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**Politico-Economic Analyses of Immigration
and Integration**

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Intensified by the recent influx of refugees and generally increasing levels of ethnic diversity, Swiss and European governments are struggling with the design of policies that catalyze the integration of immigrants and facilitate the social cohesion of host communities. Against this background, we want first to better understand the interplay between attitudes towards foreigners and their location decisions as well as the consequences for citizens' policy preferences. Second, we aim at evaluating the effects of non-citizen voting rights as a policy instrument to foster integration.

Attitudes towards Immigrants, Foreigners' Location Choices and Support of the Welfare State

Attitudes towards foreigners influence the interaction between immigrants and the native population in many ways. They matter for the successful integration as well as for the formation of policy preferences and, thus, for the development and evolution of institutions. There is a large body of literature, which discusses the sources of the expression of negative attitudes towards foreigners as reflected, for example, in right-wing extremism (for example, Hainmueller and Hopkins 2014).

However, much less is known about the effects of the presence of foreigners on policy preferences and on the support of the welfare state in general. In fact, any study faces severe methodological challenges, as it is necessary to overcome an inherent simultaneity (Dustmann and Preston 2001). On the one hand, the presence of foreigners may affect natives' preferences and attitudes. Getting to know foreigners may reduce prejudices, as postulated by the so-called contact hypothesis. Or, the presence of foreigners may aggravate negative attitudes, as natives fear pressure on the labor market and the welfare system, might expect an increase in the crime rate, or fear the alienation of their own culture. On the other hand, the

attitudes of natives towards foreigners may also affect the presence of immigrants. Foreigners might move less to areas where residents have reservations about them, where they fear discrimination or even physical abuse. This leads to an inherent reverse causality between attitudes and the presence of foreigners that challenges a straight forward identification of causal relationships.

The Deterrent Effect of Voting against Minarets: Identity Utility and Foreigners' Location Choice

(Michaela Slotwinski, Alois Stutzer)

In order to better understand how natives' attitudes influence immigrants' location choices, we study the consequences of the surprisingly approved initiative against the construction of new minarets in Switzerland. 58% of voters approved the constitutional amendment in November 2009. The study applies a regression discontinuity design to estimate the discontinuous jump in the probability to move to a community with an unexpectedly high approval of the initiative. In so doing, it implements a novel methodology for estimating regression discontinuity models with unknown discontinuity points. We find that the probability of foreigners moving to a municipality with an unexpectedly high approval of the initiative decreases initially by about 60 percent (Slotwinski and Stutzer 2015).

The Influx of Asylum Seekers and Citizens' Policy Preferences (Michaela Slotwinski, Alois Stutzer and Severin Zimmermann)

In this study, we concentrate on the presence of asylum seekers in Swiss municipalities and how this affects residents' attitudes towards refugees and foreigners as well as policy preferences more generally, including the generosity of the welfare state. We identify the effects based on the first presence of asylum seekers in a municipality as well as based on the establishment of asylum centers. Information about attitudes and policy preferences is derived from citizens' voting behavior in national ballot votes. In contrast to the prior literature, the Swiss setting allows to identify residents' policy preferences by a measure that is not prone to a social desirability bias – a bias, which is frequently a challenge in studies using survey responses as an approximation of policy preferences.

In an extension of the analysis, we will further explore whether the reactions of citizens depend on the cantonal asylum policies, for example, regarding the involvement of asylum seekers in the labor market. Last, we will explore whether we see any reaction in the housing prices of these municipalities, which might also reflect residents' preferences, for example if these municipalities become less attractive and housing prices drop.

The Role of Non-Citizen Voting Rights in Migrants' Integration

Voting rights for non-citizens offer a means of inclusion in the democratic process, and are a potentially important determinant of immigrants' integration. So far, the pros and cons have primarily been discussed on theoretical and normative grounds (see, for example, Munro 2008). We want to better understand the empirical effects of non-citizen participation rights on various dimensions of integration.

Non-citizen voting rights are hypothesized to reduce perceptions of social exclusion and to motivate immigrants to invest in their competencies and connections to integrate in the host society. Thereby, formal democratic participation rights for foreigners come in many forms and are more or less extensive (see Arrighi and Bauböck 2017 for an overview). We therefore aim at analyzing non-citizen voting rights in different contexts. In each context, we will rely on specific procedural aspects that regulate access to non-citizen voting rights in order to identify treatment effects. Our preferred setting is one that allows us to apply a regression discontinuity design by using an assignment rule based on the duration of stay in the host country – for example, comparing migrants who arrived slightly more than the necessary years (to be eligible) before the next election and were, thus, just allowed to vote (treatment group) with migrants who arrived slightly later and were just

not allowed to vote (control group). This setting allows us to identify the local treatment effect of the first opportunity to participate in the political process in the host country.

Democratic Involvement and Immigrants' Compliance with the Law

(Michaela Slotwinski, Alois Stutzer and Cédric Gorinas)
In Denmark, non-EU citizens get the right to vote in municipal and regional elections after three years of stay. Relying on register data, we find causal evidence that the first possibility to vote considerably reduces the number of legal offenses of non-Western male immigrants in the time after elections. This effect is mainly driven by petty offenses, i.e. traffic offenses, and holds at least up to 1.5 years after the elections have taken place (Slotwinski et al. 2017).

Non-Citizen Voting Rights at the Municipal Level and Political Attitudes of Foreigners in Geneva

(Michaela Slotwinski, Dominik Hangartner, Alois Stutzer and Stefan Schütz)

In the canton of Geneva, foreigners receive the right to vote in local ballots and elections after eight years of stay in Switzerland. By narrowly surveying individuals around this threshold in local elections in the canton of Geneva and applying a regression discontinuity design, we aim to learn about the effects of non-citizen voting rights on social and political integration. Furthermore, the diversity of foreigners in Geneva allows us to investigate whether the reaction to the opportunity of political participation depends on individuals' country of origin and prior democratic experience.

Publications

- Slotwinski, Michaela, and Alois Stutzer. “The Deterrent Effect of Voting Against Minarets: Identity Utility and Foreigners' Location Choice.” *IZA Discussion Paper* No. 9497. Bonn: IZA, 2015.
- Slotwinski, Michaela, Alois Stutzer, and Cédric Gorinas. “Democratic Involvement and Immigrants' Compliance with the Law.” *IZA Discussion Paper* No. 10550. Bonn: IZA, 2017.

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