

The Acceptance of the Multicultural Society Among Young People. A Comparative Analysis of the Effect of Market-Driven Versus Publicly Regulated Educational Systems

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Abstract: This paper examines the impact of private, quasi-market versus public steering of educational systems on European youngsters' attitudes towards immigrants. There has recently been a drive for a quasi-market strategy in the provision of education, inspired by the hope that this will increase both quality and cost-effectiveness. However, research has shown that this policy leads to greater inequality between schools and individual pupils. In this paper we use the data from the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS 2009) to see whether the extent of market steering lessens support for immigrants' rights. Such an effect is expected because market steering is thought to increase the inequality between schools and to lead to a concentration of immigrant children in schools where pupils with weak socio-economic backgrounds are concentrated. The focus of the analysis is on the country level variation in the attitudes towards immigrants. Controlling for overall immigration pressure, quasi-market systems are observed to lead to less support for immigrants' rights, and this is largely due to the higher concentration of immigrant children in low SES schools in such systems. These characteristics of the educational system explain about half of the cross-national variation in attitudes towards immigrants among the 21 countries observed.

Introduction

Many European societies witness the electoral success of anti-immigrant parties (Boomgaarden and Vliegthart, 2007; Cochrane and Nevitte, 2007). Although these do not, in most cases, address a single issue (Hainsworth, 1992), their support appears primarily motivated by xenophobia, ethnocentrism, negative attitudes towards immigrants and the rejection of a multicultural society (Billiet and De Witte, 1995; Delwit *et al.*, 1998; Lubbers and Scheepers, 2001). The presence of such feelings has been studied in many societies. Comparative studies gauging the extent of cross-national differences are also quite frequent (e.g. Coenders, 2001; Mayda, 2006; Weldon, 2006). Much rarer are cross-national studies of the extent of anti-immigrant feelings among adolescents. Yet, these kinds of studies are of strategic importance due to the persistence of attitudes like

xenophobia: they are formed quite early in life and then remain relatively stable throughout the life course (Sears, 1990; Vollebergh *et al.*, 2001). This article uses the data of the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS 2009) to map the cross-national variation in the attitudes of European 14 year olds with regard to immigrants' rights. The purpose of this article is to evaluate the extent to which this international variation can be explained by the degree of public versus market steering of the educational system.

Educational systems can be ranked on a continuum ranging from market to public steered. Market-steered systems (also referred to as quasi-markets; Chubb and Moe, 1990) are characterized by a high degree of freedom of the parents in the choice of school for their children. Parents can behave as consumers on a market for education. As a consequence, school principals will compete for pupils with an interesting

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background. It is, according to the proponents of (more) market steering, this competition that creates incentives for the schools to become cost effective and to increase their performance and attractiveness to parents (Wolf and Macedo, 2004; OECD, 2007, 2010; Moe, 2008). The argument is taken even further: a market-like opportunity structure of school choice is thought to stimulate schools to provide high-quality education for even the most disadvantaged students (Hoxby, 2002). For these quasi-markets to work, schools should preserve a high degree of independence from public regulation (Walberg and Bast, 2003).

The scientific debate about public versus market steering has often focused on the quality of public versus private schools (see Coleman and Hoffer, 1987). This is not an entirely appropriate focus since the legal status of the school is but one element of the degree of public and private steering of the educational system. Moreover, the label ‘private’ can be misleading in most OECD-countries, since even most ‘private’ schools are financed by public means, while ‘public’ schools might be placed on a quasi-market (see Hoxby, 2002; Woessmann, 2006). The focus should be on the educational system as such, not (only) on the legal framework within which single schools operate. Moreover, comparisons between private and public schools have not led to unambiguous conclusions in favour of the superiority of one or the other. From a review of several studies in different European countries, Dronkers (2004) concludes that private schools perform better as far as the cognitive achievements of the pupils are concerned, while there appears to be no systematic difference between public and private schools with regard to non-cognitive achievements. Analyses on the PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) data for 2006 do however not reveal differences in cognitive achievement between students in private and public schools, once the school composition—the background variables of the students in those schools—is taken into account (OECD, 2007).

Several authors have linked the degree of market steering to inequality within the educational system, between schools and between the best and worst performing students. The variation, and hence the inter pupil inequality in performance scores in PISA, were observed to be greater on average in more market-steered educational systems (Desmedt and Nicaise, 2006; Hirtt *et al.*, 2007). Recent research into the functioning of local education markets within the US also pointed to the possible perverse effects of installing market-like incentive structures (Lubienski, 2005). Instead of serving all students, US public school districts when operating as a local quasi-market, tend to respond like all profit

maximizing organizations and target the most wealthy or academically strong consumers. In a recent study of different local embedded markets, Lubienski *et al.* (2009: p. 639) note: ‘Despite the hope of reformers that competition may level the playing field, it appears that schools in competitive environments are instead arranged into hierarchies based on who is likely to be served’.

Our focus is not primarily on the impact of quasi-markets on the inequality between pupils. The thesis we want to test is that market steering of the educational system not only leads to inequality between schools and pupils, but also to less support for immigrants’ rights and for a multicultural society. We first develop the theoretical rationale for this proposition from which we derive our hypotheses. After that, we present the operationalization of the variables and the tests of the hypotheses.

Quasi-Market Versus Public Steering, Segregation, and Attitudes with Regard to Immigrants’ Rights

The demand-driven character of the educational quasi-markets—which implies a high degree of freedom of the parents to choose the school for their children—is likely to lead to segregation. Parents concerned about the education of their children, able to be well informed about the quality of schools, and able and willing to eventually travel some distance to get their child to the desired school, will send their children to schools with a reputation for quality. Not only do these parents, overall, tend to ‘value’ school quality more highly than more disadvantaged parents, they have also more resources to spend on the schooling of their offspring (Balla *et al.*, 1996).¹

Freedom of school choice is therefore likely to lead to a concentration of children of well to do families and of families willing and able to invest heavily in the education of their children, into specific schools (OECD, 2007; Jenkins *et al.*, 2008). That mechanism leads to segregation between, on the one hand, schools with pupils with ample cultural capital and, on the other hand, schools with pupils with weak social and cultural backgrounds, among them many minority pupils (Hirtt *et al.*, 2007; Spruyt, 2009; Alegre and Ferrer-Esteban, 2010). The proposition that such mechanisms operate, is buttressed by the observation that educational systems having increased their degree of market steering, or introducing market-like structures, experienced growing segregation between schools (Söderström and Uusitalo, 2005; Lubienski *et al.*, 2009).

Those mechanisms are likely to be responsible for the relationship between the extent of market steering and the inequality of education outcomes, as observed in the PISA studies (Desmedt and Nicaise, 2006; Hirtt *et al.*, 2007; Jacobs *et al.*, 2009). The resulting inequality between high- and low-achieving schools is mediated by the process of social segregation of pupils. Some schools are successful in attracting pupils with backgrounds that predispose towards high educational performance and achievement, while other schools end up with a concentration of pupils with unfavourable backgrounds. It is moreover likely that the 'privileged' schools will have a greater potential to upgrade their own performance and that educational systems with weak public steering will find it very difficult to develop policies that effectively compensate for the inequalities between schools created by differences in the backgrounds of their pupils (see Saporito, 2003).

In the context of rising migratory movements in European societies, these mechanisms of segregation gain added significance because in quasi-markets immigrant children are likely to become concentrated in low-SES schools. We therefore expect (Hypothesis 1) that under equal immigration pressure, segregation of immigrant children will be higher in market-steered systems and that those children will be concentrated in schools where children with a weak socio-economic background are concentrated. Not only do newcomers generally have a lower socioeconomic status and lack economic and information resources, making them more likely to attend local low SES schools, native well-off parents also tend to avoid or opt out of schools with too many immigrants (see Bagly, 1996; Levine-Rasky, 2008; Rangvid, 2010) contributing to the segregation between schools.

The concentration of immigrant children in schools with a concentration of pupils from educationally weak backgrounds is likely to have several effects that can reduce support for immigrants' rights. Such segregation will, firstly, reduce opportunities for (positive) contact between the native population and the immigrants, while such contacts are often regarded as conducive to mutual acceptance (for a review of the relevant literature, see Pettigrew and Tropp, 2000; Spruyt, 2009; Van Houtte and Stevens, 2009).²

Secondly, as a result of their concentration in 'weak' schools, immigrant pupils are likely to be regarded as having low (educational) expectations and performing poorly (Rangvid, 2010; see also Solga, 2002). Thirdly, it is possible that the concentration in such schools leads to higher drop out rates (see Mayer, 1991) and to lower degrees of labour market participation (see Heath *et al.*, 2008), higher degrees of welfare dependence, and to

higher degrees of crime and a disproportionate presence among the incarcerated population (see Eitle and McNulty Eitle, 2010). All those conditions are likely to generate anti-immigrant sentiments. Such a reaction seems to have expressed itself in a shift in the very meaning of 'integration'. According to the European *Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy*, integration should be measured in terms of social, economic, and political participation. Different European countries have broadened that definition to include, besides indicators of participation, the extent to which the non-natives share the values and lifestyles of the natives. That semantic and policy shift searches for ethnic and cultural causes of failed integration and can in many respects be regarded as a rejection of multiculturalism (Joppke, 2004). Our presumption is that at least part of the failure to achieve full participation could be due to the nature of the steering of the educational system and that this can therefore account for a part of the cross-national variation in the attitudes with regard to immigrants' rights. We expect:

- that the higher the degree of public steering of the educational system is, the higher the support for immigrants' rights will be (Hypothesis 2); and
- that the effect of public steering on support for immigrants' rights will to a great extent be mediated by the degree of segregation, because less public steering will lead to a greater concentration of immigrant children in schools where pupils with weak socio-economic and socio-cultural backgrounds are concentrated (Hypothesis 3).

Data and Operational Definitions of the Variables

Data

We use the data from the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) compiled by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) in 2008/2009. ICCS is one of the most recent and extensive, internationally comparative databases on civic education. The researchers gathered data on more than 140,000 pupils of the 8th grade (approximately 14 years of age), 60,000 teachers and 5,100 school principals from more than 5,300 schools in 38 countries or regions, among which 25 European ones (Schulz *et al.*, 2010).³

To increase the comparability of national cultures and educational systems, our analysis is limited to European

societies. Some of the European countries were however not retained in this analysis because insufficient information was available to operationalize the country and educational system characteristics (that was the case for Cyprus, Malta, Liechtenstein, and Switzerland).

Approximately 10 per cent of all students across countries are non-natives (described in ICCS as ‘both parents born abroad’). Scales concerning ethnocentrism and attitudes towards immigrants are only suitable for natives. All non-native students were therefore removed from the data set. As a result of those various selections the analysis pertains to 57,399 pupils from 3,021 schools in 21 European educational systems (of which 19 countries and 2 regions, Flanders and England). An overview of the countries (or educational systems) can be found in Table 2.

Measuring Pupils’ Attitudes Towards Equal Rights of Immigrants

In ICCS, five Likert-items are used to gauge the pupils’ attitudes with regard to immigrants’ rights. Four answers were possible (strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree) which in Table 1 are collapsed into two categories.

From Table 1, it is clear that in the 21 European countries an overwhelming majority of pupils is in favour of equal rights for immigrants. Eighty-six per cent agrees that immigrants should have the same rights as everybody else, 91 per cent agrees with equal opportunities for education. The support for the right to vote is somewhat less (79 per cent) and it further decreases

when the right of the immigrants to continue their own customs and lifestyle (77 per cent) and the use of their own language (70 per cent) is concerned. While support for immigrants’ rights is generally high, variation in the responses to the different items is clearly related to the extent to which a multicultural society is deemed desirable and acceptable.

The high support for immigrants’ rights registered with the ICCS scale could be due to the one-sided positive phrasing of the items. In order to gain a better understanding of the scale we compared it to a more balanced scale for general xenophobic feelings. Such a comparison was possible for Flanders because the country-specific module of ICCS for that educational system (151 schools; 1,630 teachers; 2,968 pupils) included such a scale.⁴ The correlation (in the Flemish sample) of these scales amounts to $r = -0.59$, indicating that the attitude with regard to immigrants’ rights is very strongly related to xenophobia, even though it cannot be considered the same.

Table 2 gives the mean country scores for the scale on immigrants’ rights. The scale has an average of 50 over the 38 participating countries and a standard deviation of 10. The average score of the 21 European countries (49.3) does not significantly differ from the average score of the 38 countries in the ICCS study. Within Europe there is significant variation. Remarkable are the very low scores for Latvia, England, the Netherlands, and Flanders. The greatest support for equal rights of immigrants and for multiculturalism is observed in Lithuania, Sweden, Bulgaria, and Luxembourg. It is the

Table 1 Extent of agreement with the statements gauging attitudes towards immigrants’ rights [unweighted percentages of native students ($N = 57,339$) from 21 European countries]^a

	(Strongly) disagree	(Strongly) agree	Factor loadings
(a) Immigrants should have the opportunity to continue speaking their own language	30.4	69.6	0.673
(b) Immigrant children should have the same opportunities for education that other children in the country have	9.1	90.9	0.772
(c) Immigrants who live in a country for several years should have the opportunity to vote in elections	21.3	78.7	0.736
(d) Immigrants should have the opportunity to continue their own customs and lifestyle	22.9	77.1	0.764
(e) Immigrants should have all the same rights that everyone else in the country has	14.3	85.7	0.792
Eigen value			2.80
Cronbach’s Alpha			0.80
R^2			56.1

^aThe scale statistics are based upon a separate analysis on 21 countries in this article. The reliability (Cronbach’s Alpha) of the international scale (Schulz et al., 2011) has a median of 0.78 over the 21 countries, with a minimum of 0.73 (for Slovak Republic) and a maximum of 0.89 (for Sweden).

Table 2 Average country scores on the scale 'attitudes towards immigrants' rights' (international average of 50 and standard deviation of 10)

	Scale score
Luxembourg	51.7
Bulgaria	51.7
Sweden	51.6
Lithuania	51.1
Greece	50.9
Spain	50.7
Slovenia	50.2
Norway	50.2
International average ^a	50.0
Poland	50.0
Ireland	49.9
Slovak Republic	49.7
Europe 21 ^b	49.3
Denmark	48.5
Italy	48.4
Czech Republic	48.1
Finland	48.0
Austria	47.8
Estonia	47.7
Latvia	46.9
UK (England)	46.4
Belgium (Flanders)	45.9
Netherlands	45.8

^aBased on all 38 participating countries in ICCS.

^bWestern and Eastern Europe (21 countries in this analysis).

variation described in Table 2 that we try to explain on the basis of the extent of public steering and the interplay between inequality and segregation within the educational system.

Measuring the Degree of Public Steering of the Educational System

In the introductory discussion concerning the extent of market versus public steering of the educational systems, three crucial aspects were mentioned: the extent to which parents are free in the choice of school, the extent to which school principals experience competition for pupils and the capacity of the state to intervene at the level of the schools. Measures for these variables were obtained using different international data sources. Eurydice (2009: p. 56) collects a measure of the degree of freedom of school choice (see Table 3). PISA 2006 asked the school principals to what extent they experience competition for pupils (OECD, 2007, Table 5.5). For the 21 countries considered here, the average proportion of school principals that do experience such competition varies from 52 to 96 per cent. It

proved more difficult to find a good indicator of the degree to which the government can direct educational policy at the school level. As a proxy indicator, we used the percentage of students in primary and secondary education enrolled in public schools (Eurydice, 2009: p. 54).⁵

Since we consider the three variables as indicators of the same phenomenon—public versus market steering—they should be strongly interrelated and their degree of interrelation validates them as indicators of an overarching construct. A principle component analysis of the three variables revealed a single component (eigenvalue = 2.1; $R^2 = 68$ per cent) and uniformly high factor loadings (freedom of parental choice: -0.90 ; experienced competition: -0.79 ; percentage of pupils in public schools $+0.79$). We shall use this component as an indicator of public versus market steering: high positive values indicate high public steering, while high negative values indicate high quasi-market levels. Table 4 (column 1) gives the scores for this variable for the 21 European countries considered in this analysis. The educational systems of the Netherlands and Flanders can be characterized as exceptionally market-driven. England and Ireland are also strongly market driven.⁶ The more strongly publicly regulated systems are found in Greece, Finland, Slovenia, and Norway.

Ethnic Concentration in Socially Weak Schools and Immigration Pressure

It is of course only meaningful to look at the effects of public steering on the extent to which immigrant children are concentrated in low SES-schools, when controlling for the overall immigration pressure of a country.

Two variables are taken into account to measure immigration pressure. The first is the presence of immigrants, defined as the proportion of foreign-born population in the total population (UN, 2010).⁷ For the 21 countries, it varies between 1 and 35 per cent. The other variable focuses on the number of asylum applications (between 2003 and 2007) (Eurostat, 2010). This variable varies between 0 and 14.5 per 1,000 inhabitants for the countries concerned. This variable is used because a high number of non-native born residents does not necessarily indicate diversity in the population (e.g. Luxemburg), while asylum applications tend to be made by persons whose ethnic and religious background differs significantly from that of the host country. A principle component analysis of the two variables reveals that they are strongly interrelated and form a single component (eigenvalue = 1.5; $R^2 = 75$ per cent) which can be interpreted as measuring the extent

Table 3 Indicators of the degree of public steering of the educational system

Variable	Description
Freedom of school choice	0 = school is appointed (sometimes contestation by parents possible), 1 = parents choose in a certain way but government can intervene, 2 = full freedom of school choice for parents (Source: Eurydice, 2009: p. 56)
Percentage of students in public schools	Percentage of students in primary and secondary education enrolled in public schools (from 24 to 100 per cent) (Source: Eurydice, 2009: p. 54)
Experienced competition by school principals	Extent to which school principals in a country experience competition with other schools to attract students (from 52.4 to 95.9 per cent) (Source: PISA, 2007: Table 5.5)
Amount of regulation of school choice	Factor score scale on the basis of freedom of school choice, percentage of students in public schools and experienced competition by school principals

Table 4 Country scores for 'Public versus Quasi-Market Steering', 'Migration Pressure', and 'Ethnic Concentration in low SES Schools'

	Column 1 Public versus market-driven educational system	Column 2 Migration pressure	Column 3 Ethnic concentration in low SES schools
	Negative scores indicate quasi-market educational systems, positive scores publicly regulated educational system	Negative scores indicate low migration pressure, positive scores high migration pressure	Correlations within each country between percentage of migrants and mean SES at school level (*(-1))
Netherlands	-2.43	-0.10	0.516**
Belgium (Flanders)	-2.05	0.38 ^a	0.557**
Ireland	-0.78	0.89	0.105**
UK (England)	-0.78	-0.17 ^a	0.169**
Spain	-0.66	-0.23	0.255**
Slovak Republic	-0.51	-0.42	-0.064**
Latvia	-0.49	-0.25	0.042*
Bulgaria	-0.22	-1.20	0.043*
Italy	-0.21	-0.69	0.075**
Luxembourg	-0.01	2.73	0.832**
Sweden	0.18	1.71	0.487**
Czech Republic	0.27	-0.72	-0.028
Denmark	0.34	-0.36	0.487**
Estonia	0.51	-0.35	0.027
Lithuania	0.70	-1.05	-0.072**
Austria	0.74	1.56	0.354**
Poland	0.80	-1.12	-0.175**
Greece	0.89	0.13	0.152**
Finland	0.97	-0.71	0.056**
Slovenia	1.16	-0.45	0.035*
Norway	1.55	0.40	0.300**

^aData for Belgium and UK.

*Significant at 0.05 level.

**Significant at 0.01 level.

to which immigrants from cultural backgrounds that differ from the native population are present. High positive values on this scale indicate high migration pressure (which is found in Luxembourg,⁸ Sweden, Austria, and Ireland), high negative values indicate low migration pressure (found in the Eastern European Countries, also in Finland and Italy). The country scores on the scale for migration pressure are presented in Table 4 (column 2).

The extent to which immigrant children are concentrated in schools where all pupils tend to be of a weak socio-economic and socio-cultural background is operationalized on the basis of the correlation, for each specific country, between the percentage of immigrant children per school (as defined by ICCS as 'both parents born abroad') and the mean socio-economic status of all pupils in the school (based on the educational level and job status of parents and on number of books at home). Since these variables are negatively correlated in most countries (a high percentage of immigrant children in schools is negatively correlated with a high mean SES of the school population), we mirrored this correlation around 0 for reasons of readability. This results in an indicator where high values correspond to a high concentration of immigrant children in weak SES schools (see also Table 4, column 3).

While in a number of countries, there is no relationship between the overall socio-economic and socio-cultural composition of the school and the proportion of immigrant children in the school, in other countries immigrant children are (heavily) concentrated in schools in which most pupils have weak backgrounds. That is particularly the case in Luxembourg, Flanders, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Denmark.

Controls for School and Individual Characteristics

While the focus of this article is on the way the market-driven versus publicly regulated nature of educational systems influences the cross-national variation in the attitudes towards immigrants' rights, we will include a number of controls for school and individual characteristics in the multilevel models (Snijders and Bosker, 1999). These variables are included merely as control variables. Schools are seldom a random sample of the population at large. Taking school and pupil characteristics into account decreases the risk of specification error. Yet, in order not to sidetrack from the focus of this article, the effects of these control variables will not be commented upon.⁹ The most commonly identified characteristics of the pupils that have been observed to influence the attitudes towards migrants (as identified in

a review of the literature, see Elchardus and Siongers, 2009) were included: *i.e.* gender, the highest job status in the family, the educational level of the parents, the number of books at home, the language usually spoken at home, age, and the educational aspirations of the pupil. At the school level, the models control for the social and ethnic composition of the classrooms and the schools. Classroom effects of aggregated characteristics¹⁰ indicate that the concentration of pupils with a certain trait has effects over and above those that are realized via the individual students (Spruyt, 2009; Barber *et al.*, 2010; Kokkonen *et al.*, 2010).

Testing the Hypotheses

Our first hypothesis predicts that, controlling for levels of immigration pressure, the concentration of immigrant children in socially weak schools will be higher in market steered educational systems. Table 5 shows that this is indeed the case. When immigration pressure is low the level of ethnic concentration tends to be low, while the level of public steering of the educational system does not make a difference. This is probably due to the fact that in such educational systems there are too few immigrant children to give rise to discernable patterns of segregation. When immigration pressure is high, the level of ethnic school concentration in low SES schools becomes higher, both in systems with low and high public steering. This indicates that irrespective of the nature of the steering of the educational system, immigration pressure leads to some degree of segregation, concentrating immigrant children in weak schools. Yet, that tendency is much more pronounced in quasi-markets than in systems with a strong public steering (the level of ethnic concentration = 0.42 in market steered systems versus 0.27 in publicly steered systems). Publicly steered systems are, under comparable circumstances, much more successful in avoiding strong concentrations of immigrants in socially weak schools.

Indeed, the correlation between the degree of public steering and ethnic school concentration ($r = -0.35$) increases after controlling for migration pressure (partial $r = -0.46$). This means that under equal migration pressure, a stronger ethnic segregation in low SES schools is found in quasi-market educational systems.

Hypotheses 2 and 3 predicted that in school systems with high public steering: (i) support for immigrants' rights would be higher among the pupils and (ii) that this would, at least in part, be the case because in such systems there will be less concentration of immigrant children in schools where pupils with a weak socio-economic and socio-cultural background are concentrated.

Table 5 The level of ethnic concentration in low SES schools by combinations of levels of immigration pressure and levels of public steering^a

	Level of ethnic concentration
Low migration pressure and high public steering	0.05
Low migration pressure and low public steering	0.03
High migration pressure and high public steering	0.27
High migration pressure and low public steering	0.42
Total	0.20

^aCountries were divided into two equal groups on the scale for migration pressure and on the scale for public versus market steering of the educational system respectively, and afterwards categorized in one of the combinations that can be calculated from these. Sign. = 0.01; $\eta = 0.69$; $\eta^2 = 0.48$; $F = 5.24$.

Table 6 Variance components models 0–3, positive attitude towards the rights of immigrants: 3 levels

Level	Variance components	Variance partitioning components (intra-class correlation, per cent)	R ² (per cent)
Model 0			
Country	3.8	4.1	
School	5.1	5.5	
Individual student	84.4		
Model 1: Control variables for school and individual background			
Country	3.5	3.9	8.1
School	3.2	3.7	36.8
Individual student	81.8		3.0
Explanatory variables at the country level			
Model 2: Public versus market-driven educational system			
Country	2.6	3.0	31.6
School	3.2	3.7	36.8
Individual Student	81.8		3.0
Model 3: Public versus market-driven educational system + ethnic concentration in low SES schools			
Country	1.9	2.2	49.0
School	3.2	3.7	36.8
Individual student	81.8		3.0

In order to test these hypotheses, a series of models are estimated (see Table 6). Model 0 indicates that there is an autocorrelation at the country level of 4.1 per cent. That is the country-level variation we try to explain. Taking into account the above-mentioned individual and school characteristics, that are used as control variables, hardly reduces the autocorrelation at the level of the country. It is reduced by less than 5 per cent. Including the individual and school variables only explains 8 per cent of the variance at the country level. When in Model 2, the extent of public steering is taken into account the autocorrelation is reduced by 23 per cent and the explained variance at the country level increases to 37 per cent. Model 3 further includes a control for the

extent of segregation (concentration of immigrant children in low SES-schools). The autocorrelation is further reduced by 26 per cent and the explained variance at the country level further increases to 49 per cent.

Since we are interested in the influence of school system characteristics on the attitudes of pupils towards immigrants' rights, we focus on the impact of the presence of a quasi-market (Model 2) and on the degree of ethnic concentration in socially weak schools (Model 3). The parameters of those models are presented in Table 7. Model 2 in Table 7 supports the hypothesis concerning the impact of public versus market steering of the educational system on attitudes towards immigrants' rights.

Table 7 Country level, fixed effect parameters (B and betas) on positive attitude towards the rights of immigrants: three levels, controlled for individual and school level variables^a

	Model 2		Model 3	
	B	Beta	B	Beta
Intercept	48.448***	0.000***	48.522***	0.000***
Public versus market-driven educational system—grand mean	0.972*	0.090*	0.662 ⁺	0.061 ⁺
Ethnic concentration in low SES schools			−3.505**	−0.091**

^aResults are controlled for age, gender, the highest job status of the parents, cultural capital in the family, the language usually spoken at home, and the educational aspirations of the students at the individual level, and the social and ethnic composition of the classrooms at the school level.

***Significant at 0.001 level; **Significant at 0.01 level; *Significant at 0.05 level; ⁺Significant at 0.07 level.

Model 3 highlights the importance of ethnic concentration for the attitudes towards immigrants' rights. In highly segregated school systems, individual students tend on average to be less positive towards immigrants' rights. The ethnic concentration variable reduces the impact of the public versus private steering variable, indicating a mediating effect of ethnic segregation in weak schools. Publicly steered educational systems engender more positive attitudes towards immigrants' rights, partly because in such systems immigrants are to a lesser extent concentrated in low SES schools.

These results hold after taking into account individual characteristics and aggregated measures of the school population. Even though the interpretation of those effects falls outside the scope of this article, it can be noted that the concentration of non-natives in a school has a small but statistically significant and positive effect on attitudes towards immigrants.¹¹ This supports the contact hypothesis which states that interethnic contacts helps to overcome ethnic prejudice. The observation is interesting in the context of this article because the negative effect on the attitude with regard to immigrants' rights is clearly not due to the concentration of immigrant children in certain schools, but to the concentration of immigrant children in socially weak schools.

Conclusion and Discussion

Enthusiasm for multiculturalism, understood here as the policy response to diversity and not as the mere fact of diversity, has dwindled in the last years of the 20th and the first decade of the 21st century (Joppke, 2004; Koopmans, 2010). Multiculturalism can be understood as a set of policies geared towards equal rights for immigrants, access to opportunities at participation and social rights, protection against cultural discrimination, recognition of cultural differences, rejection of assimilation, eventually the granting of special cultural rights. In

societies which have pursued such policies—in the hope that they would promote effective integration and participation, and avoid the rise of xenophobic feelings (Young, 1990)—there is now rising scepticism with regard to that project, both among policy makers (e.g. the shift in the meaning of integration from participation to assimilation) and in the electorate (e.g. the success of anti-immigrant parties).

The ICCS data do not confirm that trend: overwhelming majorities of young people are in favour of equal rights and opportunities for immigrants and large majorities (of about 70 per cent) for the right to maintain a degree of cultural specificity and the use of one's original language. It is possible that the difference between this finding and the impression gathered from the policies pursued and the election results, indicates a difference between the position of young people and the adult population. The observed difference could however also be due to the unbalanced and somewhat 'soft' character of the scale used to gauge this attitude in ICCS.

Yet, that scale showed significant cross-national variation, which we tried to explain on the basis of the extent of public steering of the educational system. The highest support for immigrants' rights is observed in Luxemburg, Bulgaria, and Sweden with average scores around 52, the lowest in England, Flanders, and the Netherlands with average scores around 46 (on a scale with an average of 50 over all participating countries and a standard deviation of 10). Our analysis has shown that about half of that variation can be ascribed to two interrelated features of the educational systems. Quasi-market educational systems lead to less support for immigrants' rights and the multicultural society among the pupils and they do so, to a large extent, because they lead to great concentrations of immigrant children in schools in which native children with weak socio-economic and socio-cultural backgrounds are concentrated. These findings indicate that in order to engender the contextual conditions to reduce ethnic

segregation in socially weak schools, to increase the educational and societal integration of immigrants, to stimulate positive contacts between natives and immigrants, and/or to reduce negative feeling towards immigrants among natives, more public steering of the educational system might be indicated.

Although a fair proportion of the cross-national differences can be attributed to the degree of ethnic concentration and public steering of the educational system, about half of the country-level variation remains unexplained, indicating that there are certainly other country level mechanisms at work that influence the attitudes towards migrants (probably related to the structure of the labour market, the modalities of access to social security, housing policies, composition of the immigrant population) (see [Oliver and Mendelberg, 2000](#); [Barber et al., 2010](#)). One characteristic of educational systems we looked at more closely is the extent of comprehensiveness versus early tracking which has been observed to affect inequality in terms of achievement in literacy, numeracy, and science (see [Hanushek and Woessmann, 2005](#); [Green et al., 2008](#); [Horn, 2009](#)). Countries with a 'comprehensive' education system, with common schooling and undifferentiated classes, generally show a lower level of inequality on different criteria. The extent of comprehensiveness could therefore conceivably be related to inequalities between the schools and influence our findings. We did not address this issue in the models because ICCS involves 14 year olds, who in many countries are not yet differentiated into tracks. The tracking of students was therefore not included in the questionnaire. We did however test for the influence of the level of tracking of educational systems (age of tracking, number of tracks at age 15, percentage of students enrolled in vocational education, measured as characteristics of the educational system). None of these variables had a significant effect on the cross-national variation of the attitudes towards immigrants' rights. Controlling for these variables did not alter the observed effect of the concentration of migrant children in low SES schools.¹²

To illustrate the contribution of the analysis presented here, it is quite informative to contrast Sweden to the Netherlands and Flanders. As far as immigration is concerned, those three countries have much in common. Together with Germany, France, Austria, the United Kingdom, and Switzerland they are among the main immigration countries in Europe. They are all three well-developed welfare states. They have been very strongly committed to multicultural policies as well. In the so called MIPEX-index of 2010, measuring the degree of legal equality of immigrants, they obtain very high scores: Sweden (84), the Netherlands (71), and Belgium

(69) and constitute, together with Finland (70) and Italy (64), the top five of that ranking. At the same time, they perform extremely badly as far as integration in the sense of full participation is concerned. The ratio of the employment level of persons born outside the EU-15 countries and the natives is a low 70 per cent in Flanders, 72 per cent in Sweden and 77 per cent in the Netherlands, compared to for instance Austria's 98 per cent and Germany's 87 per cent. While in Austria and Germany foreigners are about 3.5 times more likely to be in prison than natives, they are about 5 times more likely to be incarcerated in the Netherlands, Sweden, and Flanders ([Koopmans, 2010](#): pp. 13, 19). It is, among other things, this combination of great openness to immigrants and failed integration that has introduced doubt about the hope vested in multiculturalism and created a backlash in policies and voting behaviour. The three very similar countries do however differ markedly as far as the steering of the educational system is concerned. The Netherlands and Flanders are extremely strongly market steered (scores of respectively -2.43 and -2.05), while Sweden is more inclined to public steering (0.18 on a scale with average of 0 and standard deviation of 1). With a score of almost 52, Sweden is among the most supportive of immigrants, with scores of 46 both Flanders and the Netherlands are among the least supportive. The difference between Sweden on the one hand, Flanders and the Netherlands on the other is 6 points or 0.6 standard deviation. After taking into account the effects of steering of the educational system and ethnic segregation in socially weak schools, those estimated scores become (almost) 48 for the Netherlands and Flanders and nearly 51 for Sweden. The difference is reduced to three points, indicating that the explanation and the model developed here can indeed explain about half of the surprising difference in attitudes towards immigrants between countries that otherwise are quite similar in the way they pursue integration and in the results they obtain.

Notes

- 1 For some authors, this freedom of choice has led to a situation in which practices such as searching and competing for places and manoeuvring its way into the 'best' schools, are considered indicators of good parenting, thereby stigmatizing those parents who seemingly 'fail' to live up to those standards ([Reay and Ball, 1997](#); [Wilkins, 2010](#)).

- 2 Even though contact under the right circumstances is frequently observed to promote tolerance, it should be noted that research findings are not unanimous in favour of this ‘contact hypothesis’ (e.g. Barber *et al.*, 2010; Janmaat, 2010; Kokkonen *et al.*, 2010).
- 3 For all scales and scaling procedures of ICCS data, we refer to the forthcoming International Technical Report (Schulz *et al.*, 2011).
- 4 The scale (eigenvalue of the P.C. = 4.81, factor loadings vary between -0.53 and $+0.84$, Cronbach’s Alpha: 0.88 and $R^2 = 48$ per cent) included 10 items such as: ‘Generally, migrants are not to be trusted’, ‘Migrants take advantage of our social security system’, or ‘I think we could learn a lot from people from other countries’ (see De Groof *et al.*, 2010).
- 5 Inspired by Alegre and Ferrer-Esteban (2010), two other indicators were tested: the level of school autonomy as regards the process of student admission and the number of schools that take previous academic performance of students into account in student admission policy. These indicators could however not be incorporated into the overall scale for government regulation in education, and do not result in the same effects in our analyses as in the above-mentioned paper. They seem to only have an influence in Western-Europe. In order to be able to work with the complete European sample (with Eastern-European countries), we will continue with the indicators listed in Table 3.
- 6 According to Eurydice, Ireland is characterized by a far-reaching freedom of school choice. OECD’s *Education at a glance* (2010) indicates that choice of schooling in Ireland is subject to some restrictions. Our three indicators place Ireland among the market-driven systems.
- 7 All data are from 2010, except data for Belgium (2007) and Greece (2001: last census).
- 8 The extremely high scale score on migration pressure for Luxembourg is due to a very high percentage of migrants (35 per cent of the population born abroad), as well as to a high rate of asylum applications (10.2 versus an overall average of 4.1).
- 9 The table containing the results of these analyses can be obtained on request from the authors.
- 10 In most countries, only one class per school was selected, but sometimes two classes were sampled in a school. So most of the time we have real class aggregated measures, but occasionally we have

something more in the direction of school aggregated variables. It was not possible to distinguish between both forms.

- 11 The mean SES at school has no statistically significant effect. See also Note 9.
- 12 The results of these analyses can be obtained on request from the authors. Moreover, migration pressure and ethnic concentration in low SES schools are highly correlated ($r = -0.83$). This means that models including both variables will produce unreliable parameters due to multicollinearity. Migration pressure leads to higher concentration of ethnic minorities in low SES-schools (see also Table 5). We included the unique variance of migration pressure as a supplementary control, but this does not alter the conclusions (analyses obtainable on request).

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