



## ABSTRACT WORKING PAPER 3.19

### SOCIAL CAPITAL, NATIONAL VALUES AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS IMMIGRANTS: EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION AND NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

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This study first maps the basic socio-economic characteristics of immigrant population in Europe, followed by the analysis of the importance of national values and attitudes towards immigrants comparatively in three country groups – old EU members (WE), new member states (NMS) since 2004 and neighbouring countries (NC). Main focus of the analysis is on the relationship between immigration attitudes and social capital. Empirical analysis is based on EVS 4<sup>th</sup> wave data. The share of immigrants is highest in WE and this has led also to more negative attitudes towards them. Although most of the WE immigrants are in working age and their employment rate is higher than among natives, local people in this region are less afraid that immigrants take away their jobs as compared to NMS and NC respondents. Immigrants in WE and NC subsamples reported also higher income and educational levels as compared to natives, but at the same time they have less social capital (with some exceptions regarding trust measures). Regarding immigration attitudes, it can be generalised that native people in WE worry more about the possible threats to economic and social welfare as a result of immigration, while natives in NC worry more about threats to local culture and customs. Finally, correlation analysis provided several robust results: 1) respondents having more social capital are less afraid of the possible negative effects of immigration on host country's economic and social life, 2) higher levels of social capital associate with higher importance attached to respect host country's political institutions and to speak local language, and 3) stronger national values are related to lower general trust and less formal networks, but with more institutional trust and stronger social norms.