

Immigrants' Attitudes Towards Immigration: Assimilation towards Majority Views or Ethnoracial Polarization?

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Abstract: European societies are becoming increasingly diverse as a result of past and present immigration. After decades of research on attitudes towards immigration among the ethnic majority, scholarly interest has recently shifted to investigate these attitudes among immigrants themselves. Drawing on recent survey data from France, *Trajectories and Origins 2* (TeO2), this article advances the existing literature by investigating the role of migration-related as well as ethnoracial variables in shaping attitudes towards immigration. While there is some evidence of assimilation towards majority attitudes, our findings suggest that ethnoracial factors trump migration status and other individual-level factors in shaping prejudice. Ethnoracial minorities (namely, those of African and other non-European origin) are more likely to support immigration compared to the French majority and those of European origins net of other factors. Relatedly, among immigrant-origin groups, ethnoracial discrimination is associated with greater tolerance. In contrast, among the French majority, ethnoracial identity and perceived discrimination are related to greater prejudice. The findings suggest the solidification of an emerging cleavage based on race/ethnicity that is unlikely to be resolved by immigrant integration over time.

Introduction

The issue of immigration in Europe has increased in political salience since the 1980s, providing opportunities for far-right, xenophobic parties to move from the outskirts to the mainstream of European political systems (Green-Pedersen & Otjes, 2019; Sobolewska & Ford, 2020). Far-right leaders galvanize support on the basis of anti-immigration platforms typically aiming at low-education, blue collar, white natives who feel threatened by demographic change and the perceived economic competition engendered by newcomers (Ford & Goodwin, 2010; Golder, 2016; Oesch & Rennwald, 2018). More recently, mainstream center-right parties have hardened their stance toward immigrants and ethnic minorities in order to gain votes from the far right (Abou-Chadi & Krause, 2021). The increased importance of the issue of immigration has been accompanied by intense research in political science on the factors shaping public attitudes toward immigrants as well as their sociodemographic, psychological, ideological, and spatial substrates (e.g. Gallego & Pardos-Prado, 2014; Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014; Maxwell, 2019; Valentino et al., 2019; Valentino & Kim, 2022).

At the same time, European societies have become increasingly ethnically diverse both due to rises in international migration and the growing demographic of children and grandchildren of immigrants.¹ Despite these trends, the vast majority of extant research on attitudes towards immigration either focuses on national populations as a whole or on the white majority. This raises pressing questions. As immigrant origin populations grow fast in number, understanding the nature and substrates of attitudes among them grows evermore important. Furthermore, as the issue of immigration becomes increasingly important, the question of whether European societies are becoming politically divided on the issue of

¹ <https://worldmigrationreport.iom.int/wmr-2022-interactive/>

immigration across ethnoracial lines or whether assimilation diminishes differences between immigrant-origin populations and natives in these attitudes is crucial.

Only recently have a few burgeoning studies focused on the attitudes of immigrant-origin populations themselves. These findings suggest that immigrants are broadly more likely to be supportive of immigration compared to natives (Just & Anderson, 2015; Neureiter & Schulte, 2022; Solodoch, 2021). Yet, while groundbreaking, this research rarely extends beyond the first generation of migrants to identify whether immigrant descendants - the second and even third generations - assimilate towards majority views. Extant studies also only rarely attend to the role of race/ethnicity in shaping attitudes towards immigration, above and beyond individual-level characteristics and migration factors. Further, current research seldom explores whether the range of mechanisms identified in the broader literature on immigrant attitudes, such as the role of socioeconomic status, operate in similar ways for the majority and immigrant-origin populations.

In this article, we draw on the case of France to investigate attitudes toward immigration among immigrants, descendants of immigrants, and the majority. The aim is threefold. First, following the assimilation literature, we investigate whether tolerance towards immigration varies by immigrant generation and other key dimensions of integration. Second, applying theoretical perspectives on segmented assimilation and ethnic solidarity, we explore the extent to which support for immigration is related to ethnoracial groups, as well as ethnoracial identity and perceived discrimination. Third, we explore whether the traditional predictors of attitudes operate in similar ways for all ethnoracial groups, or whether some maintain a distinct attitudinal profile regardless of these factors.

Our empirical approach responds to three important challenges impacting research on ethnic minority political behavior. The first concerns a well-reported bias in opt-in polls that underrepresent those with limited language skills, who come predominantly from the most

discriminated minorities (Martin, 2018). This is an important issue that seriously undermines representativeness (Martin, 2018). Second, even large-scale surveys typically include only a small number of minority respondents in their samples, leading to a lack of statistical power which may produce false null findings. Third, existing studies primarily focus on first generation immigrants, and more rarely include the second or third generations, thus preventing scholars from identifying assimilation patterns across multiple generations. In order to address these issues, we test our hypotheses drawing on the *Trajectories and Origins* 2 (TeO2) survey. This is a large and rich study of the immigrant-origin population in France, specifically designed to capture under-represented, statistically small groups and to overcome the specific impediments to data collection among immigrants and their descendants (Beachemin et al. 2023). By reporting parental and grand-parental migrant status, TeO2 also offers the rare opportunity to explore assimilation in political attitudes across three generations of migrants. The survey is thus a valuable source to investigate the role of migration-related and ethnoracial mechanisms in political attitude formation.

The findings document the existence of a mechanism of solidarity toward immigrants among ethnoracial minorities. While there is some evidence of assimilation towards majority attitudes, ethnoracial factors trump migration status and other integration-related factors in shaping prejudice. Ethnoracial minorities - namely, those of African and other non-European origin - are more likely to support immigration compared to the French majority and European origins net of other factors. Relatedly, among immigrant-origin groups, ethnoracial discrimination is associated with greater tolerance. In contrast, among the French majority, ethnoracial identity and perceived group discrimination are related to greater prejudice. These findings are important for understanding political competition in France and other Western European countries with a history of mass migration, and point to the solidification of an

emerging cleavage based on race/ethnicity that is unlikely to be resolved by immigrant integration over time.

Theoretical Background

Assimilation Towards Majority Views

Extant research documents that immigrants tend to have more favorable attitudes towards immigration than natives (Just & Anderson, 2015; Neureiter & Schulte, 2022). The mechanism is relatively straightforward: Immigration is a particularly stressful event that involves both the pre-migration triggers that motivate the decision to emigrate, the conditions of migrating, as well as the post-migration stressors associated with practical and psychological aspects of adjustment to the host country (e.g. Ritsner et al., 2001; Thapa et al., 2009). Immigrants have personal experiences of this psychological distress and are more likely to understand the decision to migrate as well as to feel close to and empathize with newcomers. This in turn makes immigrants more supportive of immigration compared to natives and native-born second-generation immigrants (Just & Anderson, 2015; Neureiter & Schulte, 2022).

However, from an assimilation perspective, as immigrants integrate into the host society, their tolerance towards immigration may change. Sociologists have long been interested in how immigrants and their offspring integrate culturally, socially and politically into host societies (Gordon 1964, Alba and Nee 2003). Traditional assimilation frameworks predict that as immigrants settle durably in the host society, acquire citizenship and integrate on other dimensions, they will come to resemble the mainstream in their political attitudes and behavior (Branton, 2007; Maxwell 2010a; Maxwell 2010b). Time in the host country is a key mechanism that has been found to influence this convergence towards the mainstream (Alba and Nee 2003). Immigrants with long-term settlement and successive immigrant

generations should, from this perspective, resemble natives in their political attitudes, and hence be less supportive of immigration compared to recent migrants. This leads to our first hypothesis:

H1: Over time, immigrant origin groups will assimilate to majority views. As immigrant length of stay increases, tolerance towards immigration will decline (a). Support for immigration will likewise be stronger among first generation immigrants compared to second and third generations (b).

The assimilation perspective further stresses the role of national belonging in shaping immigrants' attitudes (Branton, 2007; Just & Anderson, 2015). Immigrants' attachment to and identification with the host country is expected to increase over time in a process of "identificational assimilation" (Gordon 1964). This entails a shift in social identity towards the national in-group and away from immigrant outgroups. The epitome of this process is the acquisition of citizenship, which signifies a psychological attachment to the host country either in place of or alongside the sending country (Just & Anderson, 2015). Research has found that the acquisition of citizenship is negatively associated with attitudes toward immigration among immigrants (Just & Anderson, 2015).

Apart from naturalization, the salience of the immigrant/native boundary could be heightened among any immigrants who feel they have "successfully" integrated into the national community; considering themselves to be legitimate national members, they may thus perceive themselves in opposition to newcomers. Moreover, rejecting immigration could be a means by which immigrants prove their national belonging, even satisfying a psychological need to be accepted by the majority. In this sense, immigrants with a strong sense of national belonging in the host society should be more hostile to immigration. Solodoch shows, for instance, that established immigrants are opposed to newcomers who are not familiar with the host nation culture, even when they are from the same ethnic group

(2021). This process of declining tolerance with increased levels of integration further mirrors the relationship between *natives*' national belonging and immigrant attitudes: Research shows that natives with a strong attachment to their nation tend to exhibit higher in-group favoritism and hence are generally more rejecting of immigration (Sides & Citrin, 2007; Sniderman et al., 2004; Sniderman & Hagendoorn, 2009). Thus, we would expect that:

H2: Support towards immigration will decline among immigrants with citizenship (a) and strong feelings of national belonging to the host country (b).

Socioeconomic integration is another dimension of immigrant assimilation that may influence immigrants' political attitudes. As immigrants and their descendants come to achieve similar socioeconomic status positions as natives, they may adopt majoritarian political views. Among natives, ample literature points to an association between low socioeconomic status, broadly defined, and opposition to immigration. For instance, individuals working in sectors that are subject to job competition with immigrants, face wage suppression as a result of immigration, and have limited potential for intersectoral mobility are particularly hostile toward immigrants, especially during periods of economic stagnation (e.g. Dancygier & Donnelly, 2014; Pardos-Prado & Xena, 2019; Stockemer & Halikiopoulou, 2023). However, it is not just native or White populations who would be subject to competition with immigrants. Immigrants may also feel economically threatened by new immigration, and perhaps even more so than natives (Neureiter & Schulte, 2024). Indeed, as immigrants tend to be more socioeconomically disadvantaged than natives, they could be more prone to competition with newcomers in terms of jobs, benefits, housing, or other material resources. This may contribute to feelings of hostility toward new immigration as much among low-SES immigrants as among low-SES natives.

Moreover, the relationship between socioeconomic status and immigrant attitudes is also tied to education. In a recent meta-analysis, Drazanova et al. highlight education as one

of the most important individual-level variables associated with attitudes toward immigration (Drazanova et al., 2024). While this correlation is shown to be consistently positive, with higher education linked to increased tolerance, the precise mechanism behind it is a point of debate. The effect of education may be direct as attending higher education provides knowledge of and opportunities for exposure to foreign cultures and fosters norms of intergroup tolerance that transfer in the realm of immigrant attitudes (e.g. Hainmueller & Hiscox, 2010; Cavaille & Marshall, 2019). Others argue that the mechanism is socioeconomic in nature, as there is less economic competition between those from high education backgrounds and immigrants for jobs or welfare benefits, compared to those from low education backgrounds (Gerber et al., 2017). In light of the above, we anticipate that:

H3: Immigrants and their descendants with high socioeconomic status will be more supportive of immigration, similarly to the majority group.

Segmented Assimilation by Ethnoracial Groups: The Solidarity Mechanism

The hypotheses derived from the assimilation framework rest on the assumption that immigrant integration is a relatively automatic and natural process that unfolds over time. However, evidence from a range of contexts calls into question this “melting pot” or “straight line” model of integration, instead suggesting that immigrant populations may maintain distinct patterns of political attitudes and behavior regardless of integration indicators (Anderson & Just, 2015; Dancygier & Saunders, 2006; Just, 2021; Neureiter & Schultet, 2024; Sanders et al., 2014). Race/ethnicity is of central importance in understanding why this might be.

The host societies immigrants settle into are not only marked by boundaries separating immigrants and natives; they are also structured by ethnoracial inequalities that are, broadly speaking, the most disadvantageous to people perceived as non-white.

Segmented assimilation theory emphasizes how immigrants and their descendants do not integrate seamlessly into a unified “mainstream,” but get sorted into pre-existing hierarchies in the host society based on their race/ethnicity (Portes and Zhou 1993). Ethnoracial discrimination plays a key role here: not only does it forge structural barriers to integration, discrimination also has potent consequences in terms of social identity and sense of belonging. Portes and Rumbault (2001), for instance, identified patterns of “reactive ethnicity” among non-white immigrant descendants in the US, whereby instead of assimilating towards a native identity, ethnic identities persisted, notably due to the sense of exclusion generated by discrimination in the host society.

This all suggests that attitudes towards immigration will vary substantially by ethnoracial factors such as ethnoracial group, ethnoracial identity and perceived discrimination. Prior research has broadly established the importance of ethnicity for political behavior as it represents a central heuristic that helps ethnic minority citizens choose to support or oppose policies and parties (Birnir, 2007; Dawson, 1994). But the very experience of structural inequality and discrimination which ethnoracial minorities face in their daily lives likely intervenes in how they perceive newcomers. Non-white ethnoracial minorities may be more accepting to immigrants precisely on the basis that they have a shared status as an outgroup, forging solidarity bonds between them. This has been argued by a stream of social and political psychology theories. For instance, Group Empathy Theory posits that “empathy for outgroups may be triggered quite automatically by instances of racial/ethnic-based discrimination, and can therefore be impactful even when groups are in competition with each other and do not strongly co-identify” (Sirin et al., 2021). Similarly, the inclusive victim consciousness hypothesis postulates that a sense of similarity of victimization between disadvantaged groups may foster sympathy (Vollhardt et al., 2016). In sum, shared collective perceptions of disadvantage against the members of an ethnic group boost solidarity,

empathy, and feelings of linked fate with other discriminated groups, including immigrants and refugees (Craig & Richeson, 2012; Sirin et al., 2021; Vollhardt et al., 2016). Thus we anticipate that:

H4: Net of other factors, ethnoracial minorities (namely, non-European immigrant origins) will be more supportive toward immigrants compared to European immigrant origins and the majority (a). Tolerance will also be higher among individuals reporting discrimination (b) and a strong ethnoracial identity (c).

Finally, and crucially, if attitudes vary strongly by ethnoracial group due to this solidarity mechanism, the key assimilation factors identified above - immigrant length of stay and generation, citizenship and national belonging, and socioeconomic status - may have limited salience in shaping the attitudes of ethnoracial minorities. If solidarity is the driving mechanism, tolerance towards immigration would remain high among ethnoracial minorities regardless of these factors. For instance, Dawson found that among African Americans support for policies that promoted the interests of their ethnic group were unaffected by individual differences in socioeconomic status (1994). Transferring this hypothesis into the realm of ethnic minority attitudes toward immigration we would anticipate a similar pattern: Groups that are subject to systematic prejudice and marginalization may develop affinity with discriminated outgroups on the basis of experiencing common circumstances. This affinity may persist regardless of levels of assimilation. This leads to our last hypothesis :

H5: The effects of assimilation variables in shaping attitudes towards immigration will be less pronounced for ethnoracial minorities (namely, non-European immigrant origins compared to European immigrant origins).

The Case of France

France offers an ideal setting to test our hypotheses as it is a highly ethnically diverse society with a long history of migration. Migration throughout the first half of the twentieth century was primarily from Southern Europe (Italy, Spain and Portugal), followed by post-colonial migration from Africa and Southeast Asia. Currently, immigrants and their descendants are estimated to represent approximately 30% of the population (Beauchemin et al. 2023). While immigrant assimilation is a central dimension of France's colorblind Republican model of integration (Noiriel, 1988; Simon, 2015), which promotes equality between citizens and national unity over ethnic/racial differentiation, empirical evidence suggests that certain immigrants and their descendants face significant structural barriers to integration. A wide range of evidence documents ethnic and racial inequalities and discrimination in various spheres, including in the labor market (Quillian et al. 2019) and in housing and neighborhoods (McAvay and Safi 2018; McAvay 2018), which negatively impact people of African origin and Muslims in particular. Quillian et al. (2019) find that France has one of the highest labor market discrimination rates compared to other Western democracies.

In the political realm, anti-immigrant sentiment has been at the forefront of the political agenda of the far-right National Rally, formerly National Front, which has been gaining momentum since the 1980s. The far-right political leader Marine Le Pen has long emphasized the cultural and economic threat posed by immigration and advocates for policies that would restrict migrant flows and ensure a "national preference" in employment and welfare programs, excluding immigrants from certain sectors of the labor market and channelling state benefits to "natives" only. There is a well-established literature in France on the correlates of support for the far-right, highlighting in particular the role of low-SES in these attitudes (Mayer 2018; Vasilopoulos et al. 2022; Vasilopoulos and Lachat 2018). Fewer studies, however, specifically examine the political attitudes and behavior of immigrant-

origin populations. The existing evidence shows that foreign-origin citizens are less likely to be registered to vote compared to French natives, and tend to be more left-leaning in their political orientation (Brouard and Tiberj 2011; McAvay and Vasilopoulos, 2024).

Data and Methods

Data come from the survey *Trajectories and Origins 2* (TeO2) conducted on 27,181 respondents living in metropolitan France in 2019-2020 (Beauchemin et al. 2023). TeO2 was specifically designed to study the integration of immigrants and their descendants across a range of social, economic, cultural and attitudinal dimensions. The sampling strategy over-represents minority populations to have adequate sample sizes for these groups that are typically under-represented in national surveys². Survey weights are applied throughout the analysis to account for this design. The sample further includes a “majority” population - respondents with no immigrant-origin parents or grandparents - which serves as a reference category. In addition to detailed categories of immigrant origins and generations and a wide range of sociodemographic variables, TeO2 includes questions on political attitudes and experiences of discrimination, making it a valuable and unique source to test our research questions.

Dependent variable

Attitudes towards immigration is the dependent variable in all models. This is measured by a question asking respondents whether they agree with the statement that “France should be more open to immigration.”³ This is coded on a 4-point scale, ranging

² The TeO2 survey was designed to be conducted entirely using face-to-face interviews (Beauchemin et al. 2023). However, due to lockdowns during the Covid-19 pandemic, interviews for 1,733 of the 27,181 respondents were conducted over the phone. To ensure our results are not sensitive to this change in the data collection method, we ran the full analysis excluding these cases. The results do not change.

³ A second question asks respondents whether “It is better for a country if there is a diversity of customs, cultures and origins.” We considered combining these two items into a scale; however Cronbach’s alpha is too low to ensure reliability ($\alpha=0.63$). We therefore focus only on the first question as it refers explicitly to the

from “Totally agree” to “Totally disagree.” We have reverse coded the original variable so that higher values indicate greater support for immigration. Table A1 provides descriptive statistics for all variables. Immigrant-origin populations have higher tolerance (mean=2.70) compared to the French majority (mean=2.27).

Independent variables

Assimilation variables:

By including information on the country of birth and national origins of respondents, their parents, and their grandparents, TeO2 allows us to distinguish respondents by detailed immigrant generational categories. We combine this information with age at migration to create the following 6-level categorical variable: first generation immigrants who migrated after the age of 16 (G1); first generation immigrants who migrated before the age of 16 (G1.5); the French-born children of two immigrant parents (G2); the French-born children of one immigrant and one French native parent (G2.5); and the French-born grandchildren of at least one immigrant parent (G3). The final category represents the “majority” population, namely French-born respondents with no immigrant parents or grand-parents.

Citizenship and feelings of national belonging are also reported in the data. We use a dummy variable to indicate whether immigrants are naturalized French citizens (coded 1) or of foreign nationality (coded 0). As G2.5 and G3 immigrant descendants are French-born citizens, we only test the effect of citizenship for the first (G1 and G1.5) and second generations (G2). Feelings of national belonging are derived from a question asking respondents whether they agree with the statement “I feel French”, measured on a 4-point scale ranging from “Totally agree” to “Totally disagree.” We have reverse coded this variable so that higher values indicate stronger feelings of national belonging.

issue of immigration. We nonetheless replicated the analysis using the diversity question, and the main findings are largely similar. Findings may be obtained from the authors upon request.

Socioeconomic status is measured by education, household income and housing tenure. Education is a 4-level categorical variable measuring the highest degree achieved by the respondent, coded as follows: “No degree” (1); “Lower than high school (the *baccalaureate*)” (2); “High school degree (3); and “Higher than high school” (4). Income is coded in quintiles indicating the lowest incomes (Q1) to the highest incomes (Q5), including a category for unreported income. Housing tenure is coded as follows: Owner; Renter on the private market; Public housing resident; and Other.

Ethnoracial variables:

TeO2 does not include self-reported race/ethnicity in line with the colorblind approach governing public statistics in France (Simon, 2015). Instead, national origins are used as a proxy for ethnoracial group, a common strategy used in French research on migration and ethnoracial inequality (Safi 2013; Maxwell 2010b; McAvay and Vasilopoulos 2024). For respondents who are first generation immigrants (G1 and G1.5), we use their national origin; for second generation immigrants (G2 and G2.5), we use the national origin of the immigrant parent. This coding strategy results in an 8-level categorical variable distinguishing respondents according to broad regions, as follows: French overseas departments⁴ (1), North Africa (2), Sub-Saharan Africa (3), Asia (4), Turkey/Middle East (5), Southern Europe (6), Other Europe (7), Other Non-European (8). This categorization scheme is consistent with the most sizeable immigrant origin populations in France today (Beauchemin et al. 2023). We use an alternative coding scheme in analyses that include third generation immigrants (G3), as the smaller sample size for this generation does not allow for disaggregated origin categories. G3 immigrants are assigned to an ethnoracial group based on

⁴ French overseas respondents are French citizens; these respondents are nonetheless categorized with the immigrant-origin population due to the fact that they - or their parents - migrated to mainland France.

the national origin of the immigrant grandparent, distinguishing between European origins and non-European origins.

We further explore the role of ethnoracial identity and perceived discrimination in shaping attitudes towards immigration. Ethnoracial identity comes from a question asking respondents to select from a list of items⁵ that best describe themselves. We consider that the respondent has a strong ethnoracial identity when they selected “origin” and/or “skin color” to define themselves. The variable is coded 1 if those two items were selected and 0 if neither were chosen.

TeO2 provides several measurements of perceived discrimination due to ethnoracial factors. We explore the effect of personal discrimination and group discrimination. Personal discrimination captures experiences of discrimination, derived from the question “In the last five years, do you think you have experienced unequal treatment or discrimination?” to which respondents could respond “Often,” “Sometimes,” or “Never”. A follow-up question asks respondents about the perceived cause of discrimination⁶. We created a dummy from these two questions, indicating 1 if the respondent experienced discrimination “Often or Sometimes” due to skin color and/or origin and 0 if they never experienced discrimination for those reasons. Group discrimination is based on the question “Beyond your personal experience, do you think you belong to a group that experiences unequal treatment or discrimination due to origin or skin color in France today?” to which respondents could respond yes or no.

Control variables:

⁵ Besides origin and skin color, the list includes the following dimensions of identity: generation, sex, occupation or social category, educational level, neighborhood or city, disability, nationality, region of origin, religion, interests, political opinions, family situation, and other.

⁶ The following causes of discrimination are provided to respondents in a list: age, sex, health/handicap, skin color, origin/nationality, place of residence, accent, family situation, sexual orientation, religion, way of dressing, weight, physical appearance, first or last name, other, or doesn’t know.

The following variables are treated as controls in all models: gender (male/female); age; age-squared; unemployed (dummy); marital status (single/married/divorced or widowed); and number of children in the household. As the neighbourhoods that immigrants and ethnic minorities reside in likely differ from the residential contexts of the French native majority, we take additional steps to address potential geographic confounding. Specifically, we further control for two characteristics of the local environment which have been found to influence attitudes toward immigration (Vasilopoulos & McAvay, 2022): the immigrant share and the unemployment rate at the neighborhood-level⁷. The immigrant share represents the number of immigrants out of the total population of the neighborhood, while the unemployment rate is measured by the number of unemployed persons aged 15 and above out of the active population.

Models

We use linear regression to model tolerance towards immigration⁸. The first set of models (Models 1a, 1b, and 1c) focuses on the effects of assimilation variables, with three separate specifications. Model 1a is estimated on immigrant-origin respondents. Because this model includes the third generation, we use the aggregate coding of ethnoracial group distinguishing European and non-European origins. Model 1b is estimated on first and second generations only (G1, G1.5 and G2) to test the effect of citizenship (specification b). Model 1c is run on the majority population.

The second set of models (Model 2a, 2b, and 2c) focuses on the ethnoracial determinants. Here we include the disaggregated coding of ethnoracial group in 8 categories. These models also include ethnoracial identity and the two perceived discrimination

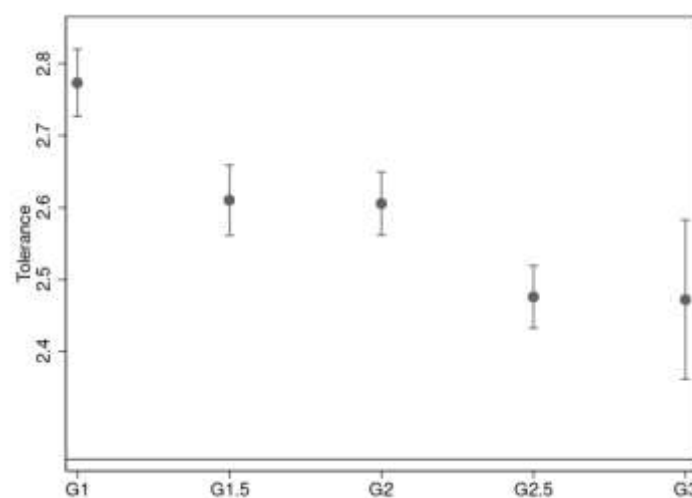
⁷ Neighborhoods refer to the IRIS scale, an infra-communal division defined by the French Census Bureau (INSEE). IRIS are roughly comparable to census tracts, with an average population size of approximately 2,000 inhabitants.

⁸ We also ran all models using ordinal logistic regression; the results are consistent with OLS estimates.

measurements. Because of generational differences, models are run separately on first generation immigrants (Model 2a), second generation immigrants (Model 2b) and the French majority (Model 2c). Finally, we use an alternative specification of Model 2, pooling first and second generation immigrants, to test the interaction between education and ethnoracial group (Model 2d).

Results

Figure 1. Predicted Tolerance Towards Immigration by Immigrant Generation



Source: Trajectories and Origins 2 (2019-2020). The graph shows point estimates and 95% confidence intervals estimated from Model 1a. For comparison purposes, the horizontal line on the y-axis represents the predicted value of tolerance for the majority net of controls derived from Model 1c.

The first set of models allows us to assess the assimilation hypotheses. Figure 1 displays support for immigration by immigrant generation from Model 1a (Table 1) net of controls. For comparison purposes, the predicted net level of tolerance among the majority is depicted by the horizontal line cutting across the y-axis, calculated from Model 1c. The generational patterns suggest that there is indeed some “straight-line” assimilation towards majority attitudes. Controlling for other factors, G1 immigrants are the most supportive of immigration. In line with H1a, tolerance drops significantly with length of stay, as shown by the gap between G1 and G1.5 immigrants. Second generation immigrants are also

significantly less tolerant than G1 immigrants, indicating generational changes in attitudes in line with H1b. The lowest levels of tolerance among immigrants are found among the G2.5 and G3 generations. Nonetheless, all categories of migrants and their descendants are significantly more favorable to immigration compared to the French majority, net of controls..

H2 stated that citizenship and feelings of national belonging would be negatively associated with immigrants' attitudes towards immigration. Model 1b tests the effect of citizenship among first and second generation immigrants. Results are displayed in the second column of Table 1. Contrary to our second hypothesis, we find no support that citizenship decreases tolerance towards immigration: the effect is negative but not significant. Likewise, there is no evidence that feelings of national belonging correlate with immigrants' attitudes towards immigration, as the effect is null in both Models 1a and 1b. Nonetheless, feelings of national belonging *are* correlated with tolerance among the majority, as shown in Model 1c: the more majority members "feel French", the less likely they are to think France should welcome more immigrants.

Results from the full regression models in Table 1 also allow us to assess the effect of socioeconomic integration. Indeed, in line with H3, there is some evidence that socioeconomic status shapes attitudes towards immigration among the immigrant sample: the higher their level of education, the more open they are to immigration net of other factors. The same relationship between education and tolerance is found for the French majority. However, there is little evidence that other socioeconomic indicators - such as income, employment status, or housing tenure - matter to tolerance.

Table 1. The Determinants of Tolerance Towards Immigration (OLS Regression Models)

	Model 1a	Model 1b	Model 1c
	Immigrants and their descendants	Immigrants only	Majority
<i>Education/Ref: No degree</i>			
Less than high school	-0.083 (0.048)	-0.009 (0.036)	0.114 (0.090)
High school	0.140** (0.051)	0.078* (0.039)	0.296** (0.094)
Above high school	0.263*** (0.044)	0.095** (0.036)	0.580*** (0.095)
Neighborhood immigrant share	0.005** (0.002)	0.002 (0.001)	0.009* (0.004)
Neighborhood unemployment rate	0.002 (0.002)	0.002 (0.002)	0.003 (0.004)
<i>Income/Ref: Q 1</i>			
Q 2	0.007 (0.053)	-0.043 (0.034)	-0.079 (0.078)
Q 3	-0.075 (0.051)	-0.068 (0.037)	-0.095 (0.074)
Q 4	-0.049 (0.057)	-0.069 (0.038)	-0.023 (0.073)
Q 5	-0.085 (0.053)	-0.064 (0.040)	0.058 (0.083)
Unreported	-0.202* (0.093)	-0.067 (0.081)	-0.113 (0.139)
Female	0.051 (0.034)	0.009 (0.023)	0.070 (0.042)
Age	-0.049*** (0.010)	-0.036*** (0.008)	-0.024 (0.014)
Age-squared	0.000*** (0.000)	0.000** (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)
Unemployed	-0.048 (0.047)	0.042 (0.038)	0.023 (0.104)
<i>Marital status/Ref: Single</i>			
Married	0.046 (0.043)	-0.022 (0.031)	-0.171** (0.058)
Widowed/divorced	0.031 (0.060)	-0.106* (0.048)	-0.041 (0.083)
Number of children	0.032* (0.013)	0.026** (0.009)	-0.021 (0.024)
<i>Housing tenure/Ref: Owner</i>			
Renter	0.055 (0.053)	0.051 (0.032)	-0.050 (0.059)
Public housing	0.073 (0.044)	0.113*** (0.031)	-0.161 (0.083)
Other	-0.031 (0.055)	-0.050 (0.060)	-0.147 (0.103)

Neighborhood immigrant share	0.005** (0.002)	0.002 (0.001)	0.009* (0.004)
Neighborhood unemployment rate	0.002 (0.002)	0.002 (0.002)	0.003 (0.004)
National belonging	-0.022 (0.018)	0.010 (0.015)	-0.122** (0.047)
<i>Immigrant generation/Ref: G1</i>			
G1.5	-0.163*** (0.033)	-0.254*** (0.032)	
G2	-0.168*** (0.032)	-0.228*** (0.035)	
G2.5	-0.297*** (0.037)		
G3	-0.301*** (0.066)		
European vs. Non European	-0.247*** (0.043)	-0.341*** (0.031)	
French citizenship		-0.015 (0.031)	
Constant	3.805*** (0.214)	3.712*** (0.154)	2.934*** (0.337)
Observations	18,432	13,145	5,675
R-squared	0.135	0.096	0.103

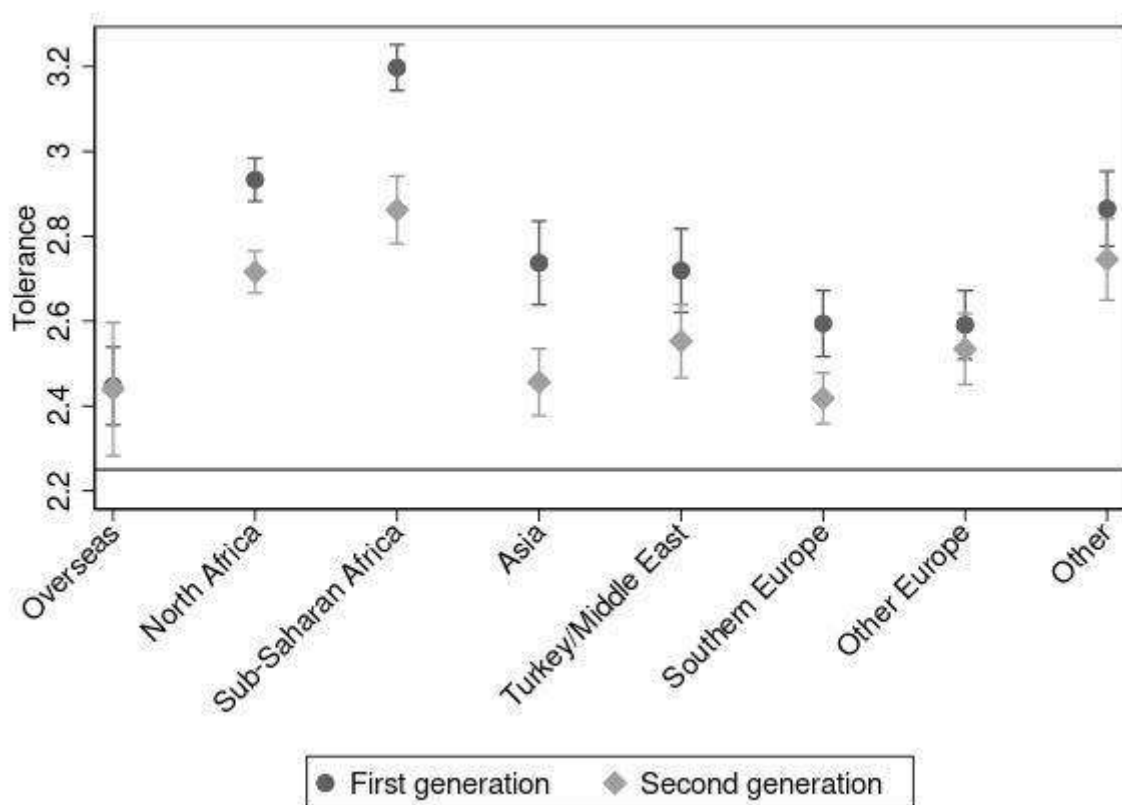
Source: Trajectories and Origins 2 (2019-2020). The table shows coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Our next set of hypotheses concerns the role of ethnoracial factors in shaping attitudes towards immigration. The results in Table 1 provide initial insight into the role of ethnoracial group. Indeed, European-origin immigrants and their descendants are consistently less likely to be open to immigration, net of controls. However, because these models included the third generation, for which detailed origin groups are not available, we explore more detailed ethnoracial variables in Model 2, excluding this generation. Model 2 also controls for ethnoracial identity and perceived discrimination. The models are run separately on first and second generation immigrants to account for generational differences. Table A2 presents the full model results, but Figure 2 focuses on patterns by ethnoracial group by generation for ease of interpretation.

We hypothesized in H4a that ethnoracial minorities - namely, non-European origins - would be more likely to support immigration compared to European origins and the majority

population due to an ethnic solidarity mechanism among the most discriminated groups. The results provide support for this hypothesis. As Figure 2 shows, first generation immigrants of Sub-Saharan African origin are by far the most open to immigration compared to all other groups, followed by first generation North Africans and other non-Europeans. While there are generational declines in tolerance, second generation non-Europeans are still highly tolerant. On the other hand, European origins - both first and second generations - show the lowest levels of support for immigration, along with respondents from French overseas departments. Respondents of Turkish/Middle East and Asian descent occupy an intermediary position in their attitudinal profile.

Figure 2. Predicted Tolerance by Ethnoracial Group and Immigrant Generation

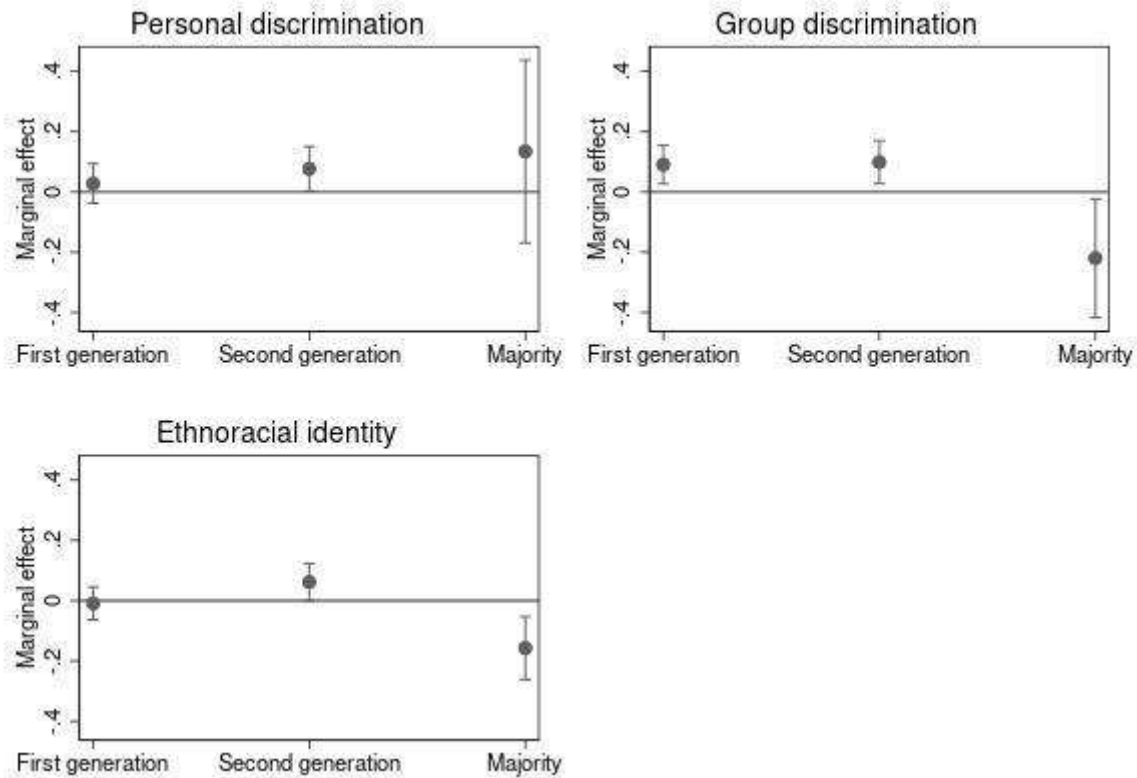


Source: Trajectories and Origins 2 (2019-2020). The graph shows point estimates and 95% confidence intervals from Models 2a and 2b. The horizontal line on the y-axis represents the predicted value of tolerance for the majority net of controls derived from Model 1c.

The findings regarding discrimination in Model 2 again point towards the ethnic solidarity mechanism and H4. The effects of these variables are displayed in Figure 3. We expected that the most discriminated respondents and those with a strong ethnic identity would be more supportive of immigration. The results show that perceived discrimination is positively associated with tolerance towards immigration among first and second generation immigrants, in line with H4b. The personal discrimination and group discrimination variables are both significant for the second generation; for the first generation, only group discrimination is significant. Results for ethnoracial identity, though positively associated with tolerance among the second generation, fall just short of statistical significance ($p=0.05$).

Interestingly, among the majority, the relationship between perceived discrimination and ethnoracial identity work in the opposite direction. French majority members who believe themselves to belong to a discriminated group - as well as those with a strong ethnic identity - are *less* open to immigration.

Figure 3. The Effects of Perceived Discrimination and Ethnoracial Identity on Tolerance Towards Immigration

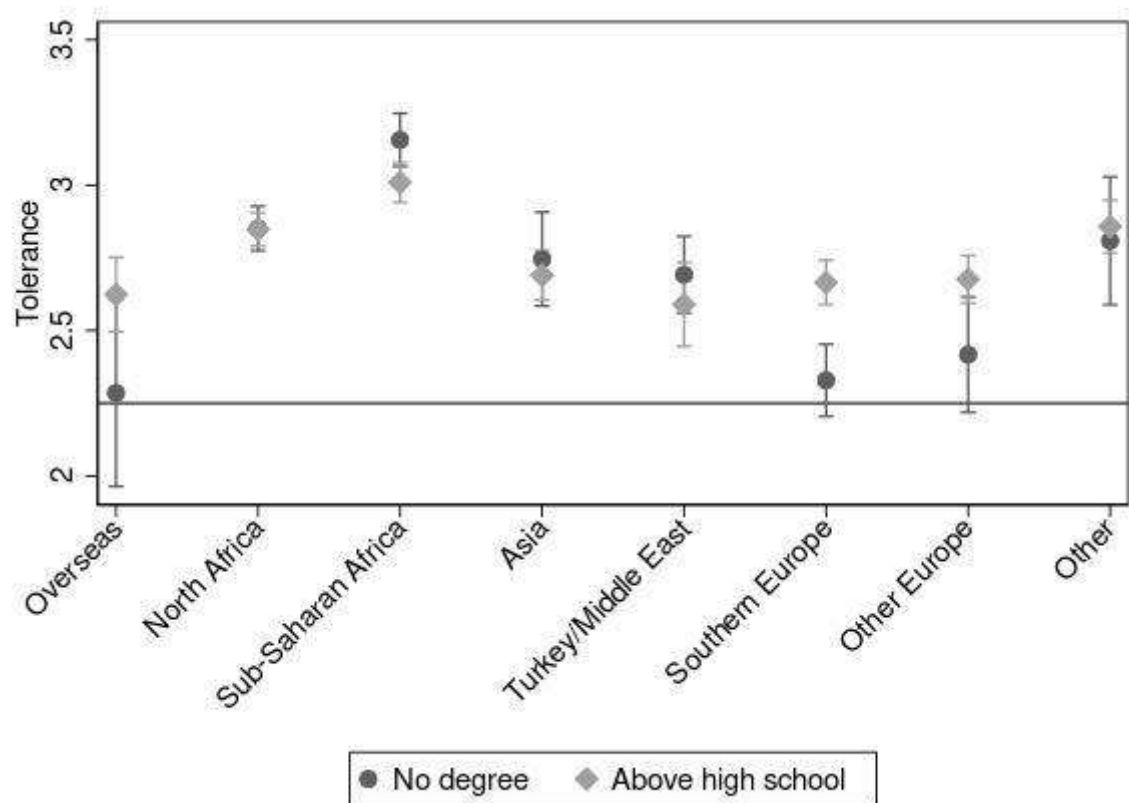


Source: Trajectories and Origins 2 (2019-2020). The graphs show point estimates and 95% confidence intervals from Models 2a, 2b, and 2c.

Our final hypothesis stated that, because of the solidarity ties ethnoracial minorities maintain with immigrants, assimilation variables might in fact have little influence on their attitudes. Indeed, Figure 2 gave initial evidence in favor of H5: while generational declines in tolerance are found for most ethnoracial groups, ethnoracial disparities persist, with North African, Sub-Saharan African and other non-European origins remaining consistently more tolerant compared to other groups of the same generation. We explore the differential role of assimilation variables further by testing an interaction between education and ethnoracial group in Model 2d. Figure 4 displays the results of the interaction, showing predicting tolerance by ethnoracial group and education. Full model results are included in Table A3 in the Appendix. The findings again confirm H5: differences in educational attainment do not

result in significant differences in levels of tolerance for most non-European origins. In fact, educational effects are only observed for Southern Europeans.

Figure 4. Predicted Tolerance by Ethnoracial Group and Education



Source: Trajectories and Origins 2 (2019-2020). The graph shows point estimates and 95% confidence intervals. The horizontal line on the y-axis represents the predicted value of tolerance for the majority net of controls derived from Model 1c.

Discussion/Conclusion

In light of the increasing ethnic diversity of European societies, the investigation of attitudes toward immigration among the rapidly growing electorate of ethnic minorities is growing in importance. In this article, we drew on recent, rich survey data from France to investigate the role of assimilation and ethnoracial factors in shaping support for immigration among immigrant-origin groups. We further examined whether the same mechanisms that

affect support for immigration among the majority operate for all immigrants-origin groups regardless of ethnoracial group.

The results show some mixed evidence for the explanatory power of assimilation variables in accounting for immigrants' attitudes towards immigration. Key dimensions of assimilation - such as citizenship acquisition and national belonging - were not found to be decisive. This contrasts with prior findings from other contexts showing decreased tolerance among naturalized immigrants (Just & Anderson, 2015). Yet, support for immigration decreased with immigrant length of stay and across immigration generations, as the assimilation framework would expect.

Alongside this mixed evidence of assimilation, however, we observed substantial variation in attitudes linked to ethnoracial factors, pointing to segmented assimilation in political attitudes. Regardless of immigrant length of stay, immigrant generation and other individual-level factors, African origin and other non-European origins were shown to be strongly supportive of immigration compared to European origins. Moreover, higher tolerance was observed among immigrant-origin respondents who identified as a discriminated group or reported personal experiences of discrimination due to ethnoracial factors. In addition, ethnoracial heterogeneity was found in the effects of education: while higher education was associated with lower prejudice among European origins and the French majority, it had little effect on the already high levels of tolerance found among African and other non-European-origin groups. All in all, these findings lend strong support to the idea that assimilation to majority views is segmented along ethnoracial lines. While we cannot establish the direction of causality in these relationships, ethnoracial processes such as discrimination and identity are significantly linked to attitudes in ways which suggest solidarity ties with immigrants among the most discriminated ethnoracial groups.

However, one finding in particular runs contrary to the ethnic solidarity argument: respondents from the French overseas departments showed quite low support for immigration. One might initially expect that the solidarity mechanism would be relevant for this group: predominantly black, French overseas respondents are exposed to discrimination and racism in French society. Yet, perhaps a different mechanism is at work here. This group is in fact highly distinctive from other minority groups, due to their legal status as French-born citizens. French overseas respondents might therefore draw on their in-group status to distance themselves from foreigners (Haddad 2018). Further, given that - as non-whites - overseas respondents occupy a lower position in the ethnoracial hierarchy relative to the majority of French citizens, expressing prejudice may even be a means of reinforcing a higher or “better” social status relative to the immigrant outgroup, perceived to be lower on the social ladder.

These findings bear important theoretical and societal implications. The first is the imperative of considering race/ethnicity in any investigation of attitudes towards immigration. While some evidence suggests that immigrants will come to resemble natives in terms of political behavior as they become incorporated into French society, this is highly variable by ethnoracial group, indicating a form of segmented assimilation in political incorporation. European immigrants indeed seem to be closer in their attitudes to natives, and are influenced by the same mechanisms - such as the powerful role of education. However, African and other non-European immigrant-origin groups - namely those impacted the most by structural disadvantages and discrimination - maintain high tolerance towards immigrants, and their attitudes are relatively unchanged by the factors that are traditionally known to shape the attitudes of majority groups.

Even more importantly perhaps, the findings for the French majority also suggest increasing political polarisation driven by race/ethnicity. While perceived ethnoracial

discrimination was linked to stronger tolerance among immigrant-origin groups, the reverse pattern was found for the majority, for whom discrimination and ethnoracial identity were associated with lower tolerance. In other words, French natives who perceive themselves to be victims of anti-White or anti-native discrimination are also the most prejudiced towards immigrants. While again we cannot identify the causal pathway, this nonetheless points to the interconnectedness of White grievance politics and ethnic intolerance which is a mainstay of the far-right political platform. Hence immigrant attitudes are racially polarizing: on the one hand, a growing minority electorate is persistently tolerant toward immigration which, given the stability of immigration attitudes (Kustov et al., 2021), will increase pressure on parties for a more liberal approach to immigration. On the other hand, the far-right will continue to find support among a block of majority voters who perceive immigration as a threat to the status of White French citizens. This highlights the possibility that conflict over immigration policy may be exacerbated by the increasing diversification of French -and perhaps other European- societies.

However, some limitations must be kept in mind in the interpretation of these findings. First, our analysis does not attempt to provide causal estimates of the factors driving immigration attitudes. As noted, experiences of discrimination or ethnic identity may not be mechanisms of attitudes per se, but rather, those who are already predisposed to support immigration may be likely to frame their experiences in terms of discrimination or emphasize their ethnic identity. Similarly, when it comes to the role of education, much research suggests that observed effects may be due to sorting: namely, that pre-existing differences rooted in personality or socialization within the family simultaneously affect tolerance toward immigrants and higher education enrollment (Hetherington & Weiler, 2018; Lancee & Sarasin, 2015). Future research could use longitudinal data or experimental designs to better identify these mechanisms. Furthermore, , this analysis only relies on data from one national

context. Future research could explore how migrant status and ethnicity shape attitudes towards immigration from a cross-national comparative perspective, investigating whether contexts with different immigrant integration systems or varying levels of ethnic discrimination result in contrasting patterns to those observed here. Future studies could also explore whether similar patterns hold for other measurements of political behavior, such as turnout and voting, or other key attitudinal dimensions, such as attitudes towards redistribution.

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Online Appendix

Table A1. Descriptive Statistics on All Variables

	Immigrant origins		French majority	
	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation
Tolerance towards immigration	2.70	0.95	2.27	0.95
<i>Education</i>				
No degree	0.17	0.38	0.07	0.26
Less than high school	0.23	0.42	0.29	0.45
High school	0.23	0.42	0.24	0.42
Above high school	0.37	0.48	0.40	0.49
Unemployed	0.09	0.28	0.05	0.22
<i>Income</i>				
Q1	0.24	0.43	0.19	0.39
Q2	0.22	0.41	0.19	0.39
Q3	0.18	0.39	0.18	0.38
Q4	0.17	0.38	0.22	0.41
Q5	0.16	0.37	0.21	0.41
Unreported	0.02	0.15	0.02	0.14
<i>Housing tenure</i>				
Owner	0.39	0.49	0.59	0.49
Renter	0.25	0.43	0.27	0.44
Public housing	0.31	0.46	0.11	0.31
Other	0.05	0.21	0.04	0.19
Age	38.53	11.68	39.41	12.20
Male	0.49	0.50	0.49	0.50
Female	0.51	0.50	0.51	0.50
<i>Marital status</i>				
Single	0.45	0.50	0.48	0.50
Married	0.46	0.50	0.43	0.49
Widowed/divorced	0.09	0.28	0.09	0.28
Number of children	1.42	1.45	1.24	1.21
National belonging	3.39	0.89	3.85	0.45
Personal discrimination	0.19	0.39	0.02	0.15
Group discrimination	0.22	0.41	0.06	0.23
Ethnoracial identity	0.46	0.50	0.16	0.36
Neighborhood immigrant share	16.49	11.07	7.83	7.48
Neighborhood unemployment rate	15.29	7.71	12.23	5.66
<i>Ethnoracial group</i>				
French overseas	0.08	0.27		
North Africa	0.32	0.47		
Sub-Saharan Africa	0.10	0.30		
Asia	0.03	0.16		
Turkey/Middle East	0.05	0.22		

Southern Europe	0.19	0.40
Other Europe	0.12	0.33
Other	0.11	0.31
<i>Generation</i>		
G1	0.39	0.49
G1.5	0.14	0.34
G2	0.25	0.43
G2.5	0.22	0.41

Source: Trajectories and Origins 2 (2019-2020).

Table A2. The Determinants of Tolerance Towards Immigration Including Ethnoracial Variables

	Model 2a First generation	Model 2b Second generation	Model 2c French majority
<i>Education/Ref: No degree</i>			
Less than high school	-0.033 (0.043)	-0.045 (0.060)	0.125 (0.088)
High school	0.052 (0.046)	0.121* (0.061)	0.311*** (0.092)
Above high school	0.070 (0.042)	0.239*** (0.059)	0.586*** (0.094)
<i>Income/Ref: Q 1</i>			
Q 2	-0.028 (0.040)	-0.022 (0.044)	-0.055 (0.078)
Q 3	-0.067 (0.045)	-0.035 (0.046)	-0.096 (0.075)
Q 4	-0.058 (0.047)	-0.013 (0.046)	-0.028 (0.074)
Q 5	-0.055 (0.051)	-0.015 (0.050)	0.052 (0.084)
Unreported	-0.007 (0.099)	-0.121 (0.087)	-0.150 (0.132)
Female	-0.007 (0.027)	0.060* (0.029)	0.091* (0.042)
Age	-0.038*** (0.010)	-0.034*** (0.009)	-0.024 (0.014)
Age-squared	0.000** (0.000)	0.000* (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)
Unemployed	0.037 (0.048)	-0.036 (0.051)	0.000 (0.101)
<i>Marital status/Ref: Single</i>			
Married	0.012 (0.039)	0.029 (0.040)	-0.141* (0.055)
Widowed/divorced	-0.075 (0.055)	-0.027 (0.068)	-0.047 (0.086)
Number of children	0.019 (0.011)	-0.011 (0.015)	-0.031 (0.023)

<i>Housing tenure/Ref: Owner</i>			
Renter	0.053 (0.039)	0.009 (0.040)	-0.031 (0.059)
Public housing	0.075 (0.040)	0.064 (0.038)	-0.170* (0.082)
Other	-0.037 (0.072)	-0.025 (0.075)	-0.103 (0.101)
Neighborhood immigrant share	0.001 (0.002)	0.001 (0.002)	0.008* (0.004)
Neighborhood unemployment rate	0.002 (0.002)	0.003 (0.002)	0.004 (0.004)
National belonging	0.007 (0.016)	-0.065* (0.026)	-0.139** (0.047)
Personal discrimination	0.028 (0.034)	0.077* (0.038)	0.135 (0.155)
Group discrimination	0.091** (0.033)	0.099** (0.037)	-0.220* (0.101)
Ethnoracial identity	-0.009 (0.028)	0.062 (0.032)	-0.157** (0.053)
<i>Immigrant generation</i>			
G1.5	Ref: G1 -0.218*** (0.034)	Ref: G2	
G2.5		-0.102** (0.032)	
<i>Ethnoracial group/Ref: Southern Europe</i>			
French Overseas	-0.147* (0.064)	0.022 (0.089)	
North Africa	0.339*** (0.048)	0.298*** (0.042)	
Sub-Saharan Africa	0.603*** (0.052)	0.444*** (0.055)	
Asia	0.143* (0.061)	0.038 (0.051)	
Turkey/Middle East	0.125* (0.064)	0.135* (0.055)	
Other European	-0.003 (0.055)	0.116* (0.049)	
Other	0.270*** (0.060)	0.327*** (0.060)	
Constant	3.377*** (0.197)	3.290*** (0.199)	2.994*** (0.337)
Observations	9,139	7,885	5,514
R-squared	0.101	0.147	0.112

Source: Trajectories and Origins 2 (2019-2020). Table shows coefficients with standard errors in parentheses.

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Table A3. The Determinants of Tolerance Towards Immigration Including An Interaction
Between Ethnoracial Group and Education

	Model 2d
<i>Education/Ref: No degree</i>	
Less than high school	0.008 (0.074)
High school	0.255** (0.079)
Above high school	0.374*** (0.074)
<i>Ethnoracial group/Ref: Southern Europe</i>	
French Overseas	-0.044 (0.177)
North Africa	0.522*** (0.075)
Sub-Saharan Africa	0.827*** (0.080)
Asia	0.417*** (0.103)
Turkey/Middle East	0.363*** (0.092)
Other Europe	0.088 (0.119)
Other	0.479*** (0.129)
Less than high school # French Overseas	0.036 (0.205)
Less than high school # North Africa	-0.123 (0.091)
Less than high school # Sub-Saharan Africa	-0.057 (0.097)
Less than high school # Asia	-0.198 (0.133)
Less than high school # Turkey/Middle East	-0.041 (0.115)
Less than high school # Other Europe	-0.059 (0.140)
Less than high school # Other	0.042 (0.170)
High school # French Overseas	-0.120 (0.199)
High school # North Africa	-0.191* (0.094)
High school # Sub-Saharan Africa	-0.274**

	(0.100)
High school # Asia	-0.459***
	(0.128)
High school # Turkey/Middle East	-0.211
	(0.121)
High school # Other Europe	-0.146
	(0.142)
High school #Other	-0.324*
	(0.157)
Above high school # French Overseas	0.003
	(0.190)
Above high school # North Africa	-0.339***
	(0.088)
Above high school #Sub-Saharan Africa	-0.483***
	(0.093)
Above high school # Asia	-0.392***
	(0.117)
Above high school # Turkey/Middle East	-0.439***
	(0.124)
Above high school # Other Europe	-0.077
	(0.132)
Above high school #Other	-0.287*
	(0.142)
<i>Income/Ref: Q 1</i>	
Q 2	-0.026
	(0.030)
Q 3	-0.055
	(0.032)
Q 4	-0.037
	(0.033)
Q 5	-0.053
	(0.036)
Unreported	-0.094
	(0.066)
Female	0.017
	(0.020)
Age	-0.041***
	(0.006)
Age-squared	0.000***
	(0.000)
Unemployed	-0.001
	(0.035)
<i>Marital status/Ref: Single</i>	
Married	0.026
	(0.027)
Widowed/divorced	-0.057
	(0.043)
Number of children	0.011
	(0.009)
<i>Housing tenure/Ref: Owner</i>	

Renter	0.023 (0.028)
Public housing	0.066* (0.028)
Other	-0.024 (0.051)
Neighborhood immigrant share	0.002 (0.001)
Neighborhood unemployment rate	0.002 (0.002)
National belonging	-0.007 (0.013)
Personal discrimination	0.060* (0.025)
Group discrimination	0.103*** (0.025)
Ethnoracial identity	0.029 (0.021)
<i>Immigrant generation/G1</i>	
G1.5	-0.190*** (0.031)
G2	-0.195*** (0.031)
G2.5	-0.287*** (0.031)
Constant	3.279*** (0.142)
Observations	17,024
R-squared	0.137

Source: Trajectories and Origins 2 (2019-2020). Table shows coefficients with standard errors in parentheses.

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05