

Transatlantic Trends: Immigration 2008 Partners

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TRANSATLANTIC TRENDS

Immigration

Key Findings on Immigration 2008

With more than 191 million people on the move worldwide, large migrant-receiving societies such as the United States and Europe confront many of the same challenges of immigration, even as they experience the benefits that migrants can bring. American and European policymakers alike are tasked with determining admittance criteria for legal immigrants, deciding between temporary and permanent labor migration programs, finding solutions to reduce illegal immigration, and addressing the issue of what to do with illegal immigrants already in their countries. The same policymakers recognize that migration has important implications for domestic policy concerns, such as national security, economics, identity politics, and social coherence.

As public opinion is crucial for policymakers in determining an appropriate legislative course of action, this survey addresses immigration and integration issues in a systematic way. For *Transatlantic Trends: Immigration*, respondents in seven countries—the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Poland—were asked about their impressions of immigration in general, as well as their preferences for migration management, governance, and integration policies. Additionally, the survey

touches on questions of national identity, and to what extent issues like in-country birth, citizenship, and self-identification are important to being considered a country national.

In the coming year, immigration issues will again be atop the political agenda. The United States will look to a new president to pass much-needed immigration reform, and in Europe, the French EU Presidency has made it clear that a common EU immigration policy is a priority. All this comes at a time when the United Kingdom is adjusting to its new points-based immigration system, Germany has put its new citizenship test into use, Poland is transitioning from a country of emigration to one of immigration, and Italy is adopting more restrictionist policies than ever before.

Transatlantic Trends: Immigration is designed to compare transatlantic as well as cross-country opinion on immigration and integration issues. It is a joint project of the German Marshall Fund of the United States, the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, the Compagnia di San Paolo, and the Barrow Cadbury Trust. The field work was carried out in September 2008 by TNS Opinion.

KEY FINDINGS OF THIS SURVEY INCLUDE¹:

- *Perception of immigration:* Forty-seven percent of Europeans and 50% of Americans perceived immigration to be more of a problem than an opportunity, but majorities in France and the Netherlands, as well as sizable minorities in other countries considered it to be more of an opportunity.
- *Illegal vs. legal immigration:* Over 40% of respondents in both the United States and in Europe were concerned about illegal immigration only, while only 24% in Europe and 17% in the United States were worried about both illegal *and* legal immigration.
- *Cultural influence:* Majorities in Europe and the United States agreed that immigration will improve their culture with new customs and ideas.
- *Immigration and security:* In all countries surveyed, majorities rejected the idea that immigration will increase the likelihood of a terrorist attack in their country.
- *Crime rates:* Fifty-two percent of Europeans agree that immigration will increase crime in their society; 47% of Americans agreed.
- *Economic concerns:* Strong majorities in the United States and the United Kingdom believed that immigration will increase tax rates, and over 50% in each country thought that immigrants take jobs away from natives.
- *Immigrant workers:* Eighty-six percent of Americans agreed that immigrants are hard workers, and a further 61% believed that immigration will create jobs as immigrants set up new businesses. Only 47% of Europeans agreed that immigration creates jobs.
- *Temporary vs. permanent labor programs:* Sixty-four percent in Europe and 62% in the United States favored permanent settlement over temporary migration schemes for legal immigrants.
- *Admittance criteria:* In all countries surveyed, language skills and having a job offer were the most important for admittance, followed in importance by a high level of education and having a family member already in the country. A majority in all countries did not think it was important for immigrants to come from a Christian country.
- *Illegal immigration:* Americans and Europeans broadly favored reduction policies, whether proactive (making it easier for immigrants to enter the country to work or study) or reactive (reinforcing border controls, imposing employer sanctions, and deportation policies).
- *Deportation vs. legalization:* British (64%) and Italian (58%) respondents clearly favored deportation of illegal immigrants while a plurality (49%) in the United States favored legalization.
- *Muslim integration:* Fifty-four percent of Americans and 53% of Europeans believed that their ways of life are not irreconcilable with those of Muslim immigrants, though countries differed on whether Muslims want to integrate.

¹Disclaimer note: In this survey we used the terminology “illegal immigrant” throughout the interview to describe foreign citizens who enter, stay, and/or work in the country without the permission of the national government, as opposed to irregular or undocumented migrants. We are aware that the debate about the terminology is sensitive on this issue. To ensure that respondents would understand the term and that the data would be comparable, we used the term illegal immigrant throughout the survey and this report.



TRANSATLANTIC TRENDS

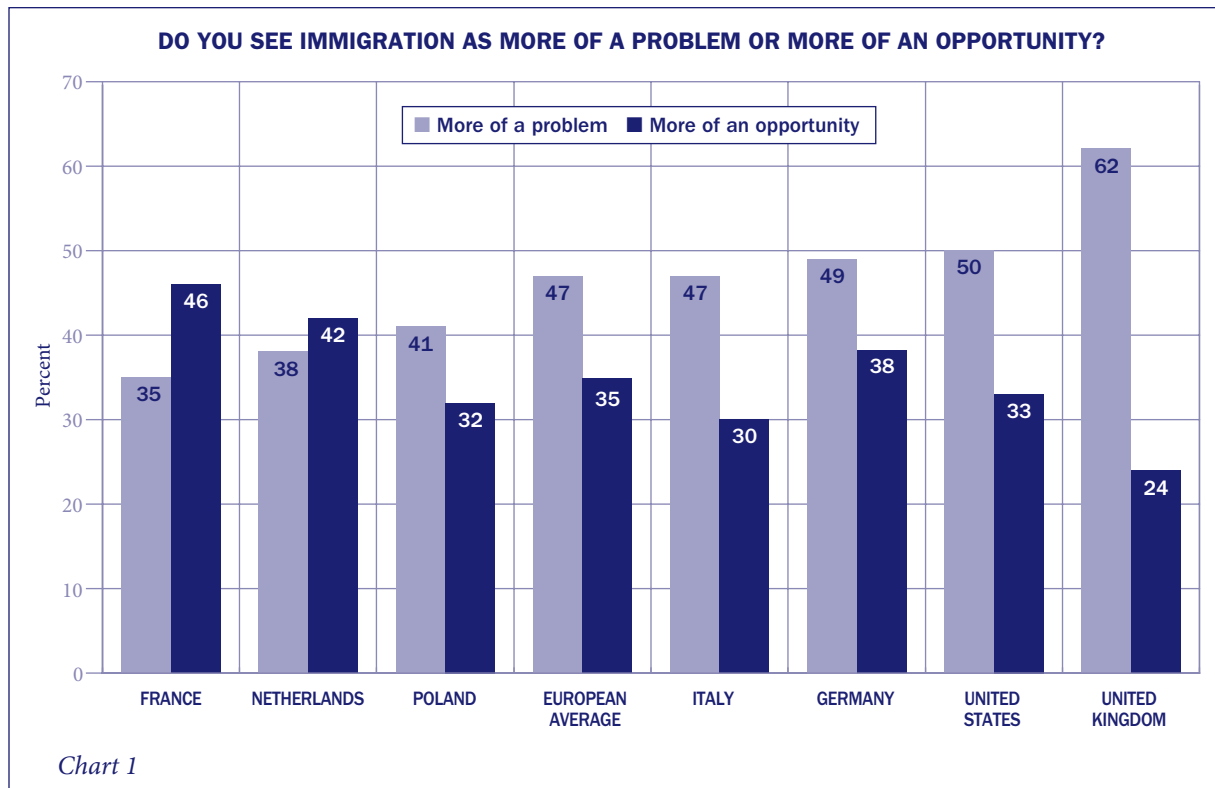
Immigration

Section One: Transatlantic Perceptions of Immigration

Transatlantic Trends: Immigration explores views of immigration and integration policies on both sides of the Atlantic in the midst of a highly politicized debate. The issue of migration has been at the center of the national stage in all countries surveyed for the past few years, and some countries have undergone major policy shifts in that time. To understand respective national backdrops and to gauge opinion on general migration developments, this section addresses the expectations that respondents had in the face of continued migration flows.

IMMIGRATION IS “MORE OF A PROBLEM” FOR ALL BUT THE FRENCH AND THE DUTCH

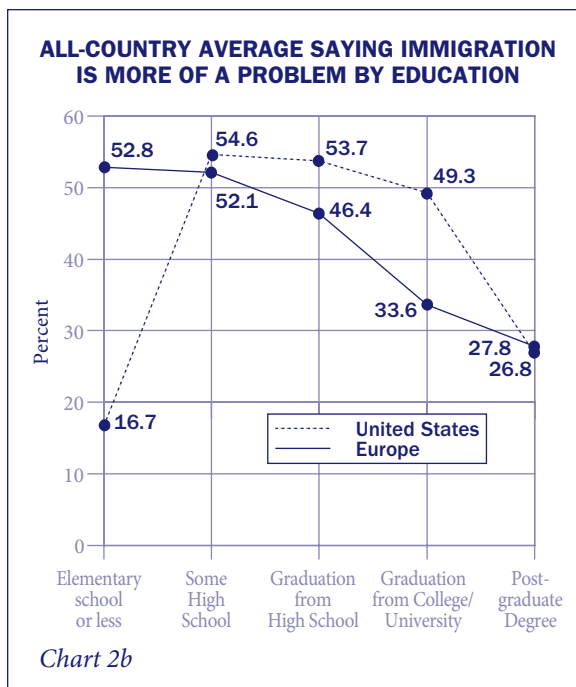
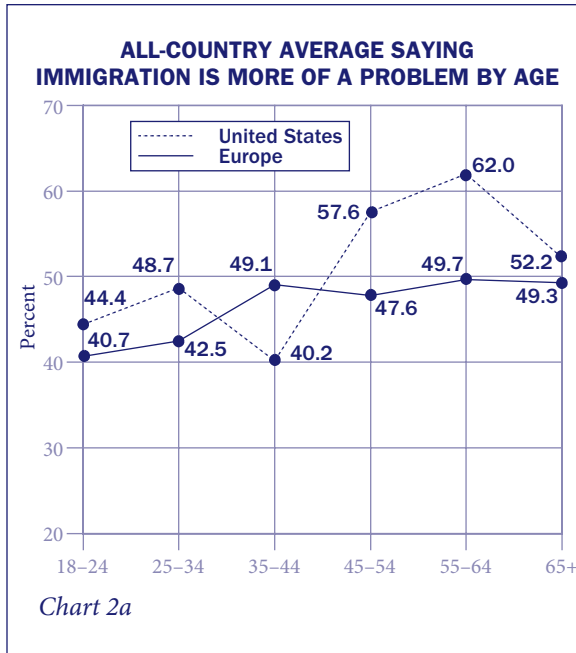
The average European response was similar to U.S. opinion on whether immigration is “more of a problem” or “more of an opportunity,” with 47% in Europe and 50% in the United States saying it is “more of a problem.” However, the European average masked differing views among European countries on this issue. The United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, and Poland all had majorities or pluralities defining immigration as “more of a problem,” while pluralities in both France and the Netherlands said that it is “more of an opportunity.” (See Chart 1)



**EDUCATION, AGE, CONTACT WITH IMMIGRANTS
IMPORTANT PREDICTORS OF SENTIMENT**

In all countries surveyed, those who are younger and those who are more educated tended to say that immigration is “more of an opportunity,” while older respondents or those who were less educated were more likely to indicate that it is “more of a problem.” Also, contact with immigrants had an effect on perception: 54% of Europeans and 61% of

Americans without immigrant friends or colleagues said that immigration is “more of a problem,” whereas only 42% of Europeans and 43% of Americans with at least a few personal or professional immigrant contacts said likewise. Education, age, and contact with immigrants consistently correlated with sentiment about immigration policy and national identity throughout the survey. (See Charts 2a and 2b)



PERCEPTION OF IMMIGRATION ALSO CORRELATED WITH POLITICAL VIEWS

The left-right divide was a significant predictor of sentiment toward immigration. In Europe, respondents were asked to place themselves on a right-to-left spectrum, and in the United States they were asked to define themselves as a Republican, a Democrat, or an Independent. Respondents declaring themselves to be on the political right were consistently more skeptical about immigration—in Europe 58% answered that immigration is “more of a problem,” compared with 33% of those identifying themselves as on the left. A similar, though less sharp, trend was present in the United States, where 58% of Republicans but only 45% of Democrats answered that immigration is “more of a problem.” (See Chart 3)

DIVERGING OPINIONS ABOUT THE LEGAL STATUS OF MIGRANT POPULATIONS ACROSS COUNTRIES

Respondents in all countries were asked whether they thought that the majority of the immigrants in their country are there legally or illegally. A plurality of Americans (48%) believed that most immigrants in their country are there illegally. In fact, illegal immigrants number about 11 to 12 million people or around one-third of the 39 million-strong U.S. immigrant population. Unlike in the United States, estimates of illegal immigrant numbers in Europe are generally imprecise or unreliable. Nevertheless, Europeans voiced strong feelings about the composition of their immigrant populations: 68% of Italians and 53% of Poles believed that most immigrants are in their countries illegally, while 77% of Germans, 60% of French, 68% of Dutch, and a plurality of Britons (46%), thought that most immigrants are in their respective countries legally.

PERCENT ANSWERING THAT IMMIGRATION IS MORE OF A PROBLEM, BY DECLARED POLITICAL AFFILIATION

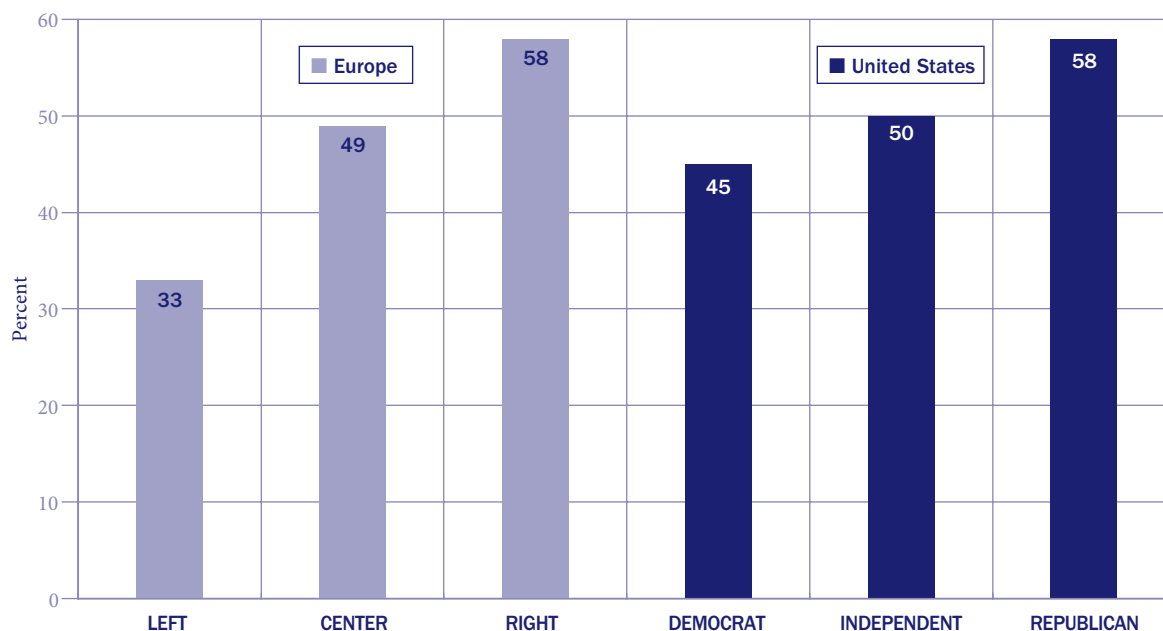


Chart 3

COUNTRY PROFILE: UNITED KINGDOM

THE BRITISH CONTINUE TO BE THE MOST SKEPTICAL OF IMMIGRATION IN EUROPE

The British public is anxious about immigration: 62% of British respondents regarded immigration as more of a problem than an opportunity. This is by far the highest level in Europe. Other data sources confirm this trend, which can be traced back to the latter half of the 1990s. In the 2008 Eurobarometer survey, 35% of British respondents (against an EU-27 average of 11%) named immigration as one of the biggest problems in their country.

Net immigration to the United Kingdom has risen dramatically over the last decade. Several factors have contributed to unprecedented immigration levels: sustained economic growth, historically low unemployment rates, large increases in asylum applications

during the 1990s, growing numbers of international students, increasing numbers of family reunification cases, and labor migration since the country opened to workers from EU accession countries in 2004. The foreign-born population in the United Kingdom now stands at over 10%, and the British government has adopted several new immigration policies, including a reform of the nationality law, reinforced border controls, and the introduction of a points-based immigration system.

IMMIGRATION STATISTICS

Immigrant population in the United Kingdom	6,116,400
Immigrant share of overall population	10.1%

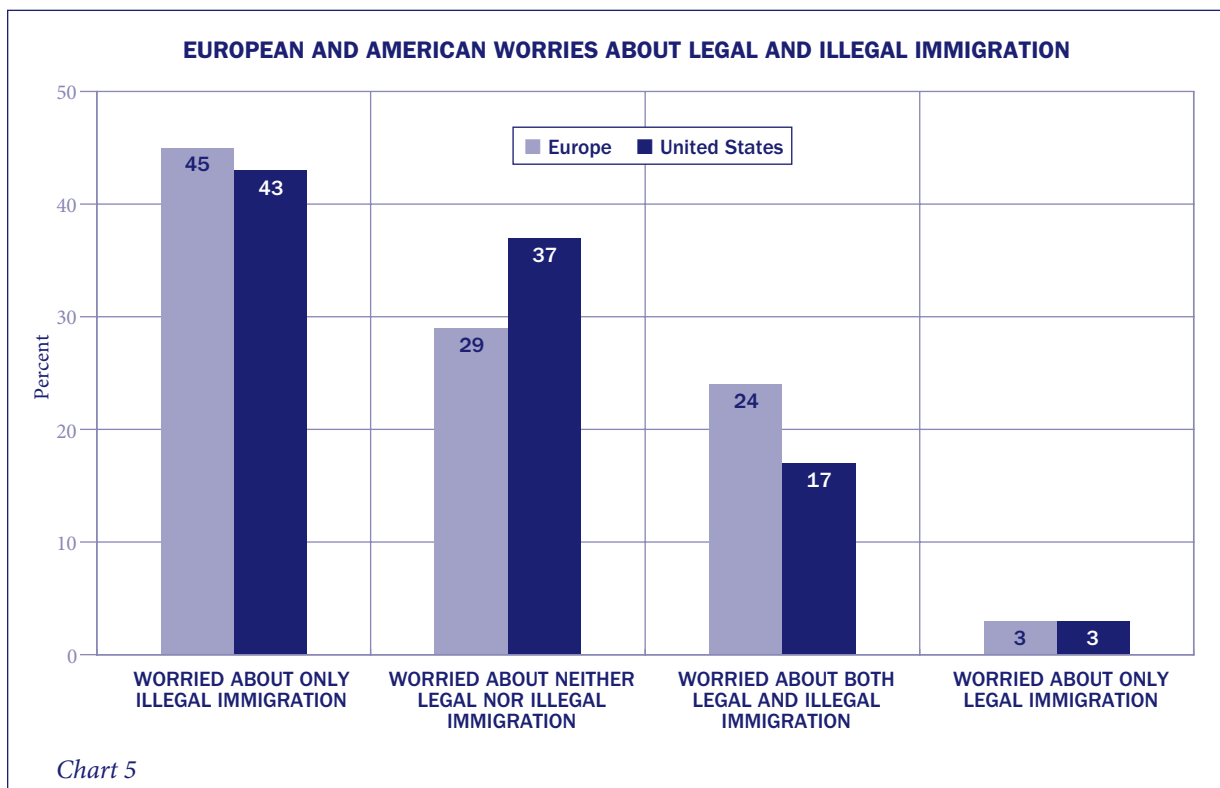
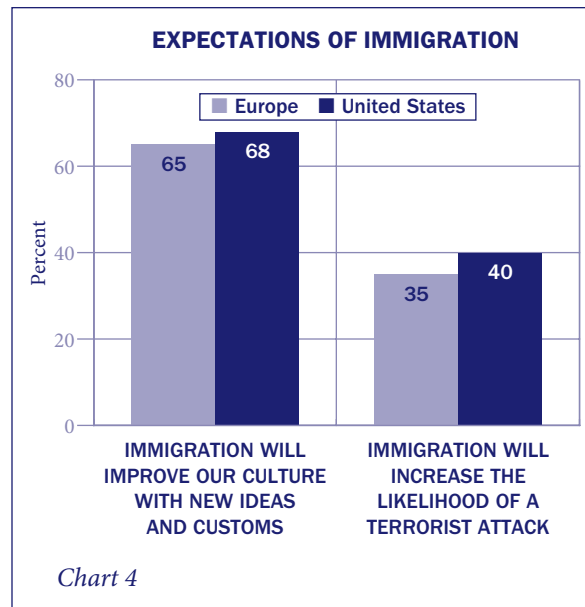
Source: OECD International Migration Outlook 2008, data for 2006

EUROPEANS AND AMERICANS EXPECT POSITIVE IMPACTS ON CULTURE

One area of agreement across the Atlantic is the projected cultural effects of immigration on society. Strong majorities in Europe (65%) and the United States (68%) agreed that immigration will improve their culture with new ideas and customs. The most optimistic about immigrants’ cultural influence were the Germans at 71% and the Dutch at 72%. (See Chart 4)

MAJORITIES DISAGREE THAT IMMIGRATION INCREASES LIKELIHOOD OF TERRORISM

The issue of immigration is often linked to security or terrorism concerns in the political arena, especially in countries where major terrorist attacks have taken place. However, majorities in all countries surveyed did not believe that immigration will increase the likelihood of a future terrorist attack in their country; only 35% of Europeans and 40% of Americans agreed that this was a possibility. French respondents were the most adamant, with less than a quarter (23%) tying immigration to the threat of terrorism. (See Chart 4)



COUNTRY PROFILE: FRANCE

LEAST CONCERNED THAT IMMIGRATION WILL INCREASE CRIME

Of all countries surveyed, the French public was the only one to strongly reject the idea that immigration increases crime. While public opinion in the other countries surveyed was either split (47% of Americans agreed, 48% disagreed) or the majority agreed that immigration will increase crime (53% in the U.K. and Poland, 57% in Germany, 61% in the Netherlands and 66% in Italy), only 28% of the French public agreed (while 70% disagreed). Among those who disagreed, 76% had a friend or colleague from another country.

In the past decade, France has adopted several measures and passed laws to open its labor markets to highly-skilled immigrants, attract foreign students, manage undocumented immigration, and promote

integration and religious dialogue. Civil unrest and riots in the banlieues in the autumn of 2005 caused a public debate about the social disenfranchisement of young, unemployed immigrants. In 2007, France created a Ministry of Immigration, Integration, National Identity and Co-development, which highlights the importance of the topic in the political and public sphere.

IMMIGRATION STATISTICS

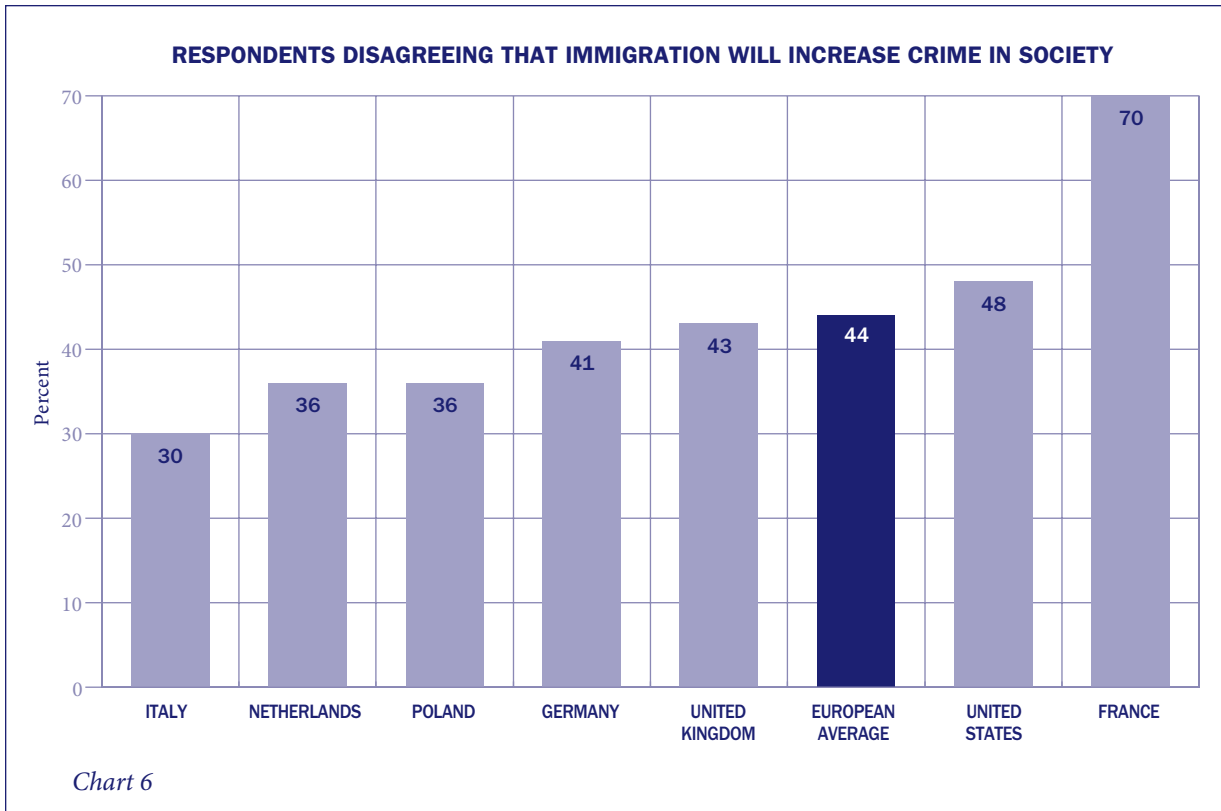
Immigrant population in France	5,078,300
Immigrant share of overall population	8.3%
Source: OECD International Migration Outlook 2008, data for 2006	

ILLEGAL, NOT LEGAL, IMMIGRATION IS THE BIGGEST CONCERN ON BOTH SIDES OF THE ATLANTIC

Real anxiety about legal immigration exists, but it is dwarfed by concerns about illegal immigration: more than 40% of respondents on both sides of the Atlantic expressed concern only about illegal—not legal—immigration. Additionally, significant numbers of respondents in Europe (29%) and the United States (37%) were not worried about either legal or illegal immigration. (See Chart 5)

IN EUROPE, IMMIGRATION MORE CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH CRIME

Europeans and Americans differed on their primary concerns associated with immigration. Majorities in all European countries, with the striking exception of France (see country profile), thought immigration would increase crime in the future, whereas Americans were evenly divided on the issue. It appears that the issue of crime as related to immigration was much more salient in Europe than it was in the United States. (See Chart 6)



ECONOMIC CONCERNS ARE STRONGEST IN THE UNITED STATES AND THE UNITED KINGDOM

Respondents from the United States and the United Kingdom diverged from their counterparts in continental Europe in their concern for the economic effects of immigration. A strong majority (65%) of both Americans and Britons believed that immigration will lead to higher taxes as a result of increased demand for social services by immigrants, as compared to the continental European average of 50%.

Economic concerns in the United States and the United Kingdom were not only linked to tax issues; 51% of

Americans and 52% of Britons thought that immigrants are currently taking jobs away from native-born workers. These majorities starkly contrast with the continental European average of 34%. (See Chart 7) Also, the United States (56%) and the United Kingdom (51%) were the only countries with majorities against “encouraging immigration for employment purposes” in the face of baby boomers retiring (U.S.) or an aging society (U.K.). All other European countries were in favor of immigration to solve potential shortages in the work force.

COUNTRY PROFILE: UNITED STATES

AMERICA'S PARADOX: IMMIGRANTS BOTH CREATE JOBS AND TAKE THEM AWAY

As seen in Chart 7, a majority of Americans believed that immigrants take jobs away from workers in their labor market. Interestingly, educational level was not a predictor of sentiment on this issue in the United States. Of the most highly-educated Americans—those with graduate degrees—39% still believed that immigrants take jobs away from natives. In Europe, by contrast, only 17% of the same highly-educated group agreed.

That said, 86% of Americans agreed that immigrants are hard workers, a view that was shared by a smaller majority of Europeans (63%). A majority of Americans (61%) also believed that immigration will create jobs as immigrants set up new businesses, an opinion that is shared by only 47% of Europeans.

The impact of ongoing immigration on the labor market has been debated in the United States for decades. With concern for American jobs in mind, some visa applications require proof that no American is available or could perform the job for which the would-be immigrant applies. At the same time, many industries, such as agriculture, construction, and services, would suffer greatly without immigrant labor. In this survey, Americans' views on the subject reflected this complexity.

IMMIGRATION STATISTICS

Immigrant population in the United States	39,054,900
Immigrant share of overall population	13.0%
Source: OECD International Migration Outlook 2008, data for 2006	

RESPONDENTS AGREEING THAT IMMIGRANTS TAKE JOBS AWAY FROM NATIVE-BORN WORKERS

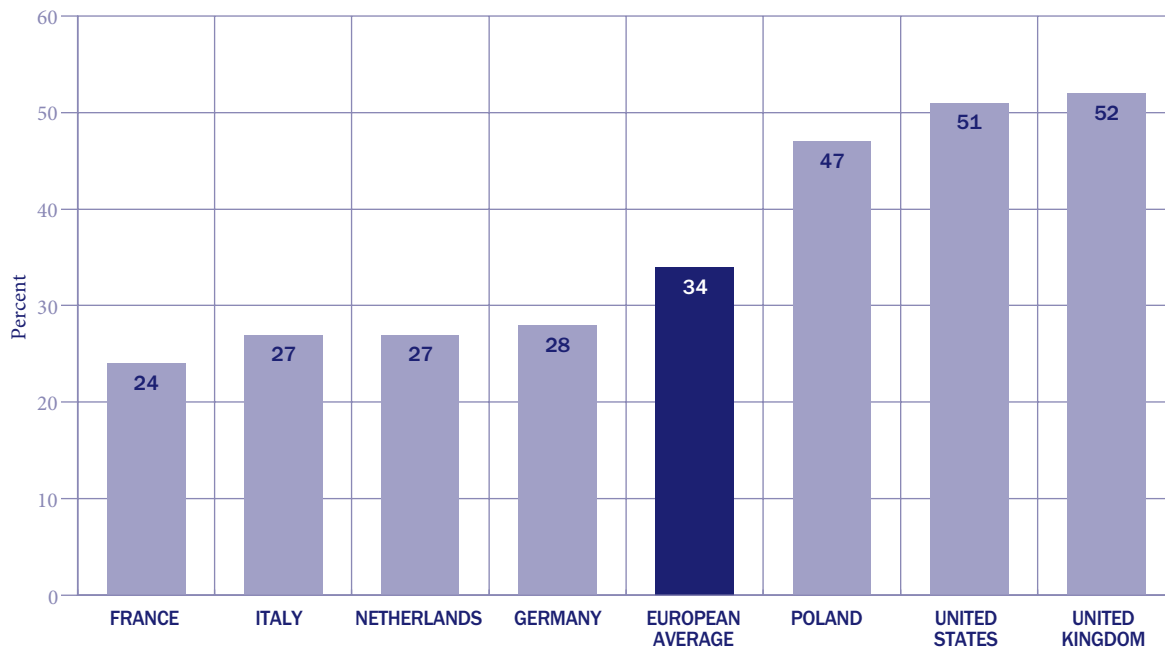


Chart 7



TRANSATLANTIC TRENDS

Immigration

Section Two: Views of Immigration Policies

In both Europe and the United States, policymakers are challenged to formulate, agree upon, and adopt legislation to deal with immigration and integration issues. But what does the general public think about admission criteria for immigrants, measures to reduce illegal immigration, labor migration schemes, and concrete measures to facilitate integration? Also, at what level of government should immigration policy be decided? The following section explores concrete policy preferences.

IMMIGRATION SWAYS VOTES

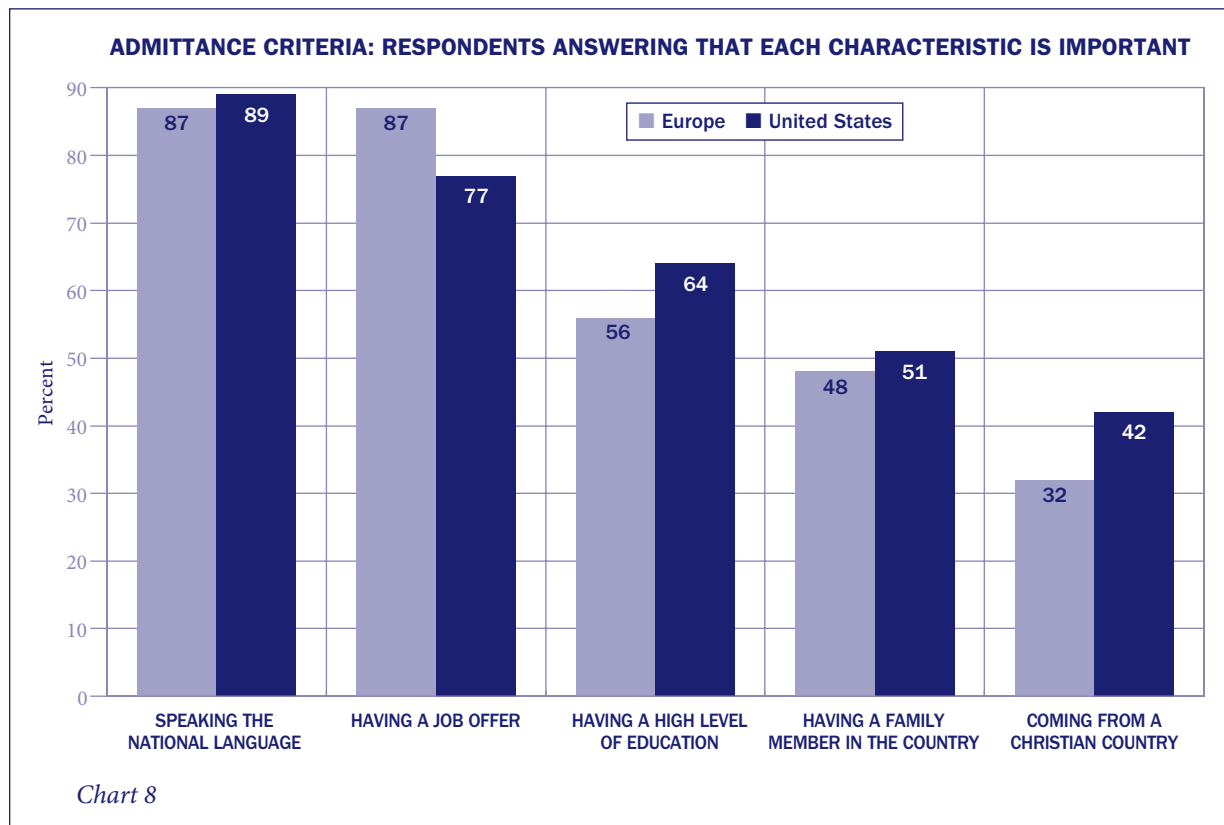
When asked whether political parties' agendas on immigration would influence their vote in the next election,

Europeans (50%) and Americans (56%) answered "yes."

In the United Kingdom, immigration seemed to have particular political salience, with 61% stating that it would influence their vote "a little" or even "a lot." Of the surveyed countries, respondents in Poland attached the least amount of electoral importance to immigration.

U.S. AND EUROPE AGREE: JOB AND LANGUAGE SKILLS ARE IMPORTANT FOR ADMITTANCE

In an era when points-based immigration systems are frequently discussed, respondents were asked to rate a number of characteristics for potential immigrants. They were not asked to rank the criteria, but rather to attribute importance to each



characteristic separately. An overall majority across the Atlantic underlined the importance of having a job offer before being admitted to the country (87% in Europe and 77% in the United States). Another criterion for admittance deemed equally important was knowledge of the national language (87% in Europe and 89% in the United States). (See Chart 8)

EUROPEANS ARE LESS CONCERNED WITH IMMIGRANTS’ EDUCATION LEVEL

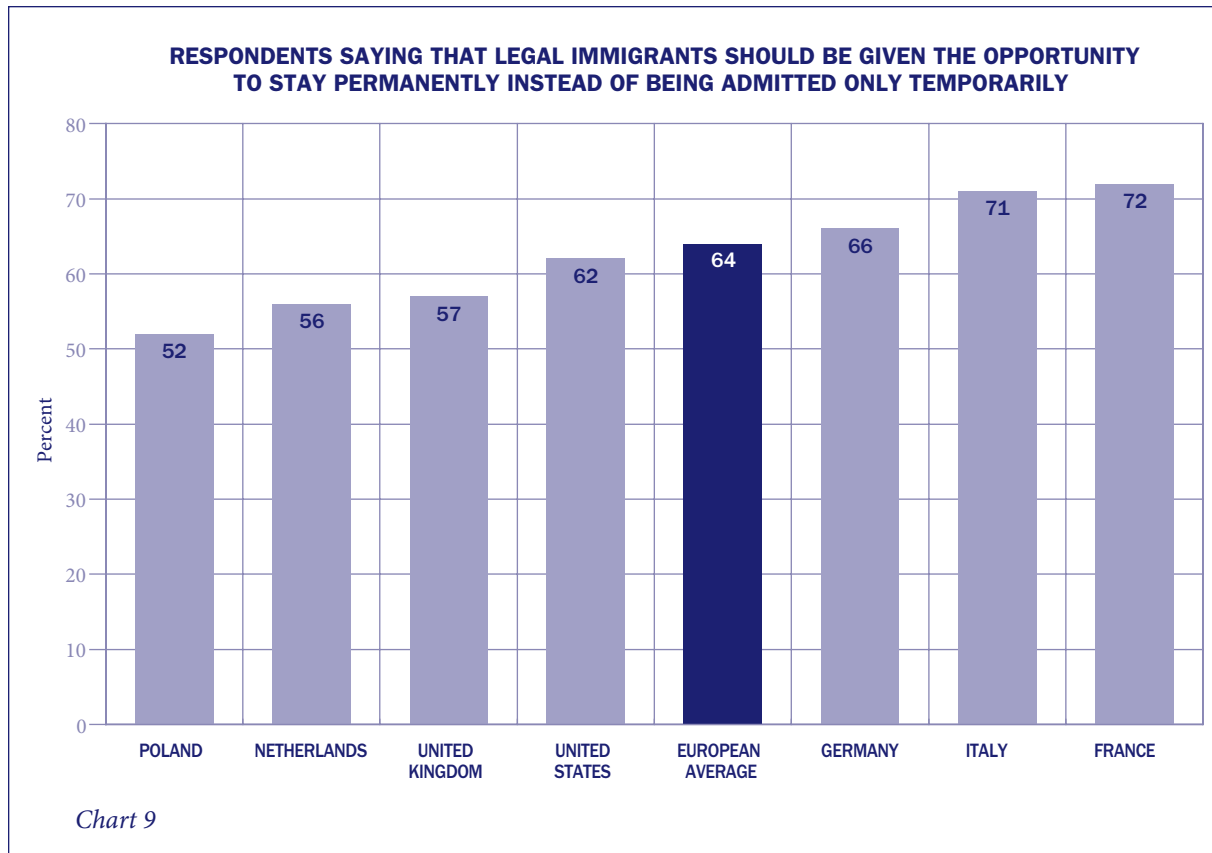
A high level of education, another admittance criterion, resonated more in the United States than in Europe. A clear majority of 64% of U.S. respondents thought it is important. In Europe, respondents in Poland, the Netherlands and Italy were split on the issue, but 69% in both Germany and the United Kingdom agreed that education is important. The French, with only 37%, were the only respondents who dismissed high education levels as important admittance criteria. (See Chart 8)

CHRISTIAN COUNTRY ORIGINS AND HAVING A RELATIVE IN THE COUNTRY IS NOT AS IMPORTANT

When asked to consider admittance criteria, respondents in all countries said it is not important for immigrants to come from a country with a Christian heritage. Only 32% of Europeans and a slightly higher 42% of Americans considered it important. Europeans and Americans were split on the issue of family reunification, with 48% and 51%, respectively, saying that it is important for new immigrants to already have a family member in the country. (See Chart 8)

TEMPORARY LABOR SCHEMES ARE NOT SUPPORTED IN ANY COUNTRY

While policymakers are increasingly proposing policies to admit workers on a temporary basis, support for these policies among the public was not found in this survey. Only 26% in Europe and 27% in the United States thought that legal immigrants should be admitted temporarily and then be required to return to their country of origin. In fact, 64% in Europe and 62% in the United States favored giving legal immigrants the opportunity to stay permanently. (See Chart 9)



THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE NETHERLANDS ARE SKEPTICAL OF EU MIGRATION MANAGEMENT

Some common immigration policies, such as asylum regulation, already exist at the EU level, but national governments continue to have jurisdiction over most migration-related issues. The French, German, and Italian publics were ready to cede sovereignty to the European Union to formulate common immigration policies (58%, 62%, and 68%, respectively). By contrast, only 28% of Britons would like to see the European Union set immigration policy. The Netherlands and Poland were split on the issue, with 47% and 40%, respectively, leaning toward EU governance on immigration policy. (See Chart 10)

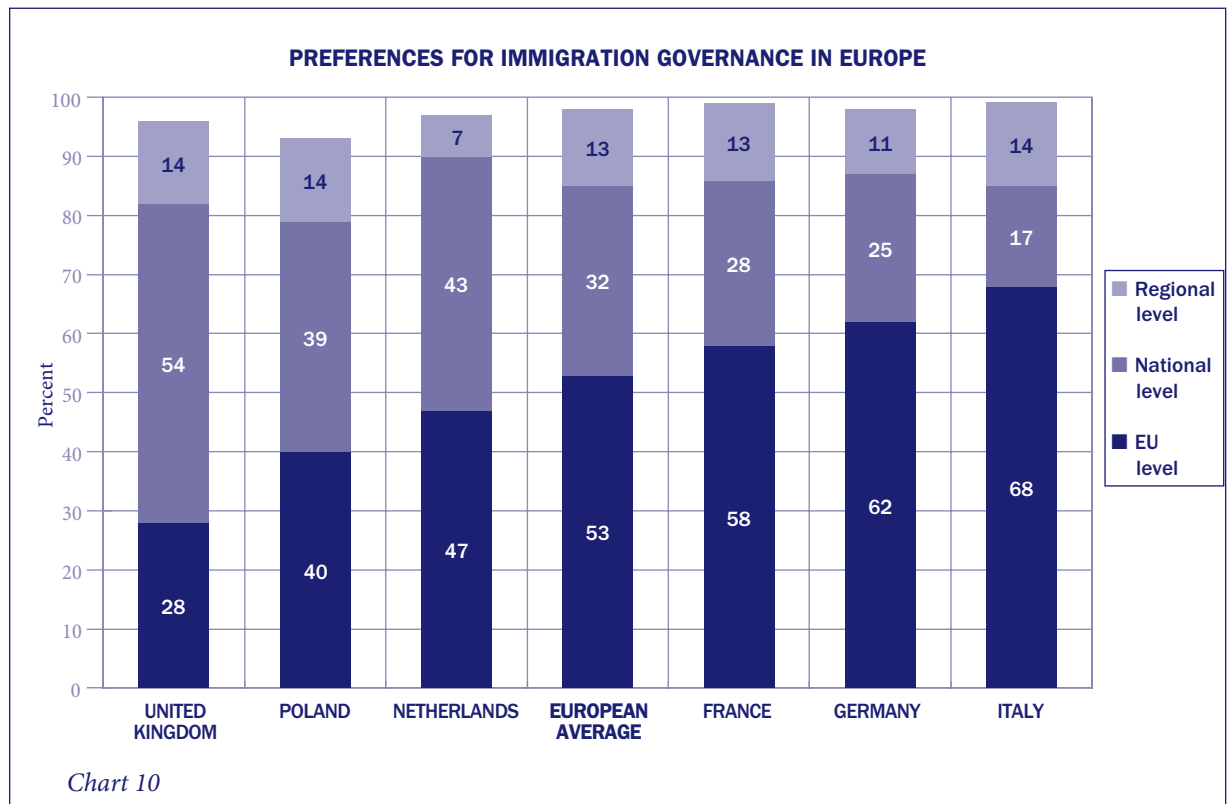
THE AMERICAN PUBLIC WANTS THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO LEAD ON IMMIGRATION POLICY

Though the U.S. Congress failed to pass comprehensive immigration reform in the summer of 2007, 77% of Americans still looked to the national government to make

decisions about immigration policy. Only 17% of U.S. respondents said that they favor decision-making by state and local authorities on this issue.

MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES SUPPORT COOPERATION WITH COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

A solid majority of 67% of Europeans supported increasing development aid to reduce illegal immigration while 30% opposed it. In the United States, 45% supported this measure and slightly more, 49%, opposed it. The high average for Europe, however, was driven mainly by the strong support in France (85%) and Italy (86%), countries that border the Mediterranean Sea. Support in other European countries was much lower and more similar to U.S. public opinion on this question. France and Italy were also much more in favor of managing migration in cooperation with source countries, and indeed some bilateral agreements between Mediterranean destination and sending countries have already been put in place. (See Chart 11)



SUPPORT FOR INCREASING DEVELOPMENT AID TO COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN WHOSE CITIZENS IMMIGRATE ILLEGALLY

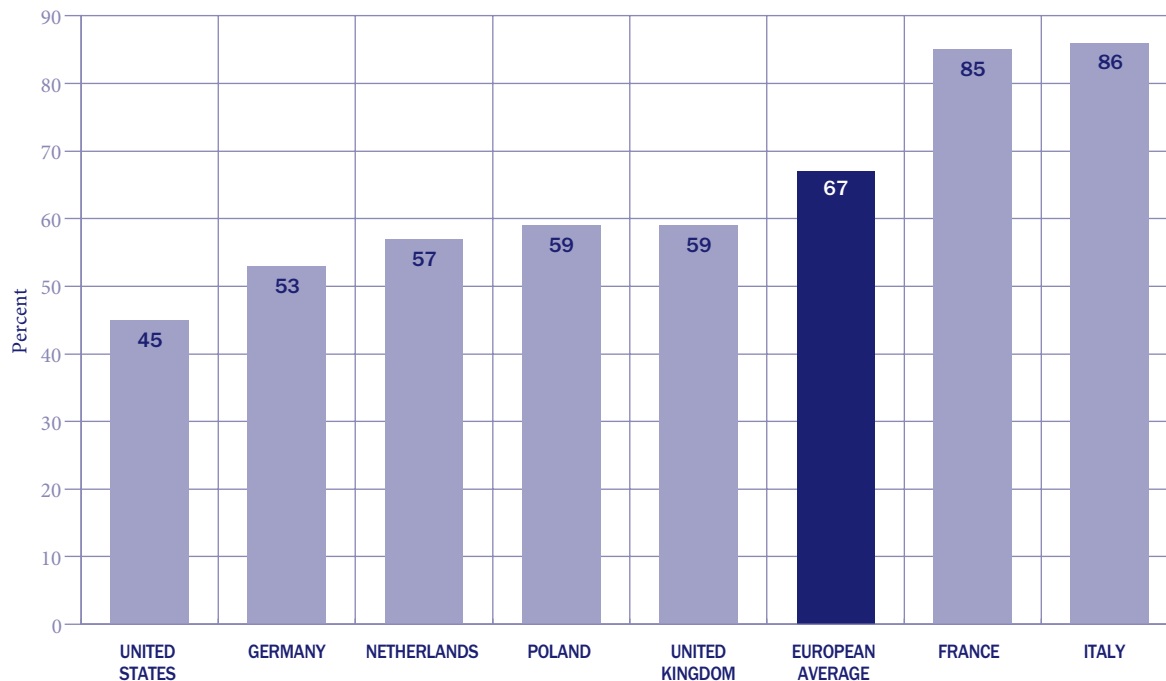


Chart 11

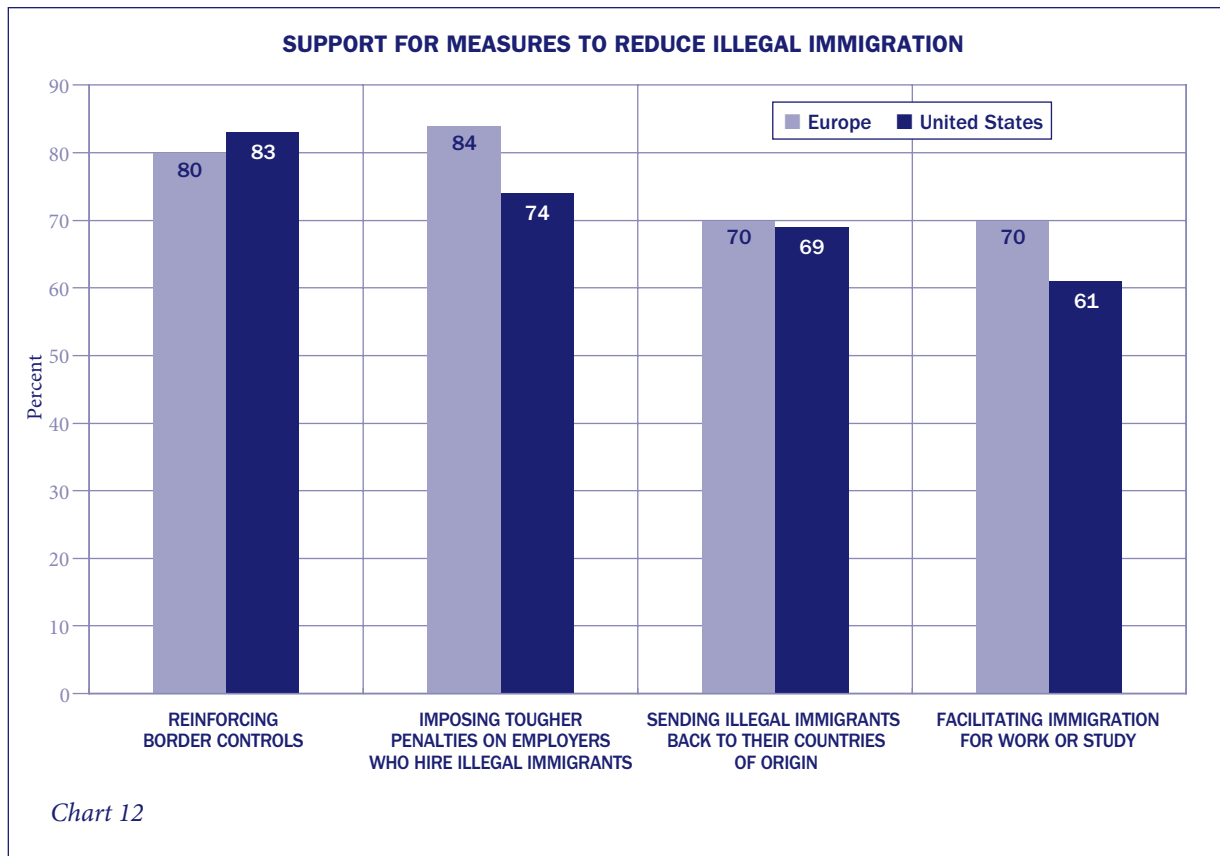
COOPERATION WITH SENDING COUNTRIES GETS CLEAR “NO” IN THE U.S., MIXED REVIEWS IN EUROPE

A majority of Americans (56%) were in favor of the United States managing immigration on its own. This sentiment is shared by Democrats and Republicans alike. Indeed, only 32% in the United States thought that migration should be managed in cooperation with immigrants’ countries of origin. In Europe, a majority (57%) supported joint management with source countries, and only 40% favored management of immigration by their country alone. The higher support for joint management was driven mainly by the EU border countries of France (74%), Italy (73%), and Poland (58%), while Germany was split on the issue, with 50% for joint management and 48% against. The United Kingdom and the Netherlands were the outliers in the surveyed European countries, as they clearly

favored national sovereignty on the management of migration (54% in the U.K. and 74% in the Netherlands favored a unilateral approach).

POLICIES TO REDUCE ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

Respondents in all countries surveyed strongly supported every measure proposed to reduce illegal immigration. In both the United States and Europe, large numbers favored reinforcing border controls (83% and 80%, respectively), imposing tougher penalties on employers who hire illegal immigrants (74% and 84%), and sending illegal immigrants back to their countries of origin (69% and 70%). At the same time, though, publics favored proactive policies, such as making it easier for immigrants to legally enter the country to work and study (61% in the United States and 70% in Europe). (See Chart 12)



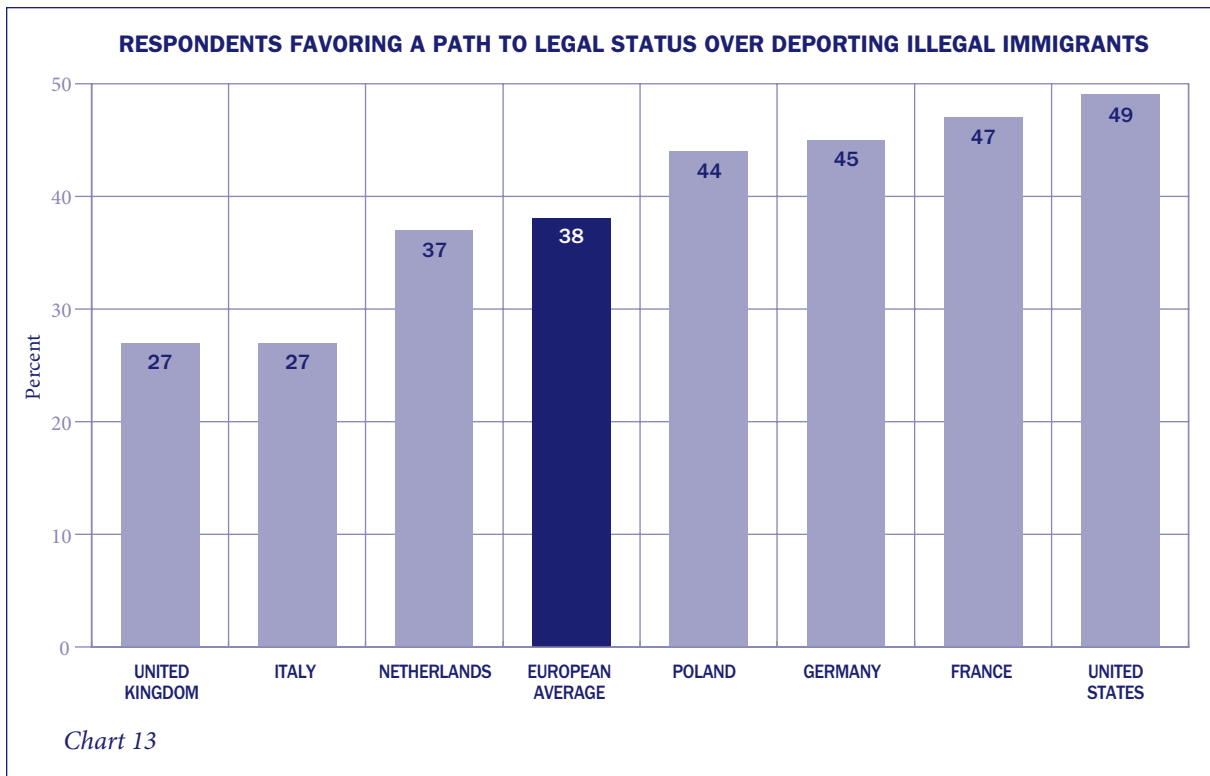
U.K. AND ITALY FAVOR DEPORTING ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS, U.S. IS SPLIT

To deal with illegal immigrants already in the country, respondents were asked to choose between two main policy options—deportation and legalization. A plurality in Europe favored requiring illegal immigrants to return to their country of origin (48%), while U.S. respondents showed a slight preference for legalization (49% favored legalization, 43% favored return). A closer look at the figures in Europe showed that the support for deportation is driven by high numbers in the United Kingdom (64%) and Italy (58%). In contrast, a plurality (47%) in France favored legalization for illegal immigrants. (See Chart 13)

SUPPORT FOR LEGALIZATION LINKED TO POLITICAL AFFILIATION, CONTACT WITH IMMIGRANTS

In both the United States and Europe, there was a clear left-right divide on support for legalization for illegal immigrants. U.S. Democrats and Europeans on the left favored legalization, while U.S. Republicans and Europeans on the right favored the return of illegal immigrants to their home country.

Of U.S. respondents with friends or colleagues from another country, 54% preferred legalization and 37% supported deportation. In Europe, those with personal or professional contact with immigrants were split, with 44% in support of return and 43% favoring legalization. Of Europeans with no contact with immigrants, 52% were in favor of return and 33% of legalization.



COUNTRY PROFILE: ITALY

A STRICT GATEKEEPER ON ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

Among all countries surveyed, Italians were the most sensitive to illegal immigration—68% believed that most immigrants are in their country illegally, a full 15 percentage points higher than any other country surveyed. They were also the most likely to support various measures to combat illegal migration flows; 91% of Italians supported reinforcing border controls, and 93% supported imposing tougher penalties on employers who hire undocumented workers. These numbers are well above the average level of support for those policies across Europe.

As a country with a long, porous Mediterranean border, Italy adopted national policies similar to those of Spain and Greece in the 1980s and 1990s, namely

offering periodic legalizations to undocumented immigrants already within its borders. Italy enacted four such amnesties, the first in 1986 and the last in 1998. At the time, the acts were not met with any significant domestic backlash, but the current political atmosphere in Italy and in Europe suggests that future legalizations are highly unlikely. Indeed, a majority of Italians, 58%, favored return requirements for the illegal immigrant population, and only 27% favored another legalization measure.

IMMIGRATION STATISTICS

Immigrant population in Italy	1,446,700
Immigrant share of overall population	2.5%
Source: OECD International Migration Outlook 2008, data for 2001. Other sources estimate the current immigrant share of the population to be closer to 6%.	



TRANSATLANTIC TRENDS

Immigration

Section Three: Views of Integration Policies

The integration of immigrants has been described as a two-way street, with the host society and immigrants both being called upon to contribute to the integration process. The United States has historically been known as an integration model without official government regulations, while many European countries have started to develop active integration policies on the national level.

In this survey, respondents were asked to what extent they support or oppose national integration policies designed to integrate legal immigrants and their families. Across the board, all of the proposed policies are supported in all countries surveyed. However, there are variations in the extent to which countries strongly support or strongly oppose certain policies.

STRONG SUPPORT FOR LANGUAGE CLASSES, BANNING DISCRIMINATION, TEACHING MUTUAL RESPECT

Across the board, respondents were very much in favor of several integration policies. In Europe and the United States, “banning the discrimination against legal immigrants in the labor market” was supported by 81% and 72%; 85% and 88%, respectively, supported “offering free language courses;” and overwhelming averages of 94% and 88% supported “promoting the teaching of mutual respect in schools.”

OVERALL SUPPORT, MINORITY OPPOSITION TO POLITICAL PARTICIPATION, SOCIAL BENEFITS FOR IMMIGRANTS

Majorities in Europe and the United States supported a policy of guaranteeing that legal immigrants “have the same rights to political participation as the country’s citizens” (58% in Europe and 59% in the United States). Germans, however, were split, with 48% supporting and 50% opposing the policy. A close look at the U.S. opposition (37% overall) to granting political participation to immigrants revealed that over a quarter, or 27%, “strongly oppose” the measure. Nearly the same can be said for the United Kingdom, where the measure found overall support, but 22% of the British public said they “strongly oppose” it. (See Chart 14)

A similar trend in the United States and the United Kingdom appeared when respondents were asked whether immigrants should have access to the same social benefits as national citizens. While European and U.S. public opinion again supported this measure (73% in Europe and 63% in the United States), the portion of Americans who opposed it (34%) included a high number of “strongly oppose” (24%). The same pattern held true for the United Kingdom, where 57% supported access to the same social benefits as national citizens, but 26% “strongly oppose” the policy. Elsewhere in Europe, the highest support overall for granting social benefits was found in Italy (90%), the Netherlands (83%), and France (81%). (See Chart 15)

POLICY SUPPORT/OPPOSITION: GIVING LEGAL IMMIGRANTS THE SAME RIGHTS TO POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AS NATIONAL CITIZENS

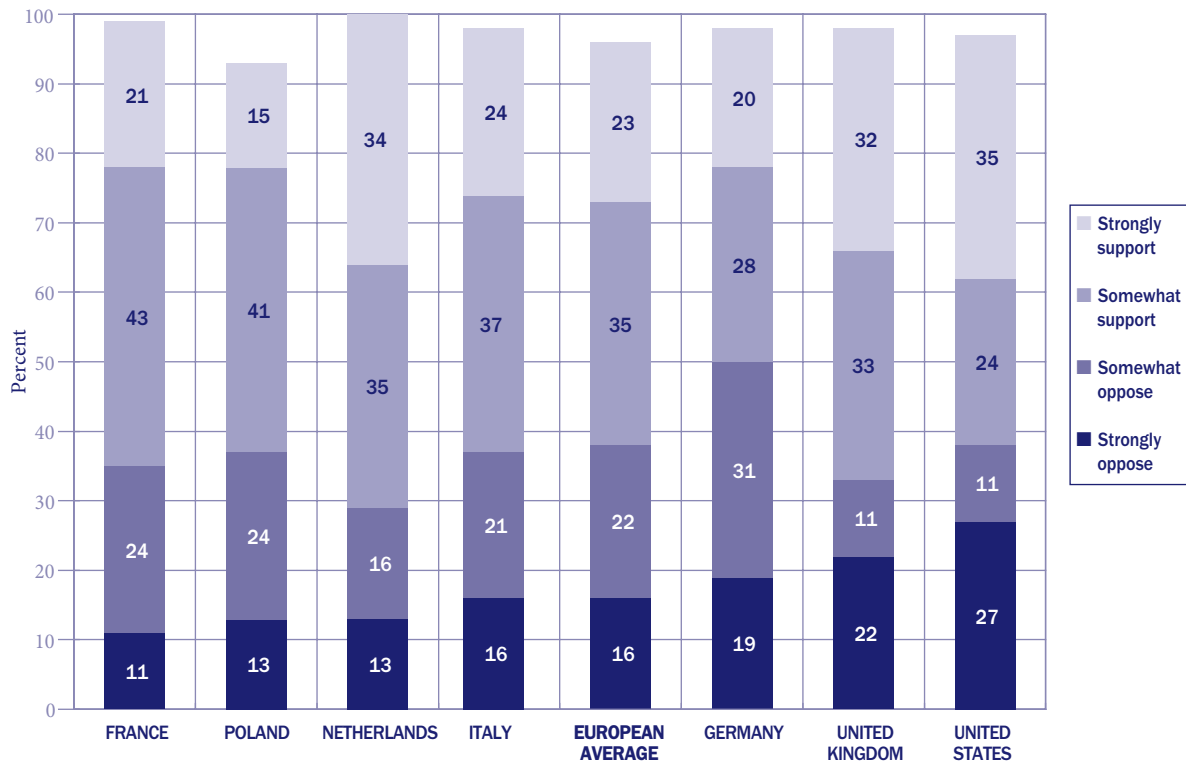


Chart 14

POLICY SUPPORT/OPPOSITION: LEGAL IMMIGRANTS SHOULD HAVE ACCESS TO THE SAME SOCIAL BENEFITS AS NATIONAL CITIZENS

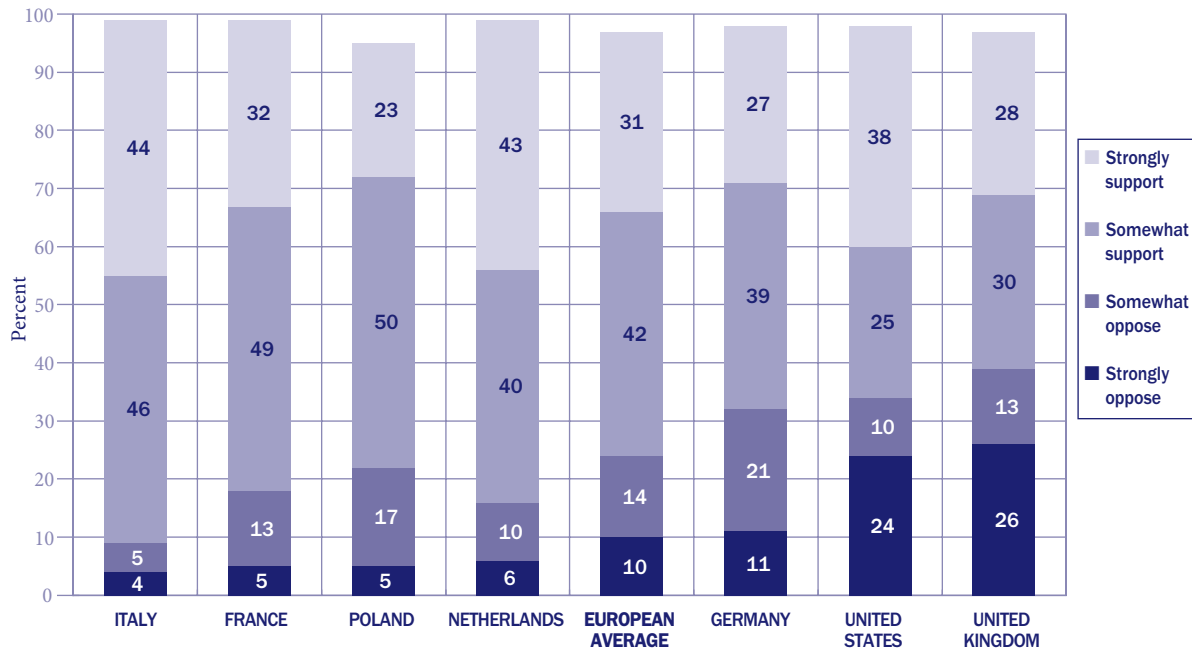


Chart 15

COUNTRY PROFILE: THE NETHERLANDS

DUTCH PUBLIC BACKS IMMIGRANT VOTING RIGHTS IN LOCAL MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

When asked whether legal immigrants should be able to vote in local municipal elections, 76% of the Dutch public were in support. This figure is the highest percentage in all countries surveyed—the average support rate was 63% in Europe and 59% in the United States. The approval was high even among those Dutch respondents who thought that there were too many immigrants in the country (67%).

The Netherlands was among the first countries in Europe to allow immigrants to vote in local elections, and the country has a reputation for broad tolerance toward other cultures and religions. While some see local voting rights as a watered-down version of

citizenship, the Netherlands' policy was built on the philosophy that it is a first and necessary step toward community integration. In 1986, the country granted immigrants who had resided in the country for at least five years local voting rights. However, in the past decade the model of "Dutch multiculturalism" has been challenged, and the Netherlands has introduced several stricter immigration and integration laws since 1998.

IMMIGRATION STATISTICS

Immigrant population in the Netherlands	1,732,400
Immigrant share of overall population	10.6%
Source: OECD International Migration Outlook 2008, data for 2006	



TRANSATLANTIC TRENDS

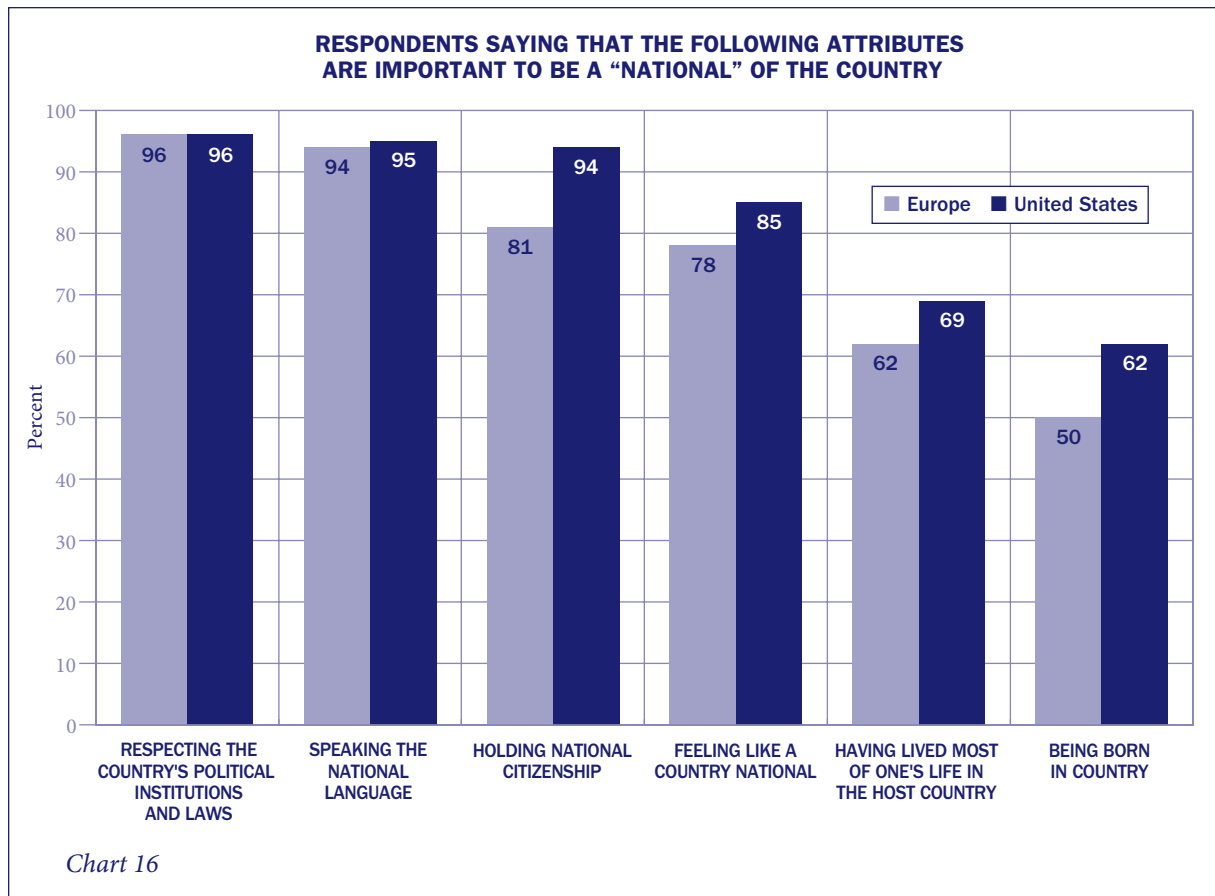
Immigration

Section Four: Perceptions of National Identity

In increasingly diverse societies, the development of a common national identity is often considered an important step on the path to social cohesiveness. Citizenship policies range from the civic concept of *jus soli* (anyone born in the country is considered a national) to the ethnic concept of *jus sanguinis* (anyone whose parents and/or ancestors are nationals is considered a national). The legal requirements to become a citizen have recently been revised in a number of countries.

KNOWING THE LANGUAGE AND RESPECTING NATIONAL LAWS ARE MOST IMPORTANT

In all countries surveyed, the largest majorities considered knowledge of the national language and respect for “political institutions and laws” important attributes for national identity. However, there was also widespread agreement on both sides of the Atlantic that it is also important to develop feelings of nationality, e.g. to “feel” American. (See Chart 16)



AMERICANS CONNECT CITIZENSHIP TO NATIONALITY MORE THAN EUROPEANS

On the issue of whether or not citizenship is important to one’s national identity, Europeans and Americans diverged slightly, with 95% of U.S. respondents and 81% of European respondents agreeing. A more striking difference surfaced when one compared those Americans and Europeans who responded that they feel citizenship is “very important” to national identity, with 79% of Americans and only 48% of Europeans answering as such. For Americans, there was a much more intense connection between citizenship and national identity. (See Chart 17)

DIVERGENCE ON IMPORTANCE OF BEING BORN OR LIVING FOR SIGNIFICANT TIME IN-COUNTRY

Solid majorities in the United Kingdom (65%), the United States (62%), Italy (61%), and Poland (69%) felt that being born in the country is important for national identity. In contrast, 62% of French, 63% of Germans, and 58% of Dutch disagreed.

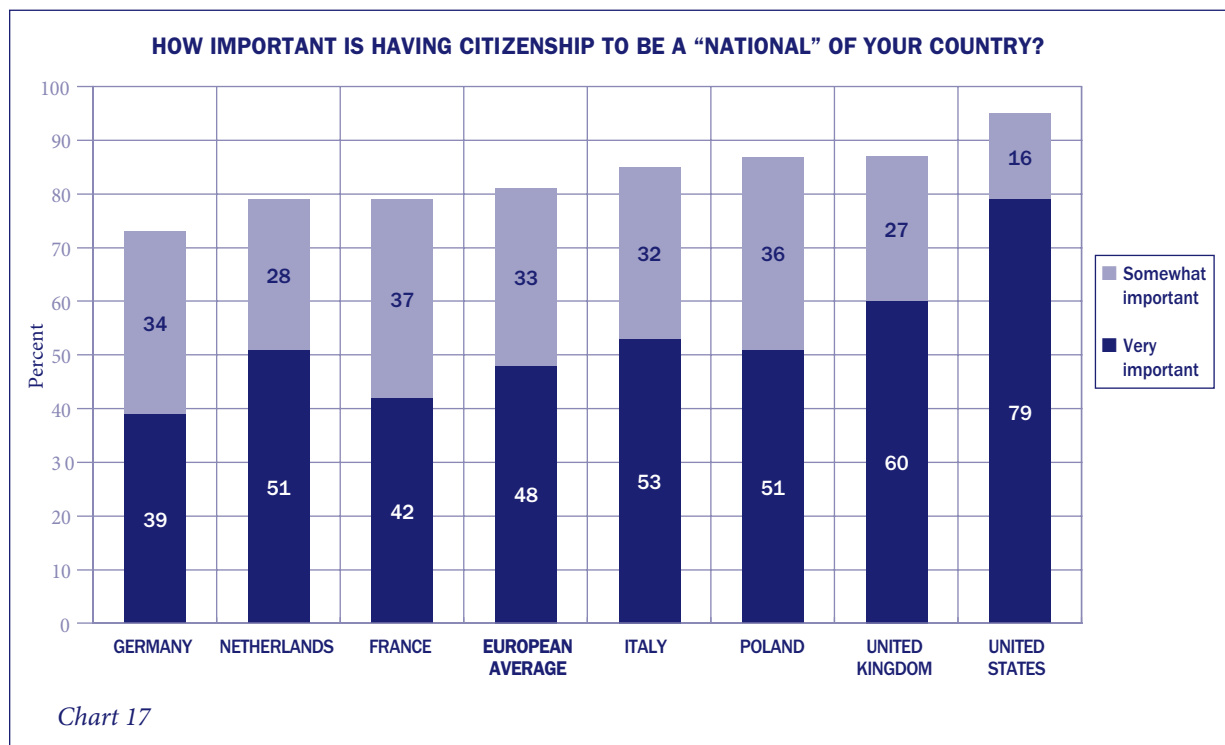
Respondents in the United States, the United Kingdom, Italy, and Poland attributed the greatest importance to being born in the country and were also the most likely to answer that “having lived in the country for most of one’s life” is important; these countries all had strong majorities

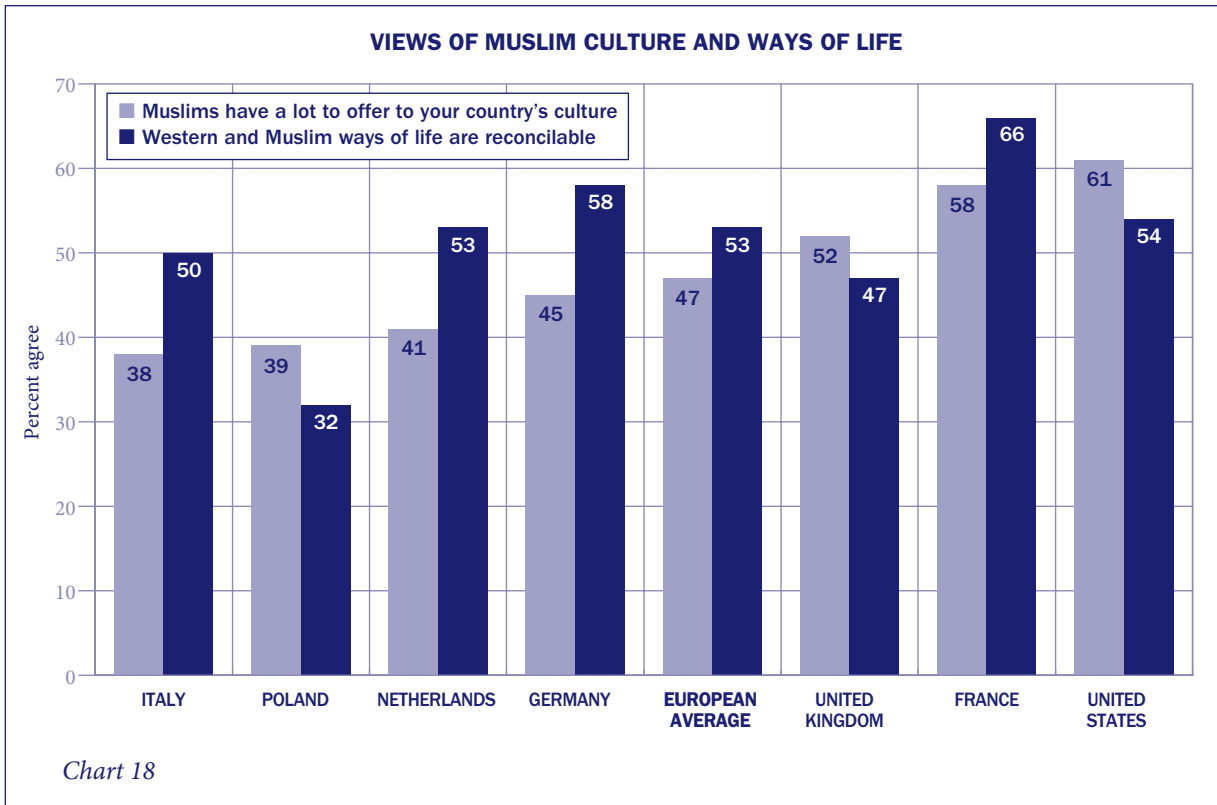
of around 70% answering that it is important. With smaller majorities, 57% of the French and 53% of the Dutch agreed that living in the country for most of one’s life is important, while Germans were split 49% to 50% as to whether it is important or not.

VIEWS ABOUT MUSLIM CULTURE ARE NUANCED IN ALL COUNTRIES

Respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the following two statements: “Muslim immigrants have a lot to offer your country’s culture,” and “Western European (or American) and Muslim ways of life are irreconcilable.” (See Chart 18)

Examining the answers to *both* questions, a nuanced perception of Muslim immigrants emerges. Overall, majorities of American and French respondents were the most optimistic about the cultural influence of Muslim immigrants and the reconcilability of Western and Muslim ways of life. A majority (52%) in the United Kingdom also thought that Muslims have a lot to offer British culture. German, Dutch, and Italian responses were some of the most complex; in each of those countries, it was not uncommon for a respondent to a) agree that Muslims have a lot to offer their culture, but b) indicate that their ways of life are irreconcilable.





COUNTRY PROFILE: GERMANY

BIRTH IN GERMANY, GERMAN CITIZENSHIP, AND “FEELING GERMAN” ARE NOT AS IMPORTANT TO “BEING GERMAN”

Of all countries surveyed, Germans found it least important for national identity that someone be born in the country (36% answering “somewhat important” or “very important”), has lived there for most of one’s life (49%), or has German citizenship (73%, the lowest number in Europe). Germans also did not think that “feeling German” matters for national identity: only 61% thought it was important in Germany, a full 18 percentage points lower than any other country.

Since the 1950s, Germany has taken in large numbers of migrants, including labor migrants and their family members, ethnic German migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees. However, a modernized nationality law

and comprehensive legal regulations for immigration and integration were only enacted recently. As such, second-generation migrants were not granted German citizenship until the end of the 1990s. Thus, despite being born in the country, second-generation immigrants such as those of Turkish descent would identify themselves as Turkish rather than German. Responses by the German public in this survey about what is important for national identity reflected less of a connection between “being German” and “feeling German.”

IMMIGRATION STATISTICS

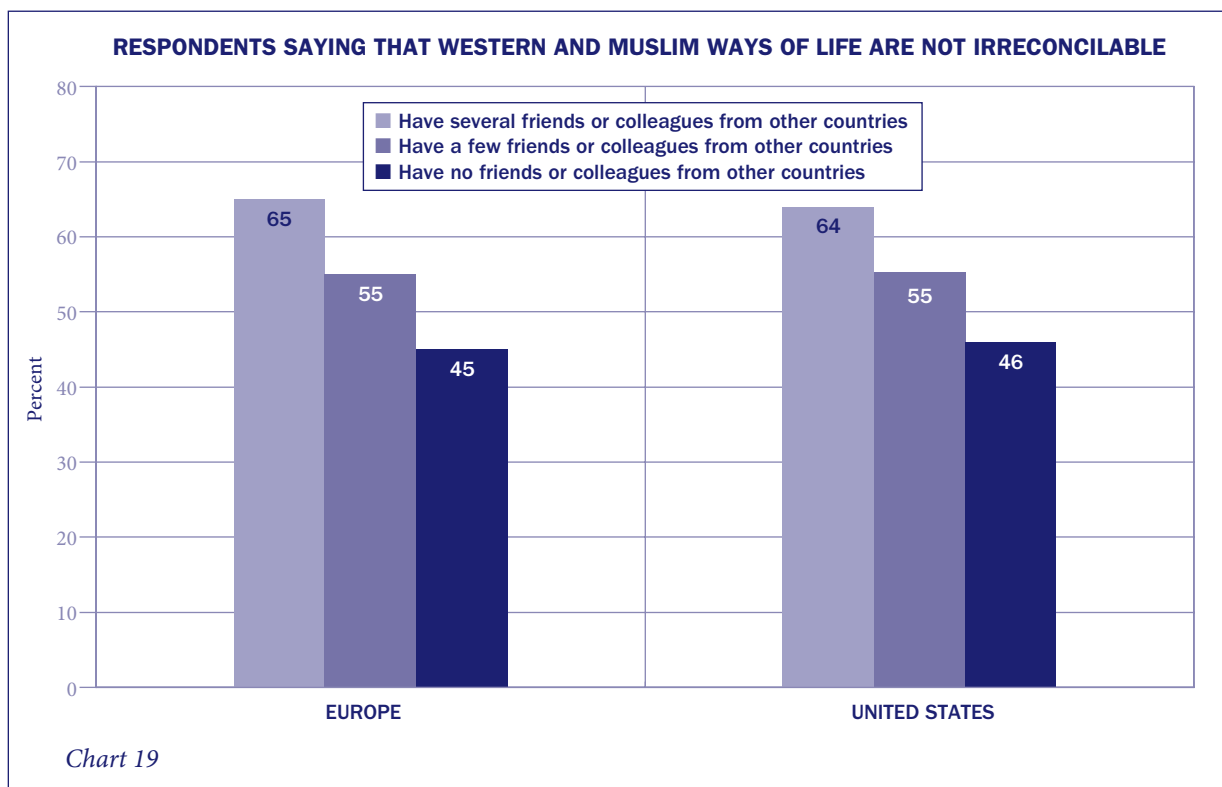
Immigrant population in Germany	10,620,800
Immigrant share of overall population	12.9%
Source: OECD International Migration Outlook 2008, data for 2003	

AMERICANS AND EUROPEANS AGREE THAT MUSLIM IMMIGRANTS WANT TO INTEGRATE

A strong majority of Americans (60%) and a plurality of Europeans (47%) agreed that Muslims coming to their countries want to integrate. However, Europeans were aware that integration has not been easy, especially for young, often second-generation Muslims. Forty-nine percent of Europeans thought that Muslim youth are frustrated by their economic situation. The strongest examples of this view were in France (64%) and Germany (60%).

SOCIAL CONTACT WITH IMMIGRANTS AFFECTS ATTITUDES TOWARDS MUSLIMS

In all countries surveyed, except Poland (see Country Profile box), a majority of respondents had friends or colleagues who came from other countries. Depending on the frequency of their social contacts with immigrants, people entertained different views regarding the compatibility of Muslim and Western cultures. On both sides of the Atlantic, those who have several friends who come from other countries tended to be more optimistic about the reconcilability of cultures. (See Chart 19)



COUNTRY PROFILE: POLAND

COUNTRY IN TRANSITION

Poland's current emigration and immigration trends reveal a country in transition. Indeed, 74% of Poles reported having no immigrant friends or colleagues who had come to Poland to live permanently (the average in was 44% in Europe and 37% in the United States). This survey's frequency of "don't know" responses suggests that many Poles do not have strong or well-developed opinions about migration, especially about specific topics such as Muslim integration or statements about immigrants more generally. For example, 29% of Polish respondents didn't know if immigrants are hard workers.

Throughout the 20th century, Poland was a net emigration country. Its entry into the European Union in 2004 and its resulting economic growth both facilitated

the movement of Poles throughout Europe and made Poland more attractive for third country nationals. The country serves as a transit country for migrants from Eastern Europe and has become a destination country for immigrants from China, Vietnam, Armenia, and neighboring-country nationals such as Ukrainians, Belarusians, and Russians. Overall, the results from this survey can serve as a benchmark for ongoing opinion research on migration in Poland.

IMMIGRATION STATISTICS

Immigrant population in Poland	776,200
Immigrant share of overall population	1.6%
Source: OECD International Migration Outlook 2008, data for 2002	



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Section Five: Conclusion

Transatlantic Trends: Immigration explores public opinion on a host of migration-related issues, but it also acted as a modest opinion experiment in and of itself. The survey also gauged how opinion about immigration would change after respondents had been asked about the issue over the course of their interview: some respondents were asked to define immigration as “more of a problem” or “more of an opportunity” at the beginning of the survey; some were asked the same question at the end; a third group was asked the question twice—once at the beginning and once at the end. The result is a moderate shift toward defining immigration as “more of an opportunity” by the end of the survey.

On average, the percentage of people saying that immigration was “more of an opportunity” at the end of the survey was seven percentage points higher than when they were asked at the beginning. The changes were most striking in the Netherlands, where the “opportunity” responses rose 11 percentage points and in Germany, where the figure rose 14 percentage points (for a total of 52%). The experience of talking about immigration issues during the survey interview therefore had an affect on respondents’ opinions.

Overall, Americans and Europeans agreed on many topics—they anticipated cultural improvements with increased migration flows, and they did not associate immigration with terrorism. Respondents in all countries were in favor of permanent, not temporary, migration programs for newcomers, and people on both sides of the Atlantic wanted their governments to act to stem illegal immigration.

Transatlantic and cross-country differences do emerge, however, especially in the types of concerns associated with ongoing migration. With the exception of the French, continental Europeans were worried about the effect that immigrants will have on crime levels, whereas Americans

and Britons expressed tangible concerns about their labor markets and tax schedules.

Questions about what makes someone American, British, French, German, Dutch, Italian, or Polish revealed the complex nature of national identity issues. Respondents in all countries believed that knowing the national language and respecting political institutions and laws are important to embody a national identity, but they had differing views on how important birth, citizenship status, and “national feeling” are.

Several factors were seen to affect perception of immigration on both sides of the Atlantic: education, age, and political preference were all powerful predictors of opinion toward immigrants and immigration policy. Another important factor was contact with immigrants in personal and professional environments. For example, respondents claiming to have a friend or colleague who has come to their country to live permanently were less skeptical of Muslim culture in relation to their own.

Against the backdrop of changing demographic and financial landscapes, policymakers in both Europe and the United States will continue to grapple with immigration issues in the years to come. *Transatlantic Trends: Immigration* shows, however, that publics in the countries surveyed do not have clear conceptions of migration as either a “problem” or an “opportunity.” Instead, skepticism about migration’s effects is mixed with optimism, and policy preferences on issues such as admittance criteria, illegal immigration, temporary worker programs, and integration policy, are interrelated and complex. Going forward, policymakers should look to the nuanced attitudes of their constituents as they formulate and modify national immigration and integration policies.

METHODOLOGY

TNS Opinion was commissioned to conduct the survey using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews in all countries except Poland, where lower telephone penetration necessitated the use of face-to-face interviews. In each country, a random sample of approximately 1,000 men and women, 18 years of age and older, was interviewed. Interviews were conducted between August 29, 2008, and September 29, 2008.

For results based on the national samples in each of the seven countries surveyed, one can say with 95% confidence that the margin of error attributable to sampling and other random effects is plus or minus 3.1 percentage points. For results based on the total European sample (n=6002), the margin of error is plus or minus 1.3 percentage points. The average response rate for all seven countries surveyed was 21%.

The results for each country are weighted according to the following sociodemographic criteria: age, gender, region, and level of education within each country. The results for “Europe” are also weighted according to each country’s population size relative to the total population of the six European countries surveyed.

When processing is complete, data from the survey are deposited with the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research at the University of Michigan (ICPSR) and are available to scholars and other interested parties. For more information, please consult the ICPSR catalog at www.icpsr.umich.edu.



TRANSATLANTIC TRENDS

www.transatlantictrends.org

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