

Attitudes to Immigration and Refugees: the Round 12 Repeat Module in the European Social Survey

The 12th round of the European Social Survey will include a rotation module on attitudes toward immigrants and refugees and their causes. The previous module on attitudes toward immigration from the 7th round of the ESS has been widely used by academics and policy-makers. The topic remains highly important in substantive terms, and indeed has gained added salience from the refugee crises of the last decade and the rise in many European countries of radical populist parties that have adopted anti-immigrant philosophy. Given the continuing salience of refugees in European societies since the 2015/16 Syrian crisis and the war in the Ukraine, the major new focus of the proposed module will be on attitudes towards refugees, how they differ from attitudes towards other migrants, and their causes.

The key questions from the previous module on attitudes toward immigration would be retained, and would provide a powerful resource for understanding the dynamics of attitude change across two decades and the emergence of new attitudes. New questions would be developed in order to measure attitudes towards refugees in a comparable manner. New concepts such as humanitarianism, nationalism, and perceived legitimacy / sympathy for reasons to become a refugee, would be added to previous questions such as symbolic and realistic threat, contact, social distance or fraternal relative deprivation in order to reach a fuller understanding of attitudes towards refugees.

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