To vote or not to vote? A macro perspective.
Electoral participation by immigrants from different countries of origin in 24 European countries of destination

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Electoral participation of immigrants is an important issue in Europe, particularly because immigrants vote less often than natives. This may suggest a lack of political integration and might result in proportionally lower representation in parliament, in turn affecting democratic legitimacy. This research analyses 8,132 immigrants in 24 European countries. We find that although the largest differences are at the level of the country of destination, the measured characteristics of the country of origin offer more powerful explanations. We conclude that immigrants from countries with more political and socio-economic opportunities have a higher propensity to vote. Immigrants who live in countries with a higher economic development level also vote more often.

Keywords: *Electoral participation, immigrants, multilevel modelling, European Union, origin countries*

Introduction

In Europe the inflow of immigrants has led to a change in the composition of the population and the electorate. For example, the share of foreign citizens in the total Finnish population increased from 0.3% between 1975-1985 to 3.1% in 2010, and, even more importantly, in the same period Finland moved from having a negative net-migration rate to having a positive migration rate (Miettinen 2011). This increased net inflow has resulted in two related challenges: (lack of) political integration of immigrants and a challenge for the legitimacy of representative democracy. It can be argued that immigrants in Europe should integrate into their host society in more than one way. For example: participation in associations (social integration), participation in the labour market (economic integration) and participation in elections (political integration). The different forms of integration may be mutually reinforcing. Political integration, for example, could lead to more social and economic integration and vice versa. Some even argue that electoral participation is the most important form of political integration (Tillie et al. 2000). Indeed, electoral participation could be said to be an important element of political participation for every citizen of a country, "turning out to vote is the most common and important act citizens take in a democracy" (Aldrich 1993, 246).

Unfortunately electoral participation by immigrants in Europe lags behind the participation of natives (van Londen et al. 2007). As the immigrant population in Europe is not expected to diminish until 2025 at least (Eurostat 2005), this means that an increasing proportion of the population does not vote in national elections, and a low turnout in national elections can be considered an indicator of diminishing democratic legitimacy (Mair 2006; Webb 2005). Both the political integration of immigrants and the legitimacy of democracy are enhanced when immigrants vote. This is why it is important to understand why some immigrants vote and others do not.

Most of the research on electoral participation by immigrants and ethnic minorities originates in the United States and focuses on comparing the voting behaviour of Afro-Americans, Latinos, and Asian-Americans with the voting behaviour of the European-American population (Tam Cho 1999; Chong & Rogers 2005; DeFrancesco Soto & Merolla 2006; Jackson 2003). Few studies on political and electoral participation have focused on Europe. The exceptions studied a single city or country and focused on the largest immigrant groups in those cities or countries. Jacobs, Phalet and Swyngedouw (2004) studied Turks and Moroccans in Brussels and tested Fennema and Tillie's hypothesis that ethnic social capital explains differences in political participation between different groups of immigrants (Fennema & Tillie 1999). Their results showed that this was not the case for Turkish and Moroccan immigrants in Brussels. However, they did find country-of-origin effects: the electoral participation levels of Turkish immigrants were lower than those of Moroccan immigrants. They pointed out that these differences in political integration could be explained by differential integration in Belgium society. However, this raises

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questions about possible country-of-origin effects in a European analysis.

In two different Dutch studies, immigrants in two cities were investigated. Van Londen and colleagues (2007) researched differences in electoral participation by Turks and Moroccans in Rotterdam. They discovered that cross-ethnic organisations (with immigrants and non-immigrants) were important in explaining voter turnout in local elections, whereas ethnic organisations only had indirect effects on participation in local and national elections. Tillie (2004) studied immigrants in Amsterdam and found significant differences in voter turnout in local elections by different immigrant groups. These differences were only partly explained by individual attributes. This indicates that other explanations need to be tested to account for the differences between immigrant(group)s.

Odmalm researched the political participation of immigrants in Malmö (Sweden) (Odmalm 2004; 2005). This research found destination effects: the political structure in the country of destination influences the electoral participation of immigrants. Again, factors outside the individual immigrant seemed to be important in explaining political participation. Togeby examined the turnout of (former) Yugoslav, Turkish and Pakistani immigrants in Denmark (Togeby 2004). In this case, organisational membership did not affect the electoral participation of Pakistani and (former) Yugoslav immigrants and had only a small effect for Turkish immigrants.

For Germany, Koopmans found that the inclusiveness of local governments for political participation of immigrants had a strong positive effect (Koopmans 2004). After comparing German cities with each other, he compared Germany with the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. He found that the differences between countries were larger than the differences within each country. This signifies that the country of destination has an effect on political integration. Berger and colleagues focused on Berlin (Berger et al. 2004). They found that immigrants who were more socially active in ethnic organisations were also more politically active. They also found origin effects; Italian immigrants participated more than Turkish or Russian immigrants. These studies all focused on social capital and major immigrant groups and differences between immigrant(group)s were left unexplained. We want to add to these explanations by introducing explanations at the macro level.

In all of the studies described above, different immigrant groups were investigated separately (Berger et al. 2004) or with dummy variables for the immigrant groups (Tillie 2004). Most of them focused on a single city or country; one focused on three countries (Koopmans 2004). What is lacking is a comprehensive study that simultaneously describes and explains the effects of the origin and destination country on the electoral turnout of immigrants. The research reported in this paper therefore focuses on the electoral participation of immigrants in 24 European countries and seeks to answer the question: *how does electoral participation in national elections by naturalised immigrants from various countries of origin in 24 European countries of destination differ?* To

our knowledge, this has not been done before. This study therefore makes a new contribution to knowledge about differences and similarities in immigrant electoral participation in Europe.

Many studies do not explain different electoral participation rates by considering macro-factors as well as individual characteristics. We therefore focus on the countries of destination and the countries of origin of the immigrant as explanatory factors. This leads to the second, explanatory, research question: *how can differences in electoral participation in national elections by naturalised immigrants from various countries of origin in the 24 European countries of destination be explained by characteristics of the countries of origin and destination?*

An immigrant perspective on electoral participation: The expressive vote

Immigrants often live in two worlds at the same time: the country they were born in (the origin country) and the country they live in (the destination country). This has an effect on the electoral participation of these immigrants; we have therefore developed two models to explain their electoral participation: a model based on the country of destination and a model based on the country of origin. The development of the models is based on socialisation theory (Stark 2006) and integration theory (Durkheim 1897/1960).

People are socialised in a certain social group and learn to adhere to the social norms of that group (Stark 2006). Integration theory elaborates on this: people who are more integrated into their social group feel more pressure to follow the norm of this group. To vote (for a certain party) is a norm that can be followed and therefore voting can be seen as an expression of belonging to a social group (Campbell 1960; Need 1997; van Egmond 2003). It is assumed that if immigrants are more integrated into the destination country they feel more pressure to follow that country's norms, including the norm that a good citizen votes in elections. Voting can thus be an expression of belonging to and integration in the destination country. However, naturalised immigrants belong to and are integrated into two groups; they are a citizen of the country of destination and an immigrant from a country of origin.

The sociological approach proposes that the environment into which one is socialised at youth, as well as one's current social environment, influence one's (voting) behaviour. People are influenced by the people they socialise with and this is a lifelong process (Stark 2006). That is why it is important to take into account both socialising environments, the country of origin and the country of destination. All immigrants are influenced by the norms in their country of destination, but for the effects of the origin country we distinguish between first and second generation immigrants. First-generation immigrants are born abroad and thus socialised into an environment other than the one in which they live. They have 'learnt' how to behave politically in their origin country and can therefore be expected to participate in the destination

country in a more or less similar way (McAllister & Makkai 1992). If they never learned to vote in their origin country, it is no surprise that they do not vote in the destination country. Since parents are the most important socialisation environment for political behaviour (Plutzer 2002), the origin country is also assumed to affect the second generation, who were born in the country of destination. The second generation is thus partly socialised into the destination country and partly into the country of origin. Therefore, we expect that the influence of the country of origin will also exist in the second generation.

However, the importance of these contexts for the electoral participation of immigrants is unclear. Cross-national analyses of the educational performance of migrant pupils, using the same double perspective (origin; destination) show that the vast majority of variance in performance is situated at the individual level (Levels et al. 2008). This means that apparent cross-national variance in migrant behaviour (like voting) is often a composition effect, caused by individual characteristics and not, or only very partly, by context features.

The destination country

Franklin (2004) stated that the political and social environment of a country is important for electoral behaviour. It has also been found that differences in immigrant electoral participation between countries are larger than within countries (Koopmans 2004), which means that we can expect differences between countries of destination. Therefore we assume that the destination country, being a socialisation environment, also influences the electoral participation of immigrants. We expect that the influence of the country of destination will be found to be stronger than the influence of the country of origin, since the current socialising environment is of more influence than an earlier socialising environment (Need 1997). In the European countries under study, the general norm is that voting is an important act. In countries with more opportunities for immigrants, electoral participation by immigrants is assumed to be higher. The factors presented in this paragraph are presented as the 'destination electoral model' in Figure 1. It suggests that political, socio-economic, and institutional opportunities foster electoral participation (Blais & Dobrzynska 1998). The three general hypotheses combined result in our 'destination hypothesis': *immigrants in countries of destination with more political, socio-economic and institutional opportunities have a higher propensity to vote.*

For the destination country model, we propose including two types of explanation. First, we want to include the more 'standard' explanations, to see if these also apply to immigrant voting behaviour, second, we propose 'immigrant specific' explanations. We cover these two types of explanation in three categories: political, socio-economic and institutional opportunities.

Political opportunities. In a country with more political stability and higher democratic quality, citizens feel that their vote counts more (Aldrich 1993), which makes the propensity to vote higher. Besides these 'standard' political factors we include the presence of an anti-immigrant party and the integration policy in the country of destination in the model. We assume that where an anti-immigrant party flourishes, immigrants are more likely to rally against this party by voting for another party, thus enhancing immigrant electoral participation. We also expect that in countries where the integration policy is more inclusive, immigrants will have more opportunities to integrate (politically) and will therefore participate more in elections. The 'political structure' hypothesis reads: *immigrants who live in a destination country with more political opportunities vote more often in elections.*

Socio-economic opportunities. The socio-economic structure of a country can influence elections as well as individual economic prosperity.[1] In countries with a higher level of economic performance the turnout is higher because when other needs are taken care of, people can engage in political behaviour (Blais & Dobrzynska 1998; Lipset 1959). Lipset (1959) also proposes that in countries with a higher level of education, democracy will flourish more and this should also increase immigrant voting. In these more highly developed countries immigrants are expected to have more opportunities to become acquainted with politics and this enhances electoral participation. The 'social-economic structure hypothesis' therefore reads: *immigrants in a destination country with more social-economic opportunities vote more often in elections.*

Institutional opportunities. The institutional setting of a country also influences electoral participation. In countries where the electoral system gives each vote an equal weight, the 'lost vote syndrome' is smaller (Franklin 2004). In other words, in a more proportional system more votes count, resulting in a higher propensity to vote. We expect immigrants to also have a higher propensity to vote when their vote matters more. Earlier research (Franklin 2004) suggests that in countries where there is a greater choice of parties, people are more likely to vote. To capture all the institutional factors[2] in a country, we also take into account the turnout of natives in the country of destination. If natives do not vote in elections, immigrants are very well integrated if they do not vote in elections either. We also expect immigrants to have a higher propensity to vote when the chances of getting an immigrant-candidate elected are higher. Unfortunately we were unable to test this hypothesis and thus we did not include it in our model. The last characteristic, which strictly speaking is not institutional, is the size of the immigrant group. The bigger the electorate, the smaller the influence of one vote (Franklin 2004). However, the bigger the immigrant group, the more influence this group can exercise and thus the more their vote is worth. The 'institutional opportunities hypothesis' reads:

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[1] On the individual level we also control for individual economic prosperity.

[2] The turnout of natives takes into account all institutional factors, including compulsory voting. When compulsory voting was taken into account separately it turned out to be not significant.

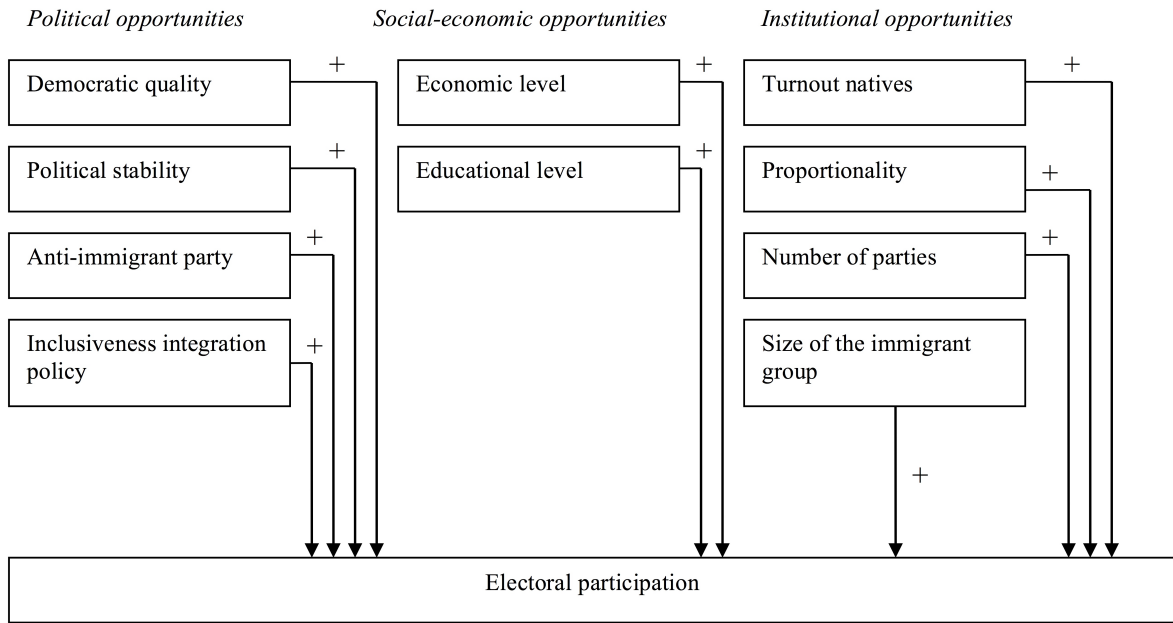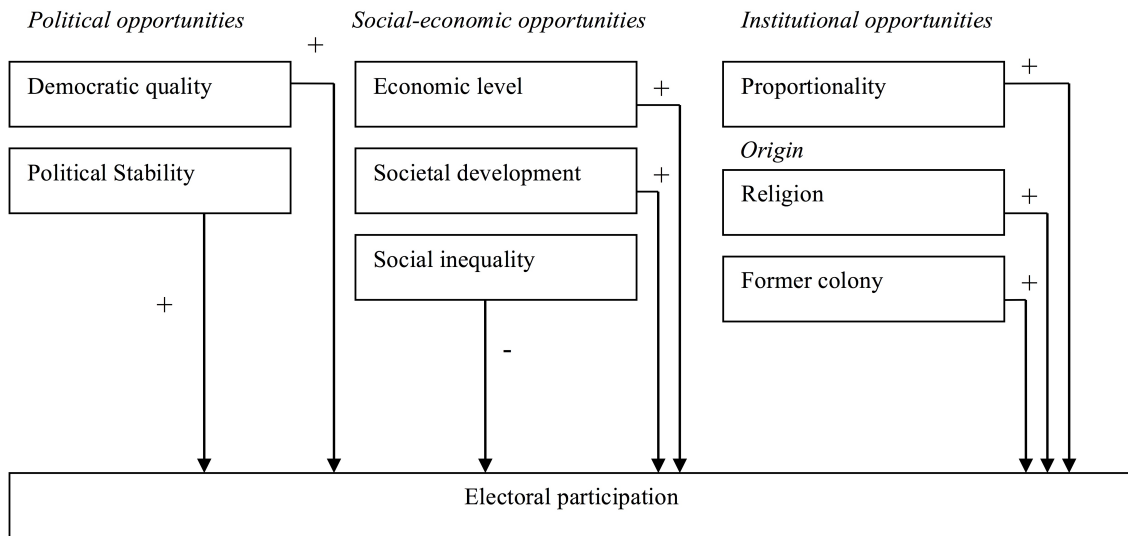*Figure 1.*   Destination electoral model for immigrants

Figure 2.   Origin electoral model for immigrants

immigrants in a destination country with more institutional opportunities vote more often in elections.

Country of origin

Since immigrants and their children are partly socialised into the country of destination and partly into their country of origin, we expect the country of origin to also be influential. In research concerning the socio-economic integration of immigrants, the country of origin has turned out to be an important explanatory factor (Levels et al. 2008; van Tuber-

gen 2004), this is replicated in studies explaining the political preferences of immigrants (Dancygier & Saunders 2006). We therefore developed another model for the country of origin. This model is depicted in Figure 2, in which the political, socio-economic and institutional opportunities and 'origin explanations' are shown. The model is expanded to take into account explanations that are specifically aimed at differential socialisation in the countries of origin. The 'origin hypothesis' that corresponds with this figure is: *immigrants from origin countries with more political, socio-economic and institutional opportunities, have a higher propensity to*

vote. Below we concentrate on the new elements in Figure 2 compared to Figure 1.

Political opportunities. We expect immigrants from countries of origin with more political stability and higher democratic quality to have been socialised into an environment that is more positive about voting and thus to have a higher propensity to vote. Anti-immigrant parties and immigration policies are not relevant to the country of origin so they are not included in the model. The 'political structure' hypothesis reads: *immigrants from an origin country with more political opportunities vote more often in elections in the destination country.*

Socio-economic opportunities. Building on the country of destination model, we added two explanations and removed one. The educational level explanation has been replaced with societal development. The economic development level is included in this model and we expect immigrants from a country of origin with a higher economic development level to have a higher inclination to vote in elections. We added societal development and social inequality to the model. In this context, societal development in a country means that the people in a country have a decent standard of living, can live a long and healthy life, and can enjoy education. We expect that if the standard of living is decent, people can 'afford' to get interested in politics and vote. In a country where social inequality (based on income) is higher, more people may feel that they have no influence on politics and thus be less inclined and socialised to vote. The 'socio-economic structure hypothesis' therefore reads: *immigrants from an origin country with more socio-economic opportunities vote more often in elections in the destination country.*

Institutional opportunities . Institutional opportunities for voting in the country of origin may also be relevant. We therefore include the level of proportionality in elections in the origin countries. We expect that immigrants who have been raised in an environment in which individual votes matter (more proportional systems) will have a higher propensity to vote in national elections in the country of destination as well. Specific origin characteristics can also influence electoral participation. In earlier research, Islamic countries were characterised as not providing such a 'good' socialising environment, given the high levels of dictatorship, authoritarian regimes, and tribal and religious strife (Fish 2002). We therefore expect that immigrants who are socialised in predominantly Islamic countries of origin will vote less often, because they do not see voting as a normal form of political participation (Pauly 2004). The macro-characteristic Islamic country is not the same as the individual religion of the migrant.[3] The final characteristic regards the colonial origins of a country. Immigrants from former colonies of the destination country have been found to vote more often than immigrants from countries not colonised by the destination country (Jacobs et al. 2004). An explanation might be that immigrants from former colonies are socialised into an environment that shows more resemblance to the country of destination in institutions and/or language, which makes the transition to voting in the country of destination easier.

Composition. It is also possible that compositional factors cause the differences in the electoral participation of immigrants in different countries. If – for instance – a country of destination only receives elderly and illiterate immigrants, the differences found in electoral participation might be caused by a compositional effect. That is why the most important variables that are known to explain individual differences in voting behaviour are taken into account. Broadly speaking, immigrants who have more resources and are more integrated have a higher propensity to vote. We therefore control for educational attainment, age, gender, marital status, generation (first or second), and religious denomination. As discussed earlier, previous multi-level studies on migrants' behaviour using the double perspective (van Tubergen 2004) found that individual characteristics have the strongest explanatory power and that contexts, like countries of origin and destination, have far less power.

Data and method

The data used for this study are the second and third rounds of the European Social Survey (Jowell & Team 2005; 2007). The European Social Survey is held in 30 countries; the second round of the survey was conducted in 2004/2005 and the third in 2006/2007. We used nested data: all immigrants live in countries of destination and originate from countries of origin. For nested data it is recommended that multilevel analysis is used (Snijders & Bosker 1999). An assumption for this analysis is that the levels are nested hierarchically; level 1 (individual) is nested into level 2 (country of destination / country of origin). The country of destination and country of origin, however, cannot be ordered hierarchically. They are both at the second level, level 2a (country of destination) and level 2b (country of origin). They are therefore called crossed factors. To correctly account for the nesting of the data, we used a cross-classified multilevel analysis. Since our dependent variable is binary (to vote or not to vote), we used logistic cross-classified multilevel analysis.

We labelled all respondents who were born outside the country of destination as 'first-generation immigrants', except in cases where both parents were natives of the destination country.[4] Respondents for whom one or both of the parents were born abroad were labelled 'second-generation immigrants'. The country of destination of the respondent is the country of survey, the country of origin is the country in which the first-generation immigrant was born or the country of origin of the mother of the second-generation immigrant.

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[3] For an analysis of migrant educational attainment with the combination of individual Islamic religion and Islamic country, see Fleischmann & Dronkers (2010).

[4] Some 'immigrants' result from border changes, for example, Germans and Russians in Poland because of the Polish border change after World War II. However, we still expect these people to feel and be treated like immigrants and vote on a lower level than 'natives'.

Table 1
Descriptive statistics of the variables used in the analysis

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean or proportion	Standard deviation
Country of destination				
Political opportunities				
Political stability	0.22	1.51	0.88	0.32
Anti-immigrant party	0.00	22.00	6.60	6.56
Migrant Integration Policy Index	39.00	88.00	55.64	12.75
Social-economic opportunities				
Economic level	16.20	80.80	34.87	11.75
Educational level	10.00	93.00	61.43	15.78
Institutional opportunities				
Proportionality	1.00	17.80	5.37	5.11
Number of parties	5.00	12.00	8.38	2.24
Size of immigrant group	0.02	19.26	3.44	5.09
Turnout natives	39.80	87.70	64.70	13.60
Country of origin				
Political opportunities				
Political stability	-2.91	1.92	0.17	0.71
Civil liberties	0.00	6.00	2.20	1.65
Political rights	0.00	6.00	2.29	1.95
Social-economic opportunities				
Economic level	1.00	55.60	21.32	12.41
Social inequality	23.00	60.00	34.44	6.83
Societal development	0.45	0.97	0.84	0.11
Institutional opportunities				
Proportionality	1.05	16.73	5.64	3.19
Origin characteristics				
Dominant religion (none=ref)	0.00	1.00	0.14	
Roman Catholic	0.00	1.00	0.36	
Other Christian	0.00	1.00	0.25	
Other non-Christian	0.00	1.00	0.15	
Former colony	0.00	1.00	0.14	

Source: European Social Survey rounds two and three, own computations; a higher score on these variables means always more.

Where this country was not known, the country of the father was used. This follows a commonly used strategy (Fleischmann & Dronkers 2010; Tillie 2004). Of the more than 12,000 immigrants identified, only immigrants who were citizens of the country of destination and 18 year or older, and thus eligible to vote in national elections, were selected. Immigrants who indicated they were not allowed to vote in the last national elections were not used in the analysis. This resulted in 8,132 immigrant respondents from 24 countries.[5] The immigrant respondents originated from 42 countries and 20 regions of origin. If there were less than 25 immigrants from a country of origin, these immigrants were categorised into a region of origin, to establish acceptable group sizes for multilevel analysis. Table 1 gives the descriptive statistics for all variables of our analyses.

[5] The countries analyzed in this study are: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Spain, Finland, France, Great-Britain, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Slovenia, Slovakia and Switzerland. The other countries that participated in the survey but were not selected were: Bulgaria, Iceland, Romania, Russia, the Ukraine and Turkey, because these countries were non-European Union members and therefore less comparable or not included in the MIPEX index (see below), an important macro variable to measure integration policy that we wanted to include in the analysis.

Table 2
Correlations between selected macro variables

	Turnout natives	GDP	MIPEX	Stability	Anti-immigrant parties	Education	Prop	Parties
Economic level (GDP)	0.120	1.000						
Inclusiveness (MIPEX)	0.400	0.208	1.000					
Political Stability	-0.180	0.541	0.086	1.000				
Anti-immigrant parties	0.036	0.204	-0.157	0.388	1.000			
Macro educational level	0.454	-0.449	0.266	-0.247	-0.114	1.000		
Proportionality	-0.266	-0.112	0.014	-0.597	-0.291	-0.091	1.000	
Number of parties	0.241	-0.309	-0.082	-0.450	-0.168	0.241	0.131	1.000

Note: All correlations are significant $p<0.05$ (N=8,132)

The country of destination

Democratic quality did not differ across destination countries and was therefore not included in the models. Political stability was measured using Kaufmann's index for political stability and ranged from -2.5 to 2.5 (Kaufmann et al. 2006). We used the definition of van der Brug and colleagues and the literature on anti-immigrant parties (Golder 2003; Van der Brug et al. 2005; van Spanje 2010, 2011) to establish which parties should be categorised as anti-immigrant parties. As an operationalisation of anti-immigrant party success we used the percentage of votes that these parties obtained in the election closest to 2006. Data are collected from the notes on recent elections in the journal *Electoral Studies* where possible and national electoral statistics when necessary. The inclusiveness of the integration policy is measured with the MIPEX index which evaluates the integration policy of European countries in six different areas. We also used the total score (Niessen et al. 2007). The economic development level is measured using GDP per capita (OECD 2008) and the educational level is the percentage of the population that participated in tertiary education (World Bank 2009). The turnout of the natives is calculated from the ESS data. Proportionality is measured by the Least Squares index (LSQ) (Gallagher & Mitchell 2005). This takes into account how proportionally the number of votes is transferred into the number of seats. The effective number of parties (with seats in parliament) are from the Elections around the World database (IFES 2009). The immigrant group size was calculated from the ESS data before selection criteria were applied.[6] For all variables, the higher the score of the country the more of this characteristic the country has.

Country of origin

The democratic quality was measured as political rights and civil liberties in a country (Freedom House 2007). Political stability, economic development level and propor-

tionality were measured as in the country of destination. For societal development, the Human Development Index was used (UNDP 2007). Social inequality was measured with the GINI coefficient for income (Central Intelligence Agency 2008). Political behaviour can also be related to religion, therefore we created dummies to indicate the country's prevalent religion; 'no prevalent religion', Roman Catholic, Islamic, other non-Christian religion and other Christian religions. Where more than 50 % of the population adhered to one of these religions, this religion is the prevalent one. 'Former colony' indicated whether the origin country was a former colony or part of former territory of the destination country (starting from 1800). For instance, Finland and Norway are former parts of Sweden. Table 2 shows that the correlations between the macro-variables are not so high as to run the risk of multicolinearity.

Composition

We control these macro-effects for a number of individual characteristics, which are often used to explain voting behaviour (Franklin 2004). We include these individual characteristics only to be sure that the effects of the macro-variables are not spurious due to the omission of individual variables. The educational attainment of the respondent is measured in five categories, ranging from not-completed primary education (0) to second stage of higher education (4). The age of the respondent is computed from the year of birth. Gender is a dichotomous variable where males are the reference category. Being married is also dichotomous with being married or living together coded as (1). Second generation immigrants is also a dummy variable. Religion is coded as: none

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[6] We are aware of the selectivity of the ESS data in which most probably the most integrated immigrants take part. However, we do not think it is possible to calculate a better estimate of group size considering that we have 24 countries of destination and 62 countries and regions of origin.

(ref.), Roman-Catholic, other Christian, Islamic and other non-Christian.

Results

Descriptive figures

The first research question concerned the description of differences in electoral participation by immigrants in different countries of destination and from different countries of origin. The results in Figures 3 and 4 provide the answer to this question.

Figure 3. Turnout of immigrants in national elections in the country of destination
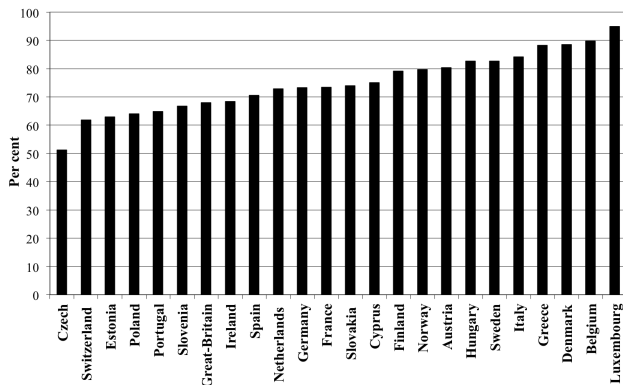
Source: European Social Survey rounds two and three, own computations.

Figure 3 shows the variation in the turnout of immigrants in national elections in the countries of destination. The turnout of immigrants is lowest in the Czech Republic, at 52%, and highest in Luxembourg at 95%, while immigrants in Finland are somewhere in the middle (79%). The high percentage in Luxembourg can probably be explained by the fact that Luxembourg has compulsory voting, as do Belgium and Greece, who also score high on electoral participation. From Figure 3 we can conclude that electoral participation differs between destination countries. Figure 4 shows that electoral participation differs between countries of origin too. The turnout is lowest for immigrants from the area 'Northern Africa' (43% voted) and highest for immigrants from Congo (92%). This high number is (partly) due to the fact that most Congolese immigrants are settled in Belgium where voting is compulsory.[7] Around 83% of immigrants from Northern Europe (the majority of Finnish immigrants with voting rights) vote, just like Finnish emigrants elsewhere (mostly in Sweden). Now we have established that the electoral participation of immigrants differs between countries of destination and countries of origin, we would like to explain these differences.

Multi-level models

To answer the second research question, four models are estimated with logistic cross-classified multilevel analysis.

First, we estimated the so-called null model; this is the model with only a random intercept. In this model it appeared that the variance at the destination level was larger (0.31, se=0.55) than the variance at the origin level (0.19, se=0.43); however, neither were significant. A null model with only destination had a variance of 0.31 (se=0.55) and a null model with only origin had a variance of 0.21 (se=0.46). So, even with a simpler multi-level model (either destination or origin), there is a barely significant higher level variance. Although Figures 3 and 4 suggest that some destination or origin countries have quite high or low turnout, most destination or origin countries have turnout percentages clustered around the average. This explains the lack of significant variances, despite a few outliers. The variance at the individual level is not estimated in logistic models, but we can conclude from these results, compared to those in Table 3, that the vast majority of the variance in electoral participation of immigrants is situated at the individual level. From these results in a multi-level context, we can conclude that turnout does not differ significantly between immigrants in different countries and from different countries. Although there is relatively little context variation, it is still interesting to see whether context can explain differences in (individual) voting intentions. This may be the case, as individual characteristics might covary with destination or origin macro-features.

In the first model of Table 3, we estimated the individual level effects. Higher educated, older, married, second generation immigrants who are Roman-Catholic or adhere to another Christian religion vote more often in national elections, whereas Muslim immigrants vote less often in national elections.

In the second model the effects of the country of destination were tested bivariately, without controlling for individual characteristics. We sought to establish which country-level variables from our 'destination model' had a significant effect on the electoral participation of immigrants. The results are shown in Model 2 of Table 3. None of the political opportunity variables for the country of destination were significant: political stability, anti-immigrant party and the Migrant Integration Policy Index did not explain the electoral participation of immigrants in destination countries.[8] From the socio-economic opportunities, only the economic development level of the country of destination is significant. Bivariate analysis revealed that the institutional opportunities variables of the destination countries were not significant, except for the turnout of natives. In countries in which more natives vote in elections, more immigrants vote too.[9] Sum-

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[7] A supplemental table (not presented here, but available from the first author on request) shows that immigrants from different countries of origin differ in their electoral participation in different countries of destination as well.

[8] Also the six subscales of the MIPEX (long-term residence, access to nationality, anti-discrimination policy, family reunion, political participation; labour market access) did not yield significant effects.

[9] We also tested, in a separate analysis, with a dummy if compulsory voting had an effect on the electoral participation of immigrants in Europe, this was not the case.

Figure 4. Turnout of immigrants in national elections of destination countries per origin country or region
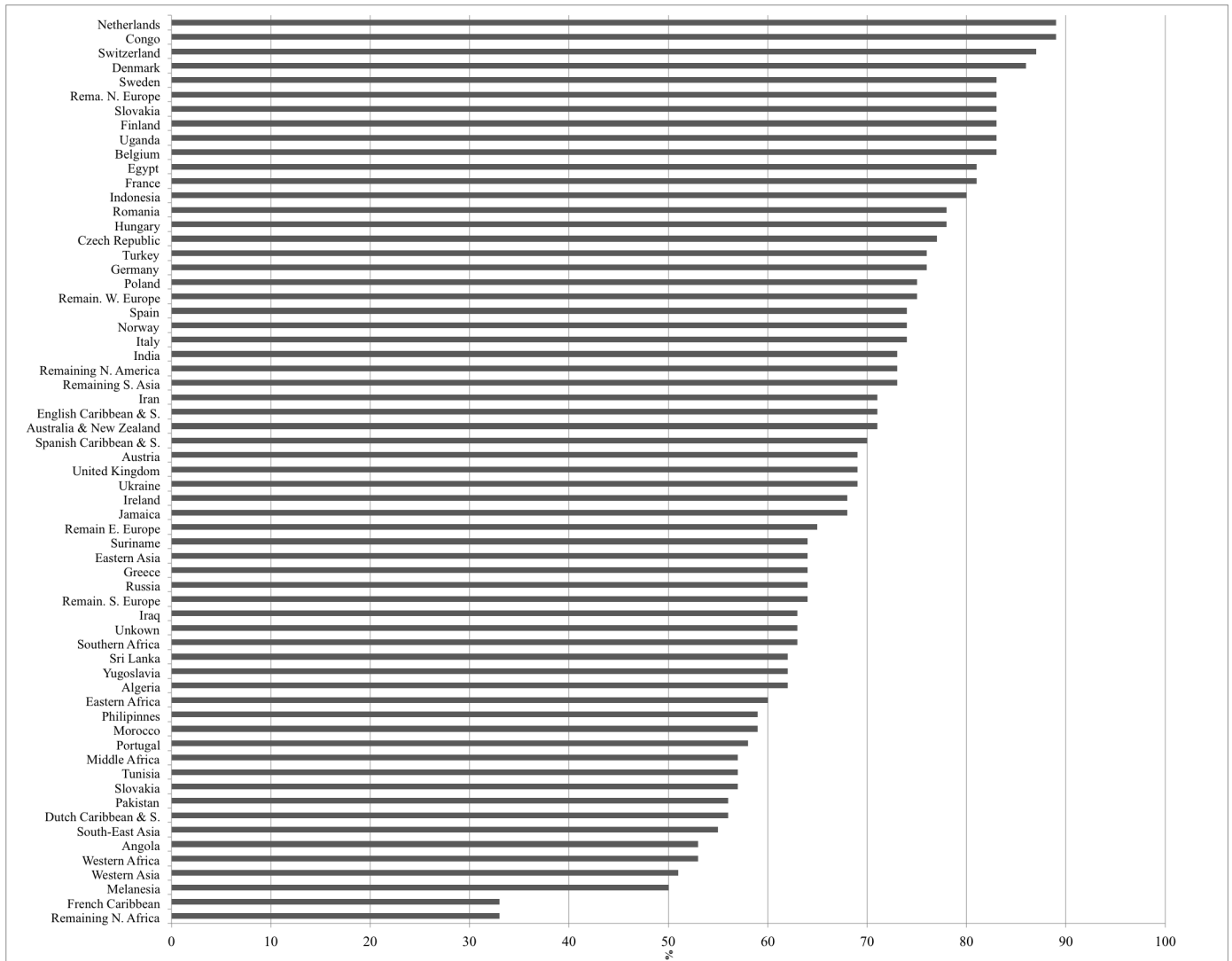
Source: European Social Survey rounds two and three, own computations.

ming up, in countries with a higher economic level and/or in which the turnout of natives is higher, immigrants have a higher propensity to vote.

In the third model the effects of the 'origin model' were tested bivariately (without individual variables). All three variables that measured political opportunities were significant. Immigrants from countries with more political stability, political rights and civil liberties showed a higher propensity to vote. All three variables related to socio-economic opportunities were also significant. Immigrants from countries with a higher economic development level, more societal development, and less income inequality had a higher propensity to vote. The proportionality of the system of the country of origin had no significant effect. Immigrants from Islamic countries vote less often, whereas immigrants from Roman-Catholic countries vote more often, which is largely the dis-

tinction between Western immigrants and non-Western immigrants. These significant effects of the characteristics of the country of origin indicate that the measured characteristics of the origin country might be more effective in explaining differences in the electoral participation of immigrants than the measured characteristics of the destination country.

The final model

In Model 4 of Table 3, we tested the macro variables controlled for individual variables. Since we only have a limited number of countries we can only test a limited number of macro variables at the same time. We selected the two variables that together explain the largest part of the variance of the destination country and the origin country. From the 'destination model' we tested the economic level and the

Table 3
Cross-classified multilevel analysis of electoral participation of immigrants, logits (standard errors in parentheses), N=8132.

	Individual model (1) (multivariate)	Destination model Model (2) (bivariate parameters)	Origin model (3) (bivariate parameter)	Multivariate model (4) (only significant macro parameters)
Individual				
Educational attainment	0.068***			0.069***
Age	0.032***			0.032***
Gender (female)	-0.077			-0.076
Being married	0.532***			0.529***
Second generation	0.359***			0.351***
Religion (none)				
Roman-Catholic	0.189**			0.183**
Other Christian	0.164**			0.159*
Other non-Christian	-0.120			-0.080
Islam	-0.369**			-0.350**
Country of destination				
Political opportunities				
Political stability		0.345		
Anti-immigrant party		0.014		
Migrant Integration Policy Index		0.010		
Social-economic opportunities				
Economic level		0.031***		0.028***
Educational level		-0.002		
Institutional opportunities				
Proportionality		-0.034		
Number of parties		-0.001		
Size of immigrant group		0.002		
Turnout natives		0.018*		0.015**
Country of origin				
Political opportunities				
Political stability			0.146**	
Civil liberties			0.114***	
Political rights			0.074**	
Social-economic opportunities				
Economic level			0.015***	
Social inequality			-0.021***	
Societal development			2.079***	0.490*
Choice				
Proportionality			0.002	
Origin				
Dominant religion (none=ref)				
Roman Catholic			0.273*	
Other Christian			0.155	
Other non-Christian			-0.173	
Islam			-0.383**	
Former colony			-0.135	-0.17*
Constant	-1.110 (0.165)***			-3.432***
Destination variance	0.352 (0.593)			0.154 (0.393)
Origin variance	0.034 (0.184)			0.032 (0.179)
Deviance decrease	633			657

*Source: ESS rounds 2 and 3, own computations; Notes: * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p <0.001*

turnout of natives. Both variables still have a significant effect when individual variables are controlled for. This signifies that immigrant voting follows native voting and thus, that in countries in which the turnout of natives is higher the turnout of immigrants is higher. The expected electoral turnout of immigrants in Finland is $(68-52)*exp(0.015) = 19$ percentage points higher than in the Czech Republic (which has the lowest turnout among the immigrants) because of the higher voting activity among Finnish natives. From the 'origin model' we selected societal development and 'former colony or part', which turned out to explain the largest amount of variance in the model. Immigrants from countries of origin with a higher level of societal development are more likely to vote in the national elections of the destination country, when controlled for individual attributes. Controlled for individual characteristics, the variable 'former colony or part of the destination country' turned out to be significant. Contrary to our expectations, we found that immigrants with the same individual attributes vote less often in elections when they are from a former colony or part of the destination country. This means that the disadvantage that immigrants have is not compensated for by similarities in the political system. It is even possible that more disadvantaged immigrants will migrate sooner to the former colonising country than less disadvantaged immigrants.

We also tested (not shown here) all bivariate effects of destination and origin macro variables while controlling for the individual variables: some of these macro variables turned out not to be significant after controlling for individual characteristics. This means that these countries 'produce' or 'receive' different kinds of immigrants, with individual characteristics that make them less inclined to vote. For example, immigrants from less developed countries are less politically and socio-economically integrated into their country of destination, not because of their origin or destination, but because of their individual characteristics.

Another conclusion which can be drawn from Model 4 of Table 3 is that second-generation immigrants vote more often than comparable first-generation immigrants. This supports our socialisation framework. The (not-shown) interaction between second generation and turnout of natives is positive and significant, which again supports our socialisation framework. The second-generation is more influenced by the institutions and environment of the country of destination than the first generation.

Now that we have controlled for individual characteristics we can conclude that our hypotheses are only partly confirmed. The destination hypothesis predicted that immigrants in countries of destination with more political, socio-economic and institutional opportunities would have a higher propensity to vote. We found that only economic opportunities in the country of destination are influential; political and institutional opportunities do not influence the propensity to vote. Turnout, as an overarching measurement of institutional opportunities, was of importance after controlling for individual variables. Our second hypothesis is also partly confirmed: we predicted that immigrants from countries of origin with more political, socio-economic and institutional

opportunities would have a higher propensity to vote. After controlling for individual characteristics we can conclude that immigrants from countries that have a higher level of civil liberties have a higher propensity to vote. Only one origin variable has a significant negative effect: whether the immigrant originated from a 'former colony or part of the destination country'. The negative effect might be explained by easier procedures for naturalisation for immigrants from former colonies or parts of the destination country (Dronkers & Vink 2012; Vink et al. 2013). The latter might cause a lower level of political integration compared to immigrants from other countries who have to face harder naturalisation procedures.

The variance of the country of destination decreased from the null model to Model 4 of Table 3 from 0.360 to 0.154 and the variance of the country of origin from 0.143 to 0.032. The deviance decreased with 657 points in total and thus the increase of the fit of the model was 657 points. This means that this model is a fairly good explanatory model for both between-destination and, especially, between-origin electoral participation by immigrants. But it is important to remember that the vast majority of the variance in electoral participation of migrants is situated at the individual level, not the origin or destination level.

Conclusion and discussion

Electoral participation by immigrants is an important issue in Europe for two reasons. First, immigrants vote less than natives in national elections in Europe and this could indicate a lack of political integration of immigrants. This lack of political integration can be partly, but not completely, explained by lack of socio-economic integration and thus a lack of skills. Second, immigrants are a growing part of the population in Europe. This group of the population votes less often than the native-population, challenging democratic legitimacy. This is why it is important to understand the lack of electoral participation by immigrants.

Therefore two questions were proposed, first: *how does electoral participation in national elections by naturalised immigrants from various countries of origin in 24 European countries of destination differ?* We showed that differences between countries of destination were larger than those between countries of origin. The lowest voting rate among immigrants was found in the Czech Republic (51%) and the highest in Luxembourg (95%), whereas immigrants in Finland are somewhere above the middle (79%). The differences between countries of origin ranged from 43% in the area Northern Africa to 83% in Finland to 93 % in Congo. Thus the electoral turnout of immigrants differs between countries of origin and between countries of destination.

We then turn to our explanatory research question: *how can differences in electoral participation in national elections by naturalised immigrants from various countries of origin in the 24 European countries of destination be explained by characteristics of the countries of origin and destination?* We conclude that characteristics of the country of destination that we assumed to affect voter turnout of immi-

grants had limited capacity to explain electoral participation. Only the economic development level and the turnout level of the natives of a country explained differences between countries. These two destination characteristics are relevant for Finland: its GDP per capita is one of the highest of the European countries studied and the turnout rate of Finnish native voters is also relatively high. This means that the level of voting by Finnish immigrants, which is above the European average (79%), is actually somewhat low for a destination country with these positive characteristics.

Characteristics of the countries of origin were much more effective in explaining differences between immigrants from different countries. Eight out of ten indicators in the 'origin model' were significant when analysed bivariately. After controlling for individual variables, only two indicators in the 'origin model' are still significant: societal development and being a former colony, although not in the expected direction. It is also important to note that integration policies like easier naturalisation processes and anti-discrimination policies (policies which are cherished in Finland) had no significant effect on immigrants' electoral participation.

The main message suggested by the results of this study is that it is important to understand that the integration and behaviour of immigrants in Europe is mainly affected by individual characteristics but also, although to a lesser extent, by the country of destination and the country of origin, with the effect of destination being far more important than the country of origin. More research is needed to explain differences in immigrants' electoral participation. This research showed that it is important to consider not only the country immigrants live in, but also the country immigrants are from. This means that for policy makers it is important to differentiate between groups of immigrants. Immigrant status is not the only influencing factor, confounding factors of the individual immigrant such as lower educational levels and being a first or second generation immigrant have to be taken into account as well. To increase the electoral participation of immigrants it is suggested that both the political integration and the socio-economic integration of immigrants should be advanced, which means that education might do part of the trick.

Furthermore, immigrants are from a particular country of origin and were socialised in that country of origin; immigrants in turn socialise their children (the second generation) in the country of destination based on the political behaviour they (the parents) have learned in their country of origin. This means that the second generation can also lack certain skills and is socialised partly in different norms, which inhibits full participation in the new society. Education and voter turnout campaigns aimed at immigrants are one possible way to raise turnout among immigrants. Only when the turnout of immigrants is raised to the level of comparable non-immigrants can the goal of full political integration of immigrants be realised.

Limitations

When reading the results and conclusions a number of limitations need to be considered. This research focused on the electoral participation of immigrants in national elections in European countries. Electoral participation in other elections, such as local government elections, was not analysed. Also, only those immigrants who were citizens of the destination country and 18 years or older were selected. These immigrants had obtained citizenship status in their country of destination, indicating that, for the first generation, they had lived there for at least five years and, where applicable, passed their naturalisation examination. In other words, not all immigrants were included in the research. In this case, this signifies that we analysed the 'more integrated' immigrants, which means that effects might be underestimated. When immigrants who are less socially and economically integrated are included, more profound effects of both the country of origin as the country of destination are expected.

Another limitation of this research is the selectivity of the European Social Survey. In the European Social Survey, respondents were only interviewed when they spoke one of the official languages of the country reasonably well or were part of a minority that makes up at least five percent of the population. In other words, they had to be capable of answering the survey questions on their own. These immigrants are thus a selective sample of immigrants in Europe; this could influence our results. Having said that, we found effects of the country of origin and it could be assumed that these effects would be larger for those immigrants who had not yet gained citizenship status or did not speak the language and thus did not participate in the European Social Survey. It is important to take this into account when interpreting the results and when using this study for future research. For example, for electoral participation in local elections or political participation in other contexts, citizenship status is not relevant and more immigrants could be included.

Despite the larger amount of variance at the destination level, we did not find many significant effects of the measured characteristics of the destination country. It is possible that we have not researched all the relevant characteristics influencing immigrants' electoral participation. For example, the presence of immigrant candidates for parliamentary elections, and/or press coverage related to the political participation of immigrants may make a difference. Future research may usefully combine a comparative study approach with more information on the countries of destination and the political and social environment for immigrants. A combination of extensive comparative research and a political opportunities structure approach might enhance our understanding of the electoral participation of immigrants. Another possible line of research might be an in-depth analysis of the outlier destination and origin countries.

Acknowledgements

Otago, New Zealand) and participants in several conferences for commenting on earlier versions of this paper.

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