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THE ENTRY OF VOX IN THE SPANISH  
POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND ITS EFFECT  
ON CITIZENS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS  
IMMIGRATION

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## Abstract

Presence of radical right parties (RRPs) in national parliaments and governments is becoming a reality in more and more countries, and questions are being raised about their effect on various aspects of the political and social context in which they are introduced. The entry of a nativist and nationalist party can help normalize certain attitudes considered taboo among the population. In this paper, we hypothesize that the entry of an RRP in parliament has a legitimization effect that allows citizens to admit to antiimmigration attitudes. We use two studies to test this argument: Analysis 1 uses a difference-in-differences method to assess the impact of the entry of Vox in the Andalusian parliament on Andalusian citizens' attitudes towards immigration, compared to other regions of Spain; Analysis 2 uses the same method to test this effect on Spanish citizens compared to those of other European countries, to account for a possible spillover effect. On the whole, our results show how RRP institutional entry produces a short-term legitimization effect on attitudes towards immigration of native citizens.

**Keywords:** Radical right parties, Vox, attitudes towards immigration, legitimization, persuasion, social norms.

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## Introduction

Vox entered Spanish politics in 2018 shaking the political board to its core, after hosting a massive event on October 8 in Madrid's Palacio Vistalegre, attended by more than 9,000 supporters (Lambertucci, 2018). Soon after, they achieved their first electoral success by entering Andalucía's Regional Parliament on December 2, elections in which they gathered 10.96% of the total vote and 12 seats out of 109 (Junta de Andalucía, 2018), later becoming the fifth biggest political force in the Andalusian Parliament. The following year they accomplished their goal of entering the national Parliament's lower chamber, Congreso de los Diputados, suddenly becoming the third biggest political force with a sum total of 52 seats and 15.09% of the electoral support (Corporación de Radio y Televisión Española, 2019). This series of events caused not only a political and institutional shock, but also a disturbance of the social norms that until then had reigned among Spanish society. It was the first time since the reinstating of democracy after Franco's dictatorship that a declared radical right party obtained institutional representation in Spain, breaking many of the consensuses thought to be established, starting with the questioning of the legitimacy of the Spanish government (EP, 2019; Rozas, 2020).

The entry of a party such as Vox in a national or regional parliament is not, however, an isolated case. In recent years, many national party systems around the world have been shaken by the institutional entry of extreme right and radical right parties (RRPs; Abou-Chadi & Krause, 2018; Bischof & Wagner, 2019; Ferreira, 2019; Norris, 2005; Oliván, 2021). The recent access and consequential political presence of this type of parties has facilitated the resurgence of debates around issues long believed to be consolidated. Parties such as Vox in Spain, AfD in Germany or Front National in France, and Trump in the US, have brought to debate, with their radical stances, issues related to immigration, feminism or the maintenance of the welfare state (Ferreira, 2019).

Due to the recent rise of this kind of parties, a great number of scientific investigations have emerged. They focus, for the most part, on exploring the reasons that have led to their appearance, treating them as a social or political symptom of something larger (Abou-Chadi & Krause, 2018; Arzheimer, 2009; Dennison & Geddes, 2018;

Eatwell, 2000; Golder, 2003; Mudde, 1999). More recently, though, studies have begun to develop that consider the rise of populist radical right parties not as a symptom, but as an explanatory factor for other types of phenomena occurring in society and political systems.

To the academic literature and research on the relationship between the elite and the masses, and the formation of public opinion, have been added some studies that argue that there is a specific effect of this type of parties in the political and social context in which they are introduced. We find studies such as those of Schain (2006) and Abou-Chadi (2014) on the effect that RRPs have on the policy-making process and the behavior of established mainstream parties (see also Abou-Chadi & Krause, 2018; Bale et al., 2010; Schumacher & Van Kersbergen, 2014; Van Spanje, 2010); as well as research on their effects on the electorate, their opinions and attitudes towards different political issues and, specifically, towards immigrants and immigration (Bischof & Wagner, 2019; Dennison & Geddes, 2019; Dunaway et al., 2010; Hellwig & Kweon, 2016; Vrâceanu & Lachat, 2018; Zapata-Barrero, 2009).

The fact that the scientific community has focused its attention on the issue of immigration is not, however, random. Many scholars have classified RRPs as niche parties, given that they compete, mostly, on the issue of immigration (Abou-Chadi, 2014; Mudde, 1999; Wagner, 2011; Wagner & Meyer, 2016) and act as issue entrepreneurs once they have acquired political representation and occupied offices (Abou-Chadi, 2014; Bischof & Wagner, 2019; De Vries & Hobolt, 2012).

Our main focus in this paper will be exploring the effect caused by the representation in Parliament of RRPs on public attitudes. Specifically, on attitudes towards immigration, as immigration stands as one of the central topics of RRPs' ideology (Abou-Chadi, 2014; Ferreira, 2019; Oliván, 2021).

Using an empirical strategy based on a difference-in-difference (DiD) methodology, we will examine whether the population expresses more negative attitudes towards immigration after the entry of Vox, a Spanish RRP, in the Andalusian Regional Parliament in 2018.

We expect to find a positive relationship between Vox's entry in Parliament on December 2, 2018 and negative attitudes towards immigration of the Andalusian population immediately after the election, as a consequence of a greater and wider

visibility of these kinds of attitudes in the public sphere. To account for a possible contagious effect to the rest of the country, a second analysis will be performed to test this expectation regarding Spain versus other European democracies.

As will be discussed further into this paper, our expectation follows Bischof and Wagner's (2019) as well as Valentim's (2021) line of research on the legitimization effect of RRP's entry in Parliament on citizens' ideology and attitudes. The results obtained by Dunn and Singh (2011), though, would suggest a non-significant effect between these variables. In this seemingly contradictory context, which we will be discussed later on, our study sets out to clarify and add to the existent knowledge on the relationship that exists between RRP representation and public attitudes towards immigration.

## Related literature

Extreme right, radical right, extreme populist right, populist radical right. Many scholars use these terms interchangeably to refer to the same concept or phenomenon (Oliván, 2021). Our study, conversely, will be based on the definition put forward by Cas Mudde (2007), which states that there is an essential difference between the terms "radical right" and "extreme right". And this difference stems from the argument that extreme right parties possess an antidemocratic component that radical right parties do not (Ferreira, 2019; Mudde, 2007; Norris, 2005).

According to Mudde (2007), there are three central elements in a populist radical right party's ideology (with no specific hierarchical order): Nativism, authoritarianism and populism. Apart from these three characteristics, some others like neoliberalism, antiparlamentarism or defense of traditional values, can also be associated with their ideology (Ferreira, 2019).

The first of these three elements, namely nativism, refers to a combination of nationalist and xenophobic attitudes (Mudde, 2007). The meaning of this concept originates in the word "native", which is the center of the idea. Nativist parties maintain a declared preference toward the "real citizens", the "people from here" (Oliván, 2021). Mudde (2007) himself defines this concept as *'an ideology, which holds that*

*states should be inhabited exclusively by members of the native group (“the nation”) and that nonnative elements (persons and ideas) are fundamentally threatening to the homogenous nation-state’ (p. 19).*

This conceptualization, then, translates as a calling for the internal homogenization of the country (in the sense of a possible existence of differentiated groups or nations inside the same country) as well as an external exclusivity (Oliván, 2021: 37). And, although it is not strictly necessary nor fundamental to them, most times it is related to racist attitudes.

The second element intrinsic to a radical right ideology is authoritarianism. Mudde (2007), applying the definition from Adorno et al. (1969) and Altemayer (1981), describes authoritarianism as *‘the belief in a strictly ordered society, in which infringements of authority are to be punished severely’ (p. 23).*

Lastly, we find populism as another one of the core RRP ideology features. Although there is little academic consensus on the specific definition of populism, there is a general agreement that populism involves the consideration of society as a dichotomous body, made up of two very different and counterposed groups: *“the pure people”* and *“the corrupt elite”*. This “thin ideology”, as classified by Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser (2017), argues that there is a profound gap between the people’s and the elite’s interests, and there is a need for someone to step up and bring the “general will” to the political institutions in an effective manner. The right person for the task, as it usually turns out, is an authoritarian and charismatic leader (Mudde, 2004, as cited in Oliván, 2021).

Part of the academic community has centered its attention on the effect RRP have on different aspects of the political system. Schain (2006) finds effects of the French Front National (FN) on party alignment after its entry in Parliament, observing a realignment of the mainstream parties’ positions on immigration in many electoral constituencies of the National Assembly, as well as changes in public opinion, especially regarding working class voters (p. 275). The party has been able to successfully impose its prime issues on society, namely, immigration and security, by forcing the other political parties in the French party system to address them. Thus, immigration and security issues have gained a prime position among voters’ and political actors’ priorities (p. 277).

That is the reason for the emergence of a growing concern among political and scientific as well as social circles. Many political actors have reacted to these findings and beliefs by asking that these kinds of parties (RRPs and extreme right parties) be restricted from entering any kind of political institution (Bischof & Wagner, 2019), due to fear that democratic and liberal values might be compromised because of the entering of their discourse and ideology in the public debate (Dunn & Singh, 2011).

For the time being, however, it is important to first discuss what the factors are, that potentially possess the power to influence public opinion.

The scientific community has, for years, busied itself with the task of finding the contributing factors in the formation of public and political attitudes of voters and citizens. Many influencing factors have been demonstrated to have at least some explanatory power in the formation of citizens' policy positions on many different public issues. Apart from political psychology theories and individual predispositions such as ideology, interests and values (Kinder, 1998, as cited in Leeper & Slothuus, 2014), other theories have surfaced that argue about the effect of political affinity (Brader & Tucker, 2012; Brader et al., 2012; Bullock, 2011; Ciuk & Yost, 2015; Hellström, 2008; Hellwig & Kweon, 2016; Leeper & Slothuus, 2014; Sanders & Toka, 2013; Slothuus, 2010; Slothuus & de Vreese, 2010; Steenbergen et al., 2007; Vrâceanu & Lachat, 2018; Zaller, 1992), socioeconomic and demographic context (Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014), and mass media (Abrajano & Singh, 2009; Arendt, 2010; Boomgaarden & Vliegenthart, 2009; Carmichael & Brulle, 2017; Entman, 1989; Kosho, 2016; Levendusky & Malhotra, 2015; McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Sirgedaite & Schuck, 2012) on citizens' attitudes.

Theories of public opinion have usually been divided between what is called "top-down" and "bottom-up" theories, depending on the nature of the relationship between the mass and the elite. The upper part of this metaphor is occupied by the political elites, mass media and technical policy experts, and the bottom one is made up of the mass audiences, the general population (Price, 2007). On the one hand, bottom-up theories argue that the political decisions and courses of action of a government and the agenda setting is affected and sometimes also guided by society and the general public (Kerzter & Zeitzoff, 2017). On the other hand, top-down theories assert that the relationship sometimes goes the other way around: Citizens do not

have a completely formed opinion or clear attitude towards certain topics, which is why they take cues provided by political parties, mass media and other elites.

There are various mechanisms through which these actors can have an effect on public opinion. The concept of agenda-setting, for example, put forward for the first time by McCombs and Shaw (1972), establishes that certain actors, such as political parties and the mass media, have the capacity to influence the political agenda of the public. Framing, on the other hand, is the process people go through when developing their opinion of or attitude towards a certain issue, with specific implications and a specific perspective of it (Chong & Druckman, 2007). The media and opinion leaders are extremely successful at influencing the framing of certain issues and topics in people's minds. An example of this influence is Entman's (2004) cascade model on framing of foreign policy issues, where frames are created by the administration, to later be passed on to other elites and the media, and eventually arrive to the general public. This process, though, is not linear, as the lower levels of the cascade can also influence, to some extent, some of the upper levels (Chong & Druckman, 2007). Priming is another possible mechanism to influence the public's policy agenda: This process, in contrast to framing, relies on the action of recalling an issue, as opposed to adopting a certain perspective on it. The more salient an issue becomes, the more probable it is that people will remember it and take it into account when assessing their opinions and attitudes towards an issue or political actor (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007).

One of the most important cue providers in the context of this "top-down" perspective, apart from mass media, are political parties and their leaders. As we have seen, there are many factors that contribute to the formation of citizens' opinions and positions on different issues, and there seems to be a consensus among scholars that, in one way or another, political parties' positions on specific topics, their political discourse, and even their mere entry in the institutional context, play an important role on how certain issues are framed and gain priority in the voters' minds.

Hellström (2008) carries out a study about the influence of political parties on citizens' attitudes towards European integration using data from the Comparative Manifesto Project, which classifies political parties' manifestos according to specific topics. Using this data, he assesses which the parties' positions on the topic are. To

estimate public opinion, he employs data from the European Commission's Eurobarometer. He then tests his expectations through a Granger-causality test, the results of which manifest that there is a clear unilateral causal effect from party positions to voters' opinions. Carmichael and Brulle (2017) reach a similar conclusion when analyzing the influencing factors of public opinion on climate change. Their results indicate the importance of elite mobilization; as they turned out to be one of the most influencing factors on the concern of the population for global warming.

Hellwig and Kweon (2016) find evidence that voters use parties' positions as a heuristic mechanism (Hellström, 2008) to determine their own stance on issues such as immigration or refugee integration. These kinds of issues are known as multidimensional (Hellwig & Kweon, 2016: 5), that is, they are composed of different dimensions that have to be taken into account when forming an opinion, and the differing positions can't be so simply divided into support or opposition to the issue. That is the reason why many citizens may feel overwhelmed by the quantity of different and opposed arguments in favor of one side or the other. The information costs of gathering all the facts regarding a certain issue in order to form a valid opinion are sometimes higher than what people are willing to spend, which is another reason why they take cues from informed actors (Achen & Bartels, 2017).

With regard to the different elements that influence the formation or alteration of attitudes towards immigrants and immigration specifically (Ceobanu & Escandell, 2010), we find abundant literature, both of general character and of specific factors. Hainmueller and Hopkins (2014) summarize concisely some of the sociotropic, and egotropic political economy theories.

Egotropic theories are based on labor market competition: They argue that people hold their positions or opinions based purely on personal interests. The level of education and skills, of both natives and immigrants, influence natives' acceptance of newcomers (Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014; Hellwig & Kweon, 2016; Vrâceanu & Lachat, 2018). According to this argument, the citizens whose job does not require of complex skills will feel more threatened by immigrants (specifically, by less qualified immigrants), given that their arrival would involve the entry of more people in competence of the labor market (Hellwig & Kweon, 2016). According to Hellwig

and Kweon (2016), different types of immigrants, skilled or unskilled, will provoke different reactions among natives (p. 226; Blinder & Jeannet, 2018).

Another theory based on political economy establishes that citizens evaluate the fiscal burden that immigration would (supposedly) mean to them. As a consequence, those with higher income will be more opposed to unskilled immigration than those with a more modest wage (Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014: 299). And not only do the citizens take into account the effect of immigration on their personal lives, but also on society as a whole, in economic as well as ethnical and cultural terms (Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014).

Exposure to diversity constitutes another factor believed to influence these kinds of attitudes. Ethnic competition theory, on the one hand, establishes that the perception of diversity can be interpreted by citizens as a cultural threat, in terms of competition between traditions, values and identity, which in turn boost intolerant attitudes. On the other hand, realistic group conflict theory determines that a perceived threat to the country's resources in economic terms can also increase aversion towards immigration (Dunn & Singh, 2011: 316).

On the other hand, in terms of exposure to diversity, we find the inter-group contact theory. This theory focuses on the idea that establishing personal relationships with immigrants mitigates the negative effects that high immigration rates would otherwise have on native citizens (Arzheimer, 2009; McLaren, 2003; as cited in Dunn & Singh, 2011: 315).

Mass media are another source that foments exposure to diversity. The nature of the discourse used to frame news and headlines can severely affect public attitudes towards immigration, although it is difficult to separate this effect from the one that political parties' positions have: There are reciprocal influences between them and that makes difficult to discern the direct effect of mass media (Vrâceanu & Lachat, 2018).

There are, also, other variables that may have an independent effect on attitudes towards immigration. On a macro level, we find factors such as a country's modernization level or ethnic fragmentation, which indicate higher levels of social tolerance towards newcomers (Dunn et al., 2008; Dunn & Singh, 2011).



On a micro or individual level, we find another set of influencing variables of demographic character. For example, higher education (Dunn Y Singh, 2011; Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014; Hatton, 2017; Heath & Richards, 2016; Hellström, 2008; Hellwig & Kweon, 2014; Vrâceanu & Lachat, 2018) or higher income (Heath & Richards, 2016: 9-10) tend to indicate more positive attitudes toward immigration. Conversely, being a man and of older age are factors that would signify a higher probability of having more negative attitudes (Hatton, 2017; Heath & Richards, 2016). Last but not least, psychological variables such as right self-placement in a left-right scale and religiosity can also be an indicator of these attitudes (Heath & Richards, 2016; Hellwig & Kweon, 2016; Vrâceanu & Lachat, 2018).

As we have already discussed in previous pages, political parties can also exert some effect on citizens' attitudes. Specifically, in regard to attitudes towards immigration, a number of investigations have proven the influence that political parties' stances, discourses and existence can have on them (see Dennison & Geddes, 2018; Flores, 2017; 2018; Hellwig & Kweon, 2016; Mudde, 1999; Sides & Citrin, 2007; Vrâceanu & Lachat, 2018).

This study goes in the line of some of these investigations. Vrâceanu and Lachat (2018), when investigating the elements that drive public sentiment about immigration in current European democracies, find that citizens tend to adopt a more positive attitude towards immigration when the political party they support supports more liberal policies regarding immigration (see also Jacoby, 1988; Slothuus, 2010). They also find that citizens' positions tend to become more negative when the political regime becomes more accommodating, or when the percentage of immigrant population increases.

Their findings are consistent with Hellwig and Kweon's (2016) and Slothuus' (2010) investigations. The first of these employs a cross-sectional analysis as well as a longitudinal one to assess the relationship between party positions and citizens' attitudes. Both studies determine that the population relies on party cues to form their opinions on multidimensional issues such as immigration, and that it is the more educated citizens that are more likely to do so. Slothuus (2010) finds, too, a relationship between party framing and citizens' attitudes, concluding that political parties can serve as opinion leaders, especially among their own supporters (p. 172).

## Theory and hypothesis

The purpose of this investigation is to analyze the influence of the parliamentary entry of an RRP on attitudes towards immigration. Thereby, the research question that will lead our study will be as follows:

*What is the effect of the parliamentary entry of a radical right party on natives' attitudes towards immigration?*

The first-time entry of an RRP into the political institutions of a country represents a shock for society, while at the same time provides the legitimization of their discourse and a public platform for its reproduction (Abou-Chadi & Krause, 2018; Bischof & Wagner, 2019; Valentim, 2021). And these phenomena can produce short- and long-term effects, respectively.

On the one hand, visibility of the RRP's discourse will provide citizens that already shared their values, but did not see them reflected in an acceptable and legitimized political alternative, with the confidence to express them (Bischof & Wagner, 2019: 4). This new "publicity" of their discourse that occurs as a result of the institutionalization of the RRP, can be what, in some way, authorizes citizens' most extremist positions (Tankard & Paluck, 2016). And this effect is not so much caused by a persuasion mechanism brought by the political party's discourse, but by a "liberation" of opinions that already existed within the citizens' minds (Bursztyn et al., 2017).

Tankard and Paluck (2016), in their study "Norm Perception as a Vehicle for Social Change", offer us their vision of this legitimization mechanism. According to the authors, when a citizens' personal vision is suddenly reflected in new information that emerges in the social or political context, a validation effect of their personal opinions occurs (p. 198). In accordance to this mechanism, what changes is the personal perception of the social acceptability of the norm, and therefore, citizens are given license to express their opinions, already perceived as legitimate or validated. As will be discussed further down this paper, political elections have the power to provoke the emergence of this new information about social norms (Bischof & Wagner, 2019).

Valentim (2021) examines this mechanism when analyzing the effect of RRP parliamentary representation on the normalization of radical right support. Using three different studies to test his argument, he finds support for the hypothesis that RRP entry in parliament provokes a shift in voters' perceptions of the legitimacy of its ideas (p. 2). His first study finds there is under-reporting of radical right support in the polls, which increases after RRP entry in parliament (p. 24); with the second study, based on individual-level data, he tests the perceived acceptability of social norms regarding radical right support when exploiting different interview-modes, after which he concludes that, in a more anonymous type of interview, subjects are more willing to express their support for RRP (p. 29); and finally, study 3 tests the specific case of the success of the UKIP in the United Kingdom, which shows an increase in the citizens that were willing to report that they voted for the UKIP, after its entry in national parliament (p. 32). Of all three studies, the conclusion is that the entry of an RRP in parliament brings about social norm change or, at least, perception of it.

These results go in line with Bischof and Wagner's (2019) study, who analyze the effect of RRP entry in parliament on voter and party polarization. Again, with resource to three different studies, they find support for their hypotheses of the existence of a legitimization effect and a backlash effect: When RRP enter the political institutions, individuals present more radical positions; those who reportedly supported right-wing parties moved further right, while those who reportedly supported left-wing parties did the same to the left.

On the other hand, entry in the institutions after electoral success also provides RRP with different kinds of resources to spread their political discourse. Parties with parliamentary representation enjoy greater media coverage, especially –as indicated by Bischof and Wagner (2019: 5)– in state-owned public media. This greater public presence and coverage by the media provides them with a platform through which to advertise and repeat their speech. Zajonc (1968) introduces us to the operating mechanism that allows this greater message repetition to affect citizens attitudes: The *mere exposure effect*. According to this theory, the simple repetition of exposure to a stimulus, even without cognition, that is, without really processing it, is enough for an attitude enhancement towards it.

Cacioppo and Petty (1979), following Zajonc's (1968) work, study the effect of message repetition on citizens' cognitive responses. They do it by carrying out two experiments, after which they gather that information and argument repetition affects the type and quantity of thoughts citizens have, which later translates into an attitudinal change or reaction (p. 105-7).

Dunn and Singh (2011) also base their investigation on this mechanism: When studying the relationship between RRP representation and social tolerance, they argue that the increased publicity of their discourse after entering parliament does not affect citizen attitudes. This reasoning is based on the argument that, to be a subject to real attitudinal change, it is necessary that the subject cognitively processes the information they are receiving (as put forward by Zaller, 1992). And because the people that pay sufficient attention to political messages as to process it are those who are interested in politics and, therefore, already possess completely formed attitudes, it is unlikely that they will change or alter them based on mere exposure to the arguments (p. 318).

Owing to the data we have available, this investigation's purpose is to test the first of these mechanisms: The legitimization effect. Based on the results obtained by Bischof and Wagner (2019) on the effect of RRP institutional entry on party and voter polarization, and by Valentim (2021) on the effect of RRP parliamentary representation on the normalization of radical right support, we expect that the legitimization that comes with the entry in the political institutions will cause this effect of liberation among voters, and thus, they will be more open to manifest opinions that range along the lines of the RRP, specifically regarding the immigration issue.

Even though we have contradictory evidence of this increment of negative attitudes thanks to Dunn and Singh's (2011) discoveries, we argue that our hypothesis is not necessarily contradictory to their. Their study is based on the second of the mechanisms discussed: Persuasion. Instead, our purpose is not to prove that there has been a change in preferences due to the RRP's discourse, but that a visibility effect has occurred and citizens now merely express ideas and attitudes that they already possessed. It is from this reasoning that we deduce the main hypothesis of our research:

**Hypothesis:** *The entry of a radical right party in the political institutions will increase negative attitudes towards immigration.*

## Empirical strategy

### Case selection

*'I am an advocate for discrimination.'*

*'Who are the authors of female murders this year? What is their origin? Does it have anything to do with cultural problems of a portion of the immigrant population?'*

*'They come here to rob Spanish citizens, assault Spanish citizens... I believe they should be expelled.'*

Santiago Abascal, leader of Vox.

These are some of the statements that Santiago Abascal, leader of the Spanish RRP Vox, currently the third political force in the Spanish Congress, has said over the past few years (The HuffPost, 2018). They are proof of the social norm breaking of this new political formation that has shaken the political arena since their arrival in 2018. Before then, only a few marginal organizations had maintained this discourse, and none of them had been able to gather enough support as to enter national politics.

To test our theoretical expectations and our hypothesis, we have decided to employ the first ever parliamentary entry of this party in Spain, which specifically was in Andalucía's regional parliament on December 2, 2018.

The recent ascent of the RRP Vox has led to the emergence of several studies about its ideology and its categorization within the different party families that exist in Europe (Anduiza, 2018; Ferreira, 2019; Forti, 2018; Issel-Dombert, 2020; Oliván, 2021; Ortiz et al., 2020; Ribera & Díaz, 2020; Turnbull-Dugarte, 2019; Urbán, 2019; Vampa, 2020). Thus, Vox is labeled as a party within the RRP family, which expresses an ideology characterized by the existence of nationalist, nativist, authoritarian components and a defense of traditional and family values. On the periphery of its ideology, we can find other components as well, such as neoliberalism or populism, to a lesser extent (Anduiza, 2018; Ferreira, 2019; Oliván, 2021). Oliván

(2021) defines Vox as one of the most nativist parties of the radical right in Europe (in second position, behind the Party for Freedom -PVV- in the Netherlands; p. 158), probably due to the centrality of anti-immigration and nationalist ideas present in their speech (Ferreira, 2019).

Due to the salience of nativism or anti-immigration ideas in the discourse of Vox, and the taboo that these ideas meant, until now, in our current liberal-democratic societies (Bischof & Wagner, 2019: 14; Dinas et al., 2020; Valentim, 2021), our expectations are that, wherever Vox succeeded electorally, and therefore gained representation in the political institutions, we will be able to observe an increase of citizens that express negative attitudes towards immigration.

To assess this prediction, we will exploit the recent entry of Vox in Andalucía's regional parliament on December 2, 2018, as a moment which shocked Spanish society and therefore has the potential to be considered as a legitimizer of radical ideas, having those been implicitly accepted as democratic when entering parliament as representatives of 10% of Andalucía's electorate.

Despite the fact that Vox as a party was created more than 8 years ago (Oliván, 2021), its role in Spain's political landscape did not become noteworthy until the Andalusian regional elections of 2018, first elections ever in which they gained notable political representation (Ferreira, 2019: 77). Until this point in time, Spain remained as the European exception to the presence of RRP representation, and many authors studied the factors that made Spain's political context different as to explain the absence of RRPs. González (2017), months before this first electoral success of Vox, published a study of the elements that made Spain a not so favorable environment for the emergence of RRPs. According to her findings, *'[...] the fact that Spanish citizens held relatively positive attitudes towards the EU, immigration and globalization, along with the weakness of a common Spanish identity to which to appeal, makes Spain inhospitable terrain for the populist far-right'* (p. 35).

If only that were true. Months after the publication of this article, Vox entered the Andalusian parliament and has not stopped growing ever since.

After the Andalusian regional elections, the next success of the political formation came the following year, when they entered the Comunidad Valenciana's regional parliament and the state Congress on April 2019, in which they gained 24 seats.

Later, after the electoral repetition, it would turn to 52. That result positioned Vox as the third state political force (Corporación de Radio y Televisión Española, 2019).

The following charts are a representation of Vox's growth in recent years. The left-hand panel on Figure 1 shows the percentage of people that report having voted for Vox in recent elections or having sympathy towards the party. Meanwhile, the right-hand panel contains a chart showing Vox's growth measured in the accumulated percentage of seats won in every election in which they have run, whether local, regional, general or European. The plot clearly denotes a rising trend, as the percentage of seats won by Vox grows with every election closer to the present.

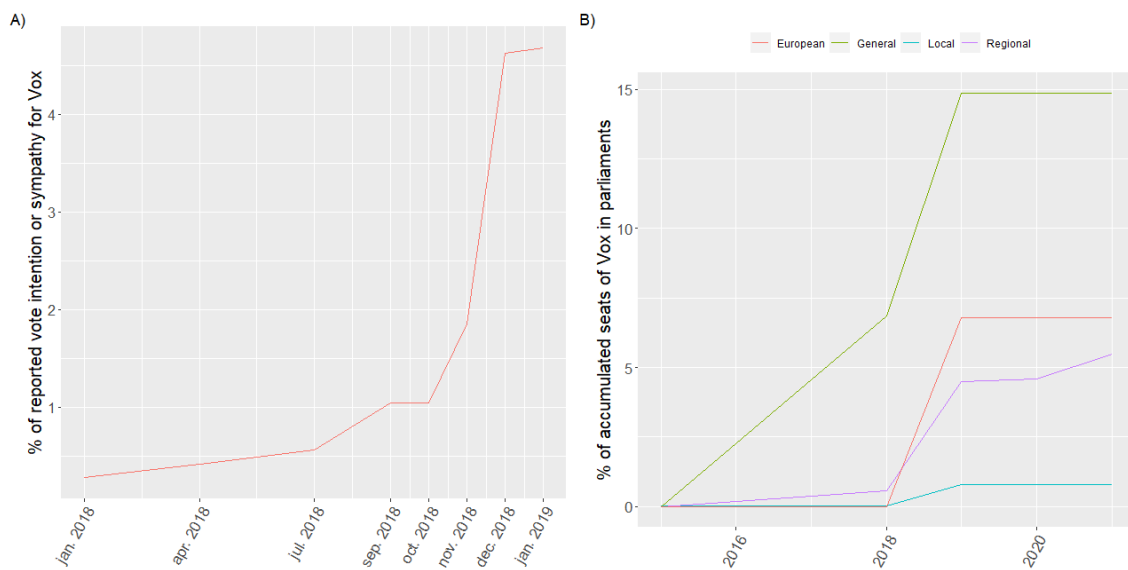


Figure 1. Left panel (A): Percentage of people who report vote intention or sympathy towards Vox across time. Source: CIS Barometer data. Right panel (B): % of seats Vox controls at the end of each year, by type of election (2015-2021). Source: Spanish electoral authorities.

As we have established, events such as elections provide a highly publicized scenario and, in addition to being a mechanism for the election of political representatives, they function as a cue which provides citizens with information about the distribution of preferences in society (Bischof & Wagner, 2019; Valentim, 2021).

The argument for having chosen a regional election and not a general one for this study, even though regional elections could be considered as second-order elections, is twofold (Reif et al., 2006). Firstly, these were the elections in which Vox obtained its first “big win”, which was also the first time an RRP ever entered the Spanish political institutions since the reinstating of the Spanish democracy (Turnbull-Dugarte, 2019). On the other hand, the win for the political right in Andalucía that

year spoiled what would have been the eleventh consecutive legislature for the main left party in Spain, Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE), which had since 1982 held office in that Autonomous Community. Vox's support, thus, facilitated the formation of a right-wing government by Partido Popular (PP) and Ciudadanos (C's) for the first time in that region.

The following figure (Figure 2) contains four newspaper covers from different regions of Spain on the day after the Andalusian elections, December 3, 2018. As can be seen, the election results are mentioned in every headline.



Figure 2. Newspaper covers from the day after Vox's entry in the Andalusian parliament (December 3, 2018). Sources: Diario de Sevilla (2018), La Voz de Galicia (2018), La Vanguardia (2018) & El País (2018).

The first one, Diario de Sevilla (A), is one of the most read newspapers in Andalucía, the region in question. La Voz de Galicia (B) and La Vanguardia (C) are also



regional newspapers from the autonomous communities Galicia and Catalunya. Finally, El País (D) is a national newspaper with readers from all regions of the country. This figure provides further proof of the impact of Vox's entry in Andalucía not only on Andalusian citizens and media, but on all corners of the country. However, there are some differences between these covers that indicate the importance of the fact in each region. For Andalucía, Vox's entry and the election results occupy all of El Diario de Sevilla's cover. Furthermore, Vox is the protagonist of its headline, even though they did not win the election by far. In the other three covers, Vox's appearance is relegated to a secondary role, and not even mentioned in some headlines, or substituted by "La ultraderecha" (El País, 2018).

Additionally, for a descriptive preliminary analysis of the differentiated effect in Andalucía and the rest of Spain, the following line plot (Figure 3) shows how the entry of Vox into Andalusian institutions produced a peak of searches for the political party on Google both at the state and regional levels, followed by the peaks produced by the two general elections the following year.

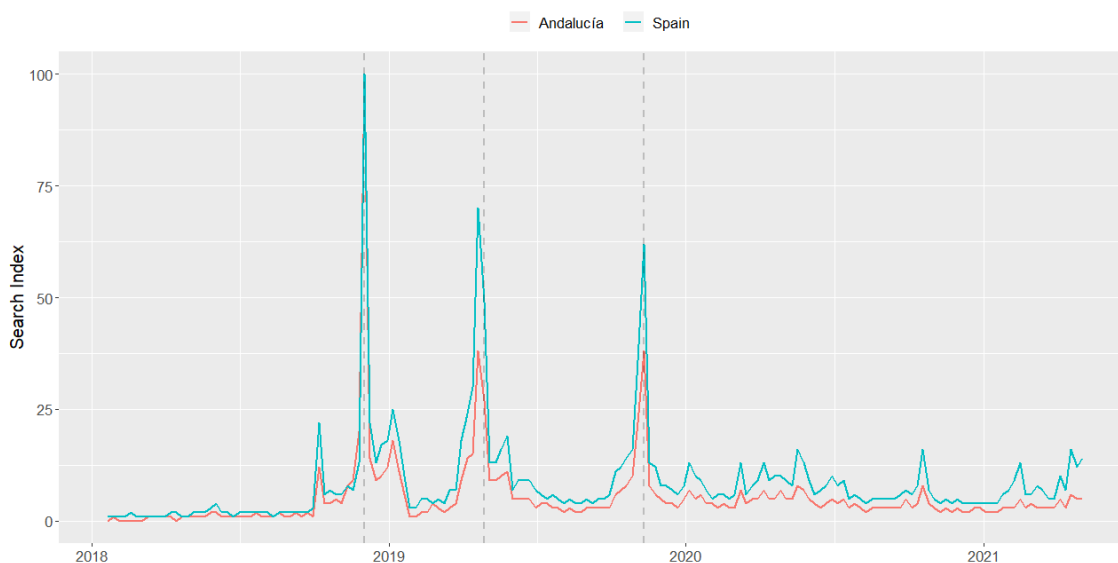


Figure 3. Google searches of the political party Vox in Andalucía and the rest of Spain for the last three years. Note: The dashed lines signify the date of the three main elections of 2018 and 2019 where Vox gained political representation. Source: Google Trends data.

As can be seen, the X axis is a time measure by week, and the Y axis represents an index number from 0 to 100, 100 being the moment in which the higher ever number of searches has been registered. That means that, the week of December 2, the week of the Andalusian elections, produced the most searches of Vox both in Andalucía and Spain. But, why do we assume it impacted Andalucía's citizens more than it did

Spain's? As Figure 3 shows, on all points but the 100 mark, there is a slight gap between the lines that signify Andalusian and Spanish searches. That means that, in relative terms, the population of Andalucía made more searches on December 2, 2018 than the rest of the country compared to ordinary days. We also rely on the proximity of the effect of these elections: Considering they are the Andalusian regional elections and not the general ones, it is plausible that they had a greater effect on Andalusian citizens.

To make sure that this effect was not generalized and searches of all political forces did not increase in the same way, or that the effect was different in other important regions such as Madrid or Catalunya, several other plots were constructed. In Appendix A we can find Figures A1 and A2, which show that our expectations are going in the right direction. Figure A1 shows a greater gap between ordinary days and the days of election for the searches of Vox than for the searches of other political parties. Figure A2 also supports our expectations, when we see again a gap between Andalucía's results and the ones from Catalunya and Madrid, similar to the plot in Figure 3.

### Data and method

In order to test our hypothesis, we will employ two different analyses. Firstly, we will carry out a study at the state level, checking whether the effect of Vox's entry into the Andalusian parliament in 2018 increased negative attitudes towards immigration in that region compared to the rest of the country, using data from the Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas' (CIS) monthly barometers. Secondly, we will replicate the method using a different set of data; this time, employing an international dataset from the European Commission's Eurobarometer, in order to verify the relationship in terms of Spain versus to other countries of the European Union. This is due to the effect we have seen that Vox's entry also had on other regions of Spain, that, if not as large as in Andalucía, is also notable.

Both studies will employ a quasi-experimental methodology using the difference-in-differences method (DiD), via various linear probability models (our method is replicated in Appendix E using logistic regression instead of LPM). In order to execute these analyses, our main independent variable will be Vox's entry in

Andalucía's regional institutions, and our outcome variable, the consideration of immigration as the most important problem in the country (or, as in Analysis 1, one of the three main problems in the country).

Additionally, our analyses will include some control variables according to existing literature on the factors that might be able to influence public opinion as well. This group of variables consists of demographic and psychological factors: Age, gender, unemployment status, education level, left-right self-placement and religiosity, as well as perception of the economic situation in the country, personal, and national economic prospects.

The equation that allows us to identify the treatment effect in all our models is as follows:

$$y_{i,t} = \alpha + \beta_1 Treated + \beta_2 Post + \beta_3 Treated * Post + \beta_4 X_i + u_{i,t}$$

where  $y_{i,t}$  is the dependent variable, attitudes towards immigration of an individual  $i$  at a time period  $t$ ;  $\beta_1$ ,  $\beta_2$  and  $\beta_3$  capture the effect of being in the treatment group and after the time treatment was administered; and  $\beta_4 X_i$  captures the effect of all individual control variables.

### Analysis 1: Andalucía vs. Spain

As we have already established, we obtained the data for the first study from the CIS' monthly barometers<sup>1</sup>. Specifically, our outcome variable will be operationalized from the following questions: '*Which is, to your judgement, the main problem that exists currently in Spain? And the second? And third?*'.

These questions are the only measurement of attitudes towards immigration of Spanish citizens we have available for our period of study in a periodic manner. And, even though other questions such as the ones from the European Social Survey questionnaires<sup>2</sup> would possibly be a better measure of these attitudes, we are confident

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<sup>1</sup> Access to the databases used for Analysis 1 can be found here: [http://www.cis.es/cis/open/cm/ES/11\\_barometros/depositados.jsp](http://www.cis.es/cis/open/cm/ES/11_barometros/depositados.jsp)

<sup>2</sup> Such as whether immigrants make the country a worse or better place to live, whether the country's cultural life is undermined or enriched by immigrants, whether immigration is bad or good for the country's economy or whether the country should allow more or less immigrants inside its borders (ESS Round 9, 2018).

that the consideration of immigration as a problem is typically related to xenophobic attitudes more than concern for immigrant rights (Zick et al., 2008).

The cutoff point, by means of which we will obtain our independent variable and consider treatment being administered, is the date in which Vox entered Andalucía's regional parliament: December 2, 2018. Observations after this date will be coded as having experienced treatment, that is, the entry of Vox in parliament, and thus, as 1, and those before, as 0.

To estimate the effect, we will build several different models, each of which includes data from different time-spans. This choice responds to the existence of two possible operating mechanisms that Valentim puts forward on his latest research on radical right support normalization. The first of these is the theory of information shock. It states that elections can help normalize certain issues, attitudes or behaviors, by providing information on the real number of individuals in a society that support them. On the one hand, as voting is a secret type of participation, and therefore allows for taboo attitudes or behaviors to emerge without direct consequences, citizens can learn what others are doing, even if it is not what is supposed to be done. On the other hand, the perceived punishment for that "bad" behavior, habit or attitude is lessened, as elections signal that many other individuals have the same predispositions and therefore won't be judgmental of them (2021: 7-8).

The second possible mechanism is a signal of norm change by the political institutions in which the RRP enters. Given the importance and centrality that parliaments and governments have in current parliamentary systems, citizens often look at them for cues of what the appropriate and accepted behaviors are in their society. That way, election results and the subsequent parliament configurations work as heuristics for many individuals.

According to Valentim (2021), if we found ourselves in front of the first of the operating mechanisms, elections as information shocks, we would observe an immediate effect in those places where the RRP had more support or a bigger electoral success. Conversely, when in presence of the second mechanism, normative change signaling, a bigger effect would be found as time goes by after the electoral success of the RRP, due to the citizens' need to become aware of that change (p. 23), which, contrary to the information shock mechanism, cannot occur overnight.

### Analysis 2: Spain vs. Europe

The second analysis we will perform finds its justification in what we can see observing Figures 2 and 3. As can be observed, Vox's entry in parliament not only triggered the attention of the population from Andalucía, but also that of the rest of the country (even if in lesser terms). Thus, it can be that with our first study no effect is found, though not because of a lack of effect, but for one that is generalized in all of Spain. That is why, by means of this second analysis, we aim to assess the effect that this event had on Spanish society in its entirety.

Given that the only changing factor, in this sense, is the unit of analysis employed, Analysis 2 will be carried out using the same methodology as Analysis 1, utilizing a set of international data instead of the CIS' barometers. To account for the results in different countries<sup>3</sup>, we will employ the European Commission's Eurobarometer<sup>4</sup> dataset's question: '*What do you think are the two most important issues that Spain is facing at the moment?*'. Although the question does not specifically regard issues as problems, the answer options (crime, the economic situation, terrorism, etc.) lead us to believe that this is the purpose of the question.

Again, the steps to follow will be the same as in Analysis 1, building all of the same models but using international data. The only methodological differences are that we have no information for the economic control variables present in the first analysis, so they will not be taken into account when building the models of Analysis 2. Also, since only two barometers per year include our question of interest, Analysis 2 covers a greater time period, in order to add variability to our analysis. Thus, dates range from 2014 to 2019.

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<sup>3</sup> Countries included in the sample are: Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and United Kingdom.

<sup>4</sup> Access to the databases used for Analysis 2 can be found here: <https://zcat.gesis.org/webview/>

## Results

### Analysis 1: Andalucía vs. Spain

We'll start this section by preliminarily observing the following bar chart (Figure 4). It provides us with a visual representation of the percentage of population in Spain that believes immigration is one of the most important problems in the country. Right before Vox's entry in Andalucía's regional parliament, the difference between the Andalusian population and the citizens from the rest of Spanish regions was minimal. After their electoral success, however, it is clear that a larger proportion of the Andalusian population considers the issue of immigration as negative.

Just like Figure 3, this plot lays the foundation for our analysis, and, furthermore, seems to point to the direction of our hypothesis. To test this in a statistical way that will allow us to assess the significance of this descriptive evidence, several models were built the results of which can be found in Table 1.

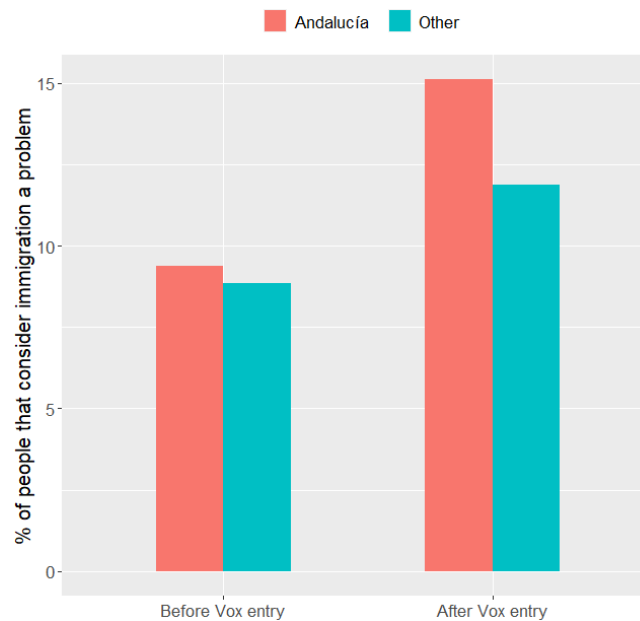


Figure 4. Percentage of people that consider immigration a problem, before and after the entry of Vox in the Andalusian regional parliament, by location. Source: CIS Barometer data.

The first two models (one without and one with controls) only include the immediately previous and following barometers, while Models 3 and 4 include two barometers with treatment and two without, to allow one more month to let the success of the party sink in among the population.

Models 5 and 6, on the other hand, include all barometers available for the years 2018 and 2019, in order to test if this effect is maintained further than those one or two months. Another way to test this is the one used for our two last models for this part of the analysis, Models 7 and 8, which use the same database as the recently discussed Models 5 and 6, but instead of making two subgroups of data, (0 and 1, depending on treatment), gives a coefficient for every month in those two years, in comparison and in reference to the month right before Vox entered parliament, that is, November 2018. That way, we will be able to observe changes in opinion month to month.

**Table 1. Estimation models for the effect of the entry of Vox in Andalucía's regional parliament on Andalusian citizens' attitudes towards immigration**

	Negative attitudes towards immigration					
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Andalucía	0.005 (0.015)	0.006 (0.019)	0.011 (0.010)	0.003 (0.013)	0.004 (0.005)	0.0003 (0.006)
After Vox entry	0.030*** (0.009)	0.033*** (0.011)	0.021*** (0.006)	0.020*** (0.008)	0.040*** (0.002)	0.053*** (0.003)
Andalucía:After Vox entry	0.027 (0.021)	0.031 (0.027)	0.030** (0.015)	0.056*** (0.019)	0.006 (0.006)	0.021** (0.008)
Constant	0.088*** (0.006)	-0.216*** (0.050)	0.090*** (0.004)	-0.193*** (0.035)	0.066*** (0.002)	-0.135*** (0.015)
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Treatment	11/18-12/18	11/18-12/18	10/18-01/19	10/18-01/19	2018-2019	2018-2019
N	5886	3823	11731	7649	109337	38228
Adj. R-squared	0.004	0.025	0.003	0.025	0.003	0.031

\*\*\* p < .01; \*\* p < .05; \* p < .1

As can be seen, there is indeed an increase in negative attitudes towards immigration after the entry of Vox in the Andalusian parliament in December 2018. The findings are very consistent across each of the models and provide evidence supporting our hypothesis. The entry of Vox had a significant effect in all of Spain, as it meant a political and social shock of the cultural norms among the population. Our interest in this investigation, however, is to learn if this effect was larger for the Andalusian population specifically. The positive interaction coefficients indicate in the that, indeed, Vox's entry had a greater effect amongst Andalusian citizens. Again, this effect is always positive across all 6 Models from Table 1, but becomes significant only for Models 3, 4 and 6.

The fact that for the first two models the effect is positive but insignificant, and only becomes so after we add two more barometers for the previous and next month

into the database (in Models 3 and 4), leads us to believe that the operating mechanism behind these results could go in the line of what Valentim (2021) suggested as his second possible mechanism: Andalusian citizens start to perceive a normative change after Vox enters their regional parliament. This change is also visible if we pay attention to the following Figure 5, which is a visual representation of our fourth and sixth models. As can be seen, there is a perceivable difference between the estimates of Andalucía and other Autonomous Communities.

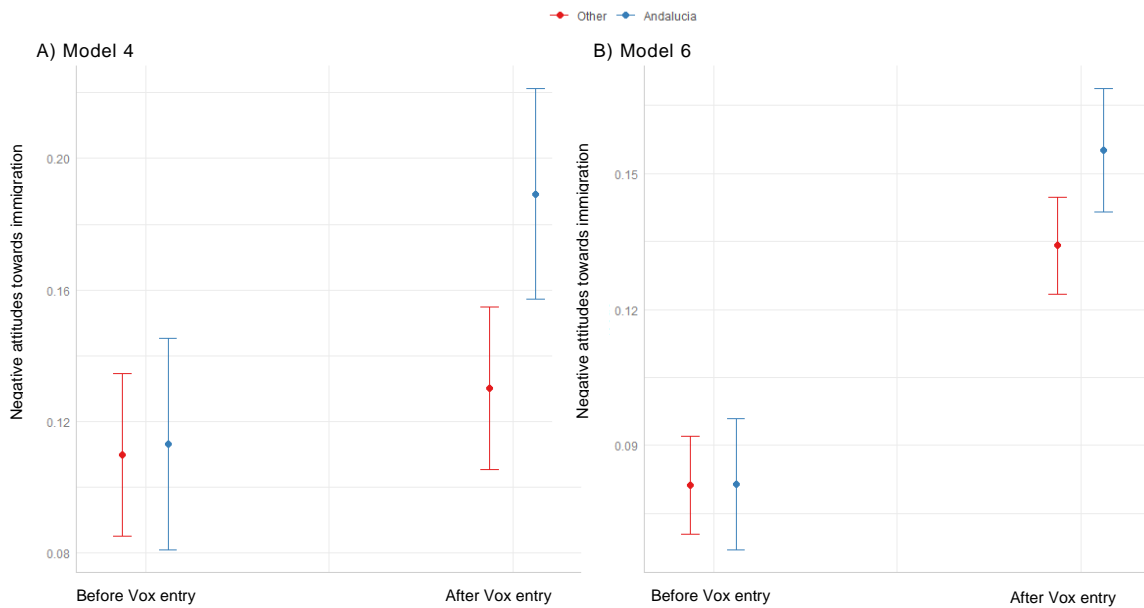


Figure 5. Predicted values of negative attitudes towards immigration conditional on RRP entry (for Models 4 and 6 of Analysis 1). Note: 95% confidence intervals.

If we turn our attention only to the models that include control variables (Models 2, 4 and 6), we can assess the impact of Vox's entry by looking at the difference between the coefficients. After December 2018, there was a 3.7% higher probability that an Andalusian citizen considered immigration one of the most important problems in the country, compared to citizens from outside of Andalucía (for an Andalusian citizen, the effect was of 6.46%, while for an average Spanish citizen was 3.3%). In Model 4 (Figure 5A), which has a wider sample by including two more months and allowing the effect to present itself by giving it more time, the effect for an Andalusian citizen was of 7.9%, while for the rest of the country was 2%. That accounts for a difference of 5.6 percentage points. Model 6, which includes data from two whole years, 2018 and 2019, has a smaller but still significant effect.

The right-hand panel (B) in Figure 5 is the visual representation of Model 6. As we can see, in contrast with the first one (Model 4), the gap between Andalucía's and



Spain's lines has been reduced. However, this smaller difference is not entirely due to a decrease in the effect in Andalucía, but because the rest of the country is catching up after Vox's entry in the national parliament on April 2019, which we will discuss soon. Specifically, the effect for Andalusian population remains high at 7.43%, and the effect for the rest of Spain increases to 5.3%, leaving us a difference of only 2.13 percentage points.

Finally, the results of Table B1, which for length reasons is located in Appendix B, show coefficients for every month of 2018 and 2019 in relation to a month before Vox entered the Andalusian parliament, November 2018. After the results already discussed, this table brings us some new and more specific insights. Additionally, Figure 6 provides us with a visual representation for the results in Table B1.

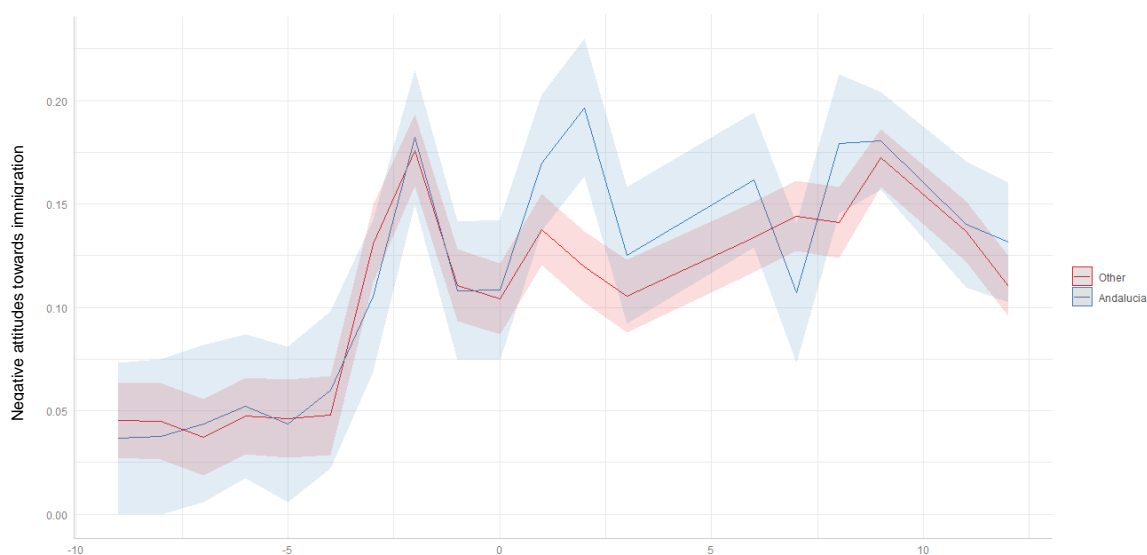


Figure 6. Predicted values of negative attitudes towards immigration in Andalucía vs. Spain according to our findings from Model 8 (Table B1 in Appendix B). Note:  $x = 0$  signifies moment after which treatment is administered (November 2018).

First of all, if we focus on the results of our multiple interaction terms, which can be found at the bottom of the table, the detail that stands up the most is that only one of the coefficients is statistically significant: the one from January 2019, just two months after the entry of Vox in the Andalusian parliament. This finding is especially relevant for our study, insomuch as it helps confirm our hypothesis one step further than the findings recently discussed. As discussed, these last two models (Models 7 and 8) are made up of 22 months of data, period in which three major elections occurred in Andalucía, and two in the rest of Spain (Andalucía's regional elections in December 2018, and two general elections on April 2019 and November

2019); as well as local and European elections in all of the country in May. The fact that the effect of the entry of Vox is only significant in Andalucía after the Andalusian elections does not mean that other elections did not have an effect on Andalusian citizens, rather, it means that it was not statistically higher than the effect it had on the rest of the Spanish Autonomous Communities.

Secondly, also regarding the coefficients concerning Andalucía, and visually perceivable in Figure 6, we can see how the effect of Vox's entry fades as time passes. After time  $x = 0$ , that is, November 2018, Andalucía's predicted values increase considerably, but quickly return to levels near the rest of the country. This, however, is not an unprecedented finding. As Flores states in his 2018 paper on the effect of elite discourse on public attitudes towards immigrants, *'If targeting minorities and immigrants is somewhat controversial for some, hearing a political figure openly chastising them may enable some individuals to express their true opinions. However, after a while, this "social permission" may wear off and there would be a return to the status quo, in which such views may still be somewhat controversial'* (p. 1678).

Even though the results of Models 3 and 4 pointed towards the existence of a "normative change mechanism", the fact that the effect does not stick and, thanks to Figure 6, we can see it fluctuate after Vox's entry in December 2018, seems to indicate that perhaps there is a little more to be discussed about the underlying workings of this effect.

Finally, it is worth mentioning the results in the upper section of Table B1: The ones for the rest of Spain. Contrary to those of Andalucía, we find many significant coefficients among these results; especially around the dates of the previously mentioned elections. Unfortunately, due to lack of data for some variables, the coefficients for March, April and October 2019 are missing. Nevertheless, a clear pattern is visible: After the elections of Andalucía in December 2018 –which, even though did not affect the rest of the country, did indeed mean a shock for all Spanish society–, the general and locals of April and May 2019 and the general again on November 2019, the coefficients turn positive and significant.

On the whole, these results support our hypothesis sustaining that, wherever an RRP enters parliament, in this case Vox in Andalucía, there is an increase in the manifestation of negative attitudes towards immigration.

### Analysis 2: Spain vs. Europe

The final part of our analysis compares attitudes towards immigration of Spanish citizens with those of other countries in the European Union, using Eurobarometer data. As we have already discussed in previous pages, this second analysis is designed to assess the effect Vox's entry in Andalucía's regional parliament had on all of Spain. The last study showed, according to the findings of Tables 1 and B1, that Vox's entry also had a positive effect on our dependent variable for the rest of the country, and not only in Andalucía.

The upcoming pages, therefore, contain the findings of this second study. Again, Figure 7 provides a descriptive analysis of our outcome variable before and after treatment, for Spain and other countries of Europe.

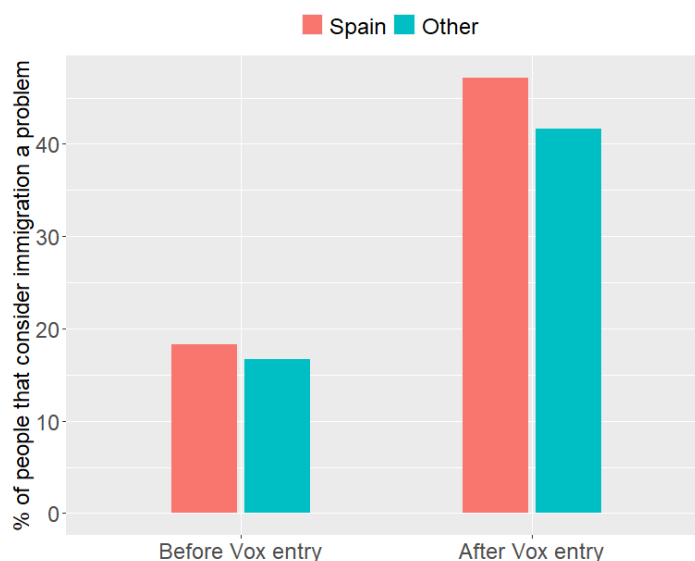


Figure 7. Percentage of people that consider immigration a problem, before and after the entry of Vox in the Andalusian regional parliament, by location. Source: EC Eurobarometer data.

As we can see, contrary to its twin from Analysis 1 (Figure 4), the difference between Spain and the rest of Europe here is not too big. However, the result of our analysis will demonstrate whether this difference is statistically significant.

Following the example of Analysis 1, Table 2 shows the results for six of the eight models constructed with European data. The Table shows how there is an

indiscriminate increase in negative attitudes towards immigration across all models. This is true not only for Spain, but for all of Europe, as the coefficients for “After Vox entry” indicate. As we have already discussed, RRP entry is not a phenomenon limited to Spain, but common across many countries, and especially in Europe (Denison & Geddes, 2018; Norris, 2005). Recently, more and more citizens are supporting RRP, which means that, in one way or another, they also support their ideas and values. And, as we know, hostility towards or opposition to immigrants and immigration is a considerable part of their ideology (Anduiza, 2018; Mudde, 2007; Oliván, 2021).

As can be seen in Table 2, the interaction terms –which, again, are our main interest in this analysis– remain positive and mostly statistically significant. Again, we will focus on Models 2, 4 and 6, which include control variables. For all of these models, there is a positive effect for the entry of Vox in the Andalusian parliament in Spain that causes a difference that ranges from 4.1 percentage points in Model 4 to 6.8 percentage points in Model 2.

**Table 2. Estimation models for the effect of the entry of Vox in Andalucía’s regional parliament on Spanish citizens' attitudes towards immigration**

	Negative attitudes towards immigration					
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Spain	0.016 (0.014)	0.036** (0.018)	-0.044*** (0.009)	-0.042*** (0.011)	-0.109*** (0.004)	-0.107*** (0.005)
After Vox entry	0.248*** (0.004)	0.249*** (0.004)	0.156*** (0.003)	0.155*** (0.003)	0.041*** (0.002)	0.027*** (0.002)
Spain:After Vox entry	0.041** (0.020)	0.032 (0.023)	0.075*** (0.014)	0.083*** (0.016)	0.101*** (0.011)	0.114*** (0.012)
Constant	0.167*** (0.002)	0.089*** (0.016)	0.165*** (0.002)	0.084*** (0.011)	0.191*** (0.001)	0.123*** (0.006)
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Treatment	11/18-02/19	11/18-02/19	03/18-11/19	03/18-11/19	11/14-07/20	11/14-07/20
N	60073	47528	108597	87783	368765	301588
Adj. R-squared	0.077	0.080	0.035	0.040	0.004	0.009

\*\*\*p < .01; \*\*p < .05; \*p < .1

This means that, after Vox entered the political institutions, Spanish citizens had a 6.8 percentage points bigger chance of considering immigration a problem right after the fact, compared to citizens of other European countries, and a 4.1 percentage points bigger chance during the following year.

These results indicate that, although our first analysis provided significant results, our intuition to perform a second analysis was correct: The effect spilled over to other areas of Spain as well as Andalucía, even though the election in question was regional. This is yet again, proof of the social and political shock that the entry of an RRP in Spain meant for Spanish society.

Again, following our first analysis' lead, the two plots in Figure 8 are a visual representation of Models 4 and 6. Both models indicate that there is an increase in negative attitudes towards immigration of Spanish citizens after Vox's entry on December 2, 2018. That increase is statistically significant and larger than that of other countries in Europe.

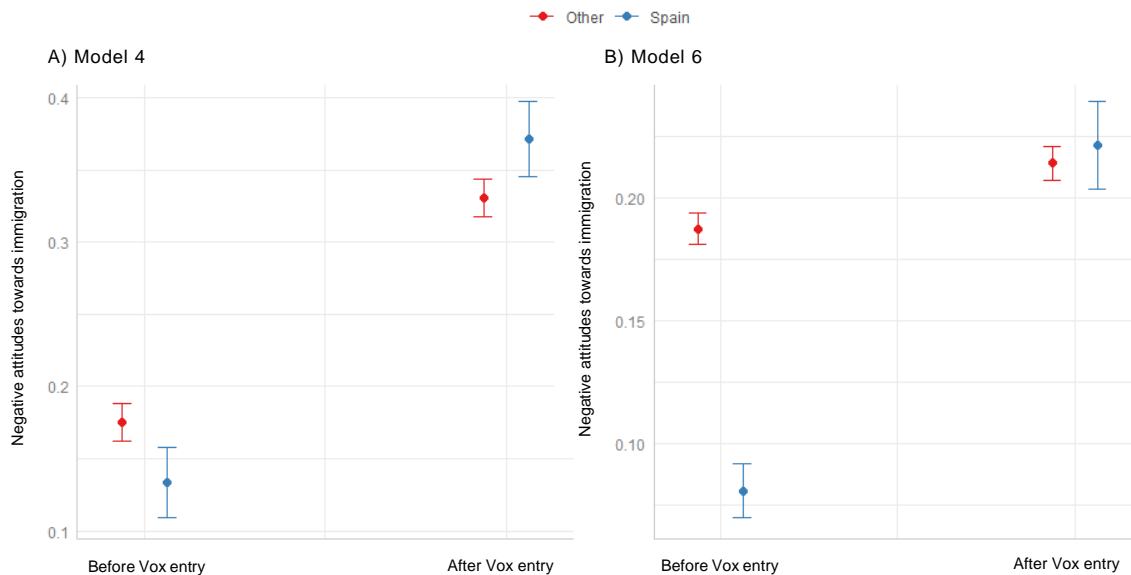


Figure 8. Predicted values of negative attitudes towards immigration conditional on RRP entry (for Models 4 and 6 of Analysis 2). Note: 95% confidence intervals.

Finally, Table B2 in Appendix B shows the regression results for the last two models performed for Analysis 2, and Figure 9 is a visual representation of the predicted values resulting from it.

These results are similar to those of Table B1, and show how our interaction term for treatment group and date are almost always negative, minus that of February 2019, which is the most immediate data available right after Vox's entry in December 2018.

The coefficient, however, is not statistically significant. That could be due to the fact that already more than two months had passed since the election date. As the

results from Analysis 1 have shown, the effect of Vox's entry fades after some time, which could be why the results of Table B2 are positive, but not significant. Perhaps if more recent data were available, we could observe a bigger effect in our interaction terms.

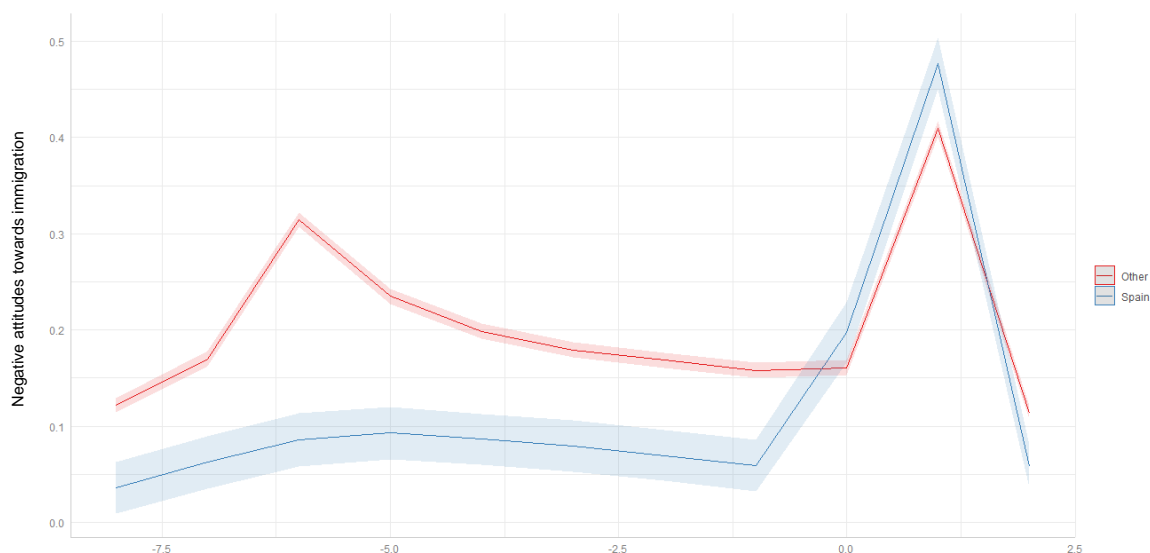


Figure 9. Predicted values of negative attitudes towards immigration in Andalucía vs. Spain according to our findings from Model 8 (Table B2 in Appendix B). Note:  $x = 0$  signifies moment after which treatment is administered.

Another possible answer to this phenomenon could be the type of question used for the analyses. Even though the wording is practically the same, and the expected answers are also similar, there is a big difference between the CIS Barometer's question and that of the EC Eurobarometer: The former asks for the three main problems, whereas the latter only for one. This means that the EC Eurobarometer respondents have to choose only one problem between items such as the economy, terrorism, crime, inflation, immigration, unemployment, etc. Conversely, CIS Barometer's respondents have three opportunities in which to include immigration as one of the most important problems in the country. Therefore, it seems more likely that more people would list immigration as a problem when they can put it after problems that could be considered more serious or urgent, such as crime or inflation. However, further down this paper we perform an additional test considering only the first answer to the CIS Barometer's question as our dependent variable.

Another phenomenon visible in the plot is the fact that Spanish predicted values go up also between October and November 2018, one month before Vox's entry in parliament. Our assumption here is that the repercussion of Vistalegre's political

meeting held by Vox on October 8, 2018, exerted as well a legitimizing effect for citizens all over the country, since it had an unprecedented turnout. This increase can only be seen in Analysis 2, as this event was held in Madrid, and therefore had no significant differentiated effect on Andalusian citizen's attitudes.

This effect, though, isn't unexpected. Just as elections can be seen as highly publicized scenarios and therefore provide citizens with information about social norms and the distribution of preferences in society, a mediatic event such as Vistalegre's meeting can also function as a legitimizing event and have a similar power, which is what can be seen in Figure 9.

All things considered, this second analysis fulfills our expectations in that its results denote an effect of Vox's entry in all of Spain compared to other countries, and thus helps confirm our main hypothesis.

## Robustness and placebo tests

### Parallel Trends Assumption

To ensure the robustness of our results, it is important to confirm that the parallel trends assumption under which our research method operates is verified. The following plot (Figure 10) shows how the lines of Andalucía and Spain's average in negative attitudes towards immigration vary in a similar way throughout the months before Vox enters the Andalusian parliament.

Therefore, we can corroborate the existence of a parallel trend in attitudes towards immigration of the population from Andalucía and the rest of Spain before the time of treatment administration, i.e., December 2, 2018.

The same dynamic can be observed in Figure 11 in regard to Spain and other European countries, even if slightly less parallel in the end than Spain's trends –which we have already discussed.

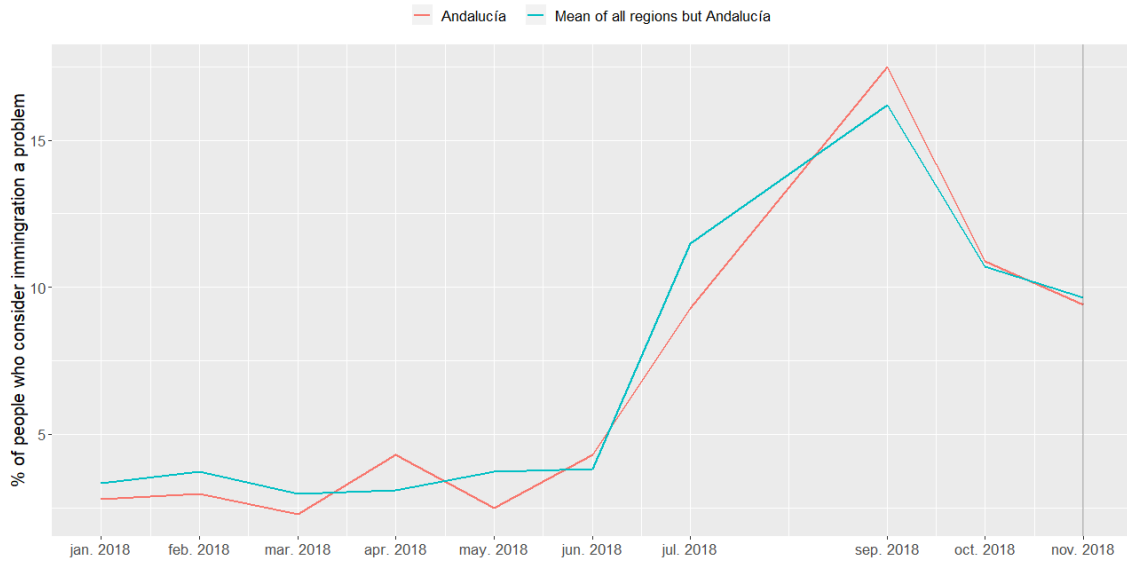


Figure 10. Parallel trends plot for the consideration of immigration as a problem in Andalucía and the rest of Spain. Note: The grey vertical line signifies the moment after which treatment is administered. Source: CIS barometer data.

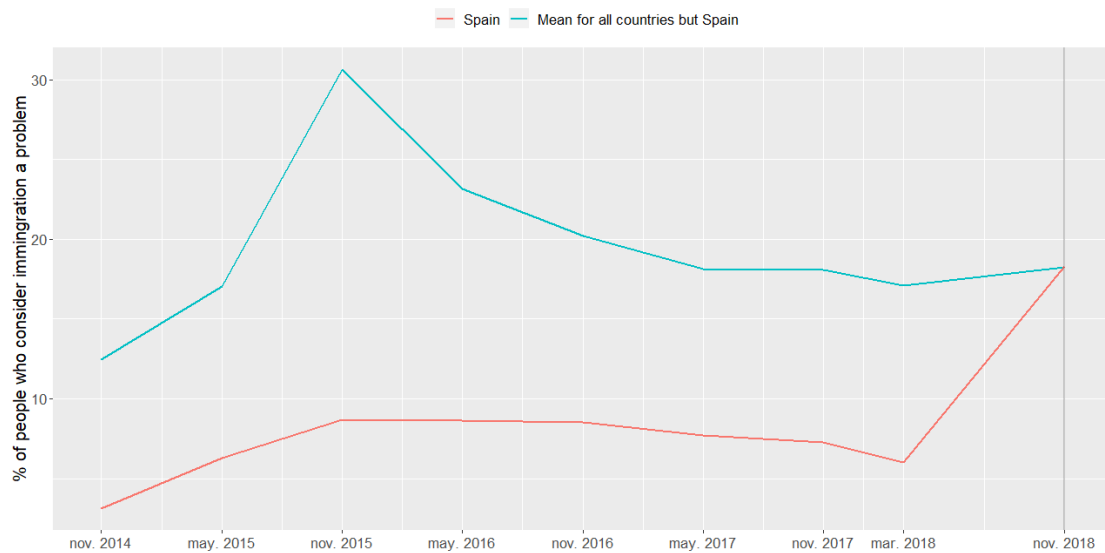


Figure 11. Parallel trends plot for the consideration of immigration as a problem in Spain and the rest of European countries included in the EC Eurobarometers. Note: The grey vertical line signifies the moment after which treatment is administered. Source: EC Eurobarometer data.

Given that these graphs only plot the trends for the means of Spain and Europe, Appendix C includes both plots with the trends for every region of Spain (Figure C1) and every country included in the Eurobarometer (Figure C2).

Alternative operationalization of the dependent variable

As we anticipated, an additional analysis was performed using an alternative operationalization of our outcome variable to check the robustness of our results.



Instead of considering all three answers as the first, second or third problems or most important issues in the country, this complementary analysis considers solely the first of these answers: The consideration of immigration as *the most* important issue or problem in the country. Since Analysis 2 already uses a question with only one answer, this alternative operationalization is only performed for Analysis 1: Andalucía vs. Spain.

The results of this analysis can be viewed in Tables D1 and D2, which are located in Appendix D. As we can observe, all coefficients remain positive, even if not always significant. This outcome is interesting and brings us to briefly discuss the possible reasons for it. This alternative operationalization analysis and its results, go in line with those of our final models in Analysis 2, and are not entirely unexpected.

As we have noted during the discussion of the results for Analysis 2, it is possible that, having to choose only one main problem in the country, respondents resort to other problems or issues that perhaps have a more immediate effect on their lives, such as healthcare, crime or inflation, and not so much immigration. It can also be that certain inhibitions are still at work, which make it that listing immigration as the most important problem in the country still be perceived as or considered taboo or inadmissible. Whatever the reason, it seems that having only one blank to fill with an important problem, instead of three, limits the expected effect.

#### Alternative method: Logistic regression

Another set of models was constructed, this time switching our method to logistic regression with generalized linear models instead of using linear probability models. Since our dependent variable is dichotomous, a logit model might be fit to estimate coefficients that imply probabilities that fall inside of the unit interval, in this case between 0 and 1.

The results of these models are available in Appendix E. As one can see from tables E1 through E4, our coefficients of interest remain in the same direction as our linear probability models, even if not always statistically significant.

### Alternative dependent variables: Placebo tests

In order to ensure that the effect on immigration wasn't mirrored by other variables and attitudes of Andalusian citizens, and that this effect wasn't caused by a general change in Andalusian citizens' attitudes that did not affect the rest of the country (instead of by Vox's entry), three additional models were constructed with different dependent variables.

Three new variables were chosen that did not necessarily belong to the prime issues of Vox's discourse, and so could have been affected by other factors. These variables are: Government approval (Model 1), the consideration of climate change as a problem in the country (Model 2), and a negative prospect of the country's economy (Model 3).

As one can see from the results on Table F1 (Appendix F), none of these variables were severely altered after November 2018 in Andalucía. Since none of them are strongly related to Vox's discourse or ideology, these tests take us a step further in affirming that the change in citizens' attitudes towards immigration was due to Vox's entry and not a general attitudinal shift in Andalucía.

### Alternative dependent variables: Vox's discourse

Additionally, since immigration is only one topic among Vox's repertoire, and therefore other issues might have affected citizens after their entry in parliament, several models were built, this time considering those topics as dependent variables, instead of attitudes towards immigration. The results of these tests can be found in Table G1 (Appendix G).

The topics chosen as dependent variables respond to their importance and prominence among Vox's ideology and discourse. As we have already discussed during our case selection justification, Vox's discourse is centered, aside from immigration, on authoritarianism and the defense of traditional values, as well as the defense of the unity of Spain, especially after the Catalan referendum and what is commonly known as "El Procés" for Catalan independence.

Hence, three new models were constructed, to assess the effect of Vox's entry on: Catalan independence (Model 1), that is, whether citizens considered Catalan

independence a major problem in the country; crisis of values (Model 2) namely if citizens thought that there was a crisis of values and considered it also one of the major issues; and finally territorial organization (Model 3), that is, what citizens thought about the current autonomous communities situation -if the figure of autonomous communities should be abolished, whether they should stay the same or gain or lose some of their autonomy.

Given the lack of information on these new dependent variables for our second analysis, this test was only performed for Analysis 1.

As can be seen in Table G1 (Appendix G), none of these variables were affected by Vox's entry in the Andalusian parliament, and even sometimes the effect was contrary to what would be expected.

The fact that attitudes towards immigration were affected by Vox's entry, and no other variables were, can mean different things: It can be that a special emphasis was made on the topic of immigration during the Andalusian campaign –for which we would need to perform a deep study of the topics and issues discussed and most magnified by media outlets during the campaign—, or perhaps it is because immigration –or, more specifically, antiimmigration attitudes— are still considered taboo or unacceptable, and therefore the legitimization effect was greater, given that attitudes about the unity of the nation and traditional values are already legitimate within Spanish society.

## Concluding remarks

In our current party systems, it is more and more common that established parties have to coexist and compete with new radical parties, such as RRP and radical left parties, inside the walls of political institutions and within governments. These new parties are often characterized as niche parties, and as such, they are expected to behave in different ways and therefore have differing consequences in the environment in which they are introduced (De Giorgi et al., 2021: 5; Wagner & Meyer, 2016). That is why it is important to explore the potential political and social

consequences of not only their existence, but of their presence inside a country's decision-making institutions.

Throughout this paper, our main purpose has been to assess the impact of RRP institutional entry on citizens' attitudes towards immigration. Specifically, we exploited the entry of the new Spanish RRP Vox into the Andalusian regional institutions on December 2, 2018. Given the centrality of the immigration issue among the party's main policy priorities, as well as its nativist ideology, we set out to evaluate the effect that the entry of its antiimmigration discourse in the political institutions could have on citizens.

Attitudes towards immigration are becoming increasingly relevant in our modern societies: The migration crisis and rapid globalization are facilitating mobility between countries. In this context, citizens have incentives to take cues from relevant political and social actors in order to develop their own views on the matter.

Building upon the work of Bischof and Wagner (2019) and Valentim (2021), using a difference-in-differences method, our results have shown that, indeed, RRP entry and political representation can increase reported antiimmigrant attitudes in surveys on the following months to said entry. After December 2, 2018, not only the probability that citizens all around the country listed immigration as one of the main problems of the country increased, but those who were from the region into which Vox entered, Andalucía, were even more likely to do so. Thus, confirming our initial expectations and validating our hypothesis.

By means of our monthly models, we have found that there is a fluctuation of negative attitudes towards immigration: Whenever Vox entered parliament (whether the first time in Andalucía or later in 2019 on both general elections), negative attitudes towards immigration spiked, even if that effect would deflate with time –which we have seen is a common phenomenon, as Flores (2018: 1678) stated.

Also, considering the impact that Vox's entry was bound to have on other regions of Spain as well as Andalucía –given the notoriety of the fact and its consequential mediatic repercussion–, Analysis 2 was performed. It included a sample of all countries included in the EC Eurobarometer, in order to assess Vox's entry's impact on all of Spain compared to other countries in Europe. Its results also confirmed the

effect that surely the RRP's institutional entry had on citizens all over the country, when in relation to other European countries at the same moment.

Regarding RRP existence and parliamentary or institutional entry, there is also a discussion about whether or not RRPs should be allowed to enter political institutions and offices. One of the reasons given in favor of their banning is supported by the argument that their entry and presence would have a persuasion effect, and thus, convince the population to share their views antiimmigration, therefore lessening the democratic foundations on which modern societies are built.

Our study, however, cannot provide confirmation of that argument. Our empirical strategy allowed us to prove the short-term effects of RRP entry: That, indeed, after Vox's entry, reported antiimmigration attitudes increased. Nevertheless, the time difference between treatment and control groups was much too small as to believe that this sudden increase was due to the power of persuasion, and not simple legitimization of preexisting ideas. Thus, insomuch as the existence of a legitimization effect –and not persuasion– indicates that those attitudes already existed inside citizens' minds, and Vox's entry only helped bring them to surface, we cannot say that the amount of people that possessed antiimmigration attitudes increased, only that the number of people who admitted to these attitudes increased.

Whether the extent of Vox's influence went as far as to persuade citizens is certainly an avenue that future research should explore. Long-term presence of RRP in political institutions, accompanied by the media attention and increase in resources that inevitably comes with it, might be able to exert that persuasion effect on the population. While going beyond the scope of this study, answering this question would be a step forward in uncovering the full extent of RRP influence on citizens' attitudes.

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## Appendix

### Appendix A – Google Searches

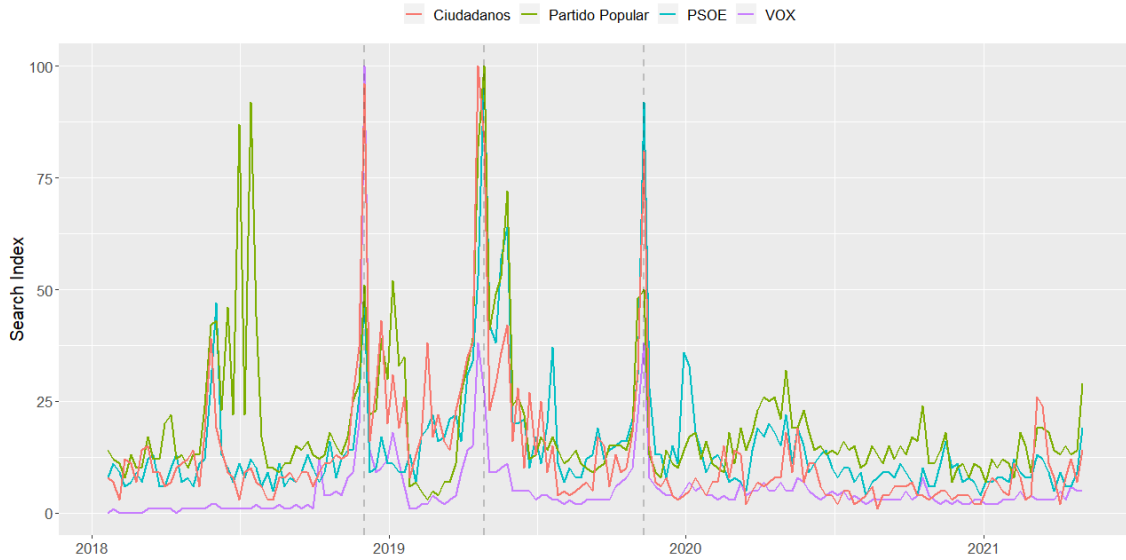


Figure A1. Google searches of the main Spanish political parties in Andalucía during the last 3 years. Note: the dotted lines signify the date of the three main elections of 2018 and 2019 where Vox gained political representation. Source: Google Trends data.

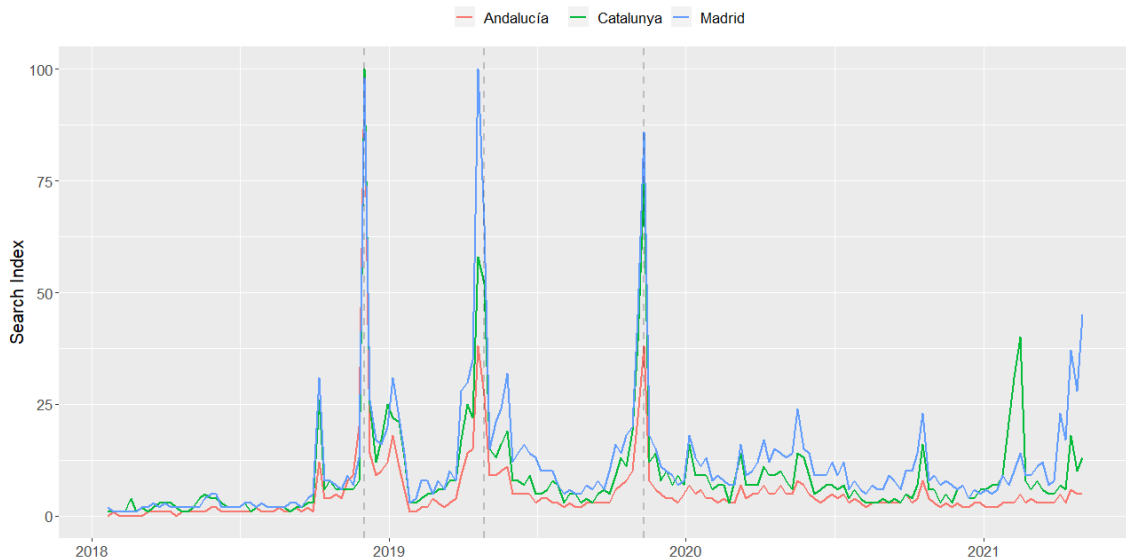


Figure A2. Google searches of the political party Vox in Andalucía, Catalunya and Madrid during the last 3 years. Note: the dotted lines signify the date of the three main elections of 2018 and 2019 where Vox gained political representation. Source: Google Trends data.

*Appendix B – Tables B1 and B2*

**Table B1. Estimation models for the effect of the entry of Vox in Andalucía's regional parliament on Andalusian citizens' attitudes towards immigration**

	Negative attitudes towards immigration	
	Model 7	Model 8
Andalucía	0.005 (0.014)	0.004 (0.018)
January 2018	-0.056*** (0.009)	-0.059*** (0.011)
February 2018	-0.060*** (0.009)	-0.059*** (0.011)
March 2018	-0.062*** (0.009)	-0.067*** (0.011)
April 2018	-0.057*** (0.009)	-0.056*** (0.011)
May 2018	-0.054*** (0.009)	-0.058*** (0.011)
June 2018	-0.054*** (0.009)	-0.056*** (0.011)
July 2018	0.027*** (0.009)	0.027** (0.011)
September 2018	0.063*** (0.009)	0.072*** (0.010)
October 2018	0.003 (0.009)	0.007 (0.010)
November 2018	Reference	Reference
December 2018	0.030*** (0.009)	0.034*** (0.010)
January 2019	0.014* (0.008)	0.015 (0.010)
February 2019	-0.003 (0.009)	0.001 (0.010)
March 2019	0.007 (0.007)	
April 2019	0.003 (0.006)	
May 2019	0.017** (0.008)	0.030*** (0.010)
June 2019	0.030*** (0.008)	0.040*** (0.010)
July 2019	0.029*** (0.009)	0.037*** (0.010)
September 2019	0.068*** (0.007)	0.068*** (0.009)
October 2019	0.020*** (0.006)	
November 2019	0.030*** (0.008)	0.033*** (0.009)
December 2019	0.009 (0.008)	0.006 (0.009)



Andalucía:January 2018	-0.010 (0.021)	-0.013 (0.027)
Andalucía:February 2018	-0.005 (0.021)	-0.012 (0.027)
Andalucía:March 2018	-0.009 (0.021)	0.002 (0.027)
Andalucía:April 2018	0.006 (0.021)	0.0004 (0.026)
Andalucía:May 2018	-0.015 (0.021)	-0.007 (0.027)
Andalucía:June 2018	0.003 (0.021)	0.008 (0.028)
Andalucía:July 2018	-0.027 (0.021)	-0.030 (0.027)
Andalucía:September 2018	0.018 (0.020)	0.002 (0.025)
Andalucía:October 2018	0.012 (0.020)	-0.007 (0.026)
Andalucía:November 2018	Reference	Reference
Andalucía:December 2018	0.027 (0.020)	0.028 (0.025)
Andalucía:January 2019	0.044** (0.020)	0.073*** (0.025)
Andalucía:February 2019	0.008 (0.020)	0.015 (0.025)
Andalucía:March 2019	-0.006 (0.015)	
Andalucía:April 2019	0.010 (0.016)	
Andalucía:May 2019	0.019 (0.020)	0.023 (0.025)
Andalucía:June 2019	-0.022 (0.020)	-0.042 (0.026)
Andalucía:July 2019	0.003 (0.020)	0.034 (0.026)
Andalucía:September 2019	-0.006 (0.017)	0.004 (0.022)
Andalucía:October 2019	0.002 (0.015)	
Andalucía:November 2019	-0.011 (0.019)	-0.001 (0.024)
Andalucía:December 2019	0.012 (0.019)	0.017 (0.024)
Constant	0.088*** (0.006)	-0.117*** (0.016)
Controls	No	Yes
Treatment	2018-2019	2018-2019
N	109337	38228
Adj. R-squared	0.011	0.044

\*\*\* p < .01; \*\* p < .05; \* p < .1

**Table B2. Estimation models for the effect of the entry of Vox in Andalucía's regional parliament on Spanish citizens' attitudes towards immigration**

	Negative attitudes towards immigration	
	Model 7	Model 8
Spain	0.016 (0.012)	0.037** (0.016)
November 2014	-0.042*** (0.003)	-0.039*** (0.004)
May 2015	0.004 (0.003)	0.009** (0.004)
November 2015	0.139*** (0.003)	0.154*** (0.004)
May 2016	0.065*** (0.003)	0.074*** (0.004)
November 2016	0.035*** (0.003)	0.038*** (0.004)
May 2017	0.014*** (0.003)	0.019*** (0.004)
November 2017	0.005* (0.003)	0.008** (0.004)
March 2018	-0.004 (0.003)	-0.003 (0.004)
November 2018	Reference	Reference
February 2019	0.248*** (0.003)	0.248*** (0.004)
November 2019	-0.011*** (0.004)	-0.013*** (0.004)
July 2020	-0.055*** (0.003)	-0.062*** (0.003)
Spain:November 2014	-0.110*** (0.017)	-0.122*** (0.021)
Spain:May 2015	-0.124*** (0.018)	-0.144*** (0.021)
Spain:November 2015	-0.235*** (0.018)	-0.265*** (0.022)
SpainMay 2016	-0.162*** (0.018)	-0.179*** (0.021)
Spain:November 2016	-0.133*** (0.018)	-0.149*** (0.021)
Spain:May 2017	-0.120*** (0.018)	-0.137*** (0.021)
Spain:November 2017	-0.116*** (0.018)	-0.136*** (0.021)
Spain:March 2018	-0.119*** (0.018)	-0.136*** (0.021)
Spain:November 2018	Reference	Reference
Spain:February 2019	0.041** (0.018)	0.031 (0.021)
Spain:November 2019	-0.065*** (0.022)	-0.079*** (0.025)

Spain:July 2020	-0.094 <sup>***</sup> (0.022)	-0.100 <sup>***</sup> (0.025)
Constant	0.167 <sup>***</sup> (0.002)	0.104 <sup>***</sup> (0.007)
Controls	No	Yes
Treatment	2014-2020	2014-2020
N	368765	301588
Adj. R-squared	0.042	0.051

<sup>\*\*\*</sup> p < .01; <sup>\*\*</sup> p < .05; <sup>\*</sup> p < .1

Appendix C – Parallel trends plots

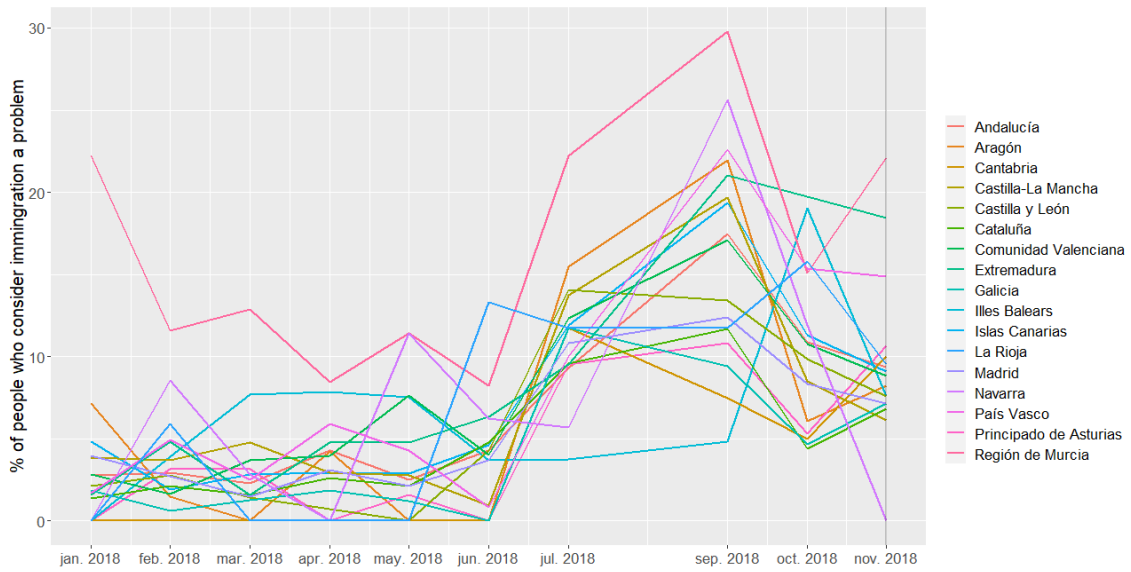


Figure C1. Parallel trends plot for the consideration of immigration as a problem in every region of Spain. Note: The black vertical line signifies the moment after which treatment is administered. Source: CIS Barometer data.

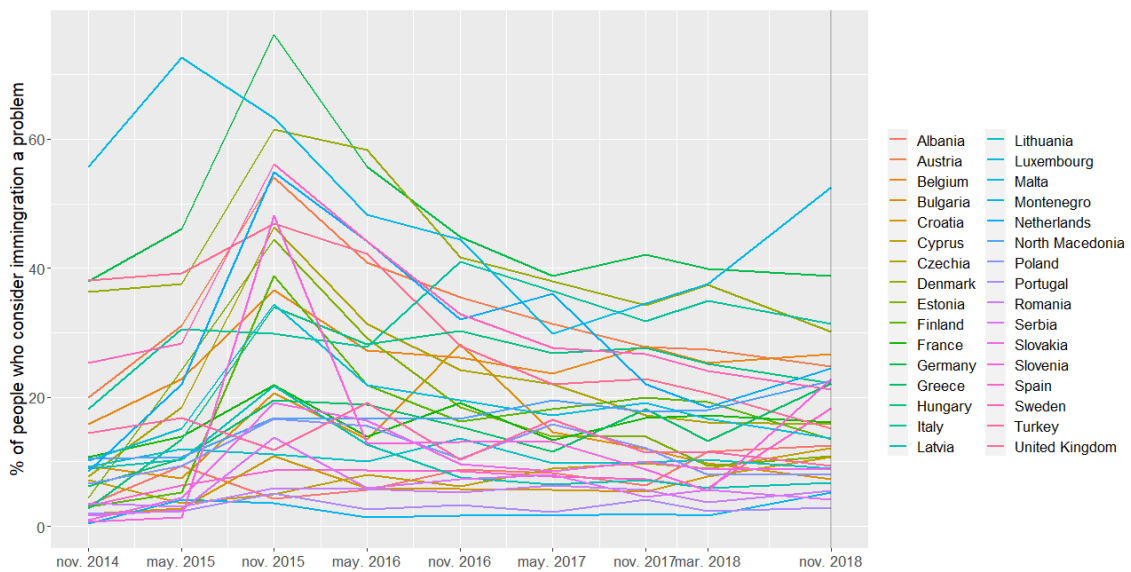


Figure C2. Parallel trends plot for the consideration of immigration as a problem in every country included in the Eurobarometer. Note: The black vertical line signifies the moment after which treatment is administered. Source: EC Eurobarometer data.

*Appendix D – Alternative dependent variable operationalization*

**Table D1. Estimation models for the effect of the entry of Vox in Andalucía's regional parliament on Andalusian citizens' attitudes towards immigration (alternative dependent variable operationalization)**

Negative attitudes towards immigration						
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Andalucía	0.013* (0.008)	0.010 (0.010)	0.007 (0.005)	-0.002 (0.006)	-0.002 (0.002)	-0.005* (0.003)
After Vox entry	0.010** (0.005)	0.012** (0.005)	0.010*** (0.003)	0.011*** (0.004)	0.007*** (0.001)	0.013*** (0.002)
Andalucía:After Vox entry	0.002 (0.011)	0.003 (0.013)	0.007 (0.007)	0.007 (0.009)	0.005* (0.003)	0.010*** (0.004)
Constant	0.019*** (0.003)	-0.087*** (0.025)	0.018*** (0.002)	-0.063*** (0.017)	0.016*** (0.001)	-0.026*** (0.007)
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Treatment	11/18-12/18	11/18-12/18	10/18-01/19	10/18-01/19	2018-2019	2018-2019
N	5851	3812	11707	7645	109397	38244
Adj. R-squared	0.002	0.013	0.002	0.008	0.001	0.010

\*\*\*p < .01; \*\*p < .05; \*p < .1

**Table D2. Estimation models for the effect of the entry of Vox in Andalucía's regional parliament on Andalusian citizens' attitudes towards immigration (alternative dependent variable operationalization)**

	Negative attitudes towards immigration	
	Model 7	Model 8
Andalucía	0.013* (0.007)	0.010 (0.009)
January 2018	-0.011** (0.004)	-0.007 (0.005)
February 2018	-0.011** (0.004)	-0.008 (0.005)
March 2018	-0.012*** (0.004)	-0.012** (0.005)
April 2018	-0.011** (0.004)	-0.009* (0.005)
May 2018	-0.011** (0.004)	-0.011** (0.005)
June 2018	-0.011** (0.004)	-0.007 (0.006)
July 2018	0.008* (0.004)	0.009 (0.005)
September 2018	0.025*** (0.004)	0.026*** (0.005)
October 2018	-0.003 (0.004)	0.001 (0.005)
December 2018	0.010** (0.004)	0.012** (0.005)
January 2019	0.006 (0.004)	0.011** (0.005)
February 2019	-0.004 (0.004)	-0.002 (0.005)
March 2019	-0.001 (0.003)	
April 2019	-0.0001 (0.003)	
May 2019	0.001 (0.004)	0.005 (0.005)
June 2019	0.009** (0.004)	0.020*** (0.005)
September 2019	0.008* (0.004)	0.015*** (0.005)
October 2019	0.026*** (0.004)	0.024*** (0.004)
November 2019	0.006* (0.003)	
December 2019	0.007* (0.004)	0.010** (0.005)
Andalucía:January 2018	0.001 (0.004)	0.004 (0.005)
Andalucía:February 2018	-0.014 (0.010)	-0.020 (0.013)
Andalucía:March 2018	-0.016 (0.010)	-0.015 (0.014)

Andalucía:April 2018	-0.018* (0.010)	-0.010 (0.014)
Andalucía:May 2018	-0.012 (0.010)	-0.010 (0.013)
Andalucía:June 2018	-0.019* (0.010)	-0.015 (0.014)
Andalucía:July 2018	-0.012 (0.010)	-0.015 (0.014)
Andalucía:September 2018	-0.018* (0.010)	-0.014 (0.013)
Andalucía:October 2018	-0.025** (0.010)	-0.032** (0.013)
Andalucía:November 2018	Reference	Reference
Andalucía:December 2018	-0.012 (0.010)	-0.023* (0.013)
Andalucía:January 2019	0.002 (0.010)	0.002 (0.013)
Andalucía:February 2019	0.001 (0.010)	-0.013 (0.013)
Andalucía:March 2019	-0.005 (0.010)	-0.005 (0.013)
Andalucía:April 2019	-0.013 (0.008)	
Andalucía:May 2019	-0.017** (0.008)	
Andalucía:June 2019	0.003 (0.010)	0.012 (0.013)
Andalucía:July 2019	-0.015 (0.010)	-0.016 (0.013)
Andalucía:September 2019	-0.004 (0.010)	-0.0003 (0.013)
Andalucía:October 2019	-0.012 (0.009)	-0.006 (0.011)
Andalucía:November 2019	-0.007 (0.008)	
Andalucía:December 2019	-0.015 (0.009)	-0.010 (0.012)
Andalucía:June 2019	-0.008 (0.009)	-0.012 (0.012)
Constant	0.019*** (0.003)	-0.027*** (0.008)
Controls	No	Yes
Treatment	2018-2019	2018-2019
N	109397	38244
Adj. R-squared	0.004	0.013

\*\*\* p < .01; \*\* p < .05; \* p < .1

*Appendix E – Logistic regression*

**Table E1. Estimation models for the effect of the entry of Vox in Andalucía's regional parliament on Andalusian citizens' attitudes towards immigration (GLM)**

	Negative attitudes towards immigration					
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Andalucía	0.066 (0.164)	0.102 (0.218)	0.132 (0.113)	0.061 (0.152)	0.057 (0.064)	0.038 (0.085)
After Vox entry	0.330*** (0.095)	0.383*** (0.119)	0.232*** (0.068)	0.238*** (0.085)	0.514*** (0.030)	0.657*** (0.043)
Andalucía: After Vox entry	0.211 (0.214)	0.235 (0.277)	0.230 (0.149)	0.453** (0.193)	0.045 (0.070)	0.157 (0.101)
Constant	-2.333*** (0.071)	-5.855*** (0.598)	-2.316*** (0.050)	-5.633*** (0.421)	-2.650*** (0.028)	-4.971*** (0.180)
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Treatment	11/18-12/18	11/18-12/18	10/18-01/19	10/18-01/19	2018-2019	2018-2019
N	5886	3823	11731	7649	109337	38228
Log Likelihood	-1989.079	-1251.613	-3921.213	-2489.591	-34770.840	-11636.160
AIC	3986.157	2531.227	7850.426	5007.182	69549.690	23300.310

\*\*\* p < .01; \*\* p < .05; \* p < .1



**Table E2. Estimation models for the effect of the entry of Vox in Andalucía's regional parliament on Andalusian citizens' attitudes towards immigration (GLM)**

	Negative attitudes towards immigration	
	Model 7	Model 8
Andalucía	0.066 (0.164)	0.086 (0.217)
January 2018	-1.053*** (0.145)	-1.163*** (0.188)
February 2018	-1.181*** (0.151)	-1.211*** (0.195)
March 2018	-1.285*** (0.158)	-1.509*** (0.218)
April 2018	-1.087*** (0.147)	-1.151*** (0.190)
May 2018	-1.013*** (0.143)	-1.230*** (0.201)
June 2018	-0.999*** (0.142)	-1.181*** (0.202)
July 2018	0.292*** (0.100)	0.318** (0.129)
September 2018	0.610*** (0.092)	0.713*** (0.115)
October 2018	0.034 (0.101)	0.095 (0.126)
November 2018	Reference	Reference
December 2018	0.330*** (0.095)	0.385*** (0.119)
January 2019	0.164* (0.098)	0.191 (0.123)
February 2019	-0.034 (0.102)	0.021 (0.129)
March 2019	0.083 (0.077)	
April 2019	0.037 (0.077)	
May 2019	0.194** (0.097)	0.338*** (0.120)
June 2019	0.322*** (0.095)	0.430*** (0.119)
July 2019	0.312*** (0.096)	0.405*** (0.120)
September 2019	0.650*** (0.082)	0.688*** (0.103)
October 2019	0.229*** (0.076)	
November 2019	0.330*** (0.086)	0.369*** (0.108)
December 2019	0.111 (0.089)	0.090 (0.111)
Andalucía: January 2018	-0.233 (0.358)	-0.334 (0.496)

Andalucía:February 2018	-0.042 (0.352)	-0.225 (0.498)
Andalucía:March 2018	-0.205 (0.386)	0.267 (0.484)
Andalucía:April 2018	0.251 (0.313)	0.134 (0.423)
Andalucía:May 2018	-0.389 (0.368)	-0.041 (0.477)
Andalucía:June 2018	0.163 (0.311)	0.360 (0.430)
Andalucía:July 2018	-0.303 (0.242)	-0.371 (0.325)
Andalucía:September 2018	0.105 (0.208)	-0.046 (0.272)
Andalucía:October 2018	0.129 (0.227)	-0.101 (0.302)
Andalucía:November 2018	Reference	Reference
Andalucía:December 2018	0.211 (0.214)	0.192 (0.276)
Andalucía:January 2019	0.386* (0.214)	0.569** (0.275)
Andalucía:February 2019	0.099 (0.231)	0.163 (0.297)
Andalucía:March 2019	-0.077 (0.179)	
Andalucía:April 2019	0.103 (0.180)	
Andalucía:May 2019	0.167 (0.219)	0.178 (0.281)
Andalucía:June 2019	-0.236 (0.227)	-0.471 (0.307)
Andalucía:July 2019	0.015 (0.219)	0.258 (0.280)
Andalucía:September 2019	-0.072 (0.188)	-0.033 (0.245)
Andalucía:October 2019	0.012 (0.175)	
Andalucía:November 2019	-0.125 (0.211)	-0.053 (0.271)
Andalucía:December 2019	0.114 (0.209)	0.133 (0.270)
Constant	-2.333*** (0.071)	-4.678*** (0.200)
Controls	No	Yes
Treatment	2018-2019	2018-2019
N	109337	38228
Log Likelihood	-34265.650	-11309.540
AIC	68619.290	22715.080

\*\*\*p < .01; \*\*p < .05; \*p < .1

**Table E3. Estimation models for the effect of the entry of Vox in Andalucía's regional parliament on Spanish citizens' attitudes towards immigration (GLM)**

	Negative attitudes towards immigration					
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Spain	0.110 (0.083)	0.219** (0.102)	-0.360*** (0.069)	-0.369*** (0.082)	-0.966*** (0.038)	-0.972*** (0.043)
After Vox entry	1.265*** (0.020)	1.255*** (0.022)	0.874*** (0.015)	0.855*** (0.016)	0.246*** (0.011)	0.159*** (0.012)
Spain:After Vox entry	0.120 (0.105)	0.068 (0.123)	0.500*** (0.088)	0.563*** (0.101)	0.922*** (0.062)	1.019*** (0.067)
Constant	-1.606*** (0.015)	-1.778*** (0.090)	-1.621*** (0.011)	-1.824*** (0.069)	-1.443*** (0.005)	-1.893*** (0.036)
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Treatment	11/18-02/19	11/18-02/19	03/18-11/19	03/18-11/19	11/14-07/20	11/14-07/20
N	60073	47528	108597	87783	336216	270909
Log Likelihood	-33514.820	-27024.690	-56409.590	-46309.170	-168311.600	-138246.100
AIC	67037.640	54073.390	112827.200	92642.340	336631.100	276516.200

\*\*\*p < .01; \*\*p < .05; \*p < .1

**Table E4. Estimation models for the effect of the entry of Vox in Andalucía's regional parliament on Spanish citizens' attitudes towards immigration (GLM)**

	Negative attitudes towards immigration	
	Model 7	Model 8
Spain	0.110 (0.083)	0.244** (0.102)
November 2014	-0.339*** (0.023)	-0.309*** (0.025)
May 2015	0.026 (0.021)	0.061** (0.024)
November 2015	0.789*** (0.020)	0.849*** (0.022)
May 2016	0.410*** (0.020)	0.454*** (0.023)
November 2016	0.231*** (0.021)	0.245*** (0.023)
May 2017	0.098*** (0.021)	0.125*** (0.024)
November 2017	0.039* (0.021)	0.053** (0.024)
March 2018	-0.031 (0.022)	-0.021 (0.024)
November 2018	Reference	Reference
February 2019	1.265*** (0.020)	1.243*** (0.022)
November 2019	-0.078*** (0.027)	-0.103*** (0.029)
July 2020	0.466*** (0.023)	-0.515*** (0.025)
Spain:November 2014	-1.597*** (0.196)	-1.651*** (0.215)
Spain:May 2015	-1.231*** (0.155)	-1.419*** (0.180)
Spain:November 2015	-1.646*** (0.140)	-1.820*** (0.163)
Spain:May 2016	-1.274*** (0.140)	-1.343*** (0.158)
Spain:November 2016	-1.110*** (0.141)	-1.220*** (0.158)
Spain:May 2017	-1.087*** (0.144)	-1.184*** (0.163)
Spain:November 2017	-1.093*** (0.148)	-1.252*** (0.168)
Spain:March 2018	-1.227*** (0.157)	-1.328*** (0.177)
Spain:November 2018	Reference	Reference
Spain:February 2019	0.120 (0.105)	0.061 (0.123)
Spain:November 2019	-0.540*** (0.169)	-0.632*** (0.188)

Spain:July 2020	-1.397*** (0.194)	-1.349*** (0.203)
Constant	-1.606*** (0.015)	-2.065*** (0.040)
Controls	No	Yes
Treatment	2014-2020	2014-2020
N	368765	301588
Log Likelihood	-175611.800	-145240.600
AIC	351271.500	290545.100

\*\*\* p < .01; \*\* p < .05; \* p < .1

*Appendix F – Alternative dependent variables (Placebo tests)*

**Table F1. Estimation models for the effect of the entry of Vox in Andalusia's regional parliament on citizens' attitudes**

	<b>Government approval</b>	<b>Climate change</b>	<b>Economic prospects</b>
	<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Model 3</b>
Andalusía	0.012 (0.031)	0.004 (0.007)	-0.113*** (0.042)
After Vox entry	0.075*** (0.017)	-0.004 (0.004)	0.009 (0.024)
Andalusía:After Vox entry	-0.021 (0.043)	-0.007 (0.009)	-0.016 (0.058)
Constant	-0.343*** (0.082)	0.012 (0.018)	0.482*** (0.109)
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes
Treatment	11/18-12/18	11/18-12/18	11/18-12/18
N	2134	3847	3847
Adj. R-squared	0.327	0.011	0.122

\*\*\*p < .01; \*\*p < .05; \*p < .1

*Appendix G – Alternative dependent variables (Vox's discourse variables)*

**Table G1. Estimation models for the effect of the entry of Vox in Andalucía's regional parliament on citizens' attitudes (Vox's discourse variables)**

	<b>Catalan Independence</b>	<b>Crisis of values</b>	<b>Teritorial organization</b>
	<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Model 3</b>
Andalucía	-0.025 (0.019)	-0.015 (0.010)	-0.042 (0.028)
After Vox entry	-0.023** (0.010)	-0.004 (0.006)	-0.037** (0.016)
Andalucía:After Vox entry	-0.014 (0.026)	0.004 (0.014)	0.043 (0.039)
Constant	0.054 (0.049)	0.024 (0.026)	-0.419*** (0.074)
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes
Treatment	11/18-12/18	11/18-12/18	11/18-12/18
N	3847	3847	3716
Adj. R-squared	0.027	0.002	0.129

\*\*\* p < .01; \*\* p < .05; \* p < .1