

Immigration and Xenophobia

During the past several years the question of immigration has become one of the most significant social and political issues in a growing number of West European countries. Thus in 1990, the question of how to confront the problem of immigration ranked second (41 percent) only to the question of how to combat unemployment (66 percent) among the issues that the French population considered to be of top political priority for the next few years. At the end of 1991, more than 71 percent of the population of the western part of Germany regarded the question of refugees and foreigners a very important political issue. This was far more than they accorded environmental protection and unemployment (about 10 percent each).¹ This growing concern over immigration had come at a time when most West European countries already held a sizeable immigrant population while being confronted by a wave of new arrivals. In 1987, the 12 countries of the European Community were home to more than 13 million foreign nationals, 60 percent of whom were from nonmember countries. The vast majority of non-EC nationals lived in Germany, France, and Great Britain. Belgium and the Netherlands also had sizeable non-EC populations (see Table 3.1). Among nonmember states, particularly Switzerland, Sweden, and Austria have received considerable numbers of immigrants. In 1987, roughly 15 percent of the Swiss, 4.6 percent of the Swedish, and 3.9 percent of the Austrian population were foreign nationals. Since then, new immigrants, a growing number of refugees and asylum seekers, and

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Table 3.1
Foreign Residence in the EC

1987	(in 1,000s and % of total population)		
	Total Population	Immigrants EC	Immigrants non-EC
Bel.	9,864	533 (5.4%)	315 (3.2%)
Den.	5,102	27 (0.5%)	102 (2.9%)
Fr. (1982)	54,273	1,578 (2.9%)	2,103 (3.9%)
Ger.	61,171	1,377 (2.3%)	3,196 (5.2%)
Gr.	9,740	55 (0.6%)	31 (0.3%)
Ire.	3,543	62 (1.7%)	18 (0.5%)
It. (1981)	56,557	91 (0.2%)	112 (0.2%)
Lux. (1989)	384	102 (26.4%)	10 (2.7%)
Neth. (1988)	14,714	160 (1.1%)	435 (2.9%)
Port.	10,270	24 (0.2%)	66 (0.6%)
Sp.	38,832	193 (0.5%)	142 (0.4%)
U.K.	56,075	810 (1.6%)	1,651 (2.9%)
E.C.	320,526	5,014 (1.6%)	8,179 (2.6%)

Source: European Commission

(particularly in the case of Italy) better statistics have led to a considerable increase in the size of the reported number of foreign residents in Western Europe.

History shows that native populations have often looked upon new arrivals with a mixture of apprehension, suspicion, and disdain. As early as 1896, the French newspaper *La Patrie* welcomed immigrants with the following words: "They are like an invasion of locusts. . . . They are dirty, miserable, and in rags. . . . They work for minimum wages, play sometimes the harmonica, and sometimes with the knife" (cited in Knight and Kowalsky, 1991, p. 79).

Although the horrors of the organized extermination of millions of innocent human beings because of their ethnic origins sensitized the European public to the evils of racism and ethnic discrimination, hostility toward foreigners was far from disappearing completely in Western Europe. Since they were no longer *gesellschaftsfähig*, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, and racism were largely driven underground, relegated to the sidelines of beer-hall discussions and the lunatic

fringes of the nostalgic extreme Right. The situation began to change with the economic crises of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Increasing unemployment and social marginalization caused a wave of resentment toward foreign workers. Political parties on the extreme Right and in some cases on the Left quickly seized upon the issue in order to exploit it for electoral gains. In Germany, home to one of the largest foreign populations in Western Europe, appeal to the growing hostility toward foreign workers was one of the reasons behind the electoral gains of the National Democratic Party in the late 1960s (Thüringhardt, 1988, p. 11). In France, it was the Communist party that was largely instrumental in promoting a policy of race. This policy was directed primarily against non-European, particularly Muslim immigrants and nonwhite French citizens from the overseas departments, which the party regarded "as temporary residents who must be encouraged to return home" (Schain, 1990, p. 262; Hollifield, 1991, p. 134). In Switzerland, in the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s, antiforeigner parties repeatedly called for referenda to allow the population to decide whether something should be done to stop and reverse the threatened *Überfremdung* ("foreignization") of the country. Despite sizeable support for some of the referenda, all were defeated (Husbands, 1988, p. 715). Finally, in Great Britain, the early 1970s saw the emergence of the National Front, which sought to ride on the wave of growing hostility to immigration for political success. However, this first wave of xenophobic mobilization in Western Europe proved rather disappointing to its protagonists. Appeal to xenophobia and racism helped neither the German NPD, the British National Front, nor the Swiss antiforeigner parties to play more than a marginal role in national politics; nor could it halt or prevent the decline of the Communist Party of France.

Probably one of the major reasons of the failure of these parties to gain sustained support for their antiforeigner positions was that in most of the countries with large foreign populations the governments quickly adopted stringent measures to curb further immigration. Germany ordered a stop to the recruitment of foreign labor in 1973, and Belgium in 1975 (Vandermotten and Vanlaer, 1991). In 1974, France adopted a number of restrictive measures, which culminated in the complete closing of its borders to all immigrants except for seasonal workers, political refugees, and cases of family reunion (Schain, 1990, p. 256; Hollifield, 1991, p. 131). Similarly, Switzerland introduced stricter controls on the flow of immigrant labor after the first foreignization referendum in 1969 was almost approved by a majority of the population. In the British case, the demise of the National Front was linked above all to the fact that the Conservative Party quickly seized the immigration issue and "increasingly came to be viewed by the electors as the party most opposed to immigration" (Eatwell, 1992, p. 186).

Despite efforts on the part of the established parties and the national governments to check growing hostility toward foreigners by setting strict limits to immigration, xenophobia and racism reemerged in the 1980s and early 1990s. There are at least two reasons for this development. One is found in the changes in the composition of immigrant groups. In the 1950s and 1960s the great majority of immigrant workers had been Western Europeans and Yugoslavs. The only important non-European groups were Turks, particularly in Germany, and Algerians in France. Starting in the 1970s, however, there was a steady decline in the proportion of European immigrant workers. At the same time, the number of workers from Asia and Africa increased considerably. A second reason is found in the dramatic increase in the number of political refugees in the 1980s. This was at least in part a result of the restrictive immigration policies in the 1970s. Since international law does not recognize unemployment and misery to be relevant reasons for seeking asylum, many would-be immigrant workers were forced to seek entrance into Western Europe as political refugees. The increase in the number of refugees, many of them coming from developing countries, added to the already growing non-European population in Western Europe. The result has been a profound apprehension on the part of Western Europeans "that some fundamental, unexpected and irrevocable changes have taken place because of recent large scale immigration," threatening "the historically given self-perceptions of European nations" (Hammar, 1989, p. 633).

IMMIGRANT LABOR

Postwar labor migration was a response to the labor shortage experienced in the northern industrial countries of Western Europe during the years of rapid economic expansion in the late 1950s and early 1960s (Bischoff and Teubner, 1991, pp. 31-34). In order to meet the economy's rising demands for fresh labor, a number of West European governments encouraged immigration, concluding recruitment treaties with a series of countries first in southern Europe, then outside Europe. Germany, for example, concluded the first treaty with Italy in 1955. Treaties with Spain and Greece (1960), Turkey (1961), Morocco (1963), Portugal (1964), Tunisia (1965), Yugoslavia (1968), and even Korea (1970) followed (Thürnhardt, 1988). Recruitment was done either through "German commissions" of the Federal Bureau of Labor in the labor exporting countries or by the companies themselves (Bischoff and Teubner, 1991, p. 35). The situation was similar in France. As early as in 1946, in order to meet the anticipated need for labor for reconstructing the country, the French

government established the National Office of Immigration (ONI) charged with recruiting temporary foreign labor and furnishing them with work permits. This system of recruitment worked well until the late 1950s when rapidly increased demand for labor caused many employers to recruit labor directly in the major labor-exporting countries and arrange their "regularization" after they were already in the country. "Thus a pattern of illegal immigration emerged during the 1960s, which was initiated by labour-hungry employers and openly tolerated by the state." As a result, by 1968, it was estimated that as much as 80 percent of immigrant workers had entered the country illegally (Schain, 1990, p. 255). In addition to tolerating active labor recruitment, the French government encouraged immigration from its former colonies Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia. In 1962, "it agreed to accept an unlimited number of Algerians in France, although a quarter of the Algerian work force was already in France" (Schain, 1990, p. 256). As a result of rising demand for foreign labor, the number of immigrant workers significantly increased in the postwar period. In Germany, the number of registered foreign workers increased from roughly 280,000 in 1960 to almost 2.6 million in 1973. In Switzerland, the number of foreign residents with at least a one-year work permit increased from 330,000 to almost 600,000. And in Austria, the size of the foreign work force expanded from 21,000 in 1963 to more than 225,000 in 1973. At the same time the northern countries of Western Europe witnessed a dramatic increase in the overall foreign populations living within their borders. In Germany, their number increased from 690,000 in 1960 to 4.1 million in 1974, which constituted 6.6 percent of the population; in Switzerland, from 500,000 to roughly one million; in Austria, from 100,000 in 1961 to 310,000 in 1974; and in France from 1.8 million in 1962 to 3.4 million in 1975.

Although the measures to halt further immigration in the 1970s led to a stabilization and even decrease in the number of foreign workers, they failed to reverse the overall size of the resident foreign population. This was primarily due to family reunion, but also to the growth of a second generation of foreigners born to immigrant families. This was in line with a policy that on the one hand sought to stop any new immigration, but on the other hand sought to integrate immigrant families already settled into the host societies (Erichsen, 1988, p. 16; Schain, 1990, pp. 259-260). Thus Belgium recently adopted a law that granted automatic Belgian citizenship to third-generation foreign residents if both they themselves and their parents had been born in Belgium (Vandermotten and Verlaer, 1991).

One of the consequences of the immigration policies of the 1970s was a significant change in the structure of the foreign population. Whereas in the 1950s and 1960s the majority of immigrants had been (male) workers, starting

in the 1970s a growing proportion of immigrants consisted of their (often nonworking) family members. In Germany, for example, in 1973 almost two thirds of the foreign population were active in the work force; by 1989 that proportion had fallen to one third. However, the immigration policies of the 1970s not only changed the internal composition of the foreign population. One of their unintended, but highly consequential effects was a considerable change in the national and ethnic composition of the foreign population. In the 1950s and 1960s, the great majority of foreign labor had come from neighboring European countries. In France, Europeans made up 90 percent of the foreign population in 1954 and still 86 percent in 1962 (Tribalat, 1986, p. 34). The situation was not much different in Germany where it was not until 1973 that Turkish workers became the largest group of foreign workers (Thranhardt, 1988, p. 5).

However, a recruitment stoppage and incentives for foreign workers to return home had counterproductive effects: They reduced the number of both EC citizens, whose position was fairly secure, and Europeans in general. As a result, the proportion of non-Europeans among the overall foreign population increased considerably. In France, for example, the proportion of immigrant families from the Maghreb region increased from 23 percent in 1968 to 39 percent in 1982. At the same time the proportion of Europeans decreased from 86 percent to 48 percent (Tribalat, 1986, pp. 34–35; see also Hollifield, 1991, p. 127). The situation was not much different in Germany, where by the late 1980s Turkish nationals outnumbered foreign nationals from EC countries (33 percent to 27 percent).

By the late 1980s, developments in some of the smaller countries in Western Europe, but also in the new immigration countries of southern Europe (Italy and Spain), started to resemble those witnessed earlier in France. In Denmark, for example, between 1982 and 1991 the number of foreigners from Scandinavia and the EC countries increased slightly from 46,000 to 51,000. At the same time the number of Africans and Asians increased from 19,000 to over 45,000. In Austria, the 1980s saw a significant increase in the number of Turkish immigrants, which far surpassed the increase of the number of Yugoslavs who still represented the largest immigrant group in Austria (Eichwalder, 1991, pp. 165–166). But perhaps the most dramatic development occurred in Italy, where the government has only recently begun to compile detailed statistics on immigration. These statistics reveal a drastic change in the composition of foreign resident groups during the 1980s. Whereas as recently as 1980 the majority of foreign residents in Italy were Europeans, by 1991 the vast majority were from non-EC countries (so-called *extracomunitari*). Thirty-one percent came from Africa (more than half of whom were from the Maghreb region),

and 26 percent from Asia and Latin America. Only one third of all foreign residents were Europeans, less than 20 percent from the European Community (ISPES, 1991, pp. 469–480).

Similar developments are beginning to occur in Spain, whose immigration population is still relatively low (in 1989 it was an estimated 400,000). In 1989, two thirds of the legally registered foreign residents came from Europe, a further 20 percent came from the United States and Latin America, with which Spain has traditionally had special links, and only 14 percent from Asia and Africa. However, over the last ten years the number of European residents has remained rather stable, whereas the number of Africans has increased sixfold and Asians have more than doubled. Thus in Spain, as in Italy, a growing proportion of new arrivals come from the developing countries, "some of which have not had any special links with Spain in the past" (OECD, 1991, p. 24). By contrast, Europeans still make up the vast majority of the foreign population in both Switzerland and Sweden. In 1991, almost 80 percent of all foreigners with permanent resident permits in Switzerland were citizens of EC or EFTA countries. A further 9 percent held Yugoslavian citizenship, and only 6 percent came from Turkey (Bundesamt für Ausländerfragen, 1991, p. 49). Similarly, in Sweden, in 1989 almost 60 percent of foreign residents came from Western Europe (a large proportion of them Finns). At the same time a growing number of immigrants came from Eastern Europe. Only 5 percent of the immigrant population were Turks (OECD, 1991, p. 147).

European statistics on immigrants show that despite entrance restrictions, incentive programs for foreign workers to return home, and growing hostility toward them the size of the immigrant population in Western Europe has remained fairly stable or has even increased. This confirms that some of the major assumptions and expectations of West European governments regarding immigrant workers were false. The most important of these assumptions had been that migrant workers were only attracted by economic gains. If "the economic gains to the migrants were reduced or ceased altogether, for example through unemployment," or "if their expectations of work and savings failed to materialise," they would return home. "Thus, in times of recession, policies to encourage repatriation would be both justified and successful." But despite economic recessions, despite mass unemployment almost everywhere in Western Europe, and despite the efforts of individual governments to curb immigration, "migrant workers have not only remained but have sent for their wives and children, have bought houses, and are showing every sign of settling as permanent members of their new countries" (Layton-Henry, 1990, p. 162).

As a 1985 German survey of (European and Turkish) foreign workers revealed, there are several reasons for this behavior. Although only a very small

minority of respondents said they had no intention to return to their home countries, the rest found many reasons indefinitely to postpone their return. Some of these reasons were that there were no jobs in their home countries; that they liked their work in Germany; that their children were still in school or going through vocational education and training; that they had not yet saved enough money; or that they would not be allowed to reenter the country once they had left it. One fifth (44 percent among foreigners born in Germany) said they "felt good" in Germany (Bischoff and Teubner, 1991, p. 116). As the composition of the foreign population was gradually changing during the past two decades, one might presume that more reasons have been added. These are particularly the advanced state of the West European welfare state with its basic services unknown to most non-European labor exporting countries and the relative peace and tranquility, which stands in stark contrast to the situation in a number of developing countries. As a result, the majority of foreigners prefer to stay in their host countries rather than to return home. As one survey found, in 1990 almost two thirds of all foreigners living in France (54 percent Maghrebins and 36 percent Africans) would stay in France even if there were jobs available in their home countries (Le Gall, 1992, p. 131).

ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES

Similar reasons also account for the growing number of foreigners who seek entrance into Western Europe as political refugees. During the past ten years all of Western Europe has witnessed a dramatic increase in the number of refugees. Between 1983 and 1989 alone, the number of asylum seekers and refugees more than quadrupled from roughly 70,000 to almost 320,000 (see Table 3.2). However, although all West European countries experienced substantially higher numbers of refugees in 1989 than they had in 1983, some countries clearly attracted more than others. Among these were France, Sweden, Switzerland, Austria, and above all Germany.

Because of its past, for a long time Germany had the most liberal asylum policy in Western Europe. It allowed virtually anyone to apply for asylum and required the state to take care of them while their claim was being processed. As a result, Germany attracted by far the largest proportion of refugees in Western Europe. In 1989, more than 120,000 refugees sought asylum in Germany. By 1991, that number had surpassed a quarter of a million. By the end of 1992, it reached almost half a million. This was more than the number of all refugees seeking asylum in Western Europe in 1988. In addition, as a result of the liberalization program in the Soviet Union and the eruption of

Table 3.2
Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Western Europe

	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
A	5,898	7,208	6,724	8,639	11,406	15,790	21,882
B	2,937	3,666	5,340	7,640	5,995	5,078	8,021
DK	800	4,300	8,700	9,300	2,750	4,700	4,600
F	22,285	21,624	28,809	26,196	27,568	34,253	61,372
G	19,737	35,278	73,832	99,650	57,379	103,076	121,318
GR	450	750	1,400	4,250	6,342	9,316	6,474
I	3,050	4,554	5,423	6,478	11,032	1,366	2,240
NL	2,015	2,603	5,644	5,865	13,460	7,486	13,898
N	150	300	829	2,722	8,613	6,602	4,433
S	.*	.*	.*	2,819	3,714	4,494	3,989
SW	4,000	12,000	14,450	14,600	18,100	19,600	30,000
SWI	7,886	7,435	9,703	8,546	10,913	16,726	24,425
UK	4,296	3,869	5,444	4,811	5,160	5,263	15,530
Total				201,516	182,432	233,750	318,182

A = Austria, B = Belgium, DK = Denmark, F = France, G = Germany, GR = Greece, I = Italy, NL = Netherlands, N = Norway, S = Spain, SW = Sweden, SWI = Switzerland, UK = United Kingdom

*no Spanish data available for these years, and hence no meaningful total can be given
Source: OECD

domestic turmoil in Eastern Europe, Germany was confronted with a growing number of ethnic Germans seeking repatriation from the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and East Germany. Within three years, the number of resettlers more than quadrupled from 78,000 in 1987 to 377,000 in 1989 (*Daten und Fakten*, 1992, p. 36).

The right to asylum in Western Europe is laid down in The Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, which was adopted in 1951. Initially, it was established in order to deal with the problem of refugees flowing from Eastern to Western Europe. Because of that, it was limited to the results of the postwar settlement in Europe. It was not until 1967 that an amendment abolished the

closely circumscribed boundaries of the convention. Despite this extension, throughout most of the Cold War period the question of refugees in Western Europe was mainly a question of Eastern Europeans fleeing the sphere of Communist domination. Statistics on refugees seeking asylum in Austria and Switzerland reflect these developments. In the years 1956 and 1957, Austria altogether received almost 230,000 Hungarian refugees who fled the repression after the Soviet invasion of Hungary. In 1968/69 both Austria and Switzerland received more than 10,000 Czechoslovaks, leaving the CSSR after the Soviet invasion put an end to the Prague Spring. Finally, in the years following the declaration of martial law in Poland in 1981, both countries experienced a significant increase in the number of Polish refugees, which in the Austrian case amounted to more than 38,000 (Eichwalder, 1991, pp. 165-166; Bundesamt für Flüchtlinge, 1992).

The policy of many West European countries to grant asylum to East European refugees was not only a humanitarian gesture. Particularly in Germany, East European refugees, namely those fleeing East Germany, were held up not only as symbols of the desire for freedom repressed under Communist rule, but also of the moral superiority of the West. The question of asylum thus always also had an ideological and propagandistic dimension. One important aspect of this dimension was the demand that the Soviet Union and the East European Communist regimes grant the freedom of free movement to their citizens, which one might suppose included the right to choose where they wanted to live and work. Without a doubt Western pressure on Eastern Europe's Communist regimes to open themselves up to Western influences contributed to the political crisis and ultimate collapse of these regimes. Particularly, the influence of Western culture among the younger generation of Eastern Europeans was of great significance. However, the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe confronted Western Europe with a new and unexpected challenge. It allowed a growing number of Eastern Europeans to leave their home countries for the first time and to migrate to the affluent consumer societies of Western Europe. As a result, in 1991 more than two thirds of all political refugees in Germany came from central and southeastern Europe. Among them were 40,000 Romanians, 12,000 Bulgarians, and 75,000 Yugoslav citizens (Biermann, 1992, p. 29; also Ronge, 1993, p. 20). The situation was similar in Austria, which in 1989 and 1990 saw itself confronted with a dramatic increase of Romanian refugees, and in Switzerland, which in 1991 registered more than 14,000 refugees from Yugoslavia. The great majority of these refugees fled political violence and ethnically motivated persecution, as in the case of Romanian gypsies or Bulgarian Turks (Müller, 1992). However, expectations were that in the future a growing number of Eastern Europeans

would migrate to the West for economic reasons. These impressions were reinforced by opinion polls, which found a considerable number of Central Europeans and Russians intent on leaving their home countries within the next few years (see Biermann, 1992, p. 30). It is thus hardly surprising that in the spring of 1993, more than two thirds of the German population expected to be confronted with a large immigration/refugee wave "within the near future" (Noelle-Neumann, 1993).

Confronted with already drastic increases in the number of refugees and the expectation of more, rapidly growing public hostility toward the new arrivals, and in some instances spectacular gains of radical right-wing populist parties, a number of West European governments responded similarly to the way they had sought to halt immigration in the 1970s. Austria introduced visa requirements for East European citizens and deployed military personnel along its border with Hungary to stop the influx of illegal immigrants. Denmark and Sweden adopted stricter controls of refugees entering the country while Sweden even decided to expel asylum-seekers from Bulgaria charging that their fears of persecution were not well founded (Arter, 1992, pp. 358-359). Great Britain enacted new legislation drastically shortening the period within which authorities determine whether refugees qualify for political asylum, made it considerably more difficult to appeal refusals, and increased fines on foreign airlines that flew in foreigners without proper entry documents (Whitney, 1991, p. 8). In Germany there began a debate on whether the country should change its Basic Law, which ended in a compromise between the established political parties in late 1992 to toughen Germany's relatively generous asylum law. At the same time Germany reached an agreement with some East European countries in which these countries agreed to take back nationals (particularly gypsies) who had fled to Germany to escape alleged or real persecution. Finally, in France, the appointment of Charles Pasqua to the post of minister of the interior in the spring of 1992 was a clear sign of the political importance the new center-right government attributed to the question of immigration. Under Pasqua, France introduced a number of stringent measures designed to discourage all forms of immigration and eventually reach the goal of "zero immigration."² Even the relatively tolerant Italian government could be rather ruthless when it came to discouraging East European asylum-seekers. In the summer of 1991, thousands of desperate Albanians landed on Italy's shores. Unprepared for such an emergency, the Italian authorities detained them under police guard with a minimum of food or water in a soccer stadium in the port city of Bari. Inducing them with new clothes and a small amount of money to return to their country, they sent the majority back across the Adriatic Sea a few days later. Those who had refused these inducements were in some cases mistreated by the police, then

promised a temporary permit to stay in the country and put on airplanes and returned to Albania.

The dramatic increase of East European refugees after the collapse of Communism suggests that the search for asylum is less and less motivated by purely political reasons. Most refugees flee a combination of problems ranging from abject poverty and near starvation to domestic turmoil and civil war to environmental destruction in their home countries. This is also reflected in the low rates of approval of asylum applications. In the early 1990s less than 10 percent of applications for political asylum were approved in Western Europe. The rest were considered to have entered Western Europe as "economic refugees" whose only means of bypassing the severe restrictions on immigration was to ask for political asylum. As most outside observers readily acknowledged, most refugees "want to build a better life for themselves, either here or, eventually, back home, and perhaps therefore are better described as immigrants." However, since most West European countries had barred immigration, "the only way to get a foot in the door is to sneak into countries like Spain [or Italy], which until recently did not even require visas of people coming over from Morocco, or to fly into an airport and to ask for asylum, then taking advantage of the time it takes to determine qualification to settle down and take root anyway" (Whitney, 1991, p. 8). Surveys confirm that this perception came increasingly to be shared by a growing number of West Europeans. Thus, in 1992, 75 percent of the West German population thought that most asylum seekers were abusing Germany's asylum laws (ipos, 1992, p. 93). And 78 percent thought the number of economic refugees allowed to stay in Germany should be drastically reduced.³

The dramatic increase in the influx of refugees in the late 1980s led to a new wave of resentment and hostility toward foreigners among large parts of the West European public. Confronted with the threat of an "invasion of the poor" (Werner, 1992) set on "storming Europe" (Ritter, 1990) a growing proportion of West European citizens turned against the new arrivals. Within a few years, the question of immigration and asylum had become one of the most important issues facing West European governments. In 1989 (the first year the question was asked) 54 percent of the German population said they considered it "very important" to prevent the abuse of the asylum law. By 1992, the number had increased to 67 percent, surpassed only by concern for the environment, the housing market, and the future of the pension system (ipos, 1992, p. 8). However, the dramatic increase in sheer numbers in the late 1980s is only one reason for the growing hostility toward refugees in Western Europe. Another is the fact that in the 1980s non-Europeans began to constitute a growing proportion of refugees in Western Europe. Refugees thus started to add to the

large population of non-European immigrants reinforcing the impression that Western Europe is being "invaded" from developing countries (Werner, 1992).

The French situation once again provided a clue as to general trends in Western Europe. In 1982, European refugees accounted for no more than 12 percent of all refugees that year. More than two thirds came from Asia, most of the rest were from Africa. By 1989, Europeans accounted for a little more than 5 percent of all refugees. By contrast, almost four out of ten refugees came from Africa and half from Asia. Turks alone accounted for more than 50 percent of all Asian refugees and 28 percent of all refugees that year (Lebon, 1990, p. 76). Germany and particularly Switzerland showed similar trends. Thus, in 1991, Europeans accounted for 44 percent of all refugees seeking asylum in Switzerland; 14 percent came from Africa, 31 percent from Asia, and 10 percent were from Turkey (Bundesamt für Flüchtlinge, 1992). In Germany, in 1991, Turks accounted for 9 percent of all refugees; refugees from Iran, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Vietnam, and Sri Lanka made for another 15 percent (*Daten und Fakten*, 1992, p. 35). As a result of these trends, even those West European countries which hitherto had not yet been exposed to major non-European immigrant populations, were increasingly confronted with a sizeable number of non-Europeans, whose physical differences made an impression beyond their number.

THE XENOPHOBIC BACKLASH

It should come as no surprise that the emergence and rise of radical right-wing populist parties in Western Europe coincided with the growing tide of immigrants and particularly the dramatic increase in the number of refugees seeking peace, security, and a better life in the affluent societies of Western Europe. The reaction to the new arrivals was an outburst of xenophobia and open racism in a majority of West European countries. This includes the most liberal ones, such as Sweden and the Netherlands. Upon closer analysis, however, many of the negative sentiments toward foreigners turned out to be little more than prejudices, which can easily be refuted. However, surveys indicated that these prejudices were wide spread among the population of most West European democracies. This has made it relatively easy for the radical populist Right to evoke, focus, and reinforce preexisting xenophobic sentiments for political gain.

Surveys from individual countries as well as EC polls suggest a number of common trends in Western Europe. Generally, a majority of Western Europeans think that the number of non-European nationals in Western Europe is too high. Within the European Community this opinion has been particularly

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Table 3.3
Opinions of EC Citizens on the Presence of Non-EC Citizens,
Migrants, and Racist Movements in the EC
(IN % AGREEING WITH STATEMENTS)

	B	DK	G*	GR	S	F	IR	I	L	NL	P	UK	EC
1. The presence of non-EC nationals is a bad thing/to some extent a bad thing for the future of the country:	52	47	43	27	20	44	13	31	18	25	18	35	35
2. Completely approve/to some extent approve movements in favor of racism:	12	16	10	4	10	11	15	8	9	9	14	11	11
3. There are too many non-EC nationals in EC:	56	43	55	29	25	56	12	63	20	44	18	54	51
4. Do not accept presence of people from south of the Mediterranean:	34	25	25	26	11	33	12	15	17	28	7	26	23
5. Do not accept presence of people from Eastern Europe:	27	19	26	24	9	22	13	15	16	22	7	23	20
6. Do not accept presence of political refugees:	29	8	24	18	7	24	18	15	13	16	7	20	19
7. Non-EC nationals' rights should be restricted:	58	32	37	27	12	41	22	28	10	29	11	43	33

B = Belgium, DK = Denmark, G = Germany, S = Spain, F = France, IR = Ireland, I = Italy, L = Luxemburg, NL = Netherlands, P = Portugal, UK = United Kingdom

* questions 3-7: unified Germany

Source: Questions 1 and 2 from Eurobarometer 30, December 1988; 3-7 from Eurobarometer 35, June 1991

prevalent in Italy, France, Belgium, Germany, and Great Britain, whereas it is least frequently expressed in Ireland, Portugal, Luxemburg, Greece, and Spain. The population of the latter group of countries is also more likely to regard the presence of non-EC nationals as being positive for the future of their country than are Germans, Belgians, French, Italians, or British (see Table 3.3). Similar results have been found in Austria. In 1990, about two-thirds of all respondents agreed either completely or to some extent that there were too many foreigners

in Austria. German surveys indicated that these sentiments were directed primarily against new arrivals (see Table 3.4). Despite the wave of attacks on Turks in the recent past, Germans have been relatively tolerant toward guest workers who generally have lived in the country for a considerable amount of time. Thus between 1980 and 1990 the number of Germans who said that guest workers should be sent back home when work places get scarce diminished from 38 percent to 20 percent. The number of those saying foreign workers should adapt their life-style to those of the Germans declined from 45 to 34 percent. And those who said guest workers should choose their spouse among their own people declined from 33 to 18 percent. In 1990, almost half of the German population thought the presence of guest workers had brought advantages for Germany; only one fifth considered it a disadvantage. (Statistisches Bundesamt, 1992, pp. 615-616). However, it is open to question to what degree these results were representative of broader trends in West European public opinion. Thus, in 1990, 58 percent of the Austrian public disagreed with the statement that foreigners represented an enrichment for their country (Plasser and Ulram, 1991, p. 321).

Surveys clearly reflected growing concern about immigration, and a substantial level of rejection of both resident foreigners and new arrivals. These surveys were particularly telling, since polls on immigration are rather accurate in reflecting changes in the public mood regarding foreigners in general. For example, between September and November 1991 German polls registered a significant drop in the number of respondents opposed to the large number of foreigners in Germany (from 54 percent to 36 percent).⁴ However, this decline hardly meant that a large number of the population had suddenly discovered their sympathies for guest workers and asylum seekers (see, for example, Jäger and Wichert, 1993). In fact, by mid-1992, roughly three quarter of the German population thought that the great majority of refugees were abusing Germany's asylum law (ipos, 1992, pp. 93-94). Rather, the decline in hostility toward foreigners in 1991 was a response to the highly publicized outbursts of ethnically motivated violence against foreigners in the Saxon city of Hoyeswerda, which made respondents shy away from open expressions of xenophobia.⁵ A similar decline in negative attitudes toward immigrants occurred after skinheads murdered a Turkish woman and two Turkish children in the city of Mölln in the fall of 1992.

In a similar way, the surprisingly high proportion of Italians concerned about immigration can be interpreted as a response to the rapid rise in the number of immigrants in the late 1980s. Individual studies found that the number of Italians who thought foreign immigration was causing only, or predominantly, problems increased from 49 percent in 1987 to 61 percent in 1991 (DOXA, 1991, p. 96). This also explains the seemingly high tolerance for foreigners in

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Table 3.4
German Attitudes toward Various Immigrant Groups
(rated on a scale of -5 to +5, in %)

	Turks/ Guest Workers	Recognized Pol. Refugees	Economic Refugees	African Refugees	Gypsies
(-5)	8	6	18	9	15
(-4)	4	3	9	7	7
(-3)	7	6	13	9	12
(-2)	8	7	12	12	10
(-1)	8	8	8	12	12
(0)	33	31	24	27	25
(+1)	10	13	6	8	5
(+2)	10	11	5	6	5
(+3)	8	7	3	4	3
(+4)	2	3	1	1	1
(+5)	2	3	1	2	2
Average	-0.4	0	-1.6	-0.9	-1.3

Source: EMNID-Spiegel polls, October-December 1991.

Ireland, Portugal, Spain, and Greece where the size of the foreign population is still relatively small, and in Luxemburg, where the large majority of resident foreigners are EC nationals.

A second trend in Western European attitudes toward immigrants is a growing unwillingness to accept refugees unconditionally. In 1991, less than a quarter of the population of the EC were willing to accept even genuine political refugees without restrictions. About one fifth of the respondents said their country should not accept political refugees at all. German surveys show that this readiness to reject the concept of asylum altogether can in part be explained as a response to the dramatic increase in the number of refugees.⁶ In 1990, between 19 and 28 percent of the German population thought Germany should accept all political refugees, between 14 and 30 percent thought none at all (ipos, 1990, p. 43; Statistisches Bundesamt, 1992, p. 621). The growing opposition toward refugees is also reflected in the increase in support for restricting the rights of immigrants in the EC. This became particularly evident

during the debate on whether or not Germany should restrict the constitutional protection afforded refugees. In 1991, 69 percent of the population of the former FRG and 64 percent of the former GDR supported a change of the constitutional right to asylum, in order to deter and impede potential refugees from coming into the country.⁷

However, sheer numbers alone hardly explain the profound hostility toward new arrivals that has come to characterize the attitude of a sizeable portion of Western Europe's population concerning immigrants and refugees. Rather, this hostility is motivated by a combination of fear and resentment, which has emerged and spread in response to the uncertainties brought on by the social and cultural transformation of advanced Western democracies, of which foreign presence is one of the most visible pieces of evidence. These fears and resentments are reflected in the views that immigrants are contributing to unemployment and to the increase in violence and crime. They find expression in the view that foreigners take advantage of the democratic *Rechtsstaat* and exploit and abuse the system of social welfare.

IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES AS MIRRORS OF WEST EUROPEAN ANXIETIES

In his preface to the 1991 report on racism and xenophobia in the European Community, Enrique Barón Crespo, the president of the European parliament, suggested that although both were rooted "in the fear and insecurity of the individual facing the future" they found "nourishment in unemployment and poverty" (Parlement Européen, 1991, p. 3). A number of surveys support this conclusion. They suggest that a large portion of the West European public associate immigration with unemployment.

Thus, in 1991, 22 percent of the German population agreed completely and 35 percent in part that newly arriving foreigners were worsening the unemployment situation of the native population.⁸ Similarly, in Austria, 51 percent of the population associated foreign immigrants with rising unemployment. Twenty percent agreed completely, and 29 percent in part that foreigners were taking away jobs from Austrians (Plasser and Ulram, 1991, pp. 314, 321). Even in Italy, 38 percent of the population associated the influx of non-EC nationals with "an inevitable increase in unemployment" (ISPES, 1991a, p. 131; similarly DOXA, 1991, p. 120). At the same time, a significant number of West Europeans supported measures to protect the native work force. Thus, 49 percent of the Norwegian population agreed with the notion that in difficult times Norwegians should have a priority in getting jobs. And in Germany, two-

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thirds of all respondents agreed that foreign workers should not be allowed to enter Germany for more than one year.⁹

Although a significant number of West Europeans not only recognize the contributions foreign workers have made to their economies,¹⁰ but also that foreign workers perform many jobs that unemployed natives refuse to accept, they still see them as taking away scarce jobs from the native unemployed. Thus, in a 1990 Austrian survey, 38 percent of the population (and 48 percent of the Viennese) denied that Austria could do without "guest workers," and a fifth agreed that because of the lack of workers Austrians "should be glad that foreign workers were coming to Austria."¹¹ The number was even higher in Germany. In 1992, 67 percent of the West German population agreed that the German economy needed foreign workers. (However in the former East Germany only a third agreed with that statement [ipos, 1992, p. 83-84]). Finally, in Italy, which has consistently been plagued by high unemployment, 47 percent (and 52 percent among workers) agreed in 1991 with the statement that it was right to use foreign workers because many unemployed Italians refused to perform "low" jobs. Yet at the same time, 44 percent of the population thought that jobs should go first to the Italian unemployed (ISPES, 1991a, pp. 131, 137).

Surveys showed that the latter attitudes were as diffused among the younger generation as they were among the population in general. According to a 1982 study of Austrian youth, more than half of the respondents (young people under 20) agreed with the statement that foreign workers were taking away jobs from Austrians (Bonegl, Horak, and Lasek, 1985, p. 395). A 1987 study of Germans between 16 and 17 years of age found half of them agreeing with the statement "German vocational education and training posts only for Germans" (Heitmeyer, 1989, p. 117). And a 1992 survey of Italians aged 15 to 29 found 41 percent agreeing that it was not right that immigrants took away jobs from the unemployed in the country (Cavalli and de Lillo, 1993, p. 264).

The fear of losing one's job to immigrant competitors might be understandable in the face of the fact that in the past large companies have increasingly moved to developing countries, where workers are generally willing to work more for less. However, the situation of foreign workers in advanced West European democracies shows that these perceptions are hardly justified. In most of these countries, a majority of the immigrant labor force has low levels of education. Most perform un- and semiskilled labor, which the indigenous population has increasingly come to refuse, even though the West European population's attitude toward jobs appears to be changing (in 1993, 52 percent, compared to 38 percent in 1983, in France thought the French would accept the type of work foreigners were performing at the moment; 44 percent thought they would not¹²). In 1989, 61 percent of the foreign work force in Austria (84

percent of its Turkish workers) had no more than compulsory education compared to 28 percent of the native work force. As a result, the majority of foreign workers held low level positions (Eichwalder, 1991, p. 172). Surveys showed that Austrians were not only aware of that fact, but considered it a positive and desirable situation. In 1990, 42 percent (23 percent of the Viennese) thought that foreign workers should be used in un-skilled positions; 26 percent of the Austrians (32 percent of the Viennese) believed that they should be trained to become specialist workers. However, there was also agreement that new immigrants should be trained to become specialized workers to alleviate the growing shortage of trained workers. Only 14 percent thought immigrants should receive no training at all.¹³

The situation was similar in Germany and France, where immigrant workers had lower levels of education, fewer chances to advance from unskilled to qualified positions, and faced a considerably higher risk of losing their jobs than their German and French counterparts (Deplanques and Tabard, 1991; Maurin, 1991; Erichsen, 1988, p. 19). In 1992, two thirds of the foreign work force, but only one third of their French counterparts had not more than minimal formal training or no training at all. In Germany, in the mid-1980s, 60 percent of the foreign work force, but only 17 percent of the German work force, were un- and semiskilled workers (Geißler, 1992, p. 157). The situation was similar regarding unemployment. Between 1980 and 1992, the rate of unemployment among foreign workers increased from 9 to 19 percent, roughly double the increase among French workers. And as in other West European countries, unemployment particularly affected workers from non-EC countries: In 1992, 28 percent for Moroccans, 34 percent for Tunisians, 29 percent for Algerians (Marchand, 1992, pp. 77-78).

German studies suggest that the situation is not substantially different for the second generation of foreign workers. Generally, foreign youth tend to attain lower levels of education and are considerably less likely to complete professional education and training than their German counterparts (Geißler, 1992, p. 159). Thus, in 1990, one fifth of foreign youth left school without complete education compared to roughly 7 percent of their German counterparts. Whereas more than one third of German youth left school with a university or politechnical entrance degree (*Hochschul- or Fachhochschulreife*), only one in ten foreign students attained the same level of education. Young Turks and particularly young Turkish women were especially affected by a lack of professional qualification and thus unemployment. Of those employed, the majority of the foreign labor force was employed as un- or semiskilled workers. In 1989, 64 percent of foreigners were in this category compared to 16 percent of the German labor force. And although second generation foreigners made

advances, they were still twice as likely to be unskilled workers and three times as likely to be semiskilled workers than their German counterparts (Hübner and Rohlf, 1992, p. 64; Boos-Nünning, 1990, p. 22; Statistisches Bundesamt, 1992, p. 531).

These and similar studies from other countries indicate that foreign labor is generally most threatened by redundancy; "guest workers" are most likely to be among the first to be negatively affected by the rationalization and modernization drive characterizing advanced economies (Marchand, 1992, p. 79; Geißler, 1992, p. 158). This development suggests that immigrants do in fact contribute to unemployment in Western Europe, but less by taking away jobs from the natives than by adding to the overall rate of unemployment, because they lack the education and professional training necessary to compete successfully in a changing labor market. It is thus hardly surprising that particularly in times of economic transformation the number of foreigners who fall below the poverty line is considerably higher than is the proportion of the native population. In Germany, in 1987, for example, more than twice as many foreigners than Germans were officially considered poor (12.4 percent of the foreign population versus 5.4 percent of the German population; see Krause, 1992, p. 12; Geißler, 1992, pp. 172–173).

Fear of losing one's job to cheaper foreign workers is only one, if prominent, fear associated with immigrants. A second, and increasingly important one, is the notion that immigrants contribute significantly to the increase in violence and crime. Generally, during the past several years, Western Europeans appear to have become increasingly concerned about security. In the western part of Germany, for example, between 1990 and 1991 the number of those who felt threatened by crime rose from 56 to 67 percent (92 percent in the eastern part of Germany in 1991). At the same time those who believed that the threat to their safety was growing increased from 54 percent to 63 percent (91 percent in the east) (ipos, 1991, p. 48). Surveys suggest that this increase is at least in part connected to the growing concern over immigration. Thus, in 1993, 53 percent of the French population considered immigration "a factor of insecurity."¹⁴ In Italy, the number of those who considered foreigners a cause of delinquency and crime increased from roughly 4 percent of the population in 1987 to 12 percent in 1991 (DOXA, 1991, p. 120). These perceptions were even stronger in those countries with a longer history of immigration. Thus, in Norway, 46 percent, and in Austria, 64 percent, of the population associated immigrants with an increase in crime and violence.

These perceptions have been supported by official statistics that show disproportionately high crime rates for foreigners. Thus, in 1991, more than a quarter of those suspected to have committed a crime in Germany were

foreigners, although foreigners constituted only 7.7 percent of the population.¹⁵ Similarly, in Italy, in 1988, more than 11 percent of all prisoners were foreigners (Natale, 1990, p. 326). However, as it is increasingly recognized, these statistics are highly misleading. And this for a number of reasons. Most importantly, a large proportion of crimes committed by foreigners derive from their particular situation such as violations of the asylum law, illegal border crossing, or residence requirements. Secondly, foreigners are more likely to be denounced and detained. In Italy in 1988, more than 50 percent of all foreigners, but only 12 percent of Italians denounced of a crime were also detained (Natale, 1990, p. 338). Finally, a disproportionate number of foreigners are young with low levels of education and training and, as a result, they have little chance for upward social mobility. They are threatening to become part of a growing urban underclass that is susceptible to petty crime. This is no excuse for the fact that 31 percent of all cases of murder and manslaughter and 36 percent of all cases of rapes registered in Germany in 1991 were committed by foreigners.¹⁶ However, these facts should not lead to accusations of collective guilt. Most crimes committed by foreigners result from their particular situation and thus will decrease in numbers only if their situation improves.

Fear of unemployment and increasing crime has figured prominently among xenophobic sentiments in Western Europe for some time. Recently, they have been joined by a wave of resentments. Central to these resentments is the notion that immigrants and refugees exploit and abuse the generosity of Western democracy and the welfare state. As one opponent of Germany's asylum laws has interpreted the mood in Germany, the country's public is less "against giving asylum to the politically persecuted or the orderly immigration of other foreigners. But they are outraged by the continued and constantly growing abuse of a basic right. . . and the continued toleration of this abuse. The state demands from its citizens that they observe its laws and enforces them whenever they are not observed. Why then, the citizen asks, is there a difference when it comes to asylum seekers?"¹⁷ These charges are driven by resentments against those who allegedly are granted privileges. Like similar charges against affirmative action in the United States, or the allegedly special treatment of the French-speaking population in Canada and Muslims in India, they belong to a culture of resentment, which has been a core component of the neo-conservative turn of the 1980s.¹⁸

As in the United States, Canada, or India, misgivings toward those who benefit, or are suspected of benefiting from preferential treatment by the state, figure prominently in the Western European culture of resentment against immigrants and refugees. As early as 1982, two-thirds of Austrian youth agreed with the statement that "foreigners with their many children often come to

Austria only to get the high Austrian child allowance which we pay with our taxes" (Bonengl, Horak, and Lasek, 1985, p. 395). Particularly in the Scandinavian countries, resentment toward refugees focused on the welfare issue. Thus in 1985, 28 percent of the Danish population agreed completely, and a further 26 percent agreed to some degree, that immigrants represented an economic burden for Denmark since they used the welfare system while sending their earnings back to their home country.¹⁹ And in 1993, 71 percent of the Danish population agreed that refugees did not want to leave Denmark even if the political situation improved in their home country because of the nice treatment they received from the Danish government.²⁰ But the resentment toward the alleged abuse of welfare benefits by refugees was perhaps most pronounced in Germany. In 1991, two thirds of the German population thought foreigners were abusing social welfare benefits.²¹ In order to prevent these abuses, the German public supported not only a change in the asylum law, a majority (in 1989 more than two thirds) favored forcing foreign workers to leave the country after one year of unemployment.²²

Public opinion in Western Europe has increasingly come to regard immigrants and refugees as a considerable social and economic burden. While some of these allegations are justified, most of them are not. There is some truth in the charge that refugees represent a net burden for the welfare state. According to German studies, the roughly 670,000 refugees who arrived in Germany between 1988 and 1991 cost the German taxpayer in 1991 an estimated six billion marks. However, this was largely due to the fact that refugees were not allowed to work. Had only a third of them been able to assume an average paid job, the costs for the other two thirds would have been covered by the taxes and contributions to the German social security system paid by the first group.²³

The charge that immigrant workers represent a net burden to the advanced economies of Western Europe is a distortion of the truth. It disregards that immigrant workers have made significant contributions to West European societies. Recruited to fill vacant positions during the period of high economic growth, they played a vital part in laying the foundation for affluence and prosperity. Because of their generally low levels of formal education and training they tend to be the first ones to be dismissed in times of recession and thus form a "buffer" for the native work force.²⁴ Furthermore, immigrant workers are not only a work force but also consumers, taxpayers, and contributors to social security and pension systems. As German and French studies have shown, in both countries foreigners have contributed more to pension systems than they have claimed (Erichsen, 1988, p. 23; Knight and Kowalsky, 1991, p. 99). In Germany, in 1989, foreigners paid 12.8 billion marks into the pension system.

This constituted 7.8 percent of all contributions. But with 3.7 billion marks they received only 1.9 percent of all pension payments.²⁵

The question of the future of pension systems and their relationship with immigration assumes increasing importance for West European societies. Because of falling birthrates, much of Western Europe is experiencing a significant change in the age pyramid. Projections are that by the year 2020 the youngest age group of the Italian population (0 to 14 years) will have diminished by some 41 percent compared to 1987, in France, by some 16 percent compared to 1985. At the same time the age group 65 and older is projected to have increased by some 47 percent in Italy and by some 64 percent in France (Fondazione Agnelli, 1990, p. 42). In Germany, by 2010 the youngest age group (0 to 15 years) will have decreased by some 12 percent compared to 1990, whereas the age group 65 years and older will have grown by about 20 percent (Hof, 1990). This is expected to have serious consequences both for the labor market and social security systems. Some have argued that in order to keep the labor force stable and to guarantee social security for a rapidly growing older generation it will be necessary to recruit new foreign labor (see Chesnais, 1993, pp. 110–113). French experts have projected that between the years 2000 and 2039 France very likely will have to recruit annually between 165,000 and 315,000 new immigrants to prevent a decline in the active population (Blanchet and Marchand, 1991). German experts expect that Germany will have to attract at least 400,000 immigrants annually in order to guarantee a stable labor force (Hof, 1991a). Thus, it appears that despite high rates of unemployment, "the need for large numbers of migrant workers will not greatly diminish, as is amply demonstrated by the present circumstances in Western Europe. In France, for example, immigration continues despite high youth unemployment. The young nationals prefer to stay cocooned in their families, or to get unemployment benefits, rather than accept menial jobs considered to be further degraded in status because they are increasingly held by low-skilled foreign workers" (Chesnais, 1993, p. 111).

This view has not remained unchallenged. Critics have pointed out that migration has at best little effect on rectifying the balance of Western Europe's age structure; at worst it impedes the modernization of Western Europe's economy while blocking the chances of disadvantaged groups (such as women, the long-term unemployed, and persons with health problems) from joining or rejoining the active labor force. Under these circumstances, "there seems to be little opportunity for large scale legal movements by migrants from less developed countries, either in the South or the East, into the European labor market. The West suffers high levels of unemployment, especially of the unskilled, of young people and of previous immigrants. Such jobs for which there are

vacancies demand high levels of education and skill. Third World labor forces are mostly unskilled or semiskilled rural workers." By allowing them to import cheap labor and employ them for low wages, West European states encourage employers to evade their training responsibilities, which only aggravates Western Europe's low productivity problem. Instead of continuing to encourage immigration, Western European states need to give priority to training the substantial reserves of the employable work force (such as young people and married women) while retraining "the existing work force for a more demanding skilled labor market in the future" (Coleman, 1992, pp. 444, 455).

If the academic debate on the desirability of further immigration appears far from settled, the prospects that Western Europe's aging population might have to depend on immigrants have become a new source of anxiety and resentment. The reasons have already been mentioned. Whereas in the past, the vast majority of foreigners in Western Europe were other Western Europeans, in the future, the majority of new immigrants can be expected to come from developing countries. The French migration specialist Jean-Claude Chesnais, for instance, foresees a growing "Africanization" of Europe. According to his estimates, by the year 2010, the number of Africans residing in Western Europe will be somewhere between fifteen and thirty million. France alone will have become home to an estimated six to eight million Arabs. As a result, Islam will become Western Europe's second religion while Arabic might become its second language (Chesnais, 1993, p. 113). Nowhere in Western Europe are the imbalances in population growth more striking than in the Mediterranean region. Whereas on the northern bank of the Mediterranean fertility rates are among the lowest in the world, the southern bank continues to experience considerable population growth. By the late 1980s, birth rates in the Maghreb countries, although considerably lower than in the past, were still three to four times higher than they were in Italy, Spain, or Portugal.

THE CULTURAL ROOTS OF XENOPHOBIA

Numerous studies show that Western Europeans are particularly concerned about foreigners from developing countries. Studies on "otherness" reveal that a growing number of West Europeans associate otherness in terms of culture and religion with North Africans, Turks, and Muslims (Fuchs, Gerhards and Roller, 1993). When asked to rank various immigrant groups according to preference Western European respondents tend to particularly place the latter groups on the bottom of sympathy scales. A Danish survey of views on family reunion illustrates this point. In 1991, 89 percent of the Danish population

generally agreed that the partners of foreigners living in Denmark should be allowed to come to Denmark in the context of family reunification. However, only 65 percent agreed on that for foreigners from Eastern Europe, 48 percent for Arabs, 49 percent for Asians, and 49 percent for Africans.²⁶ In Germany, the majority of the population had a predominantly negative view of gypsies, African refugees, economic refugees generally, and Turks and other guest workers (see Table 3.4). In France, in 1990, more than 50 percent of the respondents said there were too many North Africans, more than a third said there were too many sub-Saharan Africans, but only 13 percent said there were too many Spanish immigrants. French surveys also reveal growing public awareness of, and concern about, culture and religion. Asked to identify which differences made life with foreigners difficult, the most frequent answers in 1989 and 1990 were customs and religion (Le Gall, 1992, p. 126). Even in Italy, where xenophobia and racism have been less prevalent than in other West European countries, the population was considerably more hostile toward gypsies (49 percent in 1992), Arabs (18 percent), and *extracomunitari* (16 percent) than to foreigners in general (5 percent).²⁷

The results of Western European surveys on foreigners reflect a growing concern about the growing visibility of non-European cultures. Probably, its most important result has been a lively debate about the emergence of a multi- or pluri-cultural society and its desirability (Cohn-Bendit and Schmid, 1992). At the core of this debate is the question of whether or not Western European societies should seek to integrate the foreign population without forcing them to abandon their traditions and cultures. This implies that immigrant minorities have enough possibilities to uphold and develop their cultures, identities, and social relationships. It also means that the relationship between foreigners and the native population is characterized by reciprocity and equality rather than assimilation and exclusion. It finally implies that the native population should make an effort to understand and tolerate alien cultures and if necessary contribute to their preservation (Schulte, 1990).

Available surveys raise doubts as to the willingness of Western Europeans to actively contribute to the preservation of foreign cultures. One of its preconditions would be to encourage foreigners to preserve their language. If Danish polls are representative of Western Europeans' views on this question, the expectation should be equally dim. In 1992, more than two thirds of the Danish population rejected the notion that local communities should instruct the children of foreigners in their native language.²⁸

Furthermore, the native population can only be expected to make such efforts if it sees foreign cultures as a potential enrichment of its own culture. If the opinions of young Italians are any indication of larger trends in Western

Europe, the chances for this are rather dim. In 1992, only a third agreed that immigrants living in Italy contributed to the cultural enrichment of the country; for 28 percent the answer was "not at all" (Cavalli and de Lillo, 1993, p. 264).

Particularly in the case of Muslims the exposure of Western Europeans to a foreign culture has led less to appreciation than to open hostility. Disturbed by the spread of militant fundamentalism, a growing number of West Europeans associate Islam with intolerance and fanaticism, especially after the Iranian death threats against Salman Rushdie. Surveys reveal that this perception was widely shared among West European populations. As early as 1985 Danish surveys found that a considerable number of Danes (47 percent) thought that Muslims were too culturally different from the Danish population. Therefore there could not be a meaningful exchange of culture and ideas between the two communities. One quarter of those polled even considered Islam a threat to the survival of the Danish church.²⁹ At the end of the 1980s, the perception of an Islamic threat to Western European culture had grown considerably. In 1990, for example, 71 percent of the French population associated Islam with fanaticism (Mermet, 1990, p. 204). And although 63 percent of the population considered it "normal" that Muslims were allowed to build mosques to practice their religion, only 43 percent considered it "normal" if a mosque were to be constructed in their neighborhood. Forty-seven percent did not (Le Gall, 1992, p. 128). Similarly, in Denmark, in 1991 55 percent of the population rejected the notion that Muslims should be allowed to build a large mosque (*en stormoske*) in Denmark, but only 28 percent of the population supported the notion that Muslim girls should be forbidden to wear traditional cloths covering their face and hair in Danish schools.³⁰

Even if Islamic fundamentalism is increasingly used to incite and justify growing anti-Islamic sentiments in Western Europe, the threat of Islamic fundamentalism is hardly the most important reason for the growing fears and anxieties that Islam has come to evoke among parts of Western Europe's population. There is good reason to believe that Muslims have come to stand for the profound changes in global demographic patterns and their adverse effects on Western European society. In Western Europe, indigenous population growth has largely been halted, if not reversed. At the same time, many developing countries are experiencing a virtual explosion of their populations. The result is a growing preoccupation that within a few decades a progressively depopulated Europe will be confronted by a severely overcrowded South. For Europeans, South means above all Northern Africa, and Northern Africa means above all Islam. Some West European journalists, publicists, and academics dealing with demographic questions have increasingly become alarmist, seeking out Muslims who are ready to confirm their fears. Take for example an article

written by an Italian sociologist for a series on sexual education published in stages by a prominent Italian daily newspaper. He cited an Egyptian professor who he claimed had told him that the West should stop trying "to convince the world that your way of organizing political and social life is better." Islam would win anyway because from "four Christians or four Communists derive two, whereas within only a few years four Muslims will turn into one hundred."³¹ A German commentator came to similar conclusions: "If Islam encourages the high birthrates of the faithful while the Christians kill their children already in the womb, then mathematics shows that these peoples will soon numerically far surpass the Christians" (Ritter, 1990, p. 52).

With an expanding number of West European immigrants originating from developing countries, these words reflect growing concern that because of their large birth rates, immigrants and their descendants might eventually reduce the indigenous West European population to minority status in their own country. Danish surveys again illustrate the point. As early as 1985, 41 percent of the population agreed that there were too many immigrants and they would dominate Danish society within a few generations.³² Statistics reveal a different picture. They show that over time the fertility rates of immigrant populations in Western Europe have markedly declined. Immigrants tend to assimilate their reproductive behavior to that of the indigenous population. Thus in France between 1968 and 1990 the number of children per a Portuguese woman declined from 4.9 to 1.9 approaching that of her French counterpart (1.7). During the same time period the number of children per an Algerian woman declined from 8.9 to 3.2, while the fertility rate of Moroccan and Turkish women between 1982 and 1990 (the majority of them arrived in France after 1975) declined from 5.2 to 3.5 and 3.7 respectively (Tribalat, 1986, p. 41; Haut Conseil à l'intégration, 1993, pp. 336-337). Despite these facts, public attitudes toward Western Europe's Muslim population are increasingly dominated by irrational phobias rather than a reasoned debate on the cultural advantages and disadvantages of a growing Muslim presence in Western Europe.

If the debate on the notion of multicultural society has shown anything, it is that it finds only support among a minority. In 1992, in Germany, only 23 percent of the population were in favor of multiculturalism; 49 percent did not even know what it meant.³³ Rather, a large minority tend to consider foreigners a threat to its way of life and identity. In 1990, 45 percent of the Austrian population agreed with that statement (Plasser and Ulram, 1991, p. 321). As German polls show, the threat of *Überfremdung* can lead to rather shocking reactions. Thus, in 1991, the notion that "we should take care to keep the German people pure and prevent the mixing of peoples (*Völkervermischung*)"

Europe, the chances for this are rather dim. In 1992, only a third agreed that immigrants living in Italy contributed to the cultural enrichment of the country; for 28 percent the answer was "not at all" (Cavalli and de Lillo, 1993, p. 264).

Particularly in the case of Muslims the exposure of Western Europeans to a foreign culture has led less to appreciation than to open hostility. Disturbed by the spread of militant fundamentalism, a growing number of West Europeans associate Islam with intolerance and fanaticism, especially after the Iranian death threats against Salman Rushdie. Surveys reveal that this perception was widely shared among West European populations. As early as 1985 Danish surveys found that a considerable number of Danes (47 percent) thought that Muslims were too culturally different from the Danish population. Therefore there could not be a meaningful exchange of culture and ideas between the two communities. One quarter of those polled even considered Islam a threat to the survival of the Danish church.²⁹ At the end of the 1980s, the perception of an Islamic threat to Western European culture had grown considerably. In 1990, for example, 71 percent of the French population associated Islam with fanaticism (Mermet, 1990, p. 204). And although 63 percent of the population considered it "normal" that Muslims were allowed to build mosques to practice their religion, only 43 percent considered it "normal" if a mosque were to be constructed in their neighborhood. Forty-seven percent did not (Le Gall, 1992, p. 128). Similarly, in Denmark, in 1991 55 percent of the population rejected the notion that Muslims should be allowed to build a large mosque (*en stormoské*) in Denmark, but only 28 percent of the population supported the notion that Muslim girls should be forbidden to wear traditional cloths covering their face and hair in Danish schools.³⁰

Even if Islamic fundamentalism is increasingly used to incite and justify growing anti-Islamic sentiments in Western Europe, the threat of Islamic fundamentalism is hardly the most important reason for the growing fears and anxieties that Islam has come to evoke among parts of Western Europe's population. There is good reason to believe that Muslims have come to stand for the profound changes in global demographic patterns and their aversive effects on Western European society. In Western Europe, indigenous population growth has largely been halted, if not reversed. At the same time, many developing countries are experiencing a virtual explosion of their populations. The result is a growing preoccupation that within a few decades a progressively depopulated Europe will be confronted by a severely overcrowded South. For Europeans, South means above all Northern Africa, and Northern Africa means above all Islam. Some West European journalists, publicists, and academics dealing with demographic questions have increasingly become alarmist, seeking out Muslims who are ready to confirm their fears. Take for example an article

written by an Italian sociologist for a series on sexual education published in stages by a prominent Italian daily newspaper. He cited an Egyptian professor who he claimed had told him that the West should stop trying "to convince the world that your way of organizing political and social life is better." Islam would win anyway because from "four Christians or four Communists derive two, whereas within only a few years four Muslims will turn into one hundred."³¹ A German commentator came to similar conclusions: "If Islam encourages the high birthrates of the faithful while the Christians kill their children already in the womb, then mathematics shows that these peoples will soon numerically far surpass the Christians" (Ritter, 1990, p. 52).

With an expanding number of West European immigrants originating from developing countries, these words reflect growing concern that because of their large birth rates, immigrants and their descendants might eventually reduce the indigenous West European population to minority status in their own country. Danish surveys again illustrate the point. As early as 1985, 41 percent of the population agreed that there were too many immigrants and they would dominate Danish society within a few generations.³² Statistics reveal a different picture. They show that over time the fertility rates of immigrant populations in Western Europe have markedly declined. Immigrants tend to assimilate their reproductive behavior to that of the indigenous population. Thus in France between 1968 and 1990 the number of children per a Portuguese woman declined from 4.9 to 1.9 approaching that of her French counterpart (1.7). During the same time period the number of children per an Algerian woman declined from 8.9 to 3.2, while the fertility rate of Moroccan and Turkish women between 1982 and 1990 (the majority of them arrived in France after 1975) declined from 5.2 to 3.5 and 3.7 respectively (Triphalat, 1986, p. 41; Haut Conseil à l'intégration, 1993, pp. 336-337). Despite these facts, public attitudes toward Western Europe's Muslim population are increasingly dominated by irrational phobias rather than a reasoned debate on the cultural advantages and disadvantages of a growing Muslim presence in Western Europe.

If the debate on the notion of multicultural society has shown anything, it is that it finds only support among a minority. In 1992, in Germany, only 23 percent of the population were in favor of multiculturalism; 49 percent did not even know what it meant.³³ Rather, a large minority tend to consider foreigners a threat to its way of life and identity. In 1990, 45 percent of the Austrian population agreed with that statement (Plasser and Ulram, 1991, p. 321). As German polls show, the threat of *Überfremdung* can lead to rather shocking reactions. Thus, in 1991, the notion that "we should take care to keep the German people pure and prevent the mixing of peoples (*Völkervermischung*)"

found considerable support.³⁴ So did the statement that "it would get to the point that the Germans have to defend themselves against the foreigners" living among them. Between 1990 and 1992 those agreeing with that statement in former West Germany increased from 26 to 37 percent.³⁵

Neither is there much support for assisting foreigners to sustain their traditional culture. In 1988, only 24 percent of the population of Norway, where the government has actively encouraged cultural pluralism, favored increasing financial support to immigrants' culture. Almost two thirds were opposed. Instead the majority of Western Europeans would like to see immigrants adapt to European customs and habits, if they don't outright support their departure. Thus in France in 1993, 83 percent of the population agreed that foreigners had to integrate themselves into French society and "abandon customs contrary to French legislation" (such as polygamy). Seventy-five percent thought it would be better if foreign workers lived in areas where there were also French families.³⁶ Italian polls reveal the extent to which West Europeans are ambiguous in their attitudes toward foreigners. When those who agreed that foreigners were contributing to rising crime were asked what could solve that problem, one third opted for barring entrance to foreigners without work, 38 percent for creating conditions for genuine integration (ISPES, 1991a, p. 152; see also Le Gall, 1992, p. 125).

The Italian data also reveal that xenophobia is only one part of a larger combination of feelings of resentment directed toward all groups that are "different." Thus, Italians also show considerable hostility toward homosexuals (40 percent in 1992), drug addicts (43 percent), and atheists (15 percent) (Dini, 1992, p. 129). Polls from other countries show that these and similar sentiments are fairly standard among the West European public. In 1992, in Germany, for instance, 67 percent of the population said they would not want to have neighbors who were drug addicts; 66 percent did not want as neighbors "people who were often drunk"; 64 percent did not want gypsies; 31 percent, homosexuals; 18 percent, Muslims; and 8 percent, "people with lots of children."³⁷ Since, ideally, the notion of multicultural society would include not only respect and support for foreign cultures but also respect for life-styles and personal preferences that differ from those of the majority of the population, the prospects for the development of multiculturalism in Western Europe are hardly bright.

Opinion polls suggest that the majority of Western Europeans are deeply ambiguous, if not outright hostile toward immigrants and refugees. Slogans such as "*Ausländer raus*" or "*fuori gli immigrati*" are not the isolated calls of a miniscule minority on the lunatic fringes of postindustrial Europe, but express and reflect the attitudes and opinions of a sizeable portion of the core of West

Europe's public. Yes, it might be exaggerated to equate hostility toward foreigners with racism. (Although the fact that almost 23 percent of the Italian public agreed in 1991 that there was a fundamental inequality [*disuguaglianza di fondo*] between various races [ISPES, 1991a, p. 179] and that 11 percent of the population of the EC approved in one way or the other of racist movements [see Table 3.5] is reason enough for concern.) Yet one thing is clear. There is a profound xenophobic streak running through Western European society. With the growing visibility and assertiveness of non-European cultures this xenophobic streak is bound to gain in political significance.

THE SOCIAL BASIS OF XENOPHOBIA

Immigrants and refugees from the developing South to the prosperous North represent perhaps the most visible and "tangible" signs of the current social and cultural transformation of advanced Western democracies. They confront the indigenous population of the West with the social realities brought about by the new age of global economic, ecological, and political interdependence and universal communication. Therefore, these people are particularly vulnerable to becoming the target of those persons who feel objectively or subjectively threatened by this transformation. We would expect to find prejudices and hostility toward foreigners to be particularly pronounced among persons with lower levels of education, among older generations, and perhaps also among blue-collar workers. These are the groups most likely to both have the greatest difficulties adapting to rapid social and cultural change and to respond to the challenge in a cognitively rigid fashion (see Scheuch and Klingemann, 1967; Hoskin, 1991, chapter 5). However, in the case of blue-collar workers, xenophobia might be checked by traditional solidarity with fellow workers, particularly among those who are unionized. On the other hand, working class groups are also most likely to see immigrants as outsiders eager to enter society and compete for increasingly scarce jobs. One might therefore expect working class groups to feel particularly threatened by their admission (Hoskin, 1991, p. 107).

Table 3.5 provides a number of survey results from the EC, from France, and from Italy. They indicate that negative attitudes toward foreigners correlate to a large extent with age, level of education, occupation, and value preferences (for a more detailed analysis of the 12 EC countries see Fuchs, Gerhards and Roller, 1993, pp. 250-251). Thus, in France, 46 percent of the youngest age group said they favored integrating immigrants rather than sending them back to their home country. Among the advanced age groups only a third supported integration; more than half came out in favor of immigrants' departure. The differences are even

Table 3.5
The Social Basis of Xenophobia

1. Percentage of EC Nationals Who Believe the Rights of Foreigners Should Be:

	Improved	Maintained	Restricted	No Reply
Total	30	39	18	13
Male	30	41	19	10
Female	29	37	18	16
Age				
15-24	34	41	13	12
25-39	35	36	18	11
40-54	30	37	20	13
55+	23	41	20	16
Education				
low	28	35	19	18
medium	26	43	20	11
advanced	39	40	13	8
Value Types				
Materialist	25	38	21	16
Mixed	28	40	20	12
Postmaterialist	45	36	11	8

Source: Eurobarometer Special on Racism and Xenophobia, 1991, p. 80.

2. France: Percentage of Population Believing in Integration/Departure of Immigrants

	Integration	Departure	No Opinion
Total	42	46	12
Male	44	45	11
Female	40	47	13
Age			
18-24	46	44	10
25-34	52	38	10
35-49	45	43	12
50-64	35	51	14
65+			
Education			
primary	29	55	16
secondary	43	43	14
technical/commercial	40	53	7
advanced	65	27	8

Table 3.5 (cont.)
The Social Basis of Xenophobia

	Integration	Departure	No Opinion
Occupation			
Farmers	36	46	18
Shopkeepers, Artisans, Small Business	40	45	15
Executives, Liberal Professions	56	36	8
Middle Management	61	31	8
Salaried Employees	46	41	13
Blue-Collar Workers	37	53	10
No Profession, Retired	31	54	15

Source: Le Gall, 1992, p. 125.

3. Italy: Belief in the Statement that the Presence of Non-EC Foreigners has Led to an Increase in Drug Dealing (in %)

	True	Partially True	False	No Info.
Total	24	45	30	1
Male	24	43	32	1
Female	23	47	29	1
Age				
0-29	15	52	33	0
30-49	25	41	33	1
50-69	31	44	24	1
70+	56	26	16	2
Education				
none	41	28	25	6
elementary	40	35	24	1
primary	28	43	28	1
secondary	20	49	30	1
advanced	13	45	41	1
Occupation				
Small Business	31	39	29	1
Liberal Prof.	14	51	35	0
Employees	21	47	32	0
Workers	32	40	29	0
Teachers	13	49	38	1
Retired	35	42	20	3
Others	22	47	31	1

Source: ISPES, 1991a, p. 149.

starker with regard to education. Whereas less than 30 percent of those with only primary education favored integration, integration was supported by almost two thirds of those with advanced education. These results also help explain the large attitudinal differences between workers and farmers on the one hand and liberal professionals, executives, and middle-level management on the other (for earlier results see Humbertjean, 1985, pp. 85–86).

Similar results were obtained in the Italian case. There the most advanced age groups and those with primary degrees were at least twice as likely to associate the presence of non-EC foreigners with an increase in drug dealing, as were the youngest age group and those with advanced degrees. And as in the French case there were clear and significant attitudinal differences between workers on the one hand and liberal professionals and teachers on the other. These were also the groups most likely to hold postmaterialist values.³⁸ Other studies come to similar conclusions. In Norway, 65 percent of voters with primary, but only 22 percent of voters with advanced education, agreed in 1988 that in economically difficult times Norwegians should be given priority for jobs. Similar results were obtained regarding the desirability of a multicultural society: 76 percent of those with primary education, but only 58 percent of those with advanced education agreed that foreigners should adapt to Norwegian customs.

Curiously enough, there appear to be hardly any differences between female and male respondents in their attitudes toward immigrants. This is surprising since women have generally been much less likely than men to support right-wing radical and extremist parties (see Chapter 5). One reason for expecting that women might be more sympathetic to foreigners than are men is that women, like foreigners, have been the victims of discrimination. Yet surveys indicate that women are generally as likely as men to harbor negative attitudes toward immigrants. However, there are exceptions. If attitudes are associated with manifestations of open intolerance or violence, women are significantly less likely to agree with them than are men. In Italy in 1991, 46 percent of female respondents (and 44 percent of respondents with advanced degrees), but only 37 percent of male respondents said they considered such acts a clear expression of racism (ISPES, 1991a, p. 187). In this instance women belonged to the most liberal social groups.

The only other instance in which women's attitudes toward foreigners appear to be rather different from those of men is when age is taken into consideration. One Danish survey found that young women age 19 to 28 were considerably more opposed to sending back immigrant workers who were no longer needed than were men in the same age group (76 to 65 percent) (Svensson and Togeby, 1991a, p. 147). Similar differences emerge from a 1992

Table 3.6
Norwegian Voters' Views on Immigrants
(IN % AGREEING WITH STATEMENTS)

	PrS	PuS	PrS Low Income	PuS Low Income	PrS High Income	PuS High Income
1. Priority for jobs should go to Norwegian unemployed	50	39	58	46	46	28
2. Foreigners should adapt to Norwegian habits	75	64	72	64	78	59
3. Increased financial support should be given to promote immigrants' culture	17	30	20	24	18	36

PrS=Private Sector PuS=Public Sector

Source: Norwegian Study on Immigration, 1988

study of youth in the Eastern German state of Brandenburg. Forty-one percent of male respondents, but only 25 percent of female respondents, agreed with the statement that most criminals were foreigners; 48 percent of the males, but only 35 percent of the females agreed with the statement "Germany for the Germans—foreigners get out"; and 45 percent of the males, but only 31 percent of the females agreed that foreigners were responsible for unemployment in Germany (Dietrich, 1992, pp. 43–46). These results suggest that young women play a prominent and important role in sustaining left-libertarian attitudes toward immigrants and refugees.

In their study of the conservative resurgence in Norway, Lafferty and Knutsen (1984) found public-sector workers and employees in general, and particularly high level public sector employees, to be considerably more left-wing than those employed in the private sector. The results of a study of Norwegian voters indicate similar differences with regard to their attitudes toward foreigners (Table 3.6). Generally, those employed in the public sector tend to be more inclined than their counterparts in the private sector to oppose assimilation, to advocate financial support for immigrants' culture, and to reject giving priority for jobs to Norwegian unemployed. These differences become even more pronounced in a comparison between different levels of private- and public-sector employees (in terms of income): Low level public employees are

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at least as liberal in their attitudes toward foreigners as high-level private-sector employees. High-level public-sector functionaries in turn are more sympathetic toward foreigners than both their private-sector counterparts and the public sector as a whole.

What, then, appear to be the major factors determining citizens' attitudes toward immigrants and refugees? Gaasholt and Tøgeby's study of xenophobic attitudes of Danish citizens ranging from 18 to 37 years of age and based on a 1988 survey provides a comprehensive, if tentative answer (Gaasholt and Tøgeby, 1992). Like earlier studies from other countries, the two authors found a strong relationship between level of education and tolerance. Respondents with university entrance level education showed almost three times as high a level of tolerance toward immigrants as did respondents with lower levels of education (70 to 24 percent among men, 70 to 27 percent among women). As in the Norwegian case, the tolerance level among public-sector employees was considerably higher than among private-sector employees. It was particularly high among those employed in social services and among students in the humanities and the social sciences. Besides education and sector employment a third factor influencing attitudes on immigrants was a respondent's position toward a number of left-right issues. Generally, the more positive a person's attitude toward economic equality, the welfare state, and the regulation of private enterprise, the more tolerant he or she was likely to be toward immigrants. Because of a lack of comparable cross-national data, these findings have only limited validity. They are, however, quite suggestive, given the general free-market orientation of a majority of radical right-wing populist parties, if not their supporters (see Chapter 5).

XENOPHOBIA AND THE RADICAL POPULIST RIGHT

With the social and cultural transformation of advanced Western democracies, questions of immigration, foreign labor, and asylum have assumed a prominent place in the cultural and political discussion in Western Europe. So far, however, the results of this discourse have for the most part been negative. Western Europe is close to turning into a fortress for the already affluent and privileged. As one observer wrote a few years ago before the establishment of the European Union: "The 'fortress Europe' that Americans, Japanese and other outsiders fear when the European Community finally becomes a tariff-free, continent-wide market at the end of next year is already being built. But its walls are intended to keep out people, not commodities" (Whitney, 1991, p. 1). Attempts on the part of politicians and pundits to convince the public

that the affluent democracies of Western Europe have, for all practical purposes, become countries of immigration like the United States, Canada, or Australia have largely failed. So has the appeal to support the creation of multicultural, multiethnic, or multiracial societies. Only a minority of highly educated and, in terms of their jobs, secure segments of the new middle class as well as a majority of young women are willing to face the challenge of a rapidly changing world. More so than ever, a majority of Western Europeans themselves are profoundly suspicious of new arrivals while reconciling themselves only hesitatingly to those who are already there.

An impressive number of surveys point to the same conclusion: In the 1980s, hostility toward new and resident immigrants was growing considerably throughout Western Europe. By the early 1990s, a majority of the Western European population supported a number of xenophobic views. At the same time, the "immigrant problem" became one of the most important political issues with governments and political parties coming under mounting public pressure to offer effective solutions.

Despite considerable support for racist movements, alarming numbers of physical attacks against immigrants and refugees, and a general increase in cases of historical revisionism such as the denial of the Holocaust and of outright anti-Semitism, it would be mistaken, however, to confound or equate contemporary xenophobia with the racism that characterized nazism or white supremacism. As the Swiss case demonstrates, xenophobia is not necessarily directed against persons and groups of different ethnic origins. All Swiss referenda on immigration were called at a time when the vast majority of foreign residents of Switzerland were West Europeans. Similarly, German hostility toward foreigners has hardly been limited to guest workers, immigrants, or refugees. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, it also reached ethnic German resettlers from the east (*Aussiedler*) and even German migrants from the former GDR. In 1991, only 13 percent of the German population was willing to accept all *Aussiedler*; 43 percent thought their numbers should be drastically reduced.³⁹ At the same time, episodic accounts suggested that the West German population also turned against former East Germans.⁴⁰ The hasty conclusion of the currency union was largely an attempt to arrest the unrelenting flow of East German migrants into West Germany and curb growing West German resentment toward the newcomers.

These examples suggest that xenophobia is less an expression of the revival of racism. It rather reflects the desire on the part of the population of the affluent Western European societies to protect their islands of prosperity against an outside world marked by poverty, environmental destruction, interethnic violence, and growing desperation. Confronted with a profound transformation of the eco-

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conomic and social infrastructure and with mass unemployment at home, Western European citizens are increasingly turning inward. Fatigued by the cultural and political battles of the past two decades, they appear little ready to face the new conflicts bound to arise over the changing cultural makeup of their societies. Faced with chronic deficits and growing public debts, they are no longer willing to allocate money to those who are outsiders to the ethnic, cultural, and social community. Thus, a majority of Western Europeans still consider foreign residents "foreigners," or at the most "guests," rather than fellow citizens. In Germany, in 1989, 26 percent considered these residents foreigners, 27 percent guests, and 44 percent fellow citizens (Veen, Lepszy, and Mních, 1992, p. 60). And guests are expected to respect the customs of their hosts and, above all, not to turn into a financial liability. Yet, particularly the new arrivals from the developing world were being perceived as following neither of these rules. As a result, the notion that Western European governments should halt new immigration as well as reduce the number of the resident foreign population from non-Western European countries was steadily gaining ground.

Nowhere was this more the case than among the supporters of the radical populist Right. Not only did they generally consider the question of immigration by far the most important issue on the political agenda (see chapter 2), they were also the group that was by far most hostile toward immigrants and refugees. Representative survey results from France, Denmark, Norway, Germany, and Austria illustrate not only to what extent xenophobic attitudes define the supporters of the radical populist Right but also their range.

Given the importance Front National supporters have generally attributed to the question of immigration, it is hardly surprising that they show some of the most negative attitudes toward non-Europeans of any group in France and perhaps even Western Europe. Thus, in 1990, virtually all supporters of the Front National thought that the number of foreigners living in France was too large (compared to 68 percent of the population); and nine out of ten favored a policy that would lead to the departure of a large number of immigrants currently living in France (compared to 46 percent of the whole population; see Le Gall, 1992, pp. 121, 125). Polls taken in 1984 and 1985 show that these feelings were strong right from the beginning of the party's rise. In 1984, when asked which measure they thought would be most efficient to improve security, twice as many Front National supporters (62 percent) as supporters of any other political grouping chose "reduce the number of immigrant workers" (Humbertjean, 1985, p. 83). Similarly, in 1985, Front National voters (72 percent) were significantly more likely than the voters of other parties (the highest were RPR supporters with 55 percent; SOFRES, 1986, p. 220) to think

that immigrants were far too different to be able to adapt themselves to French society. A poll taken in Grenoble in 1985 confirms this result. Asked about their opinion on North-Africans, 90 percent of Front National supporters agreed that they were too numerous. For 63 percent they constituted the principal cause of unemployment, and for virtually all the principal cause of crime (Bréchon, 1993, p. 43).

By the early 1990s, xenophobia was also one of the most important characteristics distinguishing FPÖ supporters from the rest of the Austrian population. In 1992, for example, FPÖ sympathizers were at least twice as likely as the general public to consider it unpleasant to have Turks, Romanians, or Jews as their neighbors. The differences were even more pronounced with regard to the FPÖ's proposals to curb immigration included in the 1991 petition. On average, more than three times as many FPÖ sympathizers as supporters of other parties came out in support of drastic antiforeigner measures such as enshrining it in the constitution that Austria was not an immigration country, or immediately halting all new immigration (see chapter 4).

In Germany, both in the late 1980s and early 1990s, Republikaner sympathizers showed by far the least sympathies of any politically relevant group toward immigrants, refugees, and even German resettlers from the former Soviet Union. In 1989, 90 percent of Republikaner supporters (compared to 58 percent of the whole population) thought Germany did too much for the latter group.⁴¹ Undoubtedly, however, resentment was highest with regard to refugees. Thus, in 1993, almost three quarters of the German population, but only one out of two Republikaner supporters, considered it a good thing that Germany gave those who faced political persecution in their home countries the right to asylum. The numbers were reversed when Germans were asked whether or not they thought it was okay that there were many foreigners living in Germany, or whether they agreed that people coming from different cultures would invariably remain alien to each other. Whereas the population was generally split on both questions, an overwhelming majority of Republikaner supporters chose the xenophobic answer. Perhaps nothing could have better illustrated to what degree xenophobia distinguished the sympathizers of the radical Right from other groups in German society than the fact that, in 1989, half of all Republikaner supporters agreed with the notorious statement that the Germans should take care to keep the German character pure and prevent the mixing of peoples.

Danish surveys come to similar results. They show that in the late 1980s and early 1990s those sympathizing with the Progress Party distinguished themselves from the supporters of other political parties by their pronounced resentment toward foreigners. In the 1987 and 1988 elections, for instance, the

overwhelming majority of Progress Party voters agreed that immigrants represented a threat to Danish national identity and that refugees had to assimilate to Danish culture and the Danish way of life (Borre, 1987, p. 354; Andersen, 1992, p. 200). In 1993, 97 percent of Progress Party supporters agreed that the Danish government treated refugees too well; 83 percent thought the majority of those seeking political asylum were in reality economic migrants (compared to 54 percent of the population); and 58 percent thought immigrants and refugees were more likely to commit crimes than Danes (compared to 34 percent of the whole population). When asked which foreigners should be allowed to enter Denmark to join their relatives, 57 percent answered flat out "none" (compared to 27 percent of the population).⁴²

What differentiates the supporters of radical right-wing populist parties most from average citizens is the former's consistently negative attitudes on all aspects associated with immigration and asylum. Against that, the general population is far more selective. Thus, in the late 1980s, the average Norwegian citizen hardly differed from the average Progress Party supporter when it came to questions of assimilation, or giving immigrants financial support so that they could preserve their own culture. The two groups diverged, however, much more visibly on statements that could either be construed as having racist overtones (for example, that immigrants represent a threat to national identity), or that might have implied drastic consequences (such as immigrants' access to their country should be limited).

Despite these caveats, the Norwegian results generally reinforce the central argument of this chapter. The rise and spread of xenophobia in Western Europe in the 1980s and early 1990s was hardly restricted to small minorities in the population. Large majorities believed that there were too many foreigners residing in their countries, that immigration had become the most important political problem facing Western European societies, and that governments should act decisively to stem the tide. Undoubtedly, radical right-wing populist parties owed much of their success to this climate of growing resentment and anxiety, which the question of immigration invariably engendered. However, this is not to say that radical right-wing populist parties were, above all, antiforeigner parties. As the following chapter seeks to demonstrate, radical right-wing populist parties distinguished themselves not only in terms of the importance they attributed to immigration in their programs, but also with regard to how they justified their opposition to immigration.

4

The Two Faces of Radical Right-Wing Populism

One of the central points in the debate on the transformation of political behavior in advanced Western democracies has been the argument that modern voters increasingly tend to privilege issue- and value-oriented forms of participation over ideology-oriented ones. In the past, political parties distinguished themselves from each other by offering to the voters competing conceptualizations of a future ideal society and the different ways to get there. In the "postmodern" present, where the ideological foundations of the modern age are fundamentally questioned, and where idealism has largely been displaced by skepticism, ideology appears to have given way to a pragmatism of common sense. Populist parties are generally held to lack grand visions or comprehensive ideological projects. Instead, they are presumed to appeal to the common sense of the common people, seek to divine the mood swings of an increasingly volatile electorate, and shape their political programs accordingly. It seems then hardly surprising that radical right-wing populist parties have been relatively successful in attracting significant electoral support among the growing number of disenchanted and skeptical voters more interested in voicing their grievances than in evaluating alternative approaches to solving pressing societal problems.