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Do Citizens´ Preferences on Immigration Reflect Governments´ Preferences?

A Test of the Theory of Liberal Intergovernmentalism

Bachelor's project

NTNU
Norwegian University of
Science and Technology

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Abstract

The theory liberal intergovernmentalism argues that domestic preferences shape governments policy preferences. Liberal Intergovernmentalism has become one of the main theories in European integration theory but has also faced criticism. I find it interesting to test the assumption in the theory, in order to find evidence that can be used to strengthen or weaken the arguments in liberal intergovernmentalism. I use a survey from European Social Survey to look at citizens attitudes towards allowing immigrants to live in their country, and data from Eurostat (European Commission) to examine the number of granted citizenships in various EU member-states. The analysis shows that there is a statistically significant correlation between citizens´ preferences that are positive to allowing immigrants and the governments´ decision on the number of new granted citizenship. These data show evidence supporting the theoretical expectations from liberal intergovernmentalism.

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1. Introduction

There are many theories in international relation that seek to explain how states act. One of these theories is liberal intergovernmentalism, argued by Andrew Moravcsik. Moravcsik claims that in order to understand how states act in international politics and in the EU, it is necessary to disaggregate the politics into a process of successive stages. He further suggests three stages that explain states foreign policy. This thesis will focus on the first stage which is the formation of national preferences. The two other stages will be explained but will not be used in this analysis. The first stage elaborates how preferences of domestic actors shape the state's national preference, and further form how the state act at the international level. National preferences can be understood as the state's goals and interest, which will vary in response to pressure from pluralist interest groups (Moravcsik & Schimmelfennig, 2019, p. 65).

According to liberal intergovernmentalism, the domestic actors in the various EU member-states represent conflicting views which makes it difficult to create a cohesive strategy in the EU. As a result, the member-states has struggled to act uniformly when facing different crisis or issues, such as the Euro crisis and the European migrant crisis. Liberal intergovernmentalism provides an important insight into how the member-states in the EU works (Hix, 2018, p. 1600). The theory emphasizes the importance of understanding national preferences, and I will therefor examine these domestic preferences in order to highlight some aspects of how the member states in the European Union act.

This thesis will examine if there is a correlation between the citizens´ attitudes towards allowing immigrants and the governments´ decision to grant new citizenships. The citizens´ attitudes are understood as a domestic preference. I use quantitative method to see if there is a statistically significant association between the number of new citizenships granted and the citizens´ general attitudes towards accepting immigrants. I use statistics from Eurostat to see the number of granted citizenships in the different EU member-states, and data from European Social Survey (ESS) to examine the citizens´ attitudes towards immigrants. To control for other factors, I am using data from Eurostat, the Liberal Democracy Index from the Varieties of Democracy data project and other data from the World Bank.

The result shows that there is a statistically significant correlation between the actual number of new citizenships granted and the citizens´ attitudes towards allowing immigrants to come and live in their country. After adding control variables, only attitudes that are positive towards immigrants is statistically significant. Attitudes that are negatively associated with greater immigration is not significant when control variables are included. The results taken together, however, suggest support for propositions stemming from the theory of liberal intergovernmentalism.

The thesis proceeds as follows. Chapter 2 contains the conceptual framework and the main assumptions in the theory liberal intergovernmentalism. The hypothesis is also presented here. In chapter 3, I will describe the data material and how the variables are measured and operationalized. In chapter 4, I will interpret and discuss the results from the regression analysis. I will also highlight some possible weaknesses with the thesis. In chapter 5, I will summarize the result and conclude.

2. Conceptual framework and theory

This thesis examines the correlation between the number of granted citizenships and citizens´ attitudes towards immigrants. In this part I will clarify the conceptual framework and explain how the concepts are understood in this thesis. The research question is grounded in an assumption in liberal intergovernmentalism which will be further elaborated in this chapter. Regression analysis is used to see if the findings support or oppose the assumption in liberal intergovernmentalism. The dependent variable is the number of new citizenships each country grants every year, and the independent variable is preferences towards allowing immigrants to live in the recipient's country. Liberal intergovernmentalism is a European integration theory, and I will therefor examine countries that are member of or associated with the European Union. I have chosen the time period 2008-2019 since it covers a period of time where immigration policy was hugely debated across the European continent, due to the Syrian Refugee Crisis (2011-) and later the European Migrant Crisis (2014-). I make an assumption that this time period is a valid time frame for my research question.

2.1 Conceptual framework

The European Union's migration policy

The European Union has a consistent goal of controlling immigration and the member-states have a common interest in keeping the migration level stable. The European migration policy is largely decentralized, which gives the member-states the possibility to determine their migration policy to a large degree (Moravcsik & Schimmelfennig, 2019, p.74). The EU has since 1999 been working on creating a Common European Asylum System (CEAS) in order to better coordinate asylum and immigration policy between the member states and create an equal standard for asylum procedures. The EU member-states share responsibility to help and protect asylum seekers and immigrants (European Commission, n.d.). Moravcsik and Schimmelfennig (2019) argues that the EU has failed to achieve their goal of a centralized scheme that would allocate migrants proportionately in order to avoid an asymmetric distribution between the member-states, especially in the aftermath of the 2014-2015 Migrant Crisis. I find it interesting to examine domestic citizens´ preferences towards immigration since it seems to be a policy area where the European countries disagree (Moravcsik & Schimmelfennig, 2019, p. 74).

Citizenships

In this thesis citizenship is understood as something a person has that gives them legal membership and protection in the state they have citizenship. The focus in this thesis is immigrants that come from poorer countries outside of the EU that seek citizenship in EU member-states. The reason the immigrants seek citizenship is not discussed here. The main assumption tested in this thesis is that citizens´ preferences regarding immigrants affects the number of new granted citizenships. Table 1 illustrates the percentage of granted citizenships for each country as a share of the country's total population size.

Table 1: Percentage of granted citizenship in the EU member-states as a share of the total population size, 2010-2019
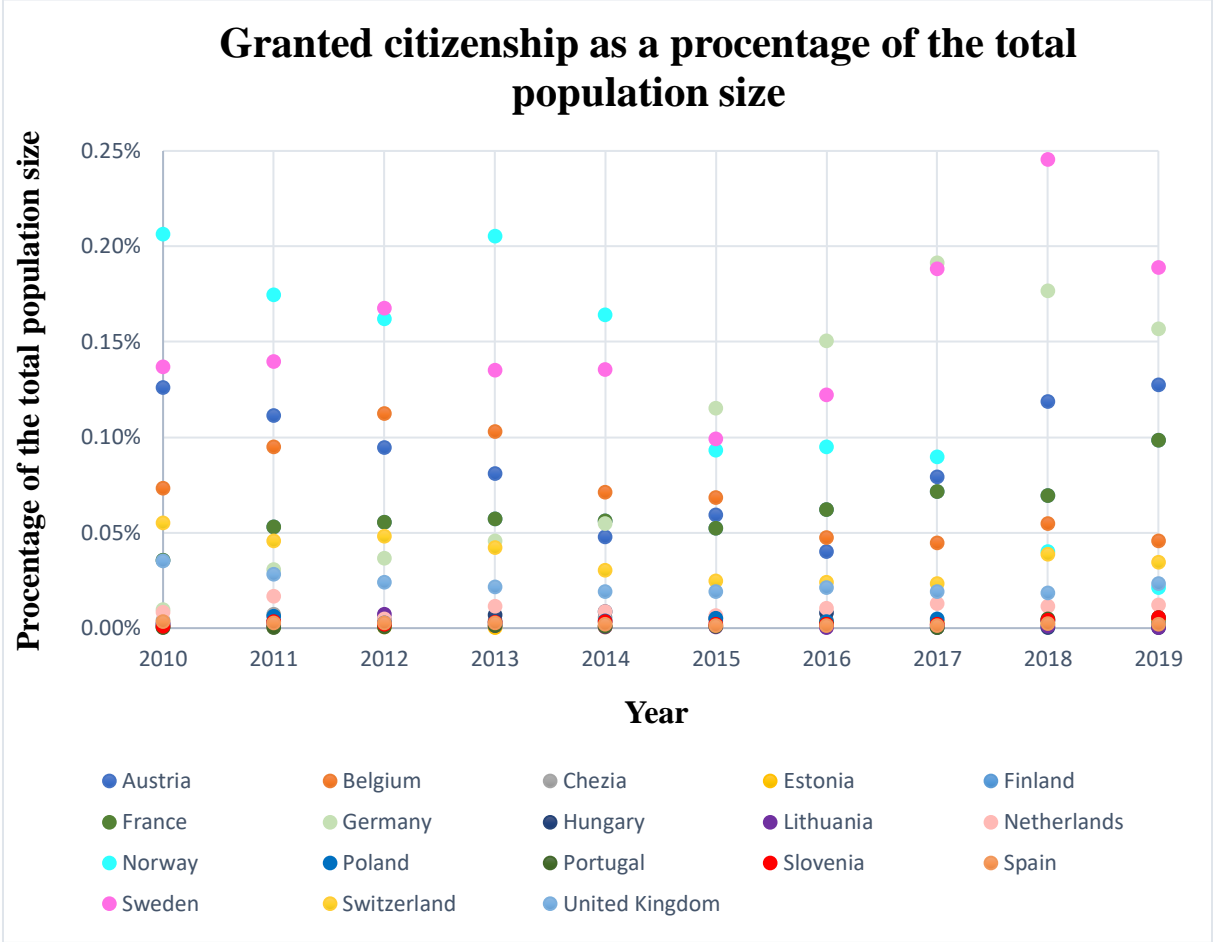
The values in table 1 are from Eurostat and shows the time period 2010-2019. There was no available population data on Ireland, so it is excluded here. There was no population data for the year 2019, so I made an estimate based on earlier years.

Immigrants

An immigrant in this thesis is understood as a person that moves to a different country for a permanent resident and seek citizenship in order to become a legal member in that state. In order to examine domestic preferences and opinions regarding immigrants, I am using a question from European Social Survey that measures citizens´ attitudes towards allowing immigrants to come and live in the recipient's country. The question doesn't specify the reason the immigrants immigrates and will therefore not be elaborated on in this thesis. The main focus will be on attitudes towards allowing immigrants from countries outside Europe.

2.2 Theory: Liberal Intergovernmentalism

"Liberal Intergovernmentalism" is associated with liberal international relations (IR) theory and is developed by Andrew Moravcsik. In the late 1990s Moravcsik argued that liberal IR theory should be understood as an equal alternative to realism and institutionalism. Realism and institutionalism have been the dominating schools of thought in international relations theory (Moravcsik, 1997, p. 513). Liberal theory has since then gained more influence and is now understood as one of the prominent theories in IR. Liberal theory highlights the state-society relationship and argues that domestic preferences affects the states behaviour in international politics.

The core assumption in liberal IR theory is that the fundamental actors in international politics are domestic individuals and private groups. These actors are mostly rational and risk-averse and seek to promote different interest and preferences. Liberal theory has a "bottom-up" understanding of politics, where individuals and private groups are understood as prior to politics (Moravcsik, 1997, p.517). The state is not the dominant actor in international politics, it simply represents the interest of domestic actors. The state represents the most dominant or the broadest preferences, since there isn't an equal influence amongst the domestic actors. This understanding of state action is contrary to what realism and institutionalism assumes, which argues that states want to maximize homogeneous understandings of national preferences (Moravcsik, 1997, p.519).

In the book *The Choice for Europe* (1998) Moravcsik presents an extensive empirical research on how the main treaties in the EU, such as the Treaty of Rome and the Treaty of Maastricht, were bargained between the EU member-states as a result of their domestic actors´ preferences. Based on this research, Moravcsik further developed his work and formulated the theory "Liberal Intergovernmentalism" (Kleine & Pollack, 2018, p. 1493). Liberal intergovernmentalism has emerged as a "baseline theory" of European integration, even though the theory and its core assumptions have been disputed (Kleine & Pollack, 2018, p. 1494). The theory builds on Intergovernmentalism and is influenced by earlier intergovernmentalist scholars, such as S. Hoffmann (Hoffmann, 1996). Intergovernmentalist scholars understood states as the main actors in international politics and emphasizes that national interest is diverse. However, "liberal" intergovernmentalism argues that states foreign policy preferences are shaped by preferences from domestic individuals and groups (Kleine & Pollack, 2018, p. 1495).

The main argument of liberal intergovernmentalism is that pluralist individuals and groups are the main actors in international politics, and that these domestic actors shape states foreign policy. Liberal intergovernmentalism assumes that in order to understand states interaction with other states, it is crucial to know the states´ preferences. State preferences are shaped by actors at the domestic level, which means that in order to understand how states act, it is necessary to investigate pluralist domestic actors and groups. This can be seen in contrast to realism, institutionalism and other theories that understand state preferences as united and fixed (Kleine & Pollack, 2018, p.1495). When governments preferences are formed by the most dominant domestic actors, these preferences are presented to other governments who then bargain for a common policy. In other words, world politics is a product of governments preferences, which again is a product of the citizens´ preferences (Hix, 2018, p. 1611).

Stages in liberal intergovernmentalism

According to liberal intergovernmentalism, the decision-making process in international politics has to be modelled as a process of three successive stages (Kleine & Pollack, 2018, p.1495). The three stages are distinct, and each stage must be explained by a unique theory. The stages are 1) Formation of state preferences, 2) Reaching a substantive bargain and 3) Creating regional institutions (Moravcsik & Schimmelfennig, 2019, p. 66-69). The three stages will be explained briefly, but the main focus in this thesis is the first stage.

Stage 1) The first stage in the decision-making process in international politics is the formation of state preferences. According to liberal intergovernmentalism, these preferences are created by domestic actors in the state. The principal actors in international politics is consequently individuals and private groups. The fundamental premise in liberal intergovernmentalism is that domestic actors are in constant competition with each other in order to gain influence over the state. Domestic individuals and groups have different issue-specific interest and preferences. The various preferences are competing for gaining influence over the state because the "winning" preferences are the ones that become the dominant preference and get to define the states goal in foreign policy (Kleine & Pollack 2018, p. 1496).

Liberal intergovernmentalism predicts that if the domestic actors are indifferent about an issue, the government will consider the economic interests articulated by the most dominant groups in the state. If the domestic actors are highly committed to an issue, liberal

intergovernmentalism theory argues that the government will try to represent the interest that most actors can agree upon (Hix, 2018, p.1600). The theory predicts that governments represent its citizens opinions if the citizens find the issue highly prominent. National preferences among the various states are rarely identical, which leads to the next stage in the decision making process (Moravcsik & Schimmelfennig, 2019, p. 66).

Stage 2) States bargain to reach collective agreements, since their national preferences isn't identical. Liberal intergovernmentalism uses a bargaining theory in order to explain the substantive policies that emerges when states with different national preferences negotiates. In order to achieve cooperation for mutual benefits, the states have to coordinate their state preferences, simultaneously as they decide how the gains of the cooperation are distributed among them. The outcome of the negotiations depends on the states relative bargaining power. In an EU context the member-states have asymmetrical interdependence, since they have different levels of bargaining power. This leads to an uneven distribution of benefits from the negotiations (Moravcsik & Schimmelfennig, 2019, p. 67).

Stage 3) In the final stage, states create or adjust regional institutions to commit to the outcomes of the agreements. At this stage, liberal intergovernmentalism uses a "regime theoretical" approach, where international institutions are seen as instruments that help states cooperate and reach collective outcomes and enforce existing agreements. The regional institutions create a "space" where the states can gain information about each other's strategies and goals (Moravcsik & Schimmelfennig, 2019, p. 69).

Criticism of liberal intergovernmentalism

The core assumptions in liberal intergovernmentalism theory have been criticist, even though the theory is understood by many as "the" theory of European integration (Kleine & Pollack, 2018, p. 1494). Following will I shortly present some of that criticism by looking at each of the stages in the model. The first stage concerning formation of state preferences has been criticized by post-functionalist scholars who argues that as the EU has become more politicized, domestic preferences are no longer solely issue-specific, but is rather shaped by broad movements that are identity-based. The second stage regarding the bargain process has been criticized by supranationalist who argues that member states also has to bargain with supranational actors, such as the European Court of Justice and the Commission and the European Parliament. Liberal intergovernmentalism predicts that the bargain process is only

between states, which supranationalist argues is a simplification of reality. The third stage concerning the member states role in creating institutions have been criticized by historical institutionalist who argues that there are other factors that also affect the creation of institutions, such as unintended consequences and path-dependent developments (Kleine & Pollack, 2018, p.1501).
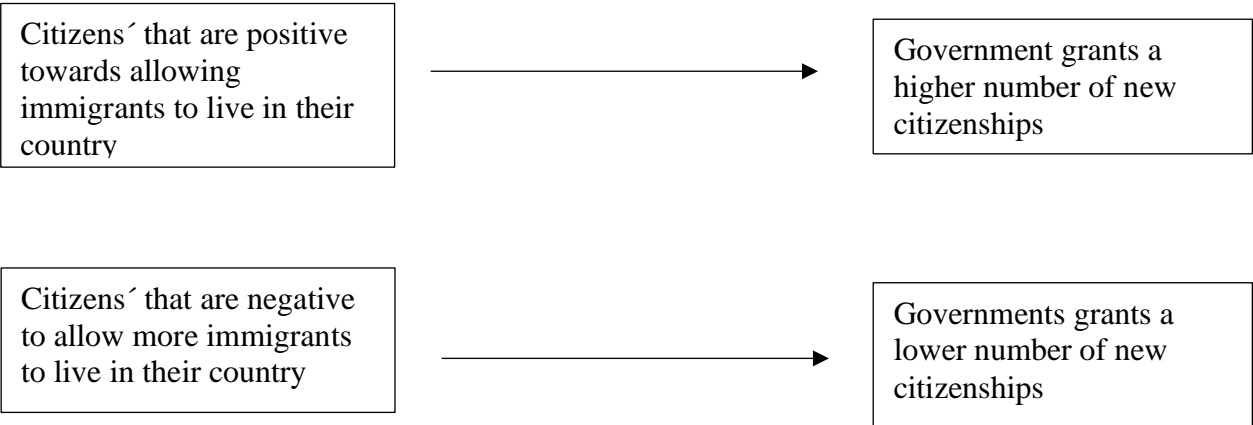
To summarize, liberal intergovernmentalism is a theory in international relations that emphasizes the role of domestic and private groups in shaping states´ foreign policy. According to the theory, there are three stages in the decision-making process of international politics, but the focus in this thesis is the first stage. Stage 1 is used as a foundation for the research question and the hypothesis in this thesis. The first stage is presumably the most fundamental and explain how national preferences are established.

2.3 Hypothesis

The hypothesis is based on the assumption of national preference formation in liberal intergovernmentalism. The theory argues that state preferences are shaped by the preferences of domestic actors and reflects the inhabitants´ opinions if the issue is close to them. I make an assumption that immigration is a salient issue for most people as it effects society as a whole. The data-material covers a time frame where immigration questions was highly present in the European countries, so the recipient would arguably have an opinion regarding immigration policy.

My hypothesis is:

> H: *Citizens´ attitudes on allowing immigrants to live in one's country increases the actual number of new citizenships granted by a government*

Citizens´ that are positive towards allowing immigrants to live in their country	→	Government grants a higher number of new citizenships

Citizens´ that are negative to allow more immigrants to live in their country	→	Governments grants a lower number of new citizenships

Related to the assumption in liberal intergovernmentalism, I expect to find a positive correlation between attitudes that are positive towards allowing immigrants with the number of new granted citizenship. In accordance, I expect to find a negative correlation between attitudes that are negative allowing more immigrants with the actual number of granted citizenships. Liberal intergovernmentalism has been used to explain how the EU member-states act, and Moravcsik and Schimmelfennig (2019) found that variations in national preferences between the EU member states partly explain the mixed results in the European Migrant crises. The other two stages further explain why the European Union struggled to create a cohesive strategy (Moravcsik & Schimmelfennig, 2019, p.74). From this it is plausible to assume that there will be a similar correlation with my data on the actual number of granted citizenship and the citizens´ attitudes towards immigrants.

3. Method

I am using quantitative method to see if there is a correlation between the number of new citizenships granted and the attitudes towards allowing immigrant to live in one's country. I want to examine if citizens´ attitudes at the domestic level affects the governments´ decision on the actual number of granted citizenships at the national level. I use regression analysis to see if there is a statistical association between the dependent variable and the independent variable, and also to control for GDP per capita, population size, total unemployment rate and liberal democracy index (V-DEM). The data material is from European Social Survey (ESS), V-DEM, Eurostat and the World Bank. The statistical software package Stata is used to analyse the statistical correlation between the dependent and the independent variable.

3.1 Data material

The dependent variable is gathered from Eurostat and shows the number of granted citizenships in each country every year. The main independent variable is from European Social Survey and shows the attitudes towards immigrants. European Social Survey (ESS) is a cross-national survey that are conducted every other year. The survey measures attitudes, social structures and beliefs in European countries. The survey selects individuals by strict random probability methods, and ESS asks a sample of 1500-3000 individuals depending on the country's population size. The samples are representative for people 15 years old and over who live in a private household in each participating country (ESS, n.d.). This analysis uses

ESS round 4-9 (2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018). The following 19 countries are chosen; Austria, Belgium, Czechia, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom[1]. These countries are chosen since they are associated with or members in the EU[2], and were included in almost all of the ESS rounds[3].

Before the regression analysis can be done, the data-material must be prepared. I am using panel data or longitudinal data since I am measuring the same variables over time (Skog, 1998, p.71). There are to main techniques to analyse longitudinal data; fixed effects and random effects. To decide which technique would be most suitable, I ran a Hausman test in Stata and found that random effect was consistent. The analysis studies 19 different countries over a time period of 12 years (2008-2019), which means that the total number of observations at each variable is 228. The different datasets were merged in order to get the variables into one dataset. I am using time fixed effects to account for common trends across the countries, so that any common tendencies don't affect the dependent variable. By using time fixed effects the correlation between the dependent and independent variable is more precise and robust since common time-specific shocks are held constant. The standard errors are clustered by countries so that the analysis treat observations across countries as independent but treat observations within countries as dependent. This is done because attitudes presumably are similar within countries but not necessarily across.

3.2 Independent variable

The independent variable is a variable from European Social Survey round 4-9 that measures attitudes towards immigrants. The survey question used in this analysis is formulated like this; "Now some questions about people from other countries coming to live (country). Would you like to allow people from poorer countries outside Europe to come live in (country)?". The participants can choose between seven different answer alternatives. The options are: 1. Allow many, 2. Allow some, 3. Allow a few, 4. Allow none, .a. Refusal, .b. Don't know and .c. No answer. This variable is chosen since it measures attitudes towards allowing or not

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[1] United Kingdom was a member in the EU until January 2020 and is therefore included here, since the data material covers the time period 2008-2019

[2] Norway and Switzerland are not fully EU-members, but are both associated with EU through the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), the Schengen Area and the European Single Market

[3] Austria did not participate in round 6 (2012), and Lithuania, Portugal, Spain and Sweden did not participate in round 9 (2018)

allowing immigrants from poorer countries to live in one's country. I chose to categories the options into two main groups; "allow" and "not allow". The group "allow" consist of the two options "allow many" and "allow some", and the group "not allow" consist of the options "allow a few" and "allow none". To check that "allow" and "not allow" doesn't measure that same attitude-value the two variables are correlated. The correlation between "allow" and "not allow" is negatively correlated, which means that if "allow" rise, "not allow" will decrease. To avoid skewness the two groups is transformed into a logarithmic scale. The alternatives "refusal", "don't know" and "no answer" are interesting as they say something about the recipients not wanting to answer, but in order to best measure attitudes only the definite answer-categories used.

The European Social Survey is only conducted every other year so in order to get numbers on every year the numbers are interpolated. The estimate is based on the known data points before and after the missing value. It is impossible to interpolate the last year in the dataset since the last observation was performed 2018 and it there are no data from 2020. The desired number of observations is 228, but Stata is only able to create 199 observation since some of the missing values couldn't be interpolated based on the available data. This means that there are 29 missing observations in this dataset. The number of observations is illustrated in table 1.

3.3 Dependent variable

The dependent variable is a variable from Eurostat that measures the total number of citizenships that are granted to immigrants every year in various countries (European Commission, 05.05.2020). To best suit the question related to the independent variable the data selection is adjusted so that the data only measures people coming from countries outside of Europe. The total number of observations possible is 228. In this dataset there are 190 available observations which means that there are 38 missing values. This dataset only has available data from the year 2010 until 2019, which means that each country has missing values in 2008 and 2009, which equals 38 missing values. The variable is transformed into a logarithmic scale in order to make the data more comprehensible and to avoid skewness.

3.4 Control variables

The control variables in this analysis is GDP per capita, total population size, total unemployment rate, liberal democracy index and migrant stock. These variables are chosen as they can capture important factors in a country, which might affect the result of the analysis. Adding control variables can make the model more realistic, since it controls for other variables and also controls for a spurious correlation. A spurious correlation is an allegedly causation between the dependent and the independent variables due to an unseen factor (Ringdal 2012: 501). The data is collected from the World Bank, V-DEM and Eurostat.

Gross domestic product (GDP) per capita

Gross domestic product is an important indicator that measures economic activity in a country. The variable for GDP per capita is from the World Bank and measures the GDP per capita in constant 2010 US dollars (World Bank, 2019). I make an assumption that a high GDP have a positive impact on citizens´ attitudes towards allowing immigrants to live in one's country, since people in richer countries presumably are more satisfied with their economic situation and are more open to help others than inhabitants that live in countries with a lower GDP. There are 198 available observations, which means that there are 30 missing values. Each country has a missing value in 2019, and there is no available data on Ireland for any of the years. In order to avoid skewness in the data, the variable is transformed into a logarithmic scale.

Population size

The total population variable is a control variable gathered from the World Bank that measure the annual population size in each country (World Bank, 2019). Population size is chosen as a control variable, since it can capture a difference in attitudes between countries with a small population and countries with a bigger population. I make an assumption that citizens´ from countries with a big population presumably will be more willing to allow immigrants to live in their country as they already live in a country with many inhabitants. There are 198 available observations. The missing values derives from the missing data on Ireland and the missing data on each country in the year 2019. The variable is transformed into a logarithmic scale to avoid skewness.

Unemployment rate

The total unemployment rate represents the annual number of people between 15 and 74 years old who are unemployed as a percentage of the total labour force. The unemployment rate can be used as an indicator of the wealth of the economy in a country (European Commission, 01.04.2020). I make an assumption that a high unemployment rate will affect the citizens´ attitudes towards allowing immigrants negatively, as the inhabitants will fear for their own work situation and don't want to allow more people to get citizenships. The data is gathered from Eurostat. There are 216 available observations, which means that there are 12 missing values. There are no available data on Ireland, so all the missing values came from non-available numbers on Ireland.

Liberal democracy index

The liberal democracy index is gathered from a dataset collected from the Varieties of Democracy data project (V-DEM). This is a multidimensional dataset that measures different types of democracy. This analysis uses the variable "v2x-libdem" which measures to what extent the ideal of liberal democracy is achieved. The variable is on a scale is from 0-1, where 0 is low and 1 is high (V-DEM, 2020). I make an assumption that citizens´ living in countries close to the ideal of liberal democracy are more willing to allow immigrants to live in their country, than inhabitants that scores lower on the liberal democracy index. Liberal democracies emphasize human rights and the responsibility to protect every human person, so it's plausible to believe that countries scoring high on the liberal democracy index are more willing to allow immigrants. There are 216 available observations. There are no available data from Ireland, which explains the 12 missing values.

Migrant stock

The migrant stock variable is gathered from the World Bank. It shows the percentage of the population in a country that are foreign born (World Bank, 2019). Migrant stock is a control variable that can control for attitudes towards immigrants over time. This control variable is used to test the assumption in liberal intergovernmentalism that national preferences derives from domestic preferences and not the shape of society. The migrant stock variable can strengthen or weaken the assumption in the theory. I make an assumption that the size of the migrant stock will negatively affect the attitudes towards allowing immigrants, since the citizens´ might fear integration problems. There are only available data every fifth year, so I

interpolate the missing values in order to have annual data. There are no available data from Ireland, so there are 12 missing values.

3.5 Table 1: Descriptive statistics

Variables	Observations	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Citizenships	190	9562.868	22954.75	0	158085
Citizenships, log	190	6.99199	2.662616	0	11.97089
Allow immigrants	199	937.4196	350.8371	90	1963
Allow immigrants, log	199	6.753932	.4764479	4.49981	7.58229
Not allow immigrants	199	943.9397	366.0552	187	1830
Not allow, log	199	6.756242	.4694753	5.231109	7.512071
GDP per capita	198	38691.21	20874.38	11534.91	92077.58
GDP per capita, log	198	10.41044	.5706088	9.353133	11.43039
Population, total	198	22100000	24700000	1314545	82900000
Population, total, log	198	16.27979	1.166215	14.089	18.23322
Unemployment rate, %	216	7.715579	4.120523	1.933	26.094
Liberal democracy index	216	.796625	.0787132	.385	.886
Migrant stock	216	11.4177	6.23025	1.555217	31.69511

Table 1 shows the summary statistics for each variable; namely, the number of observations, the mean, the standard deviation and minimum- and maximum values for the various variables.

4. Analysis

I am using multivariate regression analysis to examine the statistical association between the number of new citizenships granted and citizens´ attitudes towards allowing immigrants to come into and live in one's country. My hypothesis expects that attitudes that are positive towards allowing immigrants should be positively correlated with the number of actual citizenships granted, and that attitudes that are negative towards allowing greater immigration should be negatively associated with the number of citizenships granted. The two hypotheses are grounded in liberal intergovernmentalist theory. The theory argues that domestic

preferences are the leading factor in a state's foreign policy (Kleine & Pollack, 2018, p. 1495). The regression analysis shows that there is a statistically significant association between citizens´ attitudes towards allowing immigrants and the number of granted citizenships (model 1), and not allowing immigrants and granted citizenships (model 2). Even after adding several control variables, model 1 remains significant. There is less robust support for model 2 because its effect is not significant when control variables are added.

4.1 Result of the linear regression analysis

Table 2 shows the statistical correlation between the independent variables "allow" and "not allow" and the dependent variable "citizenships". Model 1 in table 2 shows that "allow" has a significant correlation with citizenships on the 1 % level. The coefficient is positive, which means that one unit increase in the independent variable increases the dependent variable by roughly 1,69 units. The between R-square shows that the explains 35% of the variation in the dependent variable. It is however difficult to interpret correctly what one unit increase will mean on the independent variable since the variable is converted to a logarithmic scale.

Model 2 in table 2 shows that "not allow" has a significant correlation with citizenships on 5% level. The coefficient is negative, which means that one unite increase on the independent variable decrease the dependent variable by -1,03 units. The R-square between is 0,0925 which means that the model explains 9,25% of the variation in the dependent variable. Since the variables is converted to a logarithmic scale it is difficult to interpret correctly what one unit increase will mean on the independent variable. Both models are statistically significant, and I can discard my null hypothesis and generalize the results to the population.

4.2 Table 2: Regression of the dependent variable and independent variables

Variables	(1) Model 1	(2) Model 2
Allow (log)	1,69***	
	(0,61)	
Not allow (log)		- 1,03**
		(0,61)
Constant	-4.56	13,75***
Observations	161	161
R-sq (between)	0,3494	0,0925

Robust standard errors are in parenthesis

Significance level: *** p<0.01, **p<0,05, *p<0,1

In table 3, the control variables are included. As seen there, the statistically significant correlation between number of citizenships and "not allow" immigrants disappear. The effect of "allow" has become less significant and is now only significant on a 10% level, instead of a 1% level. The correlation between GDP per capita and population size are statistically significant with the dependent at 1 % level in both model 1 and 2 in table 3. This suggest that richer countries and countries that are larger, independently increase the number of citizenships granted. Unemployment rate and the liberal democracy index are not statistically significant, and do not explain the variation in the dependent variable. The R-square has increased and is now 86,74% in model 1 and 85,48% in model 2. The increase in R-square is presumably a result of more significant variables.

4.3 Table 3: Dependent variable, main independent variables and control variables

Variables	(1) Model 1	(2) Model 2
Allow (log)	0,91**	
	(0,41)	
Not allow (log)		-0,65
		(0,46)
GDP per capita (log)	1,94***	1,89***
	(0,50)	(0,59)
Population size (log)	1,24***	1,39***
	(0,15)	(0,13)
Unemployment rate %	-0,03	-0,02
	(0,05)	(0,06)
Liberal democracy index	1,41	4,01
	(3,68)	(4,10)
Constant	-40,52***	-34,13***
Observations	152	152
R-sq (between)	0,8674	0,8548

Standard errors are in parenthesis

Significance level: *** p<0,01, ** p<0,05, * p<0,1

To see if the results in table 3 were driven by the shape of society, or a current preference, the migrant stock is included in table 4. Migrant stock is not statistically significant, and there is a small decrease in the R-square in both model 1 and 2 in table 4. There is no statistically significant correlation between the share of the migrant stock and the independent variable, so the migrant stock does not explain the variation in the dependent variable independently.

4.4 Table 4: Dependent variable, independent variables and migrant stock

Variables	(1) Model 1	(2) Model 2
Allow (log)	0,92**	
	(0,36)	
Not allow (log)		-0,67
		(0,49)
GDP per capita (log)	2,15***	2,20***
	(0,71)	(0,78)
Population size (log)	1,21***	1,35***
	(0,14)	(0,15)
Unemployment rate %	-0,02	-0,00
	(0,05)	(0,06)
Liberal democracy index	1,72	4,24
	(3,77)	(4,29)
Migrant stock (log)	-0,03	-0,04
	(0,04)	(0,04)
Constant	-42,37***	-36,49***
Observations	152	152
R-sq (between)	0,8572	0,8402

Standard errors are in parenthesis

Significance level: *** p<0,01, ** p<0,05, * p<0,1

4.5 Discussion of the results

The regression analysis suggests that the results are consistent, but it's only the independent variable "allow" that are statistically significant throughout the analysis. The hypothesis in model 1 can be accepted in all three tables (table 2,3,4) There is a statistically significant correlation between the independent variable "allow" and the dependent variable "citizenship", which remains significant when control variables are added. Model 1 in table 2 shows that the independent variable "allow" explains roughly 34% of the variance in the dependent variable. When control variables are added in table 3 explains the model approximately 85% of the variance.

There is no statistically significant correlation between the independent variable "not allow" in the analysis, which indicates that the hypothesis in model 2 must be rejected. Model 2 in table 2 shows that "not allow" explain around 9% of the variance in the dependent variable, and after adding control variables in table 3 the variable explain roughly 84%. This is however not statistically significant and cannot be used to explain the variance in the dependent variable. It is interesting that model 1 is significant throughout the analysis, whereas model 2 is not. I will discuss this further in the conclusion.

The effect of the models can be interpreted by looking at the coefficients in the independent variables. The coefficient in "allow" is positive throughout the analysis and suggest that as the value in "allow" increase, the dependent variable also increases. A standard deviation increase in the independent variable "allow" increases the dependent variable by 29% of the standard deviation of the dependent variable in model 1 in table 2. In table 3 and 4 increases the standard deviation in "allow" the dependent variable by roughly 13% of the standard derivation of the dependent variable. The coefficient in "not allow" is negative in all tables, and suggest that an increase in the independent variable, decreases the value in the dependent variable. As previously mentioned, "not allow" is not statistically significant and does not explain the variance in the dependent variable.

GDP per capita and population size is statistically significant in both model 1 and 2 and explains the variance in the dependent variable. GDP per capita shows that people in richer countries are more positive towards allowing immigrants, presumable because these countries can afford to integrate a higher number of immigrants. Population size shows that people in countries with a bigger population is more positive towards immigrants, because allowing a greater number of immigrants might seem to have a smaller impact on their life, than for people living in countries with a small population.

It is interesting that three out of five control variables in my model isn't statistically significant. I expected that unemployment rate would affect the citizens´ attitudes towards immigrants and that countries with a higher score on the liberal democracy index would be more positive towards allowing immigrants. Neither of these variables can be used to explain the variance in the dependent variable. The migrant stock variable which is added in table 4 is not statistically significant, which strengthens the assumption in liberal intergovernmentalism

about domestic preferences. From this, it seems plausible that preferences are mostly due to current preferences and not historical aspects related to a large migrant stock, which would have been captured by the already existing stock of migrants.

4.6 Possible weaknesses

This thesis examines the first stage in a 3-stage process. By reducing the analysis to only focus on the first stage important aspects with the theory may have disappeared. Stage 2 and 3 in the decision-making process are important in order to capture the whole explanation of states foreign policy. It could have been interesting to follow all the successive stages, in order to test the main assumptions in the theory more adequately. Liberal intergovernmentalism has been criticized for overlooking important aspects in the decision-making process and for simplifying reality. This thesis uses solely the prediction from liberal intergovernmentalism and overlooks the criticism from other scholars. As mentioned in the theory chapter, stage 1 have been criticized for reducing domestic preferences to something issue-specific, and not a broad movement. The analysis could have been more robust if the analysis examined the criticism of the first stage as well.

The ESS survey question had 7 different answer options. I chose to focus on the most definite answer categories and did not include the somehow unclear options; "refusal", "don't know" and "no answer". There were few respondents in the unclear categories, so I chose to exclude them in my analysis. It might be a possibility that "not allow" would have been a better group if it constituted of "allow none", "refusal", "don't know" and "no answer", instead of "allow a few" and "allow none". The option "allow a few" is arguably neither positive nor negative towards allowing immigrants, whereas "allow none" and the more unclear options are positioned more negatively. If the groups I created had been sorted differently, they could arguably better capture the attitudes that are negative towards greater immigration. The "not allow" group might also have become statistically significant if the group were able to capture the negative attitudes more precisely.

I made an assumption in this thesis, that immigration was a salient issue for the recipient in the European Social Survey, due to the recent immigration debates. However, if the inhabitants were indifferent regarding immigration, liberal intergovernmentalism would assume that the government would create policy strictly from economic interest. GDP per

capita is statistically significant in the models and suggest that even though the theory argues that it is domestic preferences that shape governments foreign policy, economic power is also part of the explanation. Another possible weakness with the analysis is the understanding of the question from ESS. The survey question asks the recipient question about their attitudes towards immigrants from poorer countries outside of Europe. However, the dependent variable doesn't directly account for people from poorer countries, only people with citizenship outside Europe. This might create a margin of error and lower the validity of the data-material (Ringdal, 2016, p.96). To illustrate; an American citizen will fall into the category of citizenship outside Europe, but an American citizen isn't necessarily poorer than a European citizen. It is assumed in this analysis that *most* people outside of Europe that seek citizenship are people in need of asylum and protection, and thereby come from countries that are relatively poorer than European countries.

It also has to be taken into consideration that there might be some human errors in the analysis. The different variables and datasets were manually added in an excel file which might have led to an error in the data-material. In addition, the data-material did not always have the desired number of available observations. I looked at data on 19 EU countries, since these countries were present in almost all of the ESS rounds. It would have been even more interesting to examine all of the EU member states in order to get a more adequate result. There has been missing values in all of my variables, and multiple variables lacks data on Ireland. In order to get more values, some variables have been interpolated. This is arguable better than no data, but it allows for a margin of error as it doesn't capture the exact number for the missing data. It would strengthen the validity of the analysis if there had been more available data. More available data would also increase the possibility to generalize the findings.

5. Conclusion

One of the more prominent theories which seek to explain the foreign policies of EU member states is based on liberal intergovernmentalism. In this thesis, I have examined the correlation between the number of new citizenships granted and the citizens´ attitudes towards allowing immigrants to come and live in their country. In relation to liberal intergovernmentalism, I expected that there would be a correlation between citizens´ attitudes and the number of new citizenships granted, and that positive attitudes would positively correlate with a higher

number of citizenship whereas negative attitudes would negatively correlate with a lower number of citizenships. The research question is grounded in liberal intergovernmentalism and the first stage of the decision-making process. The first stage examines how domestic preferences affects the national preferences formation in a state. The regression analysis supports the assumption in the theory and shows a statistically significant correlation between the number of new citizenships granted, and attitudes that are positive towards allowing a greater number of immigrants. The hypothesis in model 1 can be approved, and the model explains roughly 85% of the variance in the dependent variable when control variables are included. Model 2 is not statistically significant when control variables is included, so the hypothesis in model 2 must be disproved.

The results from the regression analysis shows that model 2 explains 85% of the variance in the dependent variable. However, there are other factors that can explain the variance in the dependent variable that isn't included in my analysis. Even though the analysis supports the assumption in liberal intergovernmentalism that domestic preferences shape the governments´ preferences, there are still other factors that can explain the dependent variable. Elections or changes in government might affect the number of citizenships and would have been interesting to examine further in another analysis. Still, the result from the regression analysis in model 1 are quite robust and explain a relatively high percentage of the variance in the dependent variable.

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