roles in reducing stigma young people put on immigrants. Though, Islam-specific knowledge seems to be slightly more effective. Same holds for contact with immigrants, which reduces level of stigmatization slightly more efficiently than both formal education and Islam-specific knowledge (7%).

As in the case of islamophobia, right-wingers are more likely to develop negative attitudes on immigrants. Despite islamophobia being the most important factor, frequency with which one attends religious services plays no role. Again, the effect of religious identity is somehow trumped by the strength of national identity, which proved to be a very potent explanatory variable (0.10 per unit). Somewhat paradoxically, living in an urban area, where most of the immigrants tend to stay and search for jobs, has more positive attitudes on them. At the same time, people in rural areas, usually unaffected by the immigrants settling in European countries have a 3% unit of more negative attitudes, all other things considered.

Table 3: Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) Regression Results

	<i>DV: Immigrant Stigma</i>		
	Full Sample	EU	WB
	(1)	(2)	(3)
<i>Intercept</i>	1.019*** (0.193)	1.350*** (0.308)	0.803*** (0.257)
<i>Education</i>	-0.041** (0.019)	-0.049 (0.031)	-0.013 (0.026)
<i>Islam Knowledge</i>	-0.048** (0.015)	-0.005 (0.024)	-0.068*** (0.020)
<i>National Identity</i>	0.100*** (0.021)	0.092*** (0.032)	0.101*** (0.027)
<i>Religiousness</i>	0.007 (0.016)	0.008 (0.024)	0.010 (0.023)
<i>Left-Right</i>	0.077*** (0.013)	0.062*** (0.021)	0.081*** (0.016)
<i>Islamophobia</i>	0.452*** (0.031)	0.498*** (0.054)	0.433*** (0.041)
<i>Immigrant Contact</i>	-0.072*** (0.019)	-0.049* (0.029)	-0.046* (0.028)
<i>Political Interest</i>	-0.022 (0.025)	-0.076* (0.042)	0.018 (0.032)
<i>Terrorism Concern</i>	0.009 (0.025)	-0.033 (0.049)	0.031 (0.030)
<i>Islam vs. Christianity</i>	0.055** (0.023)	0.023 (0.040)	0.074*** (0.028)
<i>Employed</i>	0.023 (0.048)	0.046 (0.082)	-0.067 (0.063)
<i>Public Employment</i>	-0.102 (0.063)	-0.179** (0.087)	0.019 (0.096)
<i>Parents Citizen</i>	-0.024 (0.062)	0.060 (0.087)	-0.153* (0.092)
<i>Male</i>	0.088* (0.048)	0.017 (0.072)	0.162** (0.064)
<i>Urban</i>	-0.131* (0.070)	-0.092 (0.115)	-0.172* (0.090)
N	556	237	319
R ²	0.550	0.568	0.559
Adj. R ²	0.537	0.539	0.538
Res. SE	0.513 (df = 540)	0.520 (df = 221)	0.503 (df = 303)
F Stat.	43.938***	19.410***	25.652***

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

4 Discussion and Implications

The goal of this cross-national online survey is to investigate complexities of the radicalization issue among European youth. Needless to say, "radicalization" can mean many different things today and the term is being increasingly "stretched" in everyday use. In this project, however, we were particularly interested in exploring social factors and psychological traits that take part in the development of radical islamophobia and stigmatization of immigrants. With the sudden escalation of the refugee crisis in Europe in recent years, which coincided with the rise of far-right parties in Europe, an increased number of young people have been drawn to extremist political movements.

This research study was, therefore, designed to systematically analyze potential sources of discriminatory attitudes, and provide an input on policy strategies that are likely to be successful when struggling with such tendencies. Here, we previously discussed findings in a proper social context, and debate their substantive meanings. There are a number of conclusions that could be drawn from our results; however, we choose to focus on the most crucial take-away messages.

First, these findings underline how the focus of many intuitive explanations for islamophobia and the stigmatization of immigrants are often misguided. Despite the better judgment of many social scientists, general and often media-driven narratives still heavily lean on socio-economic and demographic explanations of youth radicalization. While we do not claim that these factors are in themselves negligible neither do we claim that they work in the same way in all social contexts, we believe that the exaggerated emphasis comes at the expense of disregarding more critical and problematic issues. The findings presented here suggest that, in a world marked by enhanced social anxieties and insecurities, these explanations are inferior to needs for identity confirmation. We strongly believe that the concerns shared by many radicalized young people, although misguided, are understandable. Thus, they should not be disregarded as mere bigotry, but rather dealt with in a sensible and responsible way.

If the problem of islamophobia and immigrant stigmatization is reducible to simple demographics and socio-economic factors, its origins and potential consequences would be easily graspable. Unfortunately, today's political and social context is far more complex. It is increasingly hard for young people in Europe to find their own place in a constantly changing society. Unlike the older generations, in most cases, they live in a time crowded by insecurities and filled with political actors ready to exploit social anxiety. The idea that the discrimination of immigrants is driven primarily by fear of losing competitiveness on a job market, or increased public spending at detriment of legal citizens, does not take us far. How can we then explain why people living in rural areas have more negative attitudes on incoming refugees? For the most part, their economic self-interest is not affected as the majority of immigrants look to settle in urban areas with more work. Moreover, if job security is the main threat, then should not employed people, especially in the public sector, be free from any stigma or discrimination? Yet, we find these factors peripheral and comparatively of lesser strength.

If one is to simplify, it would be reasonable to say that the level of stigmatizing attitudes is far better explained by *xenophobic* search for identity mixed with an increased feeling of insecurity. It appears that what scares young people about immigration is much less related to the economy and narrow self-interest, and much more related to intensified diversification of society. The threat to a culturally homogeneous society is what is being defended with the development of such attitudes. We find that almost half of the difference in stigmatization of immigrants among young people can be explained simply by inspecting their attitudes on Islam and Muslims. One can deduce that the exclusion of incoming refugees would be far less wide-spread, or even non-existing, if they were of different religious and cultural backgrounds.

For this reason, we believe it is important to emphasize the critical role of national identity in justifying such xenophobia. Obviously, nationalism is a rather complex concept that is being used in this context in a way that connects it closely to notions of religion. In other words, this manifestation of national identity is not political, as in self-determination claims for instance, but rather cultural. It is used to define the nation as the primary source of belonging. This ethnic mode of nationalism emphasizes religion, language, and culture as inherited and critical in determining the boundaries of a national community (Brubaker, 2009). Under this notion, the visibility of Muslim and Islamic symbols in European societies are read as symbols of narrow-mindedness and potential sites of insurrection, leading to marginalization and discrimination of minority cultures (Ignatieff, 1994).

What measures need to be taken to untie such notions of national identity from the immigration issue? One thing is definitely de-securitization of the issue. Namely, our results confirm that a big part of the problem is that the newest European refugee crisis has fed anxieties related to the possibility of coexistence of the Islamic culture with the "European way of life". Such anxieties undermine the idea of multiculturalism in Europe and deteriorate the attitude of society towards outsiders and their rights. In this regard, securitization refers to process of politicization and framing of issues as a security threat and existential concern (Cesari, 2012). Islam in general, and refugees in particular, are then portrayed as a threat to national security due to alleged unwillingness to integrate in society; they are motors of international terrorism and violence. One way to achieve de-securitization is to foster development of civic modes of national identity, which promote values of law and citizenship instead of common roots. Once boundaries of national communities are perceived in a universalistic sense, then chauvinistic notions of "us" and "them" are re-defined in a way that does not promote inter-group anxieties and fears.

This brings us to a third noteworthy message - importance of education and first-person experience with stigmatized. Sadly, it appears that young people who foster discriminatory political beliefs tend to be less educated on the very object of their discrimination. Islamophobia, as we saw, goes well in hand with the lack of knowledge about Islam. It is a worrisome fact that the majority of our respondents were unable to correctly answer basic questions regarding Islam. Same is, unfortunately, true with regards to contact with immigrants. The most negative attitudes on immigrants are held by those with least amount of personal experience with them. This becomes especially relevant when interpreted from the perspective of out-group exclusion.

Learning that Islam and Christianity have many things in common is probably the easiest way to diminish inter-group anxieties and reduce the level of stigma. It may come as a surprise to many that the level of knowledge (or lack thereof) about Islam is equal among youth from EU and WB countries. With regards to this, results offer a reason to be optimistic too. The educational system in EU countries seems to be well developed to produce young individuals equipped to "defend" themselves from such biases. In contrast, after completing formal education, young people in the Western Balkans still have a long road ahead before neutralizing discriminatory attitudes. Luckily, the solutions are already available in the form of cultivating knowledge outside of formal curriculum and fostering contact with excluded/discriminated groups. The fact that humans tend not to learn about and engage with things they fear should not stop policy-makers from persisting in that direction. Either way, the decision whether to hold socially undesirable attitudes or not should not be left to peoples' own will.

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