
A growing body of research connects diversity to anti-welfare attitudes and lower levels of social welfare expenditure, yet most evidence comes from analyses of US states or comparisons of the United States to Europe. Comparative analyses of European nation-states, however, yield little evidence that immigration – measured at the country-level – reduces support for national welfare state programs. This is not surprising, given that research suggests that the impact of diversity occurs at smaller, sub-national geographic units. Therefore, in this article, we test the hypothesis that immigration undermines welfare attitudes by assessing the impact of immigration measured at the regional-level on individual-level support for redistribution, a comprehensive welfare state, and immigrants’ social rights. To do this, we combine data from the European Social Survey with a unique regional dataset compiled from national censuses, Eurostat, and the European Election Database (13 countries, 114 regions, and 23,213 individuals). Utilizing multilevel modeling, we find a negative relationship between regional percent foreign-born and support for redistribution as well as between regional percent foreign-born and support for a comprehensive welfare state. Objective immigration, however, does not increase opposition to immigrants’ social rights (i.e. welfare chauvinism). We discuss the implications of these results and conclude that traditional welfare state attitudes and welfare chauvinism are distinct phenomena that should not be conflated in future research.