

# MIGRANT-RELATED ATTITUDES AND PERCEIVED ETHNIC THREATS BETWEEN IN-GROUPS AND OUT-GROUPS

## *The cases of Greece and Sweden*

### Abstract

The paper explores inter-group relations by detecting divergences and/or convergences in ethnic threat perceptions and migrant-opposition attitudes between in-groups and out-groups within and across Greece and Sweden representing contexts with differentiated macro-level actual competitive economic and integration policy conditions. Using data from the fourth round (2008/2009) of the European Social Survey (ESS) Univariate 2-way (M) Anovas demonstrate moderate inter-group relations in Sweden and intense ones in Greece implying a potential inter-group clash in the latter. The paper is a step toward filling the lacuna with respect to the assessment of inter-group relations via unilateral processes and attempts to provide some fresh insights to be further investigated in future migrant-related studies.

### Keywords

Inter-group relations • ethnic conflict • integration policies • ethnic competition theory

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## 1 Introduction

Past research underlines that European countries have experienced rising migration inflows during the last decade (Hooghe *et al.* 2008). The estimated number of international immigrants increased from 49.4 million in 1990 to 69.8 million in 2010 representing 6.9% and 9.5%, respectively of the European population (IOM 2010). The data confirm that whilst the European Union has attempted to regulate immigration, an increasing number of economic or labour immigrants, political asylum seekers, or individuals who reunify with their family members, continue to settle down in European countries (Papagianni 2006). The increase of the immigrant population during the last decade has affected the ethnic composition of the European countries and reinforced the perceptions that immigrant groups (out-groups) constitute an ethnic threat to the social, political and economic order, as well as to the cultural homogeneity and the national identity of the host populations (in-groups) (Meuleman, Davidov & Billiet 2009; Schlueter & Wagner 2008). High levels of ethnic threat perceptions are considered to be the cornerstone of intense inter-group relations as well as the foundation of anti-immigrant sentiments such as

migrant-opposition, anti-immigrant prejudice and ethnic exclusionism (Coenders, Lubbers & Scheepers 2005; Gijssberts, Scheepers & Coenders 2004; Semyonov, Rajman & Gorodzeisky 2008). Some scholars advocate that immigration inevitably intensifies inter-group relations as group contact is intrinsically associated with inter-group competition which leads to ethnic clashes (Park 1950)<sup>1</sup>. In contrast to the scholars considering ethnic conflict as a natural outcome of immigration, others suggest that only under certain conditions do migration inflows generate inter-group strife (Yang *et al.* 2004).

In migrant-related research there is empirical evidence that the conditions that impact on ethnic threat perceptions and consequently influence inter-group relations involve among others the integration policies adopted in different host countries (Castles 1995; Castles & Davidson 2000; Castles & Miller 2003; Meuleman & Reeskens 2008; Weldon 2006). Additional conditions that are considered to be prerequisites of shaping inter-group relations are developed in different theoretical frameworks explaining migrant-related attitudes. Among the most prominent frameworks is ethnic competition theory, which advocates that

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[...] competition, at the individual level as well as at the contextual level, may reinforce the mechanisms of social (contra-) identification, the eventual outcome of which is referred to as ethnic exclusionism (Scheepers, Gijsberts & Coenders 2002: 18).

At the individual level, the intensity of the competition for the maintenance of the dominant group's status position, resources, prerogatives, but also its culture in terms of identity and values, is specified by socio-economic characteristics such as low income, low education and unemployment status (Mayda 2006; O'Rourke & Sinnott 2006; Wilkes, Guppy & Farris 2008). Socio-economically disadvantaged in-group members are more vulnerable to the competition with out-groups as they occupy similar socio-economic positions (Blalock 1967); consequently the former are more prone to greater perceived ethnic threats and anti-immigrant sentiments. At the contextual level, macro components including sizeable out-group populations, unfavourable economic conditions and high unemployment rates foster higher ethnic threat perceptions due to the fiercer competition over rare resources (Coenders, Gijsberts & Scheepers 2004; Schneider 2008; Semyonov, Raijman & Gorodzeisky 2008).

Either at an individual or a contextual level increased inter-group competition for scarce resources enhances perceived ethnic threats resulting in intense inter-group relations and potential ethnic clashes (Sherif & Sherif 1953, 1979). Ethnic threat perceptions are the subjective feelings that the in-group's prerogatives are threatened by out-groups, hence are applied as proxies to measure how the host population evaluates inter-group relations (Meuleman 2009: 236). Additionally, perceived ethnic threats are the core explanation of a wide set of anti-immigrant sentiments including out-group opposition attitudes which are also used to interpret the relations formed between the in-group and out-group members (Coenders, Gijsberts & Scheepers 2004; Coenders, Lubbers & Scheepers 2005; Scheepers, Gijsberts & Coenders 2002).

In migrant-related studies it is common to assess inter-group relations with measurements on perceived ethnic threats and migrant-related attitudes that derive exclusively from in-group members. However, the unilateral exploration of inter-group relations and the potential conflict that characterises such relations from the point of view of the host group has a serious shortcoming. It assumes that the relations formed between the in-group and out-group members can be evaluated by considering only the opinions of the former. Such an approach neglects that inter-group relations are bilateral ones formed by the interplay between in-group and out-group members; consequently their assessment should take into account both groups' evaluations.

The main rationale of the paper is to provide a step toward filling the lacuna with respect to the assessment of inter-group relations via unilateral processes. Hence, it explores inter-group relations by taking into account both in-group's and out-group's ethnic threat perceptions and migrant-related attitudes within and across Greece and

Sweden representing contexts with differentiated macro-level actual competitive economic and integration policy conditions. Using data from the fourth round (2008/2009) of the European Social Survey (ESS) divergences in perceived ethnic threats and migrant-related attitudes between in-group and out-group members signify intense inter-group relations whereas convergences moderate ones and greater integration of immigrants in the host country.

To the best of our knowledge, past studies have not assessed inter-group relations by taking into account both in-group's and out-group's evaluations; therefore, the paper attempts to provide some fresh insights to be further investigated in future migrant-related research.

## 2 Ethnic competition theory, integration policies and inter-group relations

Ethnic competition theory derives from social identity theory (Tajfel 1981, 1982; Tajfel & Turner 1979) and realistic group conflict theory. The former explains the unfavourable attitudes as a general disposition where in-group members perceive themselves as superior to out-groups. More specifically, the majority population through the mental process of social identification applies positive attributes to its members and negative ones to the individuals from different ethnic groups. Whilst the above processes may take place even when out-groups are absent<sup>2</sup>, social identity theory works complementary to realistic group conflict theory in the ethnic competition framework (Coenders, Gijsberts & Scheepers 2004; Scheepers, Gijsberts & Coenders 2002).

The main assumption developed in realistic group conflict theory is that the in-group's negative perceptions are essentially rooted in the perceived inter-group competition for scarce resources including material interests as well as issues associated with status and power (Blalock 1967; Blumer 1958; Campbell 1965; Quillian 1995; Sherif 1967; Sherif & Sherif 1979). There are two analytical components of inter-group competition; the actual and the perceived one (Blalock 1967; LeVine & Campbell 1972). The former refers to the objective competitive conditions in which inter-group relations are taking shape and are associated with the availability of scarce goods and the distribution of such goods through market mechanisms. The actual competitive conditions impact on the in-group's perceptions of competition forming subjective socio-economic threats, which may in turn induce migrant-opposition attitudes. Under this scope, actual competition has an indirect effect on anti-immigrant sentiments via perceived competition and threat (Bobo 1983).

Actual competitive conditions are conceptualised as contextual characteristics and have been primarily operationalised with the prevailing economic conditions and the size of the out-group population in the host country (Blalock 1967). The latter enhances the intensity of inter-group competition as the in-group members feel economically and culturally threatened by sizeable migrant groups (Quillian

1995). The macro-level actual economic conditions have a significant impact on the intensity of inter-group competition in cases of downward economic trend where the resources are becoming scarcer. For instance, migrant-related research underscores that in countries where the prevailing economic conditions are stringent (i.e. low GDP) and the unemployment rates high, the competition over resources becomes fiercer increasing the levels of perceived ethnic threat and anti-immigrant sentiments (Castles 2006; Feld 2005; Meuleman, Davidov & Billiet 2009).

Actual competition also occurs at the micro level when the ethnic majority group members belonging to socio-economically underprivileged groups (i.e. low income, low education and unemployment status) feel that their social status and privileges are threatened by out-group members competing for similar niches in the labour market (Olzak 1992). Thus, the former perceive greater ethnic threats and develop migrant-opposition attitudes (Coenders 2001; Coenders, Lubbers & Scheepers 2005).

Whilst various scholars underline ethnic competition theory's thesis (Coenders, Gijssberts & Scheepers 2004; Coenders, Lubbers & Scheepers 2005; Scheepers, Gijssberts & Coenders 2002; Schneider 2008; Semyonov, Rajjman & Gorodzeisky 2008) in developing ethnic threat perceptions, others emphasise the pivotal role of integration policies in shaping directly or indirectly the public opinion with respect to immigration<sup>3</sup> (Castles 1995; Castles & Davidson 2000; Geddes 2003; Meuleman & Reeskens 2008). The integration policy measures have a direct impact on ethnic threat perceptions and anti-immigrant sentiments as individuals through socialisation processes internalise values and norms associated with out-group's rights and obligations that are institutionalised in migrant-related laws (Weldon 2006: 335). Furthermore, the governments' policies serve as a starting point for the public discourse on immigrants' integration which is mainly carried out by political parties and elites and enforced through media forming directly the public opinion with respect to immigration (Weldon 2006: 335). The integration policies may also indirectly shape migrant-related sentiments as they outline the social environment in which inter-group relations take place; therefore they impact on the attitudes and perceived threats formed between the in-group and out-group members (Castles 1995; Castles & Davidson 2000). The effects of integration policies on inter-group relations have been confirmed in previous studies advocating that inclusive policy measures<sup>4</sup> diminish ethnic threat perceptions whereas exclusive ones increase perceived ethnic threats and anti-immigrant sentiments (Castles 1995; Castles & Davidson 2000; Castles & Miller 2003; Meuleman & Reeskens 2008).

Based on the assumptions developed in ethnic competition theory and the empirical evidence of integration policies' impact on perceived ethnic threats and migrant-related attitudes, it is hypothesised that in countries with more inclusive integration policies and less intensified macro-level actual competitive economic conditions, ethnic threat perceptions and migrant-opposition attitudes between in-groups and out-groups are likely to converge. Such convergences

signify moderate inter-group relations and greater integration of the out-group that is not perceived as a major ethnic threat to the economic and cultural prerogatives of the majority population. On the contrary, it is expected that in countries with more exclusionist integration policies and intensified macro-level actual economic competition ethnic threat perceptions and migrant-opposition attitudes between the majority and the minority groups are likely to diverge echoing intense inter-group relations and potential ethnic clashes.

In order to examine the above hypotheses two countries with differentiated macro-level actual competitive economic and integration policy conditions are selected, i.e. Sweden and Greece. According to the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX II) these countries have almost diametrically different migrant-related policies as the former adopts inclusive integration policies and the latter exclusionist ones. In the overall ranking of MIPEX II, Sweden's integration policies score the highest of all 28 countries, whilst Greece is ranked 24th as none of the six areas of integration policy is favourable for promoting integration in the country (Niessen, Huddleston & Citron 2007).

Furthermore, these countries are differentiated in macro-level actual competitive economic conditions as conceptualised in ethnic competition theory. Data from Eurostat (Eurostat 2011) indicate that the contextual economic conditions in Greece are much less favourable than in Sweden. During 2008 the GDP per capita expressed in purchasing power standards (PPS) was much lower in the former (92) than in the latter (124). During the same year, the Greek gross debt (110.3%) as a percentage of the GDP was much higher than in Sweden (38.2%) and among the highest in the Euro area indicating a downward economic trend of the Greek economy (European Commission 2010). In addition, the reported harmonised unemployment rate was higher in Greece (12.9%) than in Sweden (8.2%) (Eurostat 2011).

## 3 Methodology

### 3.1 Sample

The study explores inter-group relations through divergences and/or convergences in perceived ethnic threats and migrant-opposition attitudes within and across Greek and Swedish in-groups and out-groups using data from the fourth round (2008/2009) of the European Social Survey (ESS). The ESS is an academically led and methodologically rigorous biennial study monitoring changes in social attitudes, beliefs and behaviour patterns within Europe. The multinational design and co-ordination of the project is funded jointly by the European Commission, the European Science Foundation and academic funding bodies in each participating country. The first round was fielded in 2002/2003 and the fourth round (2008/2009) used in the present study covers 31 countries. The ESS is designed for optimal international comparability of the data using state-of-the-art methodology

that involves strict random probability sampling, a minimum target response rate of 70% and rigorous translation protocols.

In the ESS round 4 the Greek sample is  $n_1 = 2072$  and the Swedish one  $n_2 = 1830$ . The Greek dataset derives from a stratified clustered three stage probability sampling for respondents older than 15 years old whereas the Swedish one from one-stage equal probability sampling without clustering for respondents older than 15 years old. The out-group and in-group in the Greek dataset account for 5.1% (106) and 94.9% (1965) of the total sample, respectively. In the Swedish dataset, the out-group and in-group members account for 10.4% (190) and 89.6% (1639) of the total sample, respectively.

### 3.2 Measurements

In the study out-group members, namely immigrants, are operationalised as individuals whose parents and who themselves were born abroad and not with the commonly applied definition of foreign-citizens. There are substantial differences in the conceptualisation and operationalisation of out-group members as foreign-citizens and as foreign-born individuals, since the latter may acquire through naturalisation processes the citizenship of the host country (Dumont & Lemaître 2005: 3). The different naturalisation processes adopted in the host countries have a significant impact on the number of foreign-citizens in migrant-related studies. Thus, cross-national studies employing such definitions are susceptible to inaccuracies with respect to the measurement of migrant-related attitudes and ethnic threat perceptions. As Schneider (2008: 56) emphasises “This problem is even worse for using non-EU citizenship as a criterion, as people from non-EU countries gain the most from naturalisation”. Dumont and Lemaître (2005) underline that Greece and Sweden adopt different naturalisation processes, as in the latter the citizenship acquisition is easier and more common than in Greece. Similarly, MIPEX II indicates that Sweden has the highest score in the policy area of “access to nationality” among the 28 participating countries whereas Greece scores second worst (Niessen, Huddleston & Citron 2007). The difficulty in acquiring the Greek citizenship is also verified from the ESS round 4 data since 22.3% (24) of foreign-born individuals in Greece have acquired the country’s citizenship compared to 66.8% (127) in Sweden.

The core module of the ESS questionnaire contains items measuring various aspects of migrant-related attitudes and ethnic threat perceptions. The former involve attitudes expressing out-group acceptance/opposition whereas the latter reflect perceived economic, cultural, general ethnic (i.e. immigrants make country a worse place to live) and social benefits threats of immigrants in the host country. Migrant-related attitudes are measured with three items asking whether respondents think that their country should allow people of the same race or different race and from poorer countries outside Europe to settle down in the host country (Table 1, questions 1, 2, 3).

Respondents indicate their responses on a four-point scale ranging from 1 (allow many) to 4 (allow none).

Principal Component Analysis (PCA) is applied to the items measuring out-group acceptance/opposition in the Greek, the Swedish and the merged dataset including data from both countries (Table 2). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity are used to assess the adequateness of the items under study for PCA (Kaiser 1970; Bartlett 1950). KMO for each individual item as well as for the set of the three items included in the analysis is greater than .5 in the Greek (.64), Swedish (.72) and merged dataset (.69). In addition, Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity test is significant ( $p < .001$ ) and all the Pearson correlations between the three items included in each dataset’s analysis are greater than .30 satisfying the requirements for performing PCA.

The number of factors in the three PCAs is determined with Kaiser’s (1960) rule, i.e. retaining factors with eigenvalues greater than 1. The PCA for the Greek dataset indicates a single factor accounting for 73.8% (Eigenvalue = 2.2) of the total variance. The specific factor solution explains more than half of each original item’s variance as the communality values for questions 1, 2 and 3 (Table 1) are .56, .85 and .81, respectively. One factor is also extracted from the Swedish and the merged dataset explaining 87% (Eigenvalue = 2.6) and 84.5% (Eigenvalue = 2.5) of the total variance, respectively. The communality values for each of the three items under study in the Swedish dataset are more than .83 whereas for the merged dataset greater than .74 indicating an adequate proportion of the variance in the original items that is accounted for by the factor solution in the two datasets. Reliability analysis indicates that the above factors are reliable measures [Cronbach  $\alpha_{\text{Greek dataset}} = .91$ , Cronbach  $\alpha_{\text{Swedish dataset}} = .96$ , Cronbach  $\alpha_{\text{Merged dataset}} = .95$ ]. As factors’ higher scores correspond to higher levels of out-group opposition, the specific factors represent migrant-opposition indexes.

Table 1. ESS selected questions

1.	Now, using this card, to what extent do you think [country] should allow people of the same race or ethnic group as most [country]’s people to come and live here?
2.	How about people of a different race or ethnic group from most [country] people?
3.	How about people from the poorer countries outside Europe?
4.	Would you say it is generally bad or good for [country]’s economy that people come to live here from other countries?
5.	And, using this card, would you say that [country]’s cultural life is generally undermined or enriched by people coming to live here from other countries?
6.	Is [country] made a worse or a better place to live by people coming to live here from other countries?
7.	A lot of people who come to live in [country] from other countries pay taxes and make use of social benefits and services. On balance, do you think people who come to live in [country] receive more than they contribute or contribute more than they receive?

Source: ESS 4 (2008/2009)

Table 2. Loadings from principal component analysis for the items measuring migrant-related attitudes in the Greek, Swedish and merged dataset

	Factor 1	Factor 1	Factor 1
	Greece <sup>a</sup>	Sweden <sup>a</sup>	Merged <sup>b</sup>
Allow many/few immigrants of same race/ethnic group as majority	.75	.92	.86
Allow many/few immigrants of different race/ethnic group from majority	.92	.96	.96
Allow many/few immigrants from poorer countries outside Europe	.90	.91	.94
Eigenvalue	2.2	2.6	2.5
Variance explained	73.8%	87.0%	84.7%

<sup>a</sup>Design weight.

<sup>b</sup>Design and population weight combined.

The perceived ethnic threats in the study are measured with four items (Table 1, questions 4, 5, 6 and 7) included in the core ESS module asking respondents' evaluations of the economic, cultural, general ethnic and social benefits consequences of immigrants in the host country. Respondents answer on a scale from 0 to 10 with lower values corresponding to higher levels of threat perceptions. In the analyses the values are inverted so as higher values to indicate greater ethnic threat perceptions.

An additional question from the ESS questionnaire is used that measures respondents' subjective financial living conditions and it is applied to examine ethnic threat perceptions and migrant-opposition attitudes within and across Greek and Swedish in-group and out-group members living in different micro-level economic conditions. The specific question asks respondents to describe their feelings about their household's income nowadays providing a 4-item scale (1 = Living comfortably on present income, 2 = Coping on present income, 3 = Finding it difficult on present income, 4 = Finding it very difficult on present income). The item is recoded into two broader categories (1 = Living comfortably or coping on present income, 2 = Finding it difficult or very difficult on present income) and it is considered to be a reliable measure in the datasets applied [Cronbach  $\alpha_{\text{Greek dataset}} = .85$ , Cronbach  $\alpha_{\text{Swedish dataset}} = .70$ , Cronbach  $\alpha_{\text{Merged dataset}} = .80$ ].

Eurostat's (2011) and European Commission's (2010) indicators such as GDP per capita expressed in Purchasing Power Standards (PPS), gross debt as a percentage of the GDP and harmonised unemployment rate are used to describe the macro-level economic conditions in Greece and Sweden. The specific indicators refer to 2008 as it is the year of data collection of the ESS fourth round (2008/2009) used in the study. The volume index of GDP in PPS (i.e. a common currency that eliminates the differences in price levels between countries) is expressed in relation to the European Union (EU-27) average set to equal 100 (Eurostat 2011). If the index of a country is higher than 100, the country's level of GDP per head is higher than the EU average and vice versa. Harmonised

unemployment rates represent unemployed persons as a percentage of the labour force.

The Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX II) is used to portray the migrant-related policies adopted in the two countries under study. MIPEX II is a cross-country index of six main policy areas of immigrants' integration in 27 European countries plus Canada, including "anti-discrimination", "access to nationality", "family reunion", "political participation", "labour market access" and "long-term residence" (Niessen, Huddleston & Citron 2007).

## 4 Statistics

Principal Component Analysis (PCA) (Table 2) is conducted with the rationale to perform data reduction, i.e. to construct indicators of migrant-related attitudes that contain most of the variability of the original three variables (Table 1, questions 1, 2, 3) in each country separately as well as in the merged dataset. The adequateness of the items for PCA is assessed with Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of Sphericity.

Univariate 2-way (M) Anovas are applied to examine the effects of respondents' status (i.e. in-group/out-group member), subjective financial conditions (i.e. living comfortably or coping on present income/finding it difficult or very difficult on present income) and their interaction effects on different dependent variables (i.e. migrant-opposition, economic, cultural, ethnic and social benefits threat perceptions) in each country separately as well as cross-nationally. The assumptions of normality and equality of variances for conducting Univariate 2-way (M) Anova are determined with normal Q-Q Plots and Levene's Test of Homogeneity of Variance, respectively. The effect sizes are determined with Eta-squared ( $\eta^2$ ) providing the proportion of variance associated with or accounted for by each of the main and interaction effects in the Greek, Swedish and merged dataset. Cohen's (1988) rules are applied to characterise the effect sizes as small, medium or large. Multiple comparisons in the cross-national analysis are conducted with Tukey's HSD post hoc test when the homogeneity of variances assumption is confirmed and with Games Howell post hoc test when the specific assumption is violated (Table 4). For significant interaction effects in the cross-sectional analysis post hoc analyses on simple main effects within each factor level are conducted using the Sidak adjustment for pairwise comparisons (Tables 3 and 5).

In the cross-sectional analysis the design weight (provided with the ESS round 4) is applied to account for different selection probabilities of participants in Greece and Sweden. In the cross-national analysis the design weight is combined with the population weight, so that the results do not depend on the population or sample sizes of the two countries in the merged dataset. Statistically significant levels are reported for p values less than or equal to .05. The analyses are performed with SPSS 19.0.

## 5 Results

Univariate 2-way (M) Anovas are conducted to examine the effects of respondents' status and subjective financial conditions on migrant-opposition attitudes and the perceived ethnic threats under study in each country separately as well as cross-nationally. Examining the assumption of normality normal Q-Q Plots indicate that the dependent variables under study are approximately symmetrically distributed for each combination of levels of the respondents' status and the subjective financial living conditions in the three datasets. The homogeneity of variance assumption is confirmed for the dependent variables in the Greek and Swedish dataset and violated for specific dependent variables in the merged one whereas Games Howell post hoc analysis is applied.

For the Greek dataset, Univariate 2-way (M) Anovas show that controlling for respondents' subjective financial living conditions migrant-opposition is significantly higher [ $F(1,2035) = 45.97, p \leq .001, \eta^2 = .02$ ] among the Greek in-group members ( $M = .06, SE = .02$ ) than the out-group ones ( $M = -.85, SE = .13$ ). In addition, mean scores of perceived economic [ $F(1,2077) = 73.65, p \leq .001, \eta^2 = .03$ ], cultural, [ $F(1,2068) = 89.14, p \leq .001, \eta^2 = .04$ ], general ethnic [ $F(1,2061) = 57.76, p \leq .001, \eta^2 = .03$ ] and social benefits threats [ $F(1,2020) = 93.83, p \leq .001, \eta^2 = .04$ ] are significantly higher among the Greek majority than minority group whereas these are differentiated for more and less favourable subjective financial living conditions. Despite the significant results the above effect sizes are considered to be low, i.e. less than .06 (Cohen 1988).

The post hoc analysis on simple main effects indicates that economically disadvantaged Greek in-group members report significantly higher mean scores of economic, cultural and general threats (i.e. immigrants make a worse place to live) perceptions than those living in more prosperous economic conditions (Table 3). Non-significant differences are detected between Greek majority group

members living in more and less favourable subjective economic conditions with respect to their perceived social benefits threats.

Although specific ethnic threat perceptions are higher among the economically underprivileged Greek majority group, the inverted findings are detected for the minority one. More specifically, higher mean scores of perceived economic and social benefits threats are reported among more affluent out-group members than those living in stringent financial conditions (Table 3). Non-significant differences are found between out-group members living in different micro-level subjective economic conditions with respect to their cultural and general threat perceptions.

In the Swedish dataset Univariate 2-way (M) Anovas indicate that controlling for respondents' subjective financial living conditions, perceived economic [ $F(1,1754) = 8.09, p \leq .01, \eta^2 = .005$ ] and general ethnic threats [ $F(1,1783) = 8.55, p \leq .01, \eta^2 = .005$ ] are significantly higher among the Swedish in-group members (Economic threats:  $M = 4.78, SE = .10$ , General threats:  $M = 3.99, SE = .10$ ) than the out-group ones (Economic threats:  $M = 4.08, SE = .22$ , General threats:  $M = 3.28, SE = .22$ ). However, the reported  $\eta^2$  values indicate that the above effect sizes are small. Non-significant differences are detected between the Swedish majority and minority group with respect to migrant-opposition attitudes, perceived cultural and social benefits threats.

Examining cross-national divergences and/or convergences in migrant-opposition attitudes and perceived ethnic threats between the Greek and the Swedish in-group and out-group members, Univariate 2-way (M) Anova show that controlling for micro-level subjective economic conditions significant differences are detected in the mean scores of migrant-opposition [ $F(3,3810) = 417.28, p \leq .001, \eta^2 = .18$ ], perceived cultural [ $F(3,3840) = 352.42, p \leq .001, \eta^2 = .17$ ], general [ $F(3,3836) = 281.40, p \leq .001, \eta^2 = .15$ ] and social benefits threats [ $F(3,3700) = 45.43, p \leq .001, \eta^2 = .03$ ]. The reported  $\eta^2$  values indicate that apart from social benefits threat perceptions the rest effect sizes are large, i.e. greater than .14 (Cohen 1988).

Table 3. Significant results of post hoc analyses on simple main effects in perceived threats between Greek in-group and out-group members living in different financial conditions

Respondents' Status & Financial Conditions		Mean Difference <sup>a</sup>	SE <sup>a</sup>	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Economic threat perceptions					
In-group CSFC	In-group DSFC	-.43***	.10	-.64	-.22
Out-group CSFC	Out-group DSFC	1.23*	.60	.05	2.40
Cultural threat perceptions					
In-group CSFC	In-group DSFC	-.42***	.10	-.63	-.21
General threat perceptions					
In-group CSFC	In-group DSFC	-.48***	.10	-.68	-.28
Social benefits threat perceptions					
Out-group CSFC	Out-group DSFC	1.13*	.54	.07	2.19

Data weighted by design weight.

\* $p \leq .05$ , \*\* $p \leq .01$ , \*\*\* $p \leq .001$ .

<sup>a</sup>Sidak-adjusted for pairwise comparisons.

CSFC: Comfortable Subjective Financial Conditions, DSFC: Difficult Subjective Financial Conditions.

Post hoc analyses demonstrate that the Greek majority group reports significantly higher mean scores of migrant-opposition, cultural, general ethnic and social benefits threat perceptions than the rest groups (Table 4). Greek out-group members report greater levels of migrant-opposition attitudes, cultural and general ethnic threat perceptions than the Swedish in-group and out-group ones. In addition, the Swedish out-group reports significantly higher mean scores in perceived social benefits threats than the Greek minority group.

With respect to the economic threat perceptions between the Greek and the Swedish majority and minority groups, the analysis indicates a non-significant main effect of respondents' subjective

financial conditions and a significant interaction effect [ $F(3,3819) = 3.19, p \leq .05, \eta^2 = .002$ ] and main effect of respondents' status [ $F(3,3819) = 124.32, p \leq .001, \eta^2 = .08$ ] (Table 4). The effect sizes of the interaction and respondents' status are considered to be low and medium, respectively (Cohen 1988). The post hoc analysis on simple main effects demonstrates that Greek in-group members living either in favourable or unfavourable subjective financial conditions report significantly higher mean scores of perceived economic threats than the rest groups (Table 5).

Non-significant differences are reported in economic threat perceptions between more prosperous members of the Swedish

Table 4. Significant results of post hoc analyses in migrant-opposition and perceived threats between Greek and Swedish in-group and out-group members

Respondents' group 1	Respondents' group 2	Mean Difference	SE	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Migrant-opposition <sup>a</sup>					
Greek IG	Swedish IG	1.35***	.02	1.28	1.41
	Greek OG	.69**	.08	.49	.90
	Swedish OG	1.31***	.06	1.16	1.45
Swedish IG	Greek OG	-.65**	.08	-.86	-.45
Greek OG	Swedish OG	.61**	.09	.36	.85
Economic threat perceptions <sup>a</sup>					
Greek IG	Swedish IG	2.08**	.07	1.88	2.27
	Greek OG	2.98**	.23	2.36	3.59
	Swedish OG	2.49**	.16	2.08	2.91
Swedish IG	Greek OG	.90**	.24	.28	1.51
Cultural threat perceptions <sup>a</sup>					
Greek IG	Swedish IG	3.70**	.08	3.50	3.89
	Greek OG	2.95**	.24	2.33	3.57
	Swedish OG	3.75**	.16	3.35	4.16
Swedish IG	Greek OG	-.75*	.24	-1.37	-.12
Greek OG	Swedish OG	.80*	.27	.09	1.51
General threat perceptions <sup>b</sup>					
Greek IG	Swedish IG	3.05**	.07	2.86	3.24
	Greek OG	2.46**	.22	1.90	3.03
	Swedish OG	3.60**	.15	3.20	3.99
Swedish IG	Greek OG	-.59*	.22	-1.16	-.02
	Swedish OG	.55*	.15	.15	.94
Greek OG	Swedish OG	1.14**	.25	.47	1.80
Social benefits threat perceptions <sup>b</sup>					
Greek IG	Swedish IG	.60**	.07	.43	.77
	Greek OG	2.85**	.23	2.25	3.46
	Swedish OG	.79**	.14	.42	1.16
Swedish IG	Greek OG	2.26**	.23	1.66	2.86
Greek OG	Swedish OG	-2.06**	.26	-2.74	-1.38

Data weighted by design and population weight.

\* $p \leq .05$ , \*\* $p \leq .01$ , \*\*\* $p \leq .001$ .

Respondents' group: Greek/Swedish in-group (IG) /out-group (OG).

a Tukey HSD multiple comparison post hoc test.

b Games Howell multiple comparison post hoc test.

Table 5. Significant results of post hoc analyses on simple main effects in perceived economic threats between Greek and Swedish in-group and out-group members living in different financial conditions

Subjective Financial Conditions & Respondents' status			Mean Difference <sup>a</sup>	SE <sup>a</sup>	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
CSFC	Greek in-group	Swedish in-group	1.92***	.09	1.68	2.17
		Greek out-group	1.78**	.51	.44	3.13
	Swedish out-group	2.31***	.19	1.80	2.82	
DSFC	Greek in-group	Swedish in-group	1.78***	.23	1.18	2.38
		Greek out-group	3.42***	.26	2.72	4.12
	Swedish out-group	2.79**	.45	1.61	3.97	
DSFC	Swedish in-group	Greek out-group	1.63***	.33	.75	2.52

Data weighted by design weight and population weight.

\* $p \leq .05$ , \*\* $p \leq .01$ , \*\*\* $p \leq .001$ .

<sup>a</sup> Sidak-adjusted pairwise comparisons.

CSFC: Comfortable Subjective Financial Conditions, DSFC: Difficult Subjective Financial Conditions

in-group and out-group as well as the Greek out-group. In addition, non-significant differences are found in perceived economic threats between the Greek and Swedish out-group members living in stringent financial conditions; however the former report significantly lower mean scores than the Swedish in-group members.

## 6 Discussion

The study provides evidence that inter-group relations captured through divergences and/or convergences in ethnic threat perceptions and migrant-opposition attitudes between Swedish and Greek in-groups and out-groups are differentiated. The cross-sectional analysis demonstrates that migrant opposition, perceived cultural and social benefits threats converge between the Swedish in-group and out-group members independently from micro-level subjective economic living conditions. The former report greater levels of economic and general ethnic threat perceptions than the latter; however .05% ( $\eta^2 = .005$ ) of the proportion of variance is attributed to the specific effects. These findings signify moderate inter-group relations in a context with inclusive integration policies and favourable macro-level economic conditions. Previous studies underline that the Swedish generous migrant-related policy results in lower perceived ethnic threats among the majority group (Meuleman & Reeskens 2008: 20). Furthermore, macro-level actual competitive economic indicators demonstrate that whilst Sweden experienced downward economic trends during 2008–2009, it is along other countries (i.e. Germany and Norway) the least affected by the economic crisis that has severely hit most of the European member states (Collett 2011). Despite experiencing an economic slowdown during 2008–2009, the Swedish Government's main goal has been the design and implementation of policies promoting equal rights, obligations and opportunities for all regardless of ethnic or cultural background. This goal has been accomplished through an increase in integration policy investment targeting primarily to improve new immigrants' access to

the labour market (Collett 2011: 17). Such an increase in integration policy investment during a period of general austerity in Europe reflects the centralised collectivist corporatist attributes of the country associated with the policy programs and legislations enacted by the welfare state to promote out-group integration (Soysal 1994).

In contrast to the findings between the Swedish majority and minority group, migrant-opposition attitudes and all the perceived ethnic threats significantly diverge between the Greek in-group and out-group members. Although the effects sizes of the variables under study are small, the analyses show that the mean score of migrant-opposition is higher among the in-group members independently from subjective economic living conditions. Moreover, the perceived economic, cultural, general ethnic and social benefits threats are significantly higher among the Greek majority group, whilst some of these are differentiated for more and less favourable micro-level economic living conditions. In agreement with ethnic competition theory, the socio-economically underprivileged Greek in-group members report significantly higher mean scores of perceived economic, cultural and general ethnic threats than those living in more prosperous financial conditions. The inverse findings are detected for the more affluent out-group members reporting greater economic and social benefits threat perceptions than their counterparts living in more stringent financial conditions. Whilst these preliminary findings need further investigation, they imply a kind of a tension between out-group members in Greece. It is likely that the more prosperous out-group members perceive other immigrants as competitors in the shrinking Greek labour market and as a threat to the country's vulnerable economic situation and consequently to their own financial prerogatives.

Despite the potential tensions between out-group members in Greece, the findings indicate significant divergences in migrant opposition attitudes and perceptions of ethnic threats between the Greek majority and minority group. Such empirical evidence implies intense inter-group relations and a potential ethnic clash that is likely to be formed not only through stringent micro-level actual competitive

economic conditions but also through macro-level ones as well as exclusionist integration policies that prevail in the country. The economic crisis during the last few years in Europe has severely hit Greece, which has resorted to bailouts to rescue its economy (Collett 2011). The austerity on government's budgets and the explosion of unemployment rates has boosted the macro as well as the micro-level actual competitive conditions in the country. The deteriorating economic conditions are combined with exclusionist integration policies which do not embrace favourable measures promoting out-group integration in the Greek society (Niessen, Huddleston & Citron 2007). Detailed reports confirm that immigrants' rights and integration become marginal as their legal status remains insecure even after 5 or 10 years of residence depending on their employment status proven by their welfare contributions (Triandafyllidou & Marouf 2009: 73).

The cross-national comparisons between the majority and minority groups across the two countries under study indicate that the Greek out-group members independently from micro-level subjective economic living conditions report greater migrant-opposition and ethnic threat perceptions compared to the rest groups. Perceived ethnic threats are widespread both among the Greek in-group and out-group whereas the latter reports higher mean scores of migrant-opposition, perceived cultural and general threats than the Swedish minority and majority groups. The increased levels of out-group members' migrant-opposition attitudes and perceptions of specific threats are likely to reflect their fears that other immigrants can become competitors in the labour market and ethnic niches (Zimmermann *et al.* 2007: 41) and thus intensify even further the tension with the Greek majority group. Such empirical findings also echo immigrants' uncertainty with respect to their legal status which is indirectly intertwined with the increased competition in the labour market, as their stay in Greece is renewed through their employment status proven by their welfare contributions (Triandafyllidou & Marouf 2009: 71). Although the Greek minority group reports higher migrant-opposition, cultural and general ethnic threat perceptions than their Swedish counterparts, the latter perceive greater threats with respect to social benefits. Such results imply that the Swedish minority group is likely to feel threatened by the fact that an increasing number of immigrants may negatively affect the generosity of the Swedish public spending programs enacted by the welfare state to promote immigrants' integration (Collett 2011; Escandell & Ceobanu 2009).

The main rationale of the paper is the exploration of inter-group relations as captured through divergences and/or convergences in perceived ethnic threats and migrant-opposition attitudes between in-groups and out-groups within and across contexts with differentiated macro-level actual competitive economic and integration policy conditions. Whilst ESS data provide a unique opportunity to

examine such a research enquiry, the study methodologically suffers from lack of representativeness and appropriateness of the Greek and Swedish out-group samples; however representative datasets of minority populations are not available at a cross-national level. Furthermore, the study employs two diametrically different countries in terms of macro-level actual competitive economic and integration policy conditions to investigate migrant-related attitudes and perceived ethnic threats. However, it is not very clear whether cross-national comparisons between contexts with less distinct macro-level economic and integration policy attributes will result in similar conclusions. Nevertheless, the study's findings should be treated as a step toward filling the lacuna with respect to the assessment of inter-group relations via unilateral processes and be further investigated in migrant-related studies including a greater number of countries.

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## Notes

1. Whilst Park (1950) advocates that group contact is intertwined with ethnic conflict he also suggests that the processes of accommodation (i.e. establishment of laws and rules that regulate inter-group strife) and assimilation into the dominant culture can lead to conflict resolution.
2. For instance, Tajfel (1981) explained the prevalence of anti-Semitism even when the Jewish population was absent.
3. The causality pathway may also run in the opposite direction, i.e. public opinion with respect to migration forms the design and implementation of specific integration policies. For instance, some scholars argue that policymakers take public opinion into account as they formulate migrant-related policies; hence the latter become responsive to majority group's attitudes (Brooks & Manza 2006; Facchini & Mayda 2008).
4. Although some scholars advocate that inclusive integration policies result in lower levels of perceived ethnic threats (Meuleman & Reeskens 2008) others suggest that generous integration policies increase inter-group competition and generate ethnic clashes (Blalock 1967; Quillian 1995).

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