

# Political Backlash to Refugee Settlement: Cultural and Economic Drivers

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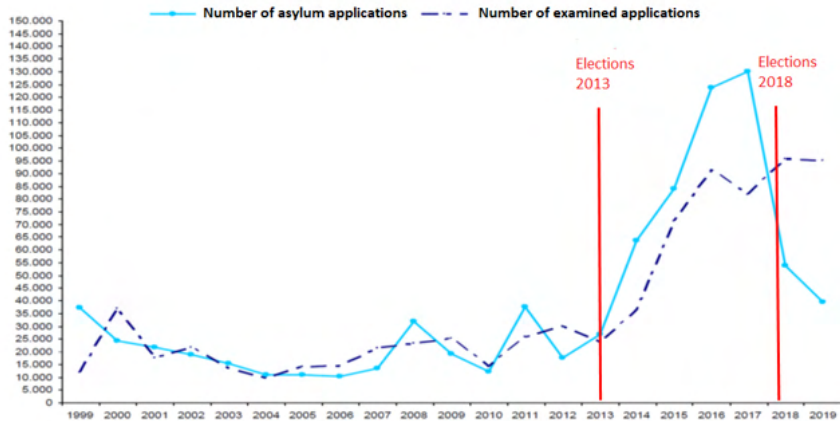
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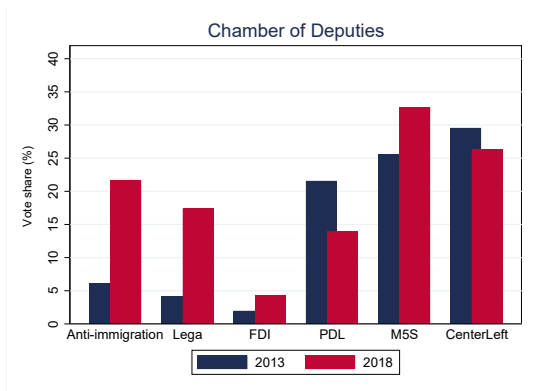
# Motivation

- ▶ Recent surge in refugee inflows unveils new social and political concerns.
  - ▶ Anti-immigrant sentiments and divided public opinion
  - ▶ Failure of reception systems to manage asylum seekers (at national and local level)
  
- ▶ 2015 Refugee Crisis in EU fueled the electoral success of populist 'radical right' parties advocating restrictive immigration policies (Hangartner et al, 2019; Dustmann et al, 2017; Dinas et al. 2019).
  
- ▶ Yet, political response to refugee exposure masks a high degree of heterogeneity, e.g. according to local contexts, types of exposure etc. (Dustmann et al, 2019; Steinmayr, 2021; Alesina and Tabellini, 2022).

# Refugee Crisis in Italy



# Change in support for anti-immigration parties 2013-2018



- ▶ Increased support for anti-immigration parties w/ strong nativist agenda.
- ▶ Anti-immigration parties (*League* and *Bol*): negative reference to diversity and multiculturalism, and support for restrictive policies. [Manifesto Project](#).
- ▶ Votes for *League* and *Bol* correlate with attitudes against immigration. [ESS](#).

# This paper

- ▶ Estimate how local conditions influence political preferences and backlash.
  - ▶ Investigate the contribution of diverse mechanisms, including economic factors, social capital, and intergroup interactions.
- ▶ Leverage exogenous variation in refugees exposure induced by dispersal policy
  - ▶ Exploit hand-collected data on refugee exposure at a very local level, Campo et al, 2021.
  - ▶ Matched with rich set of local characteristics on economic prosperity, social capital and inter-group contact.
- ▶ Build on this pattern of heterogeneity to evaluate counterfactual resettlement schemes
  - ▶ Design a matching model that assign refugees to locations to minimize anti-immigration backlash.

# Background and Data

# Refugee Reception System in Italy

Designed along two different stages:

- ▶ Preliminary phase: identification and assistance in major spots of disembarkation and governmental centres (hotspots, CARA, CPR).
- ▶ Reception phase:
  1. System for the Protection of Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR) setting up reception centers upon decision of local administrations.
  2. Temporary Reception Centers (CAS) created in **2014** to compensate the lack of SPRAR's capacity: hosting 75%–80% of refugees CAS become most relevant. [Stat.](#)

# Dispersal Policy

## 1. Across provinces:

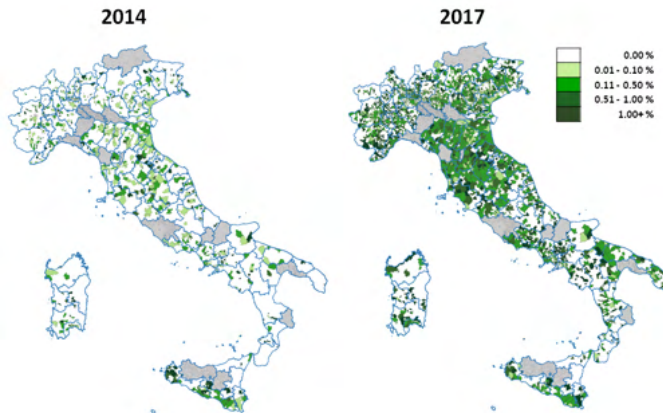
- ▶ Equal distribution of refugees across provinces according to pre-existing population  $\sim$  2.5 asylum seekers per 1000 inhabitants.
- ▶ Objective: reduce the concentration in urban and disembarkation areas and spread the 'burden' across the population

## 2. Within province:

- ▶ CAS allocated by local Prefectures through public procurement procedures that assign bids to cooperatives, NGOs or private operators.
- ▶ CAS location is proposed and decided by economic operators, without authorization of municipality administrations (selection on tender cost scheme).
- ▶ The majority of CAS are divided across networks of apartments and private houses (85%), mostly privately rented (82%).
- ▶ Importantly, municipalities had no influence on i) timing of allocation, ii) number of refugees allocated to them, iii) socio-economic background or refugees' characteristics.



# Refugee Dispersal Policy across municipalities



- ▶ Decentralized data collection from Italian Prefectures (FOIA).
- ▶ Final sample: 92 out of 106 provinces, no selective attrition.
- ▶ In 2017, 38% of municipalities had a CAS (avg capacity of 21 refugees).

# Data: Local Heterogeneity

- ▶ **Economic drivers: Map**
  - ▶ Labor market outcomes (i.e., income pc, activity and employment rate)
  - ▶ Tertiary education
- ▶ **Social capital: Map**
  - ▶ Electoral participation in referenda
  - ▶ Association density of non-profit organizations
  - ▶ Blood donations (dummy)
  - ▶ Validation with additional proxies of social capital from WVS
- ▶ **Inter-group contact: Map**
  - ▶ Share of immigrants
  - ▶ Naturalization rate
  - ▶ Residential contact index
  - ▶ Inter-marriage rate
  - ▶ Elected foreign administrators

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# Empirics: Estimation and Identification

# Empirical Strategy

Estimate how local factors affect political response to refugees' exposure ( $\gamma$ ):

$$Y_{mt} = \alpha + \beta \text{Share of Refugees}_{mt} + \gamma \text{Share of Refugees}_{mt} \times Z_{m0} + \mu_m + \delta_t + \varepsilon_{mt}, \quad (1)$$

- $Y_{mt}$  : vote share for anti-immigration parties in mun  $m$  at time  $t$  (backlash);
- $\text{Share of Refugees}_{mt}$  : share of refugees assigned to  $m$  at time  $t$ ;
- $Z_{m0}$  : pre-determined characteristics by  $m$  at time 0 (std mean 0 and sd 1);
- $\mu_m$  and  $\delta_t$  : municipalities and time FEs.

Identification of  $\gamma$  relies on quasi-random allocation of refugees across municipalities within province, interacted with pre-determined municipal characteristics.

# Exogeneity assumption: Balance tests I

Baseline characteristics:	Share of refugees in 2017	Std. err.	p-value	p-value FWER
<b>Political outcomes</b>				
<i>Camera</i>				
Anti-immigration (%)	-0.005	0.058	0.935	1.000
Lega (Nord) (%)	-0.012	0.057	0.833	0.998
FDI (%)	0.005	0.015	0.749	0.997
PDL (%)	-0.002	0.051	0.968	1.000
M5S (%)	-0.104	0.055	0.061	0.372
Center-left (%)	0.110	0.071	0.125	0.528
Election turnout (%)	-0.079	0.066	0.237	0.733
<i>Senato</i>				
Anti-immigration (%)	0.011	0.067	0.869	0.998
Lega (Nord) (%)	0.005	0.062	0.937	1.000
FDI (%)	0.004	0.018	0.830	0.998
PDL (%)	-0.014	0.050	0.775	0.997
M5S (%)	-0.089	0.053	0.098	0.492
Center-left (%)	0.147	0.085	0.087	0.472
Election turnout (%)	-0.089	0.067	0.187	0.640
<b>B. Institutional context</b>				
Municipality hosted a SPRAR	-0,001	0,001	0,288	0,823
Share of refugees in SPRAR (%)	0.000	0.002	0.907	0.946
Municipality under receivership 2007-13	-0.002	0.002	0.250	0.823
Municipality expenditure (log)	-0.017	0.010	0.084	0.659
Votes for <i>League</i> candidate last election	-0.006	0.004	0.115	0.694
<i>League</i> mayor in charge	-0.013	0.008	0.114	0.694
Mafia presence 1982-2013	0.002	0.004	0.686	0.946
Mafia crime rate 2004-2013	0.000	0.000	0.618	0.946
Crime rate 2004-2013	0.002	0.002	0.239	0.823

# Exogeneity assumption: Balance tests II

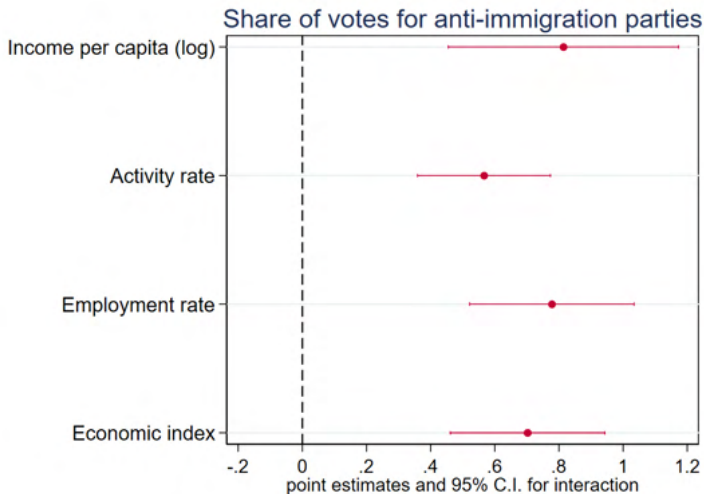
Baseline characteristics:	Share of refugees in 2017	Std. err.	p-value	p-value FWER
<b>C. Economic and demographic characteristics</b>				
Income per capita (log)	-0.001	0.002	0.718	0.712
Activity rate	-0.191	0.062	0.003	0.037
Employment rate	-0.160	0.071	0.027	0.133
Rent prices sqm. (log)	-0.023	0.016	0.168	0.435
Tertiary education rate	-0.024	0.021	0.263	0.469
Population over 65 (%)	0.201	0.063	0.002	0.037
<b>D. Social capital</b>				
Referenda turnout	0.020	0.058	0.733	0.739
Volunteers (% pop.)	0.164	0.092	0.078	0.203
AVIS branch	-0.014	0.003	0.000	0.003
<b>E. Intergroup contact</b>				
Share of immigrants (% pop.)	-0.037	0.044	0.401	0.880
Residential segregation index	0.082	0.089	0.356	0.880
Naturalization rate	0.063	0.106	0.554	0.896
Intermarriage rate	0.000	0.001	0.783	0.945
Foreign-born administrators	-0.005	0.003	0.128	0.555
Non-EU15 born administrators	0.000	0.003	0.903	0.945

No pre-trends and placebo



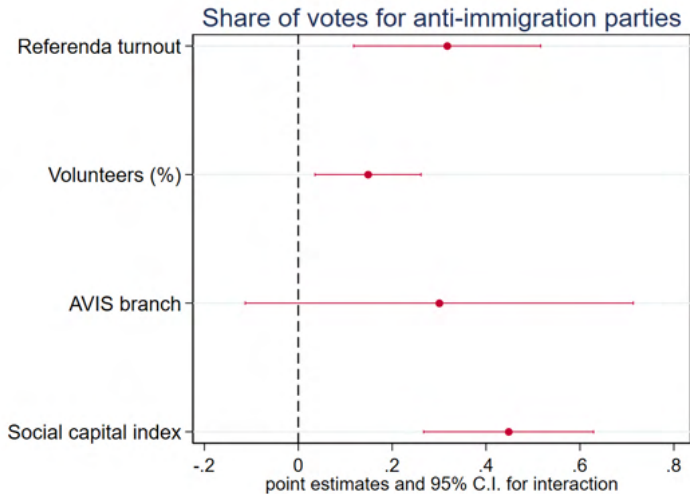
# Political Response to Refugee Exposure

# Response to Refugee Exposure & Economic Drivers

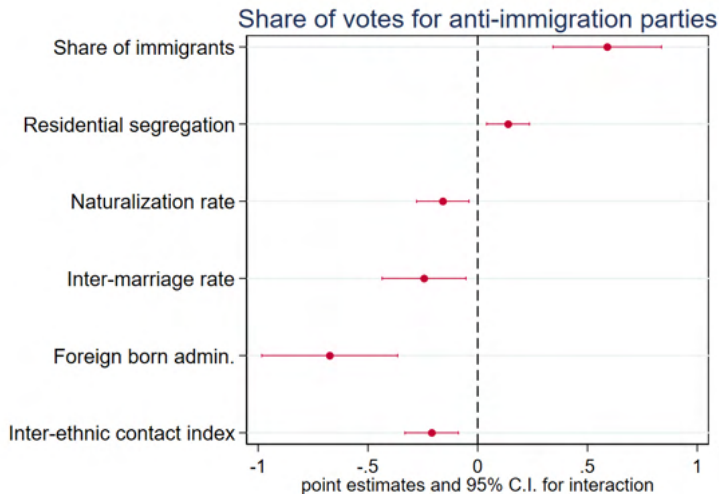


Baseline estimates

# Response to Refugee Exposure & Social Capital



# Response to Refugee Exposure & Inter-group Contact



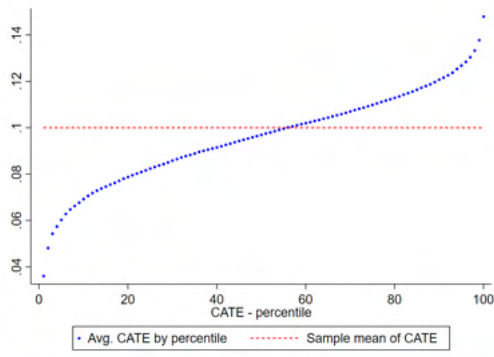
# Robustness

Results are robust considering:

- ▶ Voting for Senate,
- ▶ Selection into voting participation,
- ▶ Including time varying controls,
- ▶ Exclude municipalities hosting SPRAR,
- ▶ Dropping potential outliers.

# Heterogenous treatment effects

- ▶ Estimate heterogeneous treatment effects via *causal forest*, a machine learning technique that allows to estimate the distribution of treatment effects conditional on the whole array of local characteristics (Athey and Imbens 2016; Wager and Athey 2018; Britto et al. 2022).
- ▶ Capture high-dimensional non-linearities, w/o overfitting ([honest approach](#)).
- ▶ Identify the municipalities who respond most to refugee exposure ([CATE](#))



## Differences in high and low predicted effects

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Predicted treatment effects		Std. diff.	MHT p-value
Baseline characteristics	Below median	Above median	(1)-(2)	(1)-(2)
Income (log)	9.302	9.361	-0.227	0.001
Employment rate	44.389	45.434	-0.138	0.001
Activity rate	49.574	50.147	-0.091	0.001
Population	7867.521	6571.607	0.048	0.114
Share over 65	22.637	23.482	-0.153	0.001
Tertiary education rate dummy	0.492	0.507	-0.030	0.249
Referenda turnout	46.977	50.979	-0.670	0.001
NGO associations density	10.806	7.612	0.396	0.001
Blood donor centre	0.353	0.397	-0.092	0.001
Share of immigrants	5.543	6.882	-0.311	0.001
Residential segregation index	23.554	20.094	0.329	0.001
Naturalization rate	14.163	13.262	0.087	0.001
Intermarriage rate	0.116	0.104	0.147	0.001
Foreign-born local administrators	0.379	0.338	0.087	0.001

More graphs

# Resettlement Schemes and Policy Implications



# Designing Novel Resettlement Policies

- ▶ Evidence put into question random allocation policies, locations are heterogeneous in their response to refugee exposure ( $\beta_j$ ).
- ▶ We exploit CATE estimates of local response to refugee exposure to evaluate counterfactual resettlement policies with a normative approach to minimize negative attitudes.
- ▶ Anti-immigration backlash reduces opportunities for integration of minorities (which is an equilibrium outcome). Location mismatch may hamper integration, key policy tool.

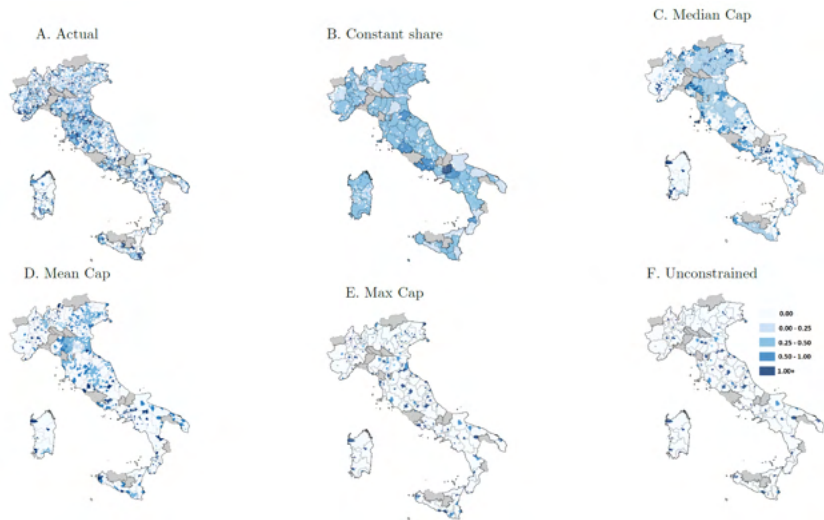
# Optimal Resettlement Policy

- ▶ Within each province  $p$ , our goal to assign  $i \in I$  refugees to  $j \in J$  locations (municipalities).
- ▶ An *assignment* defined who ( $i$ ) is matched to which location ( $j$ ).
- ▶ An *assignment* is a measure  $\mu_{ij}$  over the  $I \times J$  space:  $\mu_{ij} = 1$  if refugee  $i$  is matched to location  $j$ , and zero otherwise.
- ▶ Optimal matching is the solution of the welfare problem over all potential matches:
  - ▶ minimize the probability of failure resettlement policies, i.e., total anti-immigration backlash for each province:

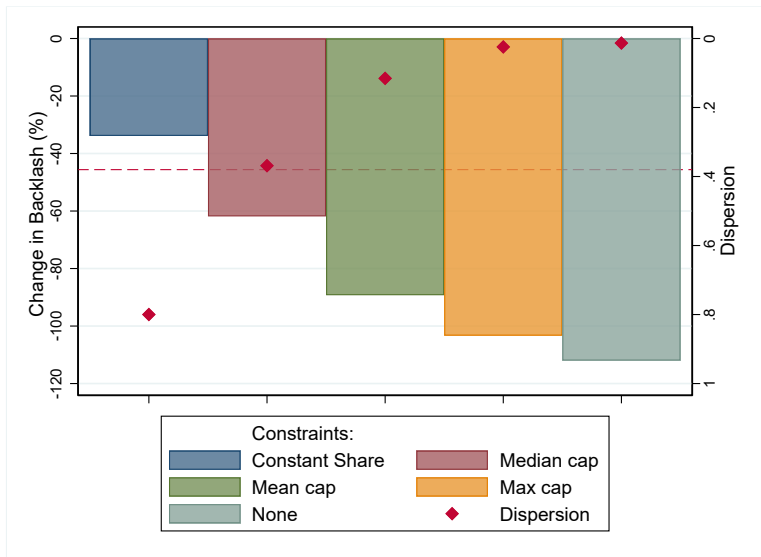
$$\min_{(\mu_{ij} \geq 0)} \sum_{j \in J} \sum_{i \in I} \frac{\mu_{ij}}{Pop_p} \beta_j \quad (2)$$

- ▶ subject to feasibility constraints (and possibly diverse capacity constraints).

# Actual vs counterfactual simulated distributions of refugees



# Change in Backlash under Optimal Assignments

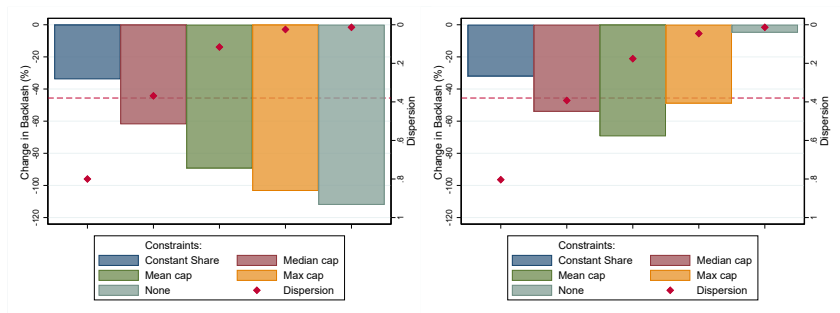


Summary stat

# Change in Backlash under Different Assignments

(a)  $\beta_j$  estimates accounting for economic and socio-cultural drivers

(b)  $\beta_j^{ec}$  estimates accounting for economic drivers and pop. only



Correlation

# Conclusions

# Conclusions

Focus on refugee crisis, shock that increase salience of ethnic boundaries.

In a real-world setting, estimate contrasting political effects:

- ▶ Economic and social capital drivers exacerbate anti-immigration backlash;
- ▶ Positive experiences of inter-group contact with former immigrants do mitigate backlash.

Evaluate counterfactual optimal resettlement policies to minimize backlash:

- ▶ constrained reforms allow sizable backlash reduction from 34 to 100%.
- ▶ by neglecting the socio-cultural local structure, counterfactual assignment policies are less effective in mitigating backlash and riskier, especially when they imply a narrow refugee dispersion.

Thank you for your attention!

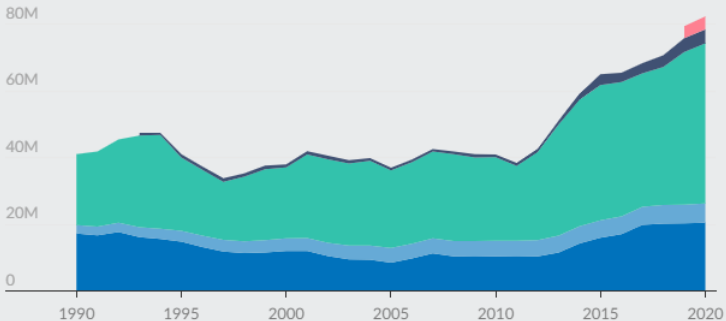
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## 82.4 million people worldwide were forcibly displaced

at the end of 2020 as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations or events seriously disturbing public order.

- Refugees (under UNHCR's mandate)
- Palestine refugees (under UNRWA's mandate)
- Internally displaced people\*
- Asylum-seekers
- Venezuelans displaced abroad\*\*



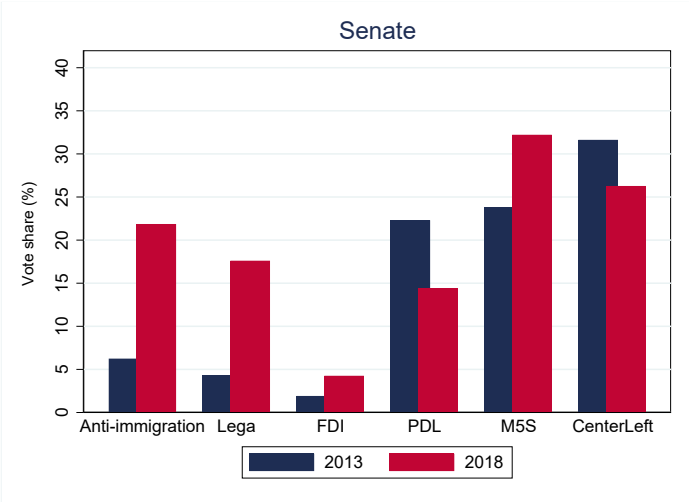
18 June 2021

\* Source: IDMC

\*\* This number excludes Venezuelan asylum-seekers and refugees.

Source: [UNHCR Global Trends 2020](#)

# Change in votes for anti-immigration parties, Senate



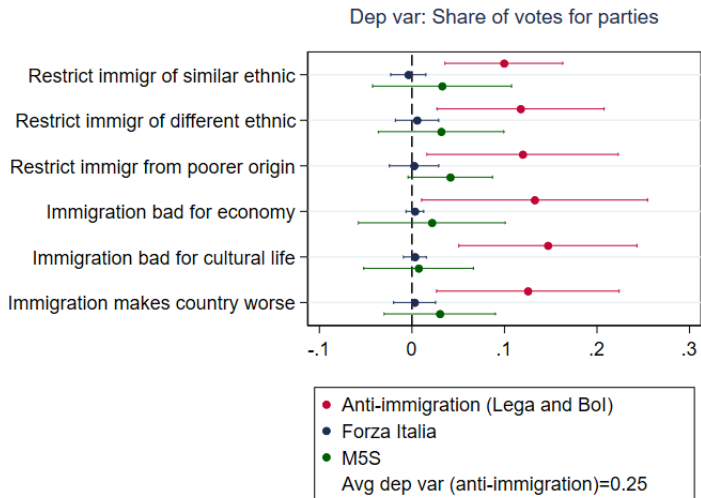
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# Manifesto Project - Parties' ideology about immigration

Category:	2013					2018				
	Lega	FDI	PDL	M5S	PD	Lega	FDI	PDL	M5S	PD
Multiculturalism: Positive	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.23
Multiculturalism: Negative	0.00	1.52	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.75	3.85	0.00	0.00	0.00
Immigration: Negative	-	-	-	-	-	2.98	1.65	2.08	0.02	0.00
Immigration: Positive	-	-	-	-	-	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.09	0.39
Immigrants Assimilation	-	-	-	-	-	1.91	2.20	0.00	0.00	0.00

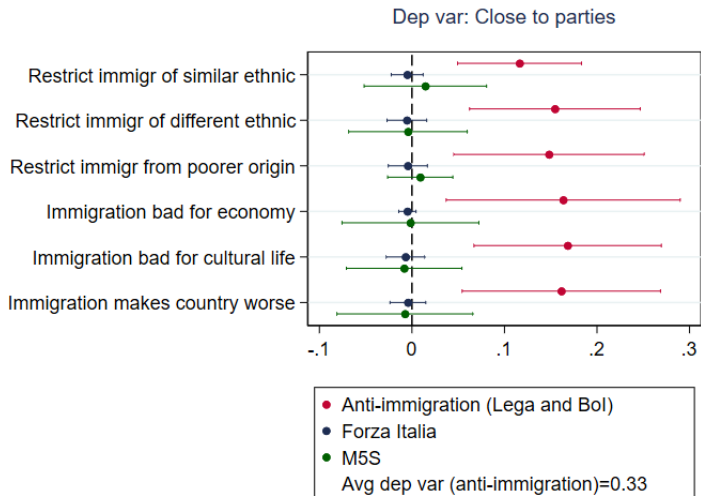
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# Political outcomes and attitudes, Validation ESS



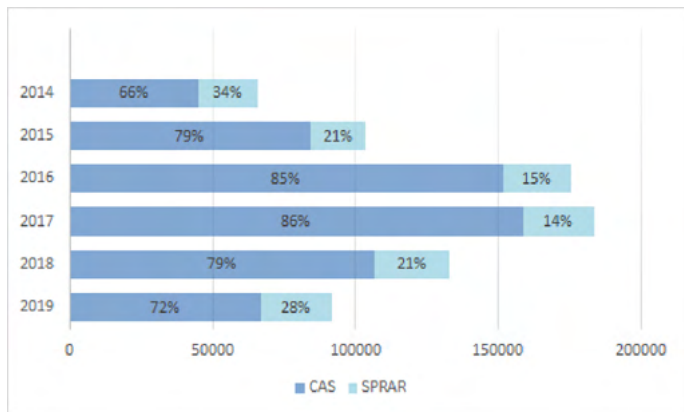
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# Political outcomes and attitudes, Validation ESS



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# Asylum Seekers in CAS and SPRAR Systems, 2014–2019



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# Attrition I

Baseline characteristics	(1) Final Sample	(2) Out of Sample	(3) Diff.	(4) Std. Diff.
<b>Political outcomes</b>				
Anti-immigration (%)	8.414 (7.327)	7.046 (6.403)	-1.368 (1.827)	-0.141
Lega (Nord) (%)	5.949 (7.187)	3.803 (5.384)	-2.146 (1.831)	-0.239
FDI (%)	2.084 (2.578)	2.845 (4.258)	0.761 (0.778)	0.153
PDL (%)	20.854 (6.841)	19.427 (8.396)	-1.427 (2.235)	-0.132
M5S (%)	22.870 (6.534)	20.741 (8.694)	-2.129 (2.450)	-0.196
Center-left (%)	25.303 (8.448)	24.393 (8.967)	-0.910 (2.236)	-0.074
Turnout (%)	74.696 (7.692)	76.438 (7.428)	1.742 (1.803)	0.163
<b>Institutional context</b>				
Municipality hosted a SPRAR	0.046 (0.209)	0.054 (0.225)	0.008 (0.016)	0.026
Share of refugees in SPRAR (%)	0.036 (0.388)	0.048 (0.343)	0.012 (0.022)	0.024
Under receivership 2007-13	0.100 (0.300)	0.095 (0.294)	-0.005 (0.027)	-0.012
Observations	6,965	914	7,880	

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# Attrition II

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
<b>Baseline characteristics</b>	<b>Final Sample</b>	<b>Out of Sample</b>	<b>Diff.</b>	<b>Std. Diff.</b>
<b>Economic and demographic characteristics</b>				
Income per capita (log)	9.334 (0.261)	9.341 (0.272)	0.007 (0.075)	0.018
Activity rate	49.930 (6.324)	50.141 (8.149)	0.211 (2.144)	0.020
Employment rate	45.006 (7.630)	45.438 (9.737)	0.432 (2.798)	0.035
Municipality expenditure (log)	4.112 (1.005)	4.274 (0.944)	0.161 (0.261)	0.117
Rent prices sqm. (log)	3.546 (1.734)	3.746 (2.167)	0.200 (0.440)	0.072
Tertiary education rate	7.453 (2.783)	7.100 (2.741)	-0.353 (0.308)	-0.090
Over 65 (% pop.)	23.041 (5.529)	22.648 (6.538)	-0.393 (1.225)	-0.046
<b>Social capital</b>				
Average Electoral participation	49.018 (6.293)	48.059 (5.110)	-0.959 (1.043)	-0.118
Association density (%)	9.509 (8.292)	12.023 (12.659)	2.514 (3.388)	0.166
AVIS branch in 2010	0.374 (0.484)	0.396 (0.489)	0.022 (0.073)	0.032
<b>Inter-group contact</b>				
% of foreign born	6.206 (4.349)	6.606 (4.844)	0.400 (1.091)	0.061
Residential segregation index	21.868 (10.698)	22.201 (9.861)	0.332 (1.183)	0.023
Naturalization rate	13.758 (10.445)	13.833 (10.872)	0.075 (1.509)	0.005
Intermarriage rate	0.110 (0.081)	0.104 (0.082)	-0.006 (0.016)	-0.052
Elected Foreign-born admin.	0.358 (0.479)	0.316 (0.465)	-0.041 (0.065)	-0.062
Elected Non-EU15 born admin.	0.142 (0.349)	0.129 (0.335)	-0.013 (0.031)	-0.026
Observations	6,965	914	7,880	



# Summary statistics - Refugees

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	Count	Mean	Sd	Min	Max
<b>Panel B. Refugees</b>					
Share of refugees in 2017	6891	0.40	1.60	0	61.31
Number of refugees in 2017	6891	20.81	96.75	0	4000
Avg number of refugees 2014–2017	6891	13.63	73.26	0	4000
Municipality with CAS 2014–2017	6891	0.43	0.50	0	1
Avg number refugees per CAS	2562	23.14	84.78	0.400	4000
Municipality with CAS, more 1 year	6891	0.31	0.46	0	1
Municipality with CAS, more 100 refugees	6891	0.03	0.17	0	1
Municipality with SPRAR	6891	0.10	0.30	0	1
Share of refugees in SPRAR 2017	6891	0.07	0.54	0	17.49
Avg share refugees in SPRAR 2014–2017	6891	0.05	0.39	0	12.92

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# Local variation in economic factors

(a) Income



(b) Employment rate



(c) Activity rate



Sizable within prov variation.

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# Local variation in social capital

(a) Turnout ref.



(b) Volunteers density



(c) Blood donor centers



Sizable within prov variation.

Example: turnout between sd 5.15; within sd 4.16.

Correlation

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# Local variation in inter-ethnic contact

Back Correlation

(a) Foreign-born residents



(b) Segregation



(c) Naturalization



(d) Inter-marriage



(e) Foreign-born admin.



# Correlation matrix

Table: Cross-correlation table – Social capital

Variables	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
(1) Electoral participation referenda	1.000			
(2) Association density (\ %)	0.173	1.000		
(3) AVIS branch in 2010	0.138	0.030	1.000	
(4) Social capital index PCA	0.811	0.716	0.114	1.000

Table: Cross-correlation table – Inter-ethnic group contact

Variables	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
(1) Residential contact index	1.000				
(2) Naturalization rate	0.060	1.000			
(3) Inter-marriage rate	0.101	0.129	1.000		
(4) Elected Foreign-born admin.	0.119	0.046	0.089	1.000	
(5) Inter-ethnic contact index PCA	0.803	0.636	0.163	0.155	1.000

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# WVS measures of social capital

	Count	Mean	Sd	Min	Max	
<b>Panel A. Our measure of social capital</b>						
Association member	6885	0.35	0.48	0	1	
Voluntary unpaid work	5943	0.27	0.44	0	1	
Vote at general election tomorrow	1390	0.86	0.35	0	1	
<b>Panel B. WVS measures of social capital</b>						
<i>Main beliefs</i>						
Trust (generalized)	7589	0.32	0.46	0	1	
Fairness	6739	9.15	1.70	1	10	
<i>Civic capital measures, Guiso et al, 2011</i>						
Avoiding a fare on public transport	7790	8.89	1.94	1	10	
Cheating on taxes	7782	8.71	2.14	1	10	
Accepting a bribe	7784	9.38	1.46	1	10	
Lying in your own interest	6752	8.61	2.01	1	10	
Throwing away litter in public place	4000	9.47	1.18	1	10	
Speeding over the limit	1971	8.39	2.06	1	10	
Civic capital index (PCA)						
<i>Cultural capital, Tabellini 2009</i>						
Respect for other people	7881	0.67	0.47	0	1	
Control	7595	6.13	2.38	1	10	
<b>Panel C. Correlation among civic capital measure</b>						
Variables:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
(1) Claiming government benefits	1.000					
(2) Avoiding a fare on public transport	0.305	1.000				
(3) Cheating on taxes	0.405	0.332	1.000			
(4) Accepting a bribe	0.281	0.252	0.256	1.000		
(5) Lying	0.273	0.308	0.319	0.346	1.000	
(6) Civic capital index (PCA)	0.670	0.654	0.727	0.577	0.685	1.000

# Validation - WVS measures of social capital

Dep var: WVS proxy for social capital	(1) Trust	(2) Beliefs Fairness	(3) Civic capital Index	(4) Cultural capital Respect	(5) Cultural capital Control
Association member	0.154*** (0.013)	0.221*** (0.054)	0.089*** (0.025)	0.078*** (0.012)	0.179*** (0.025)
Observations	6636	1481	6591	6869	6609
Voluntary unpaid work	0.142*** (0.015)	0.093 (0.085)	0.145*** (0.029)	0.078*** (0.014)	0.146*** (0.029)
Observations	5732	566	5697	5931	5708
Vote at general election tomorrow	0.106*** (0.033)	0.326*** (0.084)	0.304*** (0.080)	0.057 (0.036)	0.317*** (0.083)
Observations	1341	1361	1335	1386	1344

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# Absence of Pre-trends in Election Results

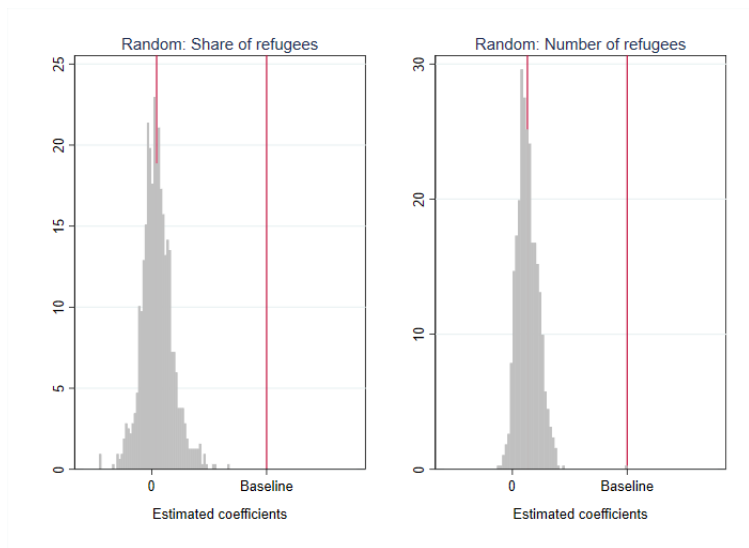
Table: Pre-trends in Election Results - Chamber of Deputies (2001-2013)

	(1)	(2)
	Anti-immigration	League
Year 2013 $\times$ Share of Refugees	-0.0231 (0.0450)	-0.0039 (0.0346)
Year 2008 $\times$ Share of Refugees	-0.0191 (0.0769)	0.0069 (0.0586)
Year 2006 $\times$ Share of Refugees	0.0010 (0.0537)	0.0469 (0.0340)
Observations	27556	27556
Municipality FE	Yes	Yes
Time FE	Yes	Yes

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# Placebo: Counterfactual political response estimates



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# Response to Refugee Exposure & Economic Drivers

Dep var: Vote Share for	(1) Anti-immigration	(2) Lega	(3) FDI
<i>Panel A. Baseline:</i>			
Share of Refugees	0.168*** (0.058)	0.118** (0.057)	0.053** (0.025)
<i>Panel B. Income per capita:</i>			
Share of Refugees	0.157 (0.132)	0.108 (0.119)	0.053** (0.026)
Income per capita (log) × Share of Refugees	0.814*** (0.183)	0.767*** (0.148)	0.018 (0.047)
Observations	13782	13782	13782
Mean dep var (2013)	8.44	5.98	2.08
Mean change dep var	17.55	14.67	1.92
Municipality & Time FE	Yes	Yes	Yes

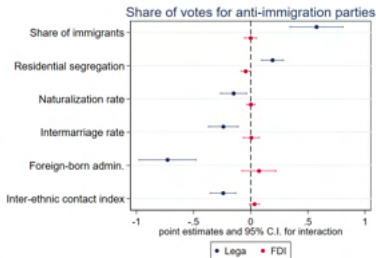
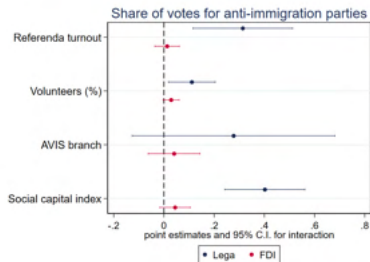
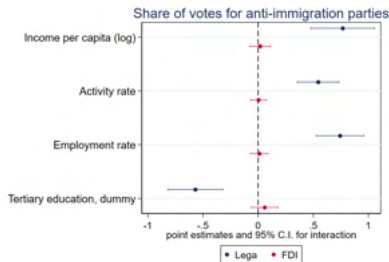
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## No effect on selection into voting participation

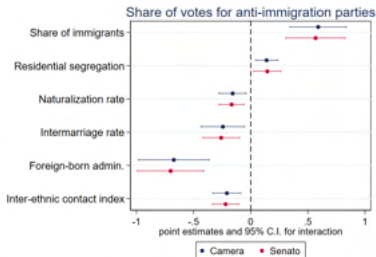
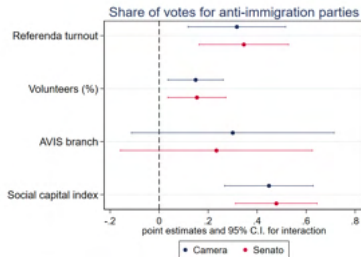
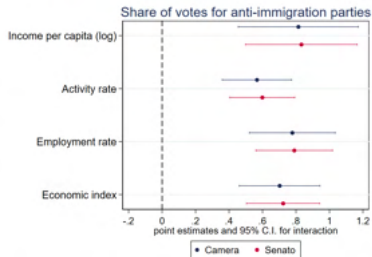
Dep var:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Turnout rate - Chamber		Turnout rate - Senate	
Share of Refugees	0.043 (0.032)	0.037 (0.031)	0.045 (0.032)	0.039 (0.032)
Observations	13782	13782	13782	13782
R-squared	0.930	0.930	0.929	0.930
Mean dep var	74.66	74.66	74.37	74.37
Municipality FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time-varying controls	No	Yes	No	Yes

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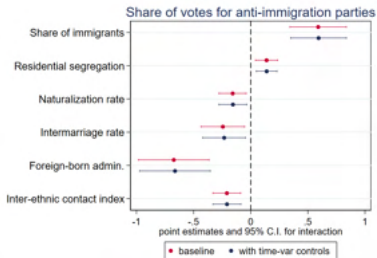
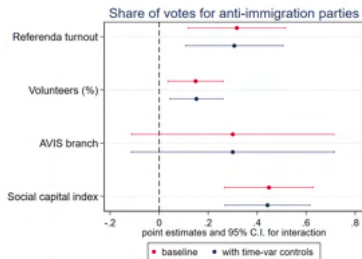
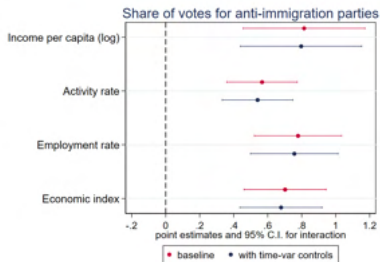
# Response to refugee exposure - League vs. Bol



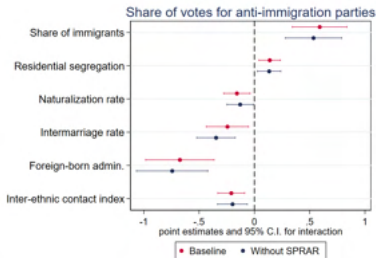
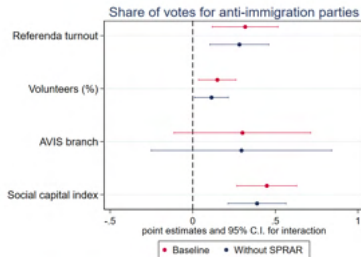
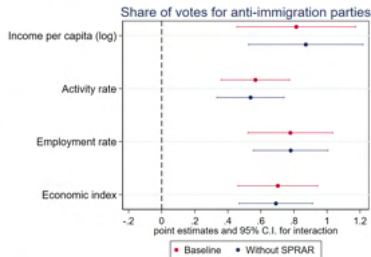
# Response to refugee exposure - Chamber and Senate



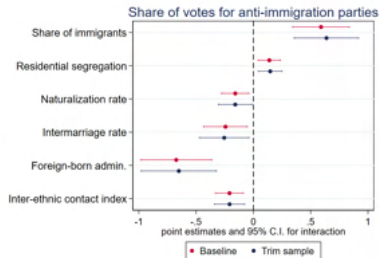
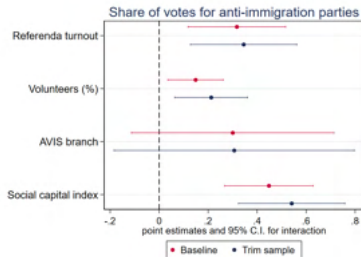
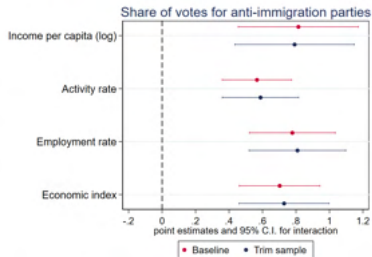
# Robustness with time-varying controls



# Robustness: exclude municipalities with SPRAR



# Robustness: trim sample



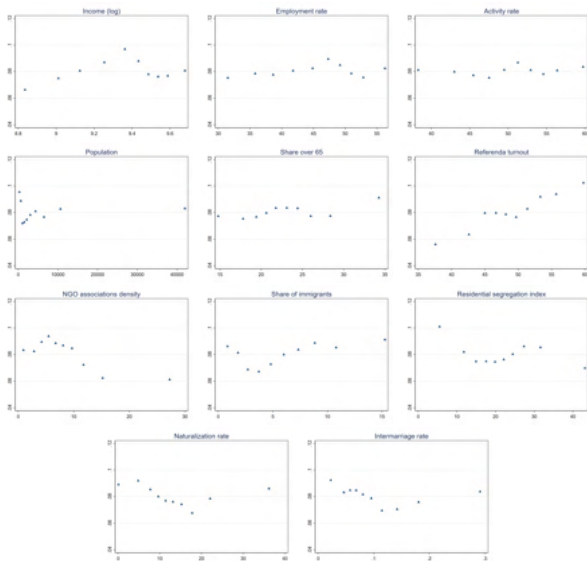


# Causal forest machine learning technique

- ▶ Causal Forest: development of supervised machine learning technique that can be used for predicting heterogeneity in causal treatment effects Athey and Imbens 2016; Wager and Athey 2018; Britto et al. 2022.
- ▶ Based on data-driven sample splits to estimate Conditional Average Treatment Effects (CATE):
- ▶ In our setting:
  - ▶ *honest approach*: sample randomly split in two equal parts, one to define the sample splits (leafs) and the other for estimating the predicted CATE Athey et al, 2019;
  - ▶ causal forest in first-differences Britto et al, 2022;
  - ▶ 100K simulations (trees);
  - ▶ minimum node size (leaf): 100.

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# CATE by economic and socio-cultural mechanisms



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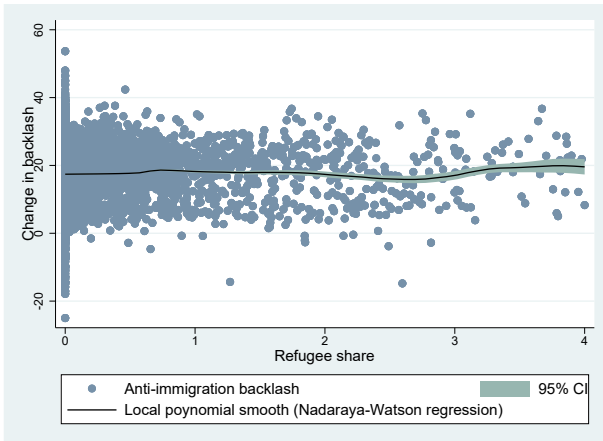
Table: Summary statistics - Counterfactuals

	Count	Mean	Sd	Min	Max
<b>Panel A. Actual refugee distribution</b>					
Share of refugees	6891	0.40	1.60	0	61.31
Number of refugees	6891	20.82	96.75	0	4000
Municipality with CAS	6891	0.38	0.49	0	1
<b>Panel B. Simulated refugee distribution - Rule 2.5 cap</b>					
Share of simulated refugees	6891	0.20	0.11	0	0.498
Number of simulated refugees	6891	16.02	67.99	0	3155
Municipality with simulated CAS	6891	0.79	0.41	0	1
Compliance rate	6891	0.51	0.50	0	1
Δ backlash	-50%				
<b>Panel C. Simulated refugee distribution - Mean capacity</b>					
Share of simulated refugees	6891	0.17	0.21	0	1.275
Number of simulated refugees	6891	19.19	84.83	0	3419
Municipality with simulated CAS	6891	0.52	0.50	0	1
Compliance rate	6891	0.43	0.50	0	1
Δ backlash	-57%				
<b>Panel D. Simulated refugee distribution - Max capacity</b>					
Share of simulated refugees	6891	0.02	0.22	0	5.473
Number of simulated refugees	6891	20.82	210.21	0	5240
Municipality with simulated CAS	6891	0.01	0.12	0	1
Compliance rate	6891	0.37	0.48	0	1
Δ backlash	-93%				
<b>Panel E. Simulated refugee distribution - Unconstrained</b>					
Share of simulated refugees	6891	0.02	0.23	0	6.106
Number of simulated refugees	6891	20.82	212.20	0	5240
Municipality with simulated CAS	6891	0.01	0.11	0	1
Compliance rate	6891	0.37	0.48	0	1
Δ backlash	-95%				

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Exp. variable:	$\Delta$ Share of Refugees			
Capacity constraint:	Median cap		Mean cap	
Economic index PCA	-1.36** (0.61)	0.028	-1.39** (0.60)	0.023
Income per capita (log)	-0.05** (0.02)	0.028	-0.06** (0.02)	0.014
Activity rate	-0.95** (0.47)	0.048	-0.90** (0.42)	0.036
Employment rate	-1.27** (0.53)	0.018	-1.37** (0.56)	0.017
Bonding social capital index PCA1	-0.79* (0.44)	0.078	-1.16** (0.56)	0.041
Average turnout	-1.17* (0.60)	0.055	-1.30** (0.63)	0.042
Association density (%)	0.20 (0.43)	0.649	-0.40* (0.24)	0.099
AVIS branch in 2010	-0.08** (0.04)	0.046	-0.06*** (0.02)	0.006
Bridging social capital index PCA	0.29 (0.26)	0.271	0.28* (0.17)	0.094
Intermarriage rate	1.14** (0.55)	0.042	1.05** (0.48)	0.030
Naturalization rate	0.23 (0.33)	0.488	0.20 (0.29)	0.502
Share of foreign born	-0.65* (0.36)	0.077	-0.64** (0.29)	0.033
Observations	2003		678	

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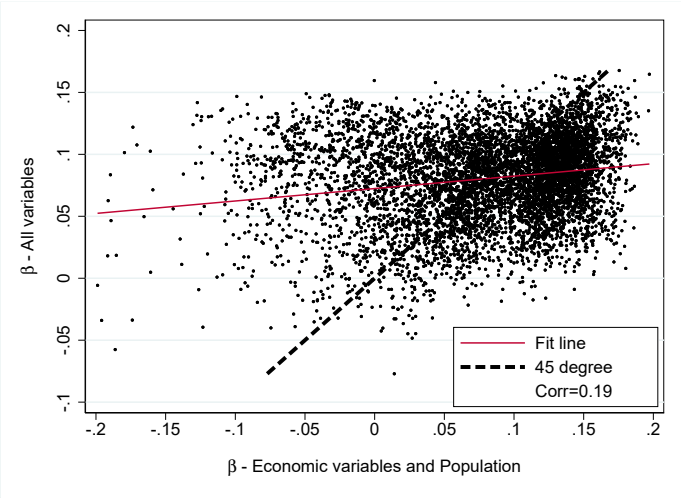
Figure: Local Polynomial Estimate of Local Response to Refugee Exposure



Notes: This Figure shows the scatterplot with overlaid non-parametric estimates of the effect on vote share for anti-immigration parties of refugee exposure from Nadaraya-Watson regression, Epanechnikov kernel, with bandwidth 0.3 natural log points and 95 percent confidence interval.

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# Backlash effects under Different Assignment Criteria



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