THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POLITICAL INTEREST AND OUT-GROUP ATTITUDES

by
ŞEVVAL ÖZKAYMAK

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ABSTRACT

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ŞEVVAL ÖZKAYMAK

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Keywords: Political Interest, Political Knowledge, Political Sophistication, Media Freedom, Out-Group Attitudes

This thesis investigates the effect of political interest on out-group attitudes as conditioned by media. Another topic this thesis examines is whether political interest can be taken as a proxy for political sophistication. The literature on the issue argues that more educated individuals from higher socio-economic backgrounds are more positive toward an out-group and biased media is detrimental to healthy inter-group relations. The analyses provide support for the main hypothesis that politically interested individuals are more positive towards immigrants and minority members. Political knowledge and political sophistication, taken as a combination of political interest, knowledge, and education, show similar effects. Furthermore, the findings suggest that the media environment mediates this relationship. When there is high media freedom, political sophistication has a positive effect, and when there is low media freedom this effect becomes negative. Furthermore, this thesis also aims to examine how individuals form their attitudes towards out-group members in restricted media environments and Turkey is an example of such a case due to commercialization, tabloidization, and press-party parallelism in its media environment. The empirical analyses suggest that political interest or knowledge alone does not affect Turkish citizens' attitudes towards out-group members. However, when media consumption is taken as a moderator, the analyses show that individuals who are sophisticated and who consume high levels of media have more positive attitudes towards out-group members. Another finding of this thesis is that retrospective economic evaluations and satisfaction with democracy are also important determinants of out-group attitudes.

ÖZET

SİYASAL İLGİ VE GRUP DIŞI TUTUMLAR ARASINDAKİ İLİŞKİ

ŞEVVAL ÖZKAYMAK

UYUŞMAZLIK ANALİZİ VE ÇÖZÜMÜ YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ, TEMMUZ 2021

Tez Danışmanı: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Mert Moral

Anahtar Kelimeler: Siyasal İlgi, Siyasal Bilgi, Siyasal Sofistikasyon, Medya Özgürlüğü, Dış Grup Tutumları

Bu tez, medya tarafından koşullandırıldığı şekliyle siyasi ilginin grup dışı tutumlar üzerindeki etkisini araştırmaktadır. Bu tezin bir diğer konusu da siyasi ilginin siyasi sofistikasyonun bir ölçütü olarak alınıp alınamayacağıdır. Bu konudaki literatür, yüksek sosyo-ekonomik tabaka mensubu daha eğitimli bireylerin dış gruplara karşı daha olumlu olduğunu ve önyargılı medyanın sağlıklı gruplar arası ilişkilere zarar verdiğini savunmaktadır. Ampirik analizler, siyasetle ilgilenen bireylerin göçmenlere ve azınlık üyelerine karşı daha olumlu olduğu ana hipotezini desteklemektedir. Siyasal ilgi, bilgi ve eğitim olarak ele alınan siyasal bilgi ve siyasal sofistiklik benzer etkiler göstermektedir. Ayrıca, bulgular medya ortamının bu ilişkiye aracılık ettiğini göstermektedir. Medya özgürlüğünün yüksek olduğu durumlarda, politik gelişmişliğin olumlu bir etkisi vardır ve medya özgürlüğünün düşük olduğu durumlarda bu etki olumsuza dönmektedir. Ayrıca, bu tez sınırlı medya ortamlarında bireylerin grup dışı üyelere yönelik tutumlarını nasıl şekillendirdiğini de incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Türkiye'de medyanın ticarileşme, magazinleşme ve basın-parti paralelliği nedeniyle böyle bir duruma örnek teşkil etmektedir. Ampirik analizler, siyasi ilginin veya bilginin tek başına Türk vatandaşlarının dış gruplara yönelik tutumlarını etkilemediğini göstermektedir. Ancak medya tüketimi moderatör olarak alındığında, analizler hem sofistike hem de yüksek düzeyde medya tüketen bireylerin grup dışı üyelere karşı daha olumlu tutumlara sahip olduğunu göstermektedir. Bu tezin bir diğer bulgusu da, geriye dönük ekonomik değerlendirmeler ve demokrasiden duyulan memnuniyetin de grup dışı kişilere dair tutumların önemli belirleyicileri olduğudur.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To my little brother Atlas who waited patiently for playtime while I was writing this thesis...

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1. INTRODUCTION

From the migration out of Africa to the most recent wave in the aftermath of
the Syrian Civil war, migration has always been an important concern in human
history. The unavoidable challenge of cohabitation of the locals, and new coming
immigrants, and latter's adaptation to the culture is far from being brand new
problems. With accelerated globalization and telecommunications, this could
have been a problem we have managed to overcome. However, even the most
established democracies are trembling today under the pressure of anti-immigrant
sentiments, human rights violations, and hate crimes and face with an important
cohabitation challenge. A concrete example of this can be seen in Europe as
its model democracies are struggling with the rise in the popularity of far-right
movements reacting to the most recent immigration wave.

Today, understanding the determinants of positive intergroup relations is more im-
portant than ever. Social identification theory (Tajfel 1974) argues that depending
on context and how salient their identity is, individuals sort others into in or out
groups and tend to have more negative attitudes towards the out of the group
members. Two sets of factors determine attitudes towards the out-group: individual
and contextual ones. Education (McClosky and Brill 1983; Schuman, Bobo, and
Krysan 1992; van der Heijden and Verkuyten 2020), socialization with out-group
members (Allport 1954), general political knowledge (Albright 2009), issue-specific
knowledge (Aalberg and Strabac 2010; Dunaway, Branton, and Abrajano 2010;
Strabac, Aalberg, and Valenta 2014), or availability of resources (Pettigrew 1998)
have been considered key individual determinants of out-group attitudes in previous
literature. Availability of resources is an extention of socio-economic status in
modern societies. Previous studies in literature found that, as the "Polish Plumber
Fear" in Europe for instance demonstrates, people from lower socio-economic
backgrounds tend to be more agressive toward out-group immigrants as they are
afraid of losing their job prospects (Pettigrew 1998).

Besides these individual factors, most empirical studies indicate that the media environment as a contextual factor (Jerit, Barabas, and Bolsen 2006) has utmost importance. Coverage of immigrants and minorities in media can significantly change prejudices against them. Several studies focusing on Europe explain how far-right and anti-immigrant parties use media to their advantage and demonstrate how news are framed matters and media effects can make people vote for anti-immigrant parties (Müller et al. 2017; Schroeder 2019; Vliegenthart, Boomgaarden, and Van Spanje 2012).

Press-Party Parallelism (PPP) explains how certain media outlets follow the agendas of political movements or parties (Hallin and Mancini 2004). Provided that the coverage is positive, representation of minorities on media can serve as a mediated contact with the out-group and reduce prejudice (Allport 1954; Kim 2008). However, PPP usually prevents such coverage. News coverage about immigrants and minorities makes the issue and related in-group out-group identities more salient and causes viewers to be more protective and aggressive.

Most of the studies on intergroup relations focus on Europe or the United States. However, because media freedom is a crucial factor in terms of how individuals receive politically relevant information, comparative research investigating countries with different media environments is essential for our understanding of media's effects on out-group attitudes. Examining the media environment of a hybrid regime such as that in Turkey can expand the scope of previous literature (Esen and Gümüşçü 2016). Turkey's media environment went through a transformation beginning from the 1990s, which was characterized by a rapid and unregulated commercialization of media resulting in few big media conglomerates taking ownership of several media outlets and channels (Christensen 2007). This, along with politicization and polarization, has harmed the plurality of media and press freedom. In addition, tabloidization of the Turkish news media, increasing "infotainment" and depoliticization process following the 1980 coup prevented the Turkish public from becoming more politically sophisticated despite the increasing numbers of media outlets (Bek 2004). A politically sophisticated and engaged citizenry is crucial for a healthy democracy as assessing the policies of the government and formulating an opinion about them requires at least some level of knowledge and interest (Brunetti and Weder 2003; Leeson 2008). Individuals without political interest or knowledge rely on political party cues that can be found in media, which are called

heuristics, shortcuts or cues (Lupia 1994). However, shortcuts in and of themselves are not enough to enable uninformed citizens to act similarly to informed citizens as heuristics are inherently biased and insufficient (Kuklinski et al. 2000; Lau and Redlawsk 2001).

The main aim of this thesis is to find an answer to whether politically interested and sophisticated individuals are more positive towards immigrants and minority members, and how media moderates this relationship. The intergroup contact literature argues that intergroup contact causes a cognitive liberalization in individuals who experience it and allows them to overcome their prejudices (Allport 1954). Similarly, political sophistication is described by Luskin (1987, 860) as having large, wide, and connected cognitions. Media exposure caused by interest in politics can enable individuals to learn more about minority groups. Therefore, I expect that being politically informed, through media's mediated contact, can result in individuals being more positive towards out-group members.

Furthermore, how to measure both political sophistication and media exposure is still debated in literature. Second concern of this study is to compare political interest and knowledge of individuals to assess the decision of CSES Planning Committee (2016) to remove political knowledge questions. Most studies on this topic either take only one determinant such as education, knowledge, or interest to approximate sophistication. This study firstly compares political interest and knowledge in terms of their effects on out-group attitudes and then employs a more comprehensive approach in creating a political sophistication scale. Comparing the difference between political interest and knowledge of individuals allows this study to analyze how media informs citizens and media effects in more detail. In addition, comparing different scales of political sophistication increases the reliability of our findings. Another concern of this study is to look into how media exposure moderates the effect of political sophistication on out-group attitudes. As for the measurement of media exposure, due to media convergence seen in the 21st century and the internet being used to consume conventional sorts of media such as television and newspapers (Taneja and Mamoria 2012), this thesis will adopt an integrated approach while using self-reported media consumption as its main independent variable and I expect that media consumption will have a negative effect on out-group attitudes due to biased news coverage.

This thesis is composed of two empirical chapters. The first chapter summarizes

previous studies on media effects and measurement of political sophistication, and employs the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) Module 5 dataset to compare political interest and knowledge and in terms of their relationship with out-group attitudes. The sample in the second chapter consists of 13 countries with varying levels of media freedom and the country with the lowest media freedom score is Turkey. Therefore, to see how distinct indicators of political sophistication affect out-group attitudes, when the media environment is restricted, the third chapter focuses on Turkey by first focusing on the state of the media environment in Turkey and then by employing the Turkish Election Study (TES) dataset. The main problems of the Turkish media environment such as rapid commercialization beginning from the 1990s, tabloidization, and press-party parallelism are discussed in this chapter. Furthermore, this section also includes media consumption habits as a moderator to this relationship and discusses possible biases in the measurement of self-reported media consumption. In the last chapter, an overview of the findings is given and their implications are discussed. The main hypothesis of this thesis, that politically sophisticated individuals have more positive attitudes towards the out-group members, is observed only in countries with high levels of media freedom. The second empirical chapter, analyzing a case with low level of media freedom, finds that even in such an environment, highly sophisticated individuals can have more positive attitudes towards immigrants and minority members if they consume media.

2. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF HOW POLITICAL INTEREST AFFECTS INTERGROUP RELATIONS

2.1 Introduction

The main aim of this chapter is to investigate how political interest, and more comprehensively political sophistication, affects out-group attitudes by using the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) data of 13 countries. I argue that political interest has a positive effect when there is high media freedom. Furthermore, I discuss the measurement of political sophistication and compare the effect of political interest to that of political knowledge and education to scrutinize the concept of political sophistication using different measurement scales.

While the importance of cohabitation between different cultural, ethnic, religious, or linguistic groups increases with each passing day, there are still gaps in the literature. There is no empirical study to date that looks specifically into the effect of political interest on attitudes towards the out-group sentiments. Thus, I believe this study can help understand how anti-immigrant sentiments are formed and the dangers of misinformation and lack of information to our modern democracy. Tajfel's (1974) social identity theory suggests that when different social groups interact, in-group favoritism and out-group aggression are almost inevitable. This tension between a minority that seeks to preserve its identity and a local majority that wants to socially dominate them is a serious threat to their cohabitation. The determinants of out-group aversion and aggression are widely discussed in the psychology literature. In this study, I will, however, focus on the political information and interest as two missing pieces of this puzzle.

In the second section of this chapter, I will discuss how political knowledge is defined and why in this study I will use political interest as a proxy for it. I will, then, go over the literature on the determinants of out-group attitudes, in general,

and anti-immigrant sentiments in particular. In the fourth section, I will outline the theoretical framework for this study based mostly on Tajfel's social identity, group contact, and media bias theories. Next, I will present the empirical findings supporting my aforementioned hypotheses by employing the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) data Module. In so doing, I will first create scales to measure my dependent variable, and evaluate their reliability and fits data making use of total office questions the CSES surveys ask their respondents about their attitudes. I will, then, test the effect of self-reported political interest on the construct. I will, also, test if the effect of political interest on out-group sentiments varies as a function of media freedom. In the last section, I will comment on my findings, explain the limitations of my study, and offer my propositions for future research on the topic.

2.2 Review of Previous Literature

2.2.1 The Determinants of Outgroup Attitudes

Tajfel, in social identity theory (1974), explains that people's behaviors in interpersonal interactions and intergroup interactions vary from each other. Both types of interactions can occur between two individuals. What differentiates an intergroup interaction from the interpersonal one is that in this form of interaction, people do not perceive each other as individuals but as members of various social groups. These social groups or categories change according to the context the individuals live in. The categorization can be based on gender, age, ethnicity, language, physical ability, or even taste in art. This "dehumanization" occurs only if the different identities are salient to the individuals and saliance can be learnt from family, friends, school, or media.

What makes social identification potentially detrimental to a democratic political system is in-group favoritism. Individuals tend to favor people if they perceive them to be in the same group with themselves because they see themselves in competition with the out-group. Gurr (1970) in his relative deprivation theory explains that there is a difference between absolute and relative deprivation in conflict situations. While absolute deprivation focuses on what the individual or group has, relative deprivation focuses on what the other individuals/groups have and makes a comparison between them. Therefore, relative deprivation is always a

zero-sum game, if the other groups/individuals are winning, it means that one is losing or lacking.

One example of the connection between relative deprivation and negative out-group attitudes can be the infamous "Polish Plumber" fear in Europe during the Eastern enlargement of the European Union (Kiran 2007; Noyes 2019). People living in core European countries, especially those with low education levels and socio-economic status were afraid of the enlargement and low-wage workers from the new member countries would come and replace them. In their minds, they were competing against the immigrants for limited employment resources. This fear of job security was not seen widely in people with higher social-economic status as they knew that the immigrants were not as qualified to replace them. Due to this higher threat perception, the national identity became more salient to the blue-collared workers and they became more aggressive towards the immigrants (Pettigrew 1998).

Political psychology literature explains what kind of individuals tend to have discriminatory attitudes towards the out-group. Altemeyer (1988) finds that people who score high on the right-wing authoritarianism scale tend to perceive the out-group members as a threat to traditional values. Lipset (1981) further argues that working-class people are more prone to authoritarianism than the middle and upper classes, as seen in the Polish Plumber case. More recent studies also highlight that blue collar workers tend to support extreme right populist parties. These authoritarian and discriminatory tendencies are inevitably detrimental to social harmony in a democratic state with different social groups.

2.2.2 Political Knowledge and Sophistication

According to some, political information and knowledge are terms that can be used interchangeably. However, others argue that political knowledge refers only to correct information (Luskin and Bullock 2011). Accordingly, in this study, I will use political knowledge to refer to the correct political information an individual possesses. Closely related to these terms, Luskin (1987) defines political sophistication as an extension of an individual's political belief system (PBS). He argues that "a person is politically sophisticated to the extent to which his or her PBS is large, wide-ranging and highly constrained" (constraints here refer to how connected an individual's cognitions are) (Luskin 1987, 860). Therefore, for an individual to be considered politically sophisticated, having correct information is

not sufficient, they should also have cognitive abilities to process and connect the information they acquired.

People who do not have time, motivation, or cognitive capacity to be politically sophisticated can rely on heuristic reasoning. They can follow shortcuts that are provided by media or political elites to form their opinions, attitudes, and voting behaviors (1994). Thus, for an uninformed voter, it is a question of which shortcut to follow and Lupia describes this as a "signaling game." While heuristics seem to close the gap between informed and uninformed citizens, studies show that even shortcuts require some amount of knowledge to work (Kuklinski et al. 2000; Lau and Redlawsk 2001). Therefore, the knowledge gap can't be eradicated altogether with cues. Heuristic reasoning is also in accordance with motivated reasoning, which suggests that when forming their opinions, people not only seek accurate information but information that can preserve their identities and values (Slothuus and de Vreese 2010).

Media, as the knowledge supplier, has a very important role in shaping an individual's political sophistication. In their study, Taber and Lodge (2006) find evidence for both confirmation and disconfirmation biases. They argue that individuals both oppose contrary arguments to their prior convictions and they seek information that will confirm their priors. In such a process, it is almost impossible for an individual to change their opinion even if they are presented with factual policy information on the contrary. This tendency is also relevant when choosing media sources. Individuals favor media outlets that are in accordance with their previous convictions and this tendency is named selective exposure which, in turn, serves to increase the knowledge gap (Cassino, Taber, and Lodge 2007; Iyengar and Hahn 2009; Prior 2005). This blind persuasion goes against the core principles of democracy in which educated citizens are expected to make rational, informed choices in elections. Political knowledge and interest of the citizens are important for the translation of attitudes into votes and representation in a democratic regime. Active and conscious participation in a democratic system requires one to possess information about the system and the more individuals participate in a political system, the more democratic and representative it is. Moreover, Inglehart (1970) argues that more politically sophisticated individuals tend to participate more in political activities like voting more than the unsophisticated ones. Therefore, well informed citizens are sine qua non for the legitimacy of a democratic regime.

As opposed to the literature discussed above, studies on cognitive mobilization the-

ory argues that media consumption will result in a better-informed electorate and these citizens will choose the most suitable party to their political interests. Cognitive mobilization, coined by Inglehart (1970) and then developed by Dalton (1984), assumes that as the cognitive capacities of individuals improve, they will rely less on heuristics, and when they encounter new information, they will change their behavior and attitude accordingly. However, Albright (2009) in his analysis of European democracies, argues it is not the case. He finds that cognitively mobilized people reported to have higher levels of partisan attachments compared to those who were not cognitively mobilized. Therefore, being politically knowledgeable is not always a remedy to polarization and motivated skepticism.

Emotions have also been argued to contribute to the political learning process (Erişen and Erdoğan 2019; Mahtani 2001; Nadeau, Niemi, and Amato 1995). Mahtani (2001) in their study on the Canadian youth finds that, the more anxious and threatened people feel, the more politically aware they are. Hoewever, this effect is only seen if they feel "hopeful" about their prospects. Mahtani argues that strong emotions increase the perceived importance of political issues and make people keener to learn more about them. Moreover, in their study Suhay and Erişen (2019) find that anger and, to a lesser extent, enthusiasm mediates how individuals process information that goes against their prior beliefs. Furthermore, political awareness is a distinguishing feature between people who use heuristics and those who do not. Kam (2005) suggests that politically aware people tend to avoid using shortcuts and less politically aware people tend to rely more on them. Accordingly, less politically aware people would be more open to effects of media bias and news framing.

Besides printed and broadcast media, with the entrance of the internet into our lives, more and more people started to consume online media sources. However, due to various factors like the biased nature of news (Iyengar and Hahn 2009) and higher attraction of entertainment than that of politics (Prior 2005), this increase in the number of media sources does not directly translate to higher political knowledge of citizens (Kim 2008). It has also been argued that not all segments of the society benefit from these new sources equally. Wei and Hindmand (2011) argue that with internet and new media , not only the knowledge gap of the previous century persisted but it turned into a wider "digital divide" in which inequalities in access to and meaningful use of technology became dominant. Similarly, Grönlund (2007) argues that the internet only increases the political knowledge of those who are already informed to a certain level, and describes this as a virtuous circle. Nevertheless, the impact of the internet on those who are not politically informed is argued to be little to none. Thus, systematic differences between citizens continue

to affect their political sophistication even at the age of internet and the knowledge gap is still a thumping problem of modern democracies.

2.2.3 Media Bias, Democracy, and Minorities

Under a democratic regime, media have the crucial role of informing the electorate. Freedom of media is an extension of the freedom of speech. If there are restrictions on media, like censorship, media can not fulfill this important duty and democracy can't function. Restrictions on media are more frequently exercised in autocracies. Yet, democracies can also employ them to varying extents. Usually, the primary aim of restrictions on media is to ensure that citizens will support government policies and criticism will be kept at a minimum (Norris and Inglehart 2010). While restrictions can enable governments to operate without accountability, they definitely go against the core principles of a democratic regime.

Furthermore, media can feed misperceptions or stereotypes about certain segments in a society and this can increase antagonism between different groups (Schroeder 2019). Most recent studies on the subject focus on how right-wing anti-immigrant populist parties in Europe use media to attract more voters. Party and leader visibility in news media has been argued to contribute significantly to the success of the anti-immigrant parties in Europe (Vliegenthart, Boomgaarden, and Van Spanje 2012). Furthermore, the more immigration-related issues are shared in newspapers, the more people reported to have intent to vote for anti-immigrant parties. Swedish Democrats, as an example, used media to portray immigration as an imminent threat to their countries' peace and security, which was shown to increase their electoral support (Schroeder 2019). Normally Swedish media do not report personal characteristics unless they are relevant to the news. However, the media channels affiliated with the Swedish Democrats report criminal activities in such a way that the reader can can perceive a connection with immigrants. This subtle change in the news frames was shown to increase antagonism against immigrants (Müller et al. 2017). Previously, studies suggested that being uninformed about immigrants or related policies would cause negative attitudes (Aalberg and Strabac 2010; Schneider 2008). Yet, these recent studies indicate that receiving biased information can be as dangerous as being uninformed. In conclusion, media can be a tool at the hands of populist leaders to feed negative stereotypes about immigrants and increase antagonism between distinct social groups.

In most cases of media bias, all media outlets are biased towards one side, some non-biased sources or sources that are biased toward another could counter or balance it (D'Alessio and Allen 2000). This is the case many democracies with high levels of media freedom. However, sometimes the whole media environment can be under the influence of a political party or a movement and this is called press party parallelism or partisanship in media or party-media alliance. Bayram (2011) identifies Seymour-Ure's (1974) press-party parallelism as an extreme form of Hallin and Mancini's (2004) political parallelism. Hallin and Mancini (2004) explain that instead of press-party parallelism, political parallelism is more relevant today. In this form, media do not follow a specific political party but a political movement.

When immigrants and other minorities are portrayed in mainstream media, it is more often negative than positive (Erjavec 2003; Esses, Medianu, and Lawson 2013; Farris and Silber Mohamed 2018). McGonagle (2008) in her study on the minority groups in Canada argues that the way media portrays minority groups shapes the way the general public views them and media tends to feed negative or "exotic" stereotypes about the minority groups (McGonagle 2008, p.103). Gross (1998, 91), writing on media and minorities as a person who experienced intersectional discrimination, states that "Our vulnerability to media stereotyping and political attack lies in large part in our isolation and pervasive invisibility." The last part of this quote especially related to the idea in the intergroup relations theory that people feel anxiety when they encounter out-group members that are different from them (Stephan and Stephan 1985). Therefore, most people tend to avoid contact with the out-group, this causes the isolation Gross describes. Thus, it is imperative for minority members to make themselves seen to counter these stereotypes yet the media channels that are affiliated with minorities are called "third media" and are usually considered beneath the other types (Gross 1998). McGonagle (2008, 166) also underlines that one of the most important rationales of the freedom of speech for minority members is "tolerance and understanding/conflict prevention." For this reason, unless the minority members get their voices heard in media, it is very hard to counter-balance the biased stereotypes regarding them and overcome intergroup antagonism. Macgilchrist (2012), examining how an anti-immigrant book published in Germany received a backlash from the media, suggests that a free media environment can enable individuals to counter the biased information they were exposed to. Of course, if such an environment does not exist, publications made according to the political views of the party or movement in power would not receive any resistance, and individuals would not be able to go through a cognitive

dissonance process (Claussen 2004).

In conclusion, media, are very important sources of how people formulate their perceptions of other group members but they are not the only ones. Media can display negative stereotypes of minority members. However, these negative images will be counter-balanced if people have positive personal experiences with out-group members (Gross 1998). In such cases, individuals will be informed well enough to resist the misinformation. Positive intergroup contact, either through personal links or indirectly through media, has been shown to reduce prejudice between different social groups (Allport 1954; Kim 2008). Therefore, contacts with members of out-group also have utmost importance in how attitudes against minority members and immigrants are formed outside of the media environment.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

Political sophistication is a very complex concept as it constitutes various traits in itself. Luskin (1990) defines political sophistication as a sum of one's interest in politics, education, exposure to political information, intelligence, and occupation. His analysis also reveals that "by far the most influential variable, unsurprisingly, is interest" (1990, 348). Several other studies indicate that exposure to political information through various channels does not necessarily mean acquiring or transforming it into their attitudes. Many factors can influence this cognitive process such as the mode of exposure (people, printed media, social media (Kleinberg and Lau 2019; Levendusky 2013)), the content of the information (heavy or light information (Lupia 1994)), the information environment, and personal characteristics of the individual (intelligence, bias, time, education). In this intricate puzzle of political sophistication, acquiring information is one piece, and going through a cognitive process to transform the acquired information into attitudes and knowledge is another.

In previous literature, the main channel through which information would be acquired is often considered the printed media but nowadays broadcast media and social media also play crucial roles in this process. Strabac, Aalberg, and Valenta (2014) in their research do not find a substantively significant positive effect of watching TV on having information about immigrants and they suggest that, in

accordance with Luskin's (1990) description of political sophistication, political interest may be a key element in explaining one's exposure to information translates into their attitudes. In addition, Levendusky (2011) claims that taking political knowledge as an independent variable in cross-sectional studies will exaggerate its effect because individuals who are more informed and less informed differ from each other systematically for many other reasons than political knowledge. He also highlights that controlling for robust control variables such as political interest and media in model equations can decrease this exaggeration of the effect to some extent.

It has also been argued that individuals with higher levels of political knowledge have more tightly connected cognitive structures than those with lower levels. These cognitive structures allow individuals to sort out their world views, political beliefs, and ideology (Abrajano and Alvarez 2010). I believe these cognitive connections can act similarly to the cognitive liberalization effects described in the intergroup contact theory (Allport 1954). Intergroup contact theory argues that when members of different groups get in touch with each other, through either direct or indirect methods, their attitudes toward particular out-group will be more positive. Furthermore more recent studies (Hodson 2011; Hodson et al. 2018; Tropp and Pettigrew 2005) claim that besides reducing prejudices, this type of contact can make individulals more open to new life experiences and can increase their cognitive flexibility. This is called "cognitive liberalization" or "cognitive expansion". Cognitive liberalization through intergroup contact is claimed to resemble a liberal Western-style education in terms of its effects on individuals.

In addition, another commonality between political sophistication and intergroup contact is that they are both cognitively costly for individuals. Individuals, firstly due to their limited time and secondly due to their tendency to avoid cognitive dissonance, tend to avoid going the extra mile to get into contact with a person from the out-group or refrain from making an effort to acquire political knowledge. Arguments in previous literature suggest that political sophistication can serve as a form of indirect contact with the out-groups due to its cognitive effects and thus can have a similar effect to those of intergroup contact and liberal education on out-group attitudes. Therefore, in this study, I will look into whether political interest, as a proxy for political sophistication, determines one's attitudes towards the out-group members. I argue that it has a positive effect on attitudes towards minority members and immigrants.

H$_1$: Individuals who are politically more interested have more positive attitudes towards out-group members.

To the best of my knowledge, no previous study looks into the effect of political sophistication (measured comprehensively) on attitudes towards out-group members. McClosky and Brill (1983) in their pioneering survey study find that elites, namely lawyers and judges in their sample, were more tolerant towards minorities than the members of the mass public who had jobs that required less formal education such as police officers. A more recent study done on the topic, van der Heijden and Verkuyten (2020) take education as the only measure of political sophistication yet Delli Carpini and Keeter (1993) argue that having more education does not directly result in being more informed. Additionally, Albright (2009), in his study, formulates political sophistication as a sum of factual political knowledge questions and education, yet he expresses that at the time of his study CSES did not have political interest questions. In this study, I have this opportunity. In this study, I will, first, focus on whether political interest can be used as a proxy for political sophistication, as the aforementioned studies claim. Following it, I will check if political knowledge and political interest have the same effect on out-group attitudes. Lastly, I will construct a scale of political sophistication using formal education, political interest, and political knowledge to see if this scale yields different results.

I also expect media freedom to have a conditioning effect on the relationship between political interest and out-group attitudes. The intuition behind this causal effect is quite straightforward: if the media channels in a country do not provide cizitzens with unbiased and uncensored information, the citizens can hardly be informed about politics or members of the out-group unless they have first-hand experiences. Intergroup contact is shown to reduce prejudice between different social groups. Yet, these prejudices and stereotypes can be fed by media outlets. Biased media news can thus both exacerbate the stereotypes about different social groups and frame events in such ways that one of the groups will be seen as an antagonist.

Besides political interest, education has always been seen as a major determinant of political sophistication. Yet, Jerit, Barabas, and Bolsen (2006) find that the effect of education on political knowledge is irregular. They highlight the eminence of how much information is available in mass media and how important it is to have a healthy information environment in a country for its citizens to be politically informed. Accordingly, I expect that in a healthy media environment where there is freedom of the press, individuals who are more interested in politics will be able

to get more unbiased information, and accordingly they will have more positive attitudes towards out-group members. In cases where there is no such media environment, this effect will, however, be reversed.

H₂: High political interest decreases negative attitudes towards the out-group members when there is high freedom of press.

2.4 Data and Research Design

This chapter's data come from Module 5 of The Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (2020). CSES dataset covers a wide range of countries from all continents of the world. Survey studies that are a part of the Module 5 of CSES are conducted between 2016 and 2021. Thus, at the date of this study, Module 5 is incomplete. I will conduct all of my empirical analyses using the most recent data available at this date. Module 5 at the moment includes data from 19 countries. I have also added The American National Election Studies (2020) to the sample. Some countries available in Module 5 of CSES did not include all the variables I was interested in so my sample is limited to 13 countries at the end. Education level questions were not asked in Israel, Dutch data are not available yet and residence (urban/rural) information was coded as "restricted information" for individual cases in the Australian 2016 Election Study and election studies done in England in 2017 and 2020, Hong Kong in 2016 and Italy in 2018.

Despite the fact that other survey studies include political interest and attitude towards the minority and immigrants in their questionnaires, the comprehensiveness of CSES in terms of both country coverage and the questions asked on distinct attributes of respondents makes it ideal for this research. The data set provides quite diverse data as there are both established and economically developed democracies such as Norway and the United States along with more unconsolidated ones such as Turkey and Chile. Among the embers of the CSES study, the mode of the interview was not uniform. Approximately 62% of the surveys were conducted face-to-face, 17% through telephone, 15% through the internet, and the rest through mail or other self-reported modes.

2.4.1 Dependent Variable

There are five different questions asked related to the out-group attitudes in CSES Module 5 questionnaire. The first question asks respondents if they think minorities should adapt to the customs and traditions of the country. The second question asks whether the will of the majority should prevail over those of minorities. The last three out-group attitude questions were specifically regarding immigrants. These ask respondents if they think the immigrants are good for the country's economy, if the country's culture is harmed by immigrants, and if immigrants increase crime rates. The response options presented to the respondents range from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree" on a five-point scale.

Two of the out-group attitude questions asking the respondents to what extent they agree with the statements "The will of the majority should always prevail, even over the rights of minorities" and "immigrants increase crime rates" are coded as missing data in several election studies i.e., Greece, Hong Kong, Ireland, South Korea, and Taiwan. The other three out-group attitudes questions were however asked in these countries as well. CSES explains this through saying that these questions were not included in the pre-test version of the questionnaire.

Three different scales were created to measure latent out-group attitudes from these five questions. The first method was factor analysis, the second one was a summated rating scale and the third one was an item-response theory model (IRT). The first scale created through factor analysis had 26316 observations, the summated rating scale had 34782 observations and the IRT scale had 35326 observations . All three scales of the dependent variable are very highly correlated with each other (0.9815, 0.9554, 0.9841). The third scale seems to be most suitable to the data at hand because of the missing two variables in the aforementioned election studies. The version of the IRT model I employ did not apply listwise deletion, therefore I was able to maximize the number of observations included in the analysis. As the responses to the questions had five ordered response categories, I employed a graded response model.

In this scale of the dependent variable, higher values denote higher levels of positive attitudes and lower values more negative attitudes towards the out-group members. In addition, 15% of the respondents in the sample reported that at least one of their parents was bron outside of their country of residence. I did not exclude these

frmo the analyses because even people who have immigrants in their families can see other immigrants as put-group members if they identify with the majority due to their residence or citizenship.

2.4.2 Independent Variables

How to correctly measure political sophistication and particularly political knowledge is a highly contested topic in literature (Luskin and Bullock 2011; Prior 2013; Prior and Lupia 2008). One possible way to measure political knowledge is to ask respondents to place political parties on a left-right scale. However, this type of political knowledge question can be problematic in a cross-sectional analysis as right and left may not mean the same things in all countries (Fisher et al. 2008). Another issue with this measurement of political knowledge is that parties move on the ideological scale over time. For this reason, there can be a discrepancy between the respondents' responses and the researchers' evaluation of a party even if the respondent is highly politically sophisticated. Despite these criticisms, it is still considered one of the most accurate and objective ways to measure one's political knowledge.

Another approach to measuring political knowledge is asking respondents factual questions about the political system and its prominent actors like the previous Prime Minister, Minister of Finance or UN Secretary-General. A criticism for this method is that it can measure the memory of the respondent rather than their knowledge. Furthermore, when and how the survey is conducted is important in respondent's answers to such questions. An example of this can be found in Prior's study (2014) that shows how merely using the pictures of political figures can drastically change the number of correct answers to such questions.

While CSES surveys' factual political knowledge questions had multiple choices for respondents to pick, another respectable survey, ANES has asked political knowledge questions with open-ended answers for a long time. Due to coding procedures, the results of the ANES political knowledge questions have been accused of being problematic and not replicable (Mondak 2000; Pietryka and MacIntosh 2013). As it can be seen from the number of methods for measuring political knowledge and the criticisms they receive, the measurement of political knowledge has been an ongoing debate in the literature. At the end of 2016, CSES

Planning Committee thus decided to stop asking any political knowledge questions. They concluded that the correct answer rates across countries had a wide variation and this was attributed partially to country characteristics. Respondents from countries like Mexico tended to choose the "Don't Know" option when they hadn't known the answer. Yet, those from other countries like Germany or Austria tended to try to guess the correct answer.

Therefore, CSES found political knowledge questions to be inefficient and ceased to ask them. CSES Planning Committee argues that their political interest and education variables also provide a measure of political knowledge. Despite the previously stated criticisms, the party placement method is thus still a more objective measure of political sophistication than self-reported political interest. Therefore, I measured the respondents' political knowledge in the same way Gordon and Segura (1997) did in their renowned article. First, I measured the absolute distance between a respondent's placement of a political party and the mean placement of that party on the ideological scale. Afterwards, a penalty was implemented for those who failed to locate the party in question. As Gordon and Segura (1997) did, I assumed that even if such individuals responded to the question, they would have failed to locate the examined party successfully so they were given a value of the mean response plus 1.96 standard deviations, locating them far away from those making a correct placement. Next, I took an average of the respondents' answers for the parties that were able to pass the 7% threshold in the election. This threshold was applied because in countries with two major political parties like the US, citizens can be informed about the both yet in multiparty systems there can be many parties and citizens can not be expected to be informed about every single one of them, especially the ones with low vote shares. Two elections in the sample were presidential elections: the United States 2020 and France 2017. Therefore, CSES did not include the vote shares of the political parties in these elections. In the French case, I coded the votes of the candidates in the first round as those of their affiliated parties. In the US case, I coded the percentages two candidates got from the total vote as the vote shares of their parties. Finally, I reversed this scale and named it political knowledge (low scores meaning that the respondent is away from the correct placement of the political party so less knowledgeable, and high scores meaning that the placement was closer, respondent is more knowledgelable). The two criticisms for party placement method that were mentioned: cross-country comparison and the discrepancy between common people and expert evaluations are not relevant in this study because I will not be comparing left-right standing across countries and no expert opinion was included for party placements.

The second main independent variable of this study is media freedom. In the study, media freedom data come from World Press Freedom Index which collects its data through surveys whose respondents are experts in their respective countries. Their questionnaire aims to measure concepts that make up the freedom of the press such as violence and oppression against journalists, censorship, transparency, and pluralism of media. RSF staff also collects data on cases of abuse and violence against journalists and then they merge these with the experts' questionnaire answers to create a score for each country. The variable ranges between 7.85 (Norway in 2017) and 52.81 (Turkey in 2018). In this variable, the higher the value is, the more restraints are on media hence, media freedom is lower. The highest score after Turkey in the sample belongs to Brazil so these countries are at one end of the scale and on the other end, there are more consolidated democracies next to Norway such as Germany and Ireland.

Furthermore, to control for the contact between respondents and minority members, I introduce population share of immigrants and the living location of the respondent as control variables. CSES did not have the number of immigrants as a country-level variable thus I included data from the United Nations' Department of Economic and Social Affairs' Population division. They report the number of immigrants living in each country in their reports. I went to the country profiles of each country in the sample and coded the percentage of the immigrants to the total population of that country. However, the UN data on immigrants are not available every year. Therefore, in the cases that there was no available data on the specific year of the Survey, I had to choose the closest year.

UN data were available in the years 2015 and 2019 and the dates of the examined election studies range between 2015 and 2019. In the cases of election studies conducted in 2017, I chose the number of immigrants from 2015 to keep the numbers conservative and avoid biased inferences. Taiwan was a unique case in the sense that the election study was available yet the UN's population division did not have a country profile. In this case, I had to go to Taiwan's official record from 2016 and code the data of population and number of immigrants.

As for the location variable, the related CSES variable is a categorical one with four categories. I coded it into a dummy variable so that those living in rural areas like villages and small towns score zero and living in large towns or its suburbs score

one. The purpose of this coding was to see the effect of living in a more densely populated area with the assumption that such individuals would be more likely to encounter people from other identity groups.

2.4.3 Model

I estimate two models in this chapter. As the main independent variable, the first model has individual indicators of political sophistication and the second model introduces political sophistication as a scale calculated using these distinct indicators. Model 1 and 2 are presented below respectively.

Out-Group Attitudes $=$ $\beta_0 + \beta_1$Political Interest $+ \beta_2$Political Knowledge $+ \beta_3$Education $+ \beta_4$Media Freedom $+ \beta_5$Politics in Media $+ \beta_6$Urban Residence $+ \beta_7$Origin of Parents $+ \beta_8$Satisfaction with Democracy $+ \beta_9$Ideological Stance $+ \beta_{10}$Economic Evaluation $+ \beta_{11}$Age $+ \beta_{12}$Gender $+ \beta_{13}$Immigrants in Population $+ \beta_{14}$Employment $+ \epsilon$

Out-Group Attitudes $=$ $\beta_0 + \beta_1$Political Sophistication $+ \beta_2$Media Freedom $+ \beta_3$Politics in Media $+ \beta_6$Urban Residence $+ \beta_7$Origin of Parents $+ \beta_8$Satisfaction with Democracy $+ \beta_9$Ideological Stance $+ \beta_{10}$Economic Evaluation $+ \beta_{11}$Age $+ \beta_{12}$Gender $+ \beta_{13}$Immigrants in Population $+ \beta_{14}$Employment $+ \epsilon$

2.5 Empirical Analyses and Findings

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the dependent variable, independent variables, and the control variables used in the study. Regarding the origin of the parents variable, those whose parents were born in their country of residence were coded as 0 and those with at least one parent born outside of the country were coded as one. As the mean of this variable is .15, 15% of the sample reported that at least one of their parents was born outside of their country of residence.

Table 2.1 Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std.Dev.	Min	Max	N
Political Interest	2.78	0.95	1	4	20432
Out-Group Attitude Score (IRT)	0.01	0.94	-2.25	2.06	20432
Restraints on Media	24.10	8.43	10.75	52.81	20432
Political Knowledge	6.38	1.81	0.31	8.56	20432
Education	6.93	1.66	1	10	20432
Politics in Media	2.74	0.91	1	4	20432
Immigrants in Population (%)	11.57	5.68	0.40	22.5	20432
Urban Residence	0.55	0.50	0	1	20432
Origin of Parents	0.15	0.35	0	1	20432
Satisfaction with Democracy	1.83	1.38	0	4	20432
Ideological Stance	5.42	2.65	0	10	20432
Economic Evaluation	3.32	1.20	1	5	20432
Age	49.28	17.39	16	99	20432
Gender	0.51	0.50	0	1	20432
Employment	0.94	0.24	0	1	20432

Another control variable, urban residence has a mean of .55, which tells us that more than half of the respondents in the sample live in an urban area and the others live in a rural area. In the sample, Hungary is the country that had the least number of respondents from urban areas and, Brazil is the one that had the most respondents from the rural areas. In addition, the percentage of the immigrants in population variable, with .4 Brazil has the lowest share and with 22.5 New Zealand has the highest. Employment was also coded as a binary variable and the mean value of .94 indicates that 94% of the sample was employed and only 6% of the sample was actively looking for a job (those who were unemployed yet did not actively search for a job like retired people were coded as 1 because they would not be likely to see the immigrants as a threat to their job prospects).

In Figure 1, a histogram of the dependent variable, out-group sentiments is presented.[1] The out-group sentiment variable, coded from five different categorical questions, has a normal-like distribution. Most of the cases are located around zero which denotes being neutral. Lower values in this variable indicate more negative

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[1]Regression analyses taking only attitudes towards immigrants into account in coding the dependent variable show similar findings and are presented in Table A.3 in Appendix A.

attitudes towards the out-group (minority group members and immigrants) and higher values more positive ones. Furthermore, the descriptive statistics of the three scales created to measure the latent out-group attitudes variable can be seen in Table 2. All three scales have almost the same standard deviation (.89, .92, and .91). The ones generated through item-response theory and factor score analysis are quite similar to each other in terms of their distributions. However, it can be seen that the number of observations in item-response theory is almost 10.000 observations more. The third one, the additive scale, has the categories of the original questionnaire variables and it is not standardized as the other two scales. Out of the three, the scale created using an item-response theory model has more observations and is standardized and thus chosen as our main measure of the dependent variable.[2]

Figure 2.1 Distribution of the Dependent Variable
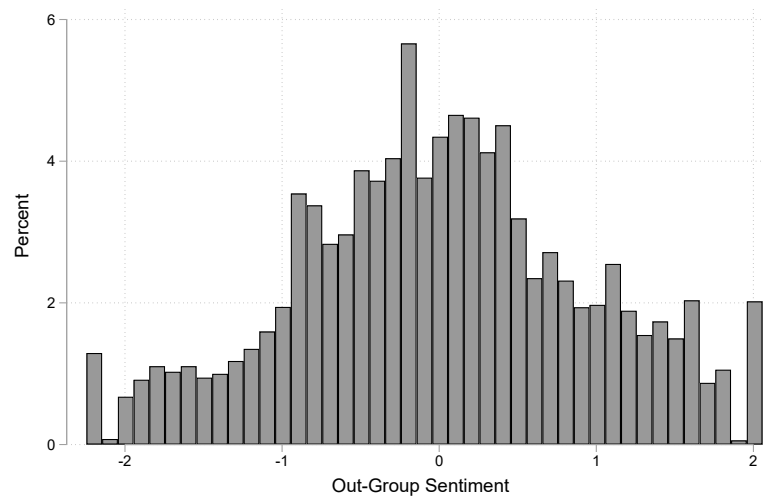
Table 2.2 Descriptive Statistics for the Dependent Variable

	Mean	Std.Dev.	Min	Max	N
Out-Group Attitude Score (IRT)	-0	0.89	-2.25	2.06	43605
Out-Group Attitude Factor Score	-0	0.92	-2.04	1.69	33641
Additive Out-Group Attitude Scale	3.09	0.91	1	5	42159

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics of the main independent variables of

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[2]Empirical analyses taking an additive scale and factor scores for out-group attitudes scales as their dependent variable show similar findings and are presented in Tables A.1 and A.2 in Appendix A.

this study. Political sophistication is a standardized scale created through factor analysis of three variables: political interest, political knowledge, and education. Political interest has a mean of 2.71. Similarly, the political knowledge variable was coded from the correct placement of political parties indicates that the mean score is 5.91 whereas the maximum is 8.56. This tells us that the sample reported to have high levels of political interest and accordingly they were mostly correct or close to correct in their placement of the parties. However, Table 5 presenting the correlations between these variables indicates that the correlation between political interest and knowledge is only .264. A similar case is reached concerning the education variable. These three variables are not highly correlated, which also confirms how misleading it might be to take only one of them as a measure of political sophistication as suggested by the CSES Planning Committee.

Table 2.3 Descriptive Statistics for the Independent Variable

	Mean	Std.Dev.	Min	Max	N
Political Interest	2.71	0.93	1	4	42355
Political Knowledge	5.91	2.32	0.12	8.56	41755
Education	6.88	1.72	1	10	39597
Political Sophistication	-0	0.73	-2.67	1.50	36877

Table 2.4 Correlations of Different Out-group Attitude Scales

	Political Interest	Political Knowledge	Education	Political Sophistication
Political Interest	1			
Political Knowledge	0.20	1		
Education	0.30	0.23	1	
Political Sophistication	0.75	0.58	0.76	1

N=20432

In Table 6, OLS regressions on out-group attitudes are estimated to assess the effect of political interest and knowledge on out-group attitudes. The first model is an additive model that includes both political interest and knowledge. Here we see that both variables have statistically significant positive effects on out-group attitudes. Therefore, the empirical evidence provides support for our first hypothesis that political interest has a positive effect on out-group attitudes. The more politically interested an individual is, the more likely they are to have positive attitudes towards the out-group. As expected, restraints on the media environment have a

negative effect on out-group attitudes. Model 2 and 3 include interaction terms of political interest and knowledge, respectively.[3] In both Model 2 and 3, the interaction terms show negative statistically significant moderating effects. The same case is observed in Model 4 when both interaction terms are included in the model.

As the inter-group contact theory suggests, living in an urban area has a statistically significant positive effect on out-group attitudes. If an individual is living in a city or a large town, they will be more likely to have contact with immigrants or minority members, and, through this cosmopolitan living, they will have more positive attitudes towards immigrants. Another important control variable, satisfaction with democracy has a statistically significant negative effect on out-group attitudes in all models. This suggests that the more dissatisfied with the democratic system a person is, the more likely they are to have negative out-group attitudes.

A similar case is seen in the economic evaluation variable, its coefficients are statistically distinguishable from zero at 99% confidence level in all of the models. The question is asked in a way that asks the respondents to compare the state of the economy to before so it is aimed to measure a retrospective evaluation of the economy. The results imply that if an individual thinks that the state of the economy has gotten better good, they will be more likely to have positive attitudes towards out-group members. This control variable and employment indicator were included in the model to see if, as it is claimed in Polish Plumber fear cases in Europe, the locals of the host country see immigrants as a threat to their job prospects. While being employed seems to not affect attitudes, evaluation of the economy does so. The reason why the effect of employment was not statistically significant can be the fact that a very small portion of the sample reported to be unemployed and seeking a job. Furthermore, as it is suggested by the authoritarian personality theory (Schuman, Bobo, and Krysan 1992), the significant negative effect of the ideological standing variable tells us that if an individual places themselves towards the right of the ideological scale, they will be more likely to have negative attitudes towards minorities and immigrants.

In Models 5 and 6, the independent variable is the political sophistication scores created via the factor analysis. In additive model 4, political sophistication has a

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[3]Another version of this model, where each indicator of political sophistication is introduced seperately and another one with country fixed effects show substantively similar findings and can be found in Tables A.4 and A.5 in Appendix A.

positive and statistically significant effect on out-group attitudes (similar to Model 1, yet with a larger magnitude). In Model 6, the interaction term of political sophistication and media freedom is introduced to the model and it is significant at a 99% confidence level which means that their effect change according to different levels of media freedom. The effect of living in an urban area is still statistically significant in this model. To further analyze the effects of the interactive in Models 2, 3, and 6, I will comment on the marginal effects graphically illustrated in Figures 2 and 3.

In Figure 2, the effect of media freedom on the effects of both political interest and political knowledge on out-group attitudes can be seen. The graph on the left, titled political interest, shows that at low levels of restains on media, i.e. when there is high media freedom, political interest has a statistically significant positive effect on out-group attitudes. Yet, when restraints on media increase, the marginal effect of political interest on out-group attitudes turns into a negative. On the right subplot entitled political knowledge, that of political knowledge, the line is less steep but the effect is similar to that of political interest. At high levels of media freedom, the effect of political knowledge is positive and at low levels it is negative. The negative effect seen in the leftmost subplot in Figure 2 is probably due to press-party parallelism. When restraints on media increase, there is more censorship on media which would prevent the cognitive dissonance process that could change the minds of individuals about the antagonistic views of the out-group. Moreover, there is a lower level of media plurality that fosters an environment of biased and partisan news. In such an environment, when individuals have limited time and cognitive abilities, the easiest option for them to acquire information is to look for political party cues broadcast through partisan media channels. The political party of the majority rarely advocates for the right of minorities and immigrants therefore the antagonism between the social groups is exacerbated (Binder 1997; Schneider 2008; Strabac, Aalberg, and Valenta 2014).

Table 2.5 OLS Regressions on Out-Group Attitudes (IRT)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Restraints on Media	-0.012**	0.004*	0.019**	0.030**	-0.012**	-0.012**
	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Political Interest	0.081**	0.227**	0.075**	0.196**		
	(0.009)	(0.020)	(0.009)	(0.021)		
Political Knowledge	-0.031**	-0.031**	0.090**	0.078**		
	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.012)	(0.012)		
Restraints on Media × Political Interest		-0.006**		-0.005**		
		(0.001)		(0.001)		
Restraints on Media × Political Knowledge			-0.005**	-0.004**		
			(0.000)	(0.000)		
Political Sophistication					0.162**	0.511**
					(0.012)	(0.029)
Restraints on Media × Political Sophistication						-0.014**
						(0.001)
Education	0.073**	0.074**	0.074**	0.075**		
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)		
Politics in Media	0.044**	0.045**	0.045**	0.045**	0.059**	0.057**
	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.008)	(0.008)
Urban Residence	0.331**	0.325**	0.327**	0.322**	0.357**	0.344**
	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)
Origin of Parents	0.086**	0.084**	0.084**	0.083**	0.098**	0.088**
	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.017)
Satisfaction with Democracy	-0.134**	-0.139**	-0.136**	-0.139**	-0.142**	-0.147**
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
Ideological Stance	-0.092**	-0.092**	-0.092**	-0.092**	-0.090**	-0.090**
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Economic Evaluation	0.048**	0.051**	0.049**	0.051**	0.059**	0.066**
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
Age	-0.005**	-0.005**	-0.005**	-0.005**	-0.006**	-0.006**
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Gender	0.048**	0.047**	0.051**	0.050**	0.059**	0.057**
	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.011)	(0.012)	(0.012)
Immigrants in Population (%)	0.003*	0.002	0.006**	0.005**	0.002	0.002
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Employment	0.042	0.038	0.034	0.032	0.038	0.028
	(0.024)	(0.024)	(0.024)	(0.024)	(0.024)	(0.024)
Constant	0.203**	-0.207**	-0.656**	-0.909**	0.654**	0.655**
	(0.060)	(0.079)	(0.103)	(0.110)	(0.053)	(0.053)
N	20432	20432	20432	20432	20432	20432
R^2	0.256	0.258	0.260	0.262	0.245	0.251

Standard errors in parentheses. Two-tailed tests.* p<0.05, ** p<0.01

Figure 2.2 Marginal Effect of Political Interest and Political Knowledge on Out-Group Attitudes | Restraints on Media (95% Confidence Level, based on Models 2 and 3 in Table 5)
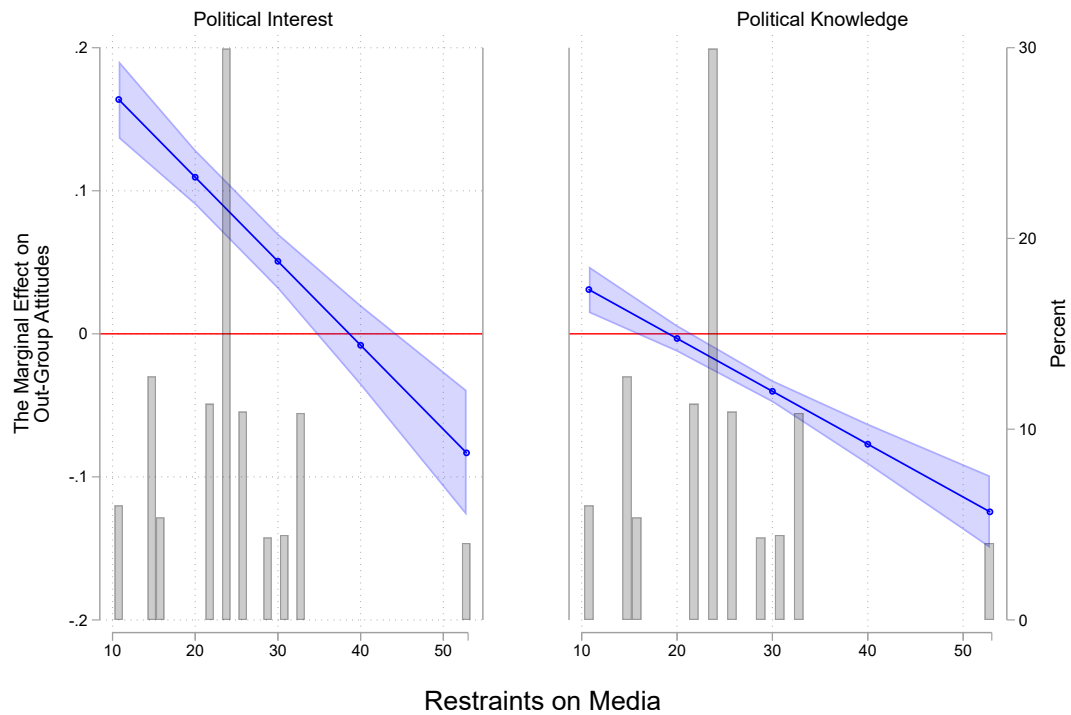
In Figure 3, the marginal effect of political sophistication on out-group attitudes at varying levels of media freedom is similar to those seen in the previous graphs of political interest and knowledge. At low levels of restraints on media, political sophistication has a positive effect on out-group attitudes and at higher levels this effect becomes negative. The fact that political interest alone presented a similar effect can be taken as an support for the suggestion that self-reported political interest can be used as a proxy for political sophistication in cases where education levels and political knowledge are not available or unreliable.

Figure 2.3 Effect of Political Sophistication on Out-Group Attitudes | Restraints on Media (95% Confidence Level, based on Model 6 in Table 5)
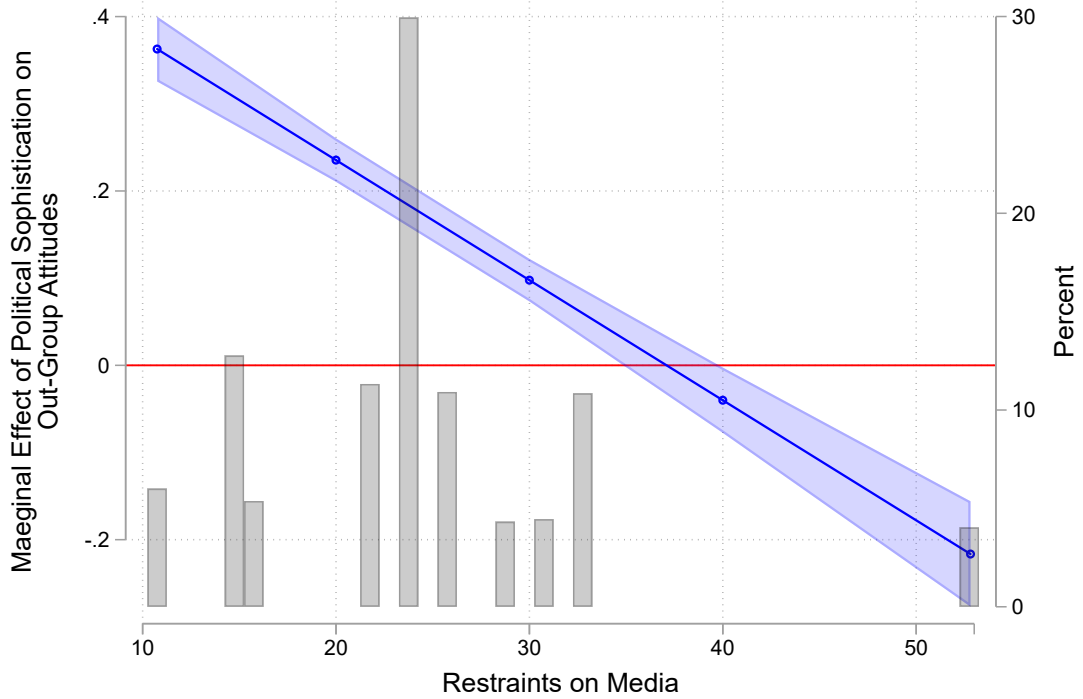
2.6 Discussion

Our analysis provides empirical support for our first hypothesis. As expected, individuals with higher levels of political interest and knowledge have more positive attitudes towards the out-group members. While the same effect is observed on both political interest and knowledge, their magnitudes differ. When I test the same model with political sophistication, created by political interest, knowledge, and education, the same effect can be observed as well. Therefore, I conclude that in line with previously mentioned literature, political interest plays a very important role in how individuals perceive minority members and immigrants. Furthermore, there is also evidence for our second hypothesis. Restrictions on media mediate the relationship between political sophistication and outgroup attitudes. At low levels of media freedom, when there are many constraints on media, political interest and knowledge have negative effects on outgroup attitudes and the opposite is the case when there are high levels of media freedom. This shows us both how important access to unbiased information for resolving intergroup conflicts is and the crucial role the media environment plays in shaping intergroup relations. Media freedom

coupled with informed and interested citizens can thus be the key tu sustaining positive intergroup relations.

The first of the prominent limitations of this research is regarding the sample. Most of the sample is composed of respondents from the United States and we have fewer observations from countries with very high and very low media restrictions. When Module 5 of CSES is released with a more diverse sample of countries, this analysis should include data from more countries from both ends of the media restriction spectrum so that the inferences can be more generalizable. Another possible limitation could have been the social desirability bias causing respondents to report higher levels of political interest yet as both self-reported political interest variable and political knowledge calculated through party placement show the same effect. I thus believe social desirability bias does not bias our estimates. Moreover, in this analysis, I could not account for the media consumption habits of individuals. Which media channels the respondent a follows is very important as media restrictions can be more comprehensive in printed and broadcast media but not as so in social media.

Lastly, as Inglehart and Norris (2010) underline in their work, the effect of mass media on public opinion is limited, especially when it comes to interpersonal relations. As it is presented in Table 6, urban residence seems to have a positive effect on out-group attitudes inline with the intergroup contact theory. In conclusion, media freedom is crucially important for positive intergroup relations but individual-level actions like socialization with different group members can foster more positive attitudes and help in prevent and de-escalation of intergroup conflicts.

3.   HOW POLITICAL SOPHISTICATION AND MEDIA AFFECT OUT-GROUP ATTITUDES IN TURKEY

3.1 Introduction

The empirical findings from the previous chapter indicate that political interest leads to more positive out-group attitudes when media freedom is high. Yet this effect is reversed when media freedom is low. In free media environments, engaged citizens can access correct political information more easily. However, when there are many constraints on media, accessing to true information requires more effort. Therefore, special attention should be paid to countries with high media restrictions to reduce overall inter-group conflicts. The country with the highest score of media restrictions in our sample in the previous chapter was Turkey. Hence, this chapter will focus on the media environment of Turkey and how media affects the relationship between political sophistication and out-group attitudes.

The state of the Turkish media environment has already been subject to a wide array of studies. Especially starting with the early 1990s, Turkish media went through a transformation at the end of which it has become highly commercialized and fragmented. The polarization of media continued with the Justice and Development Party's (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi [AKP]) regime and it is nowadays considered a clear example of press-party parallelism (Çarkoğlu, Baruh, and Yıldırım 2014; Bayram 2010). In this respect, this study will continue to the literature on the effects of press-party parallelism and how it interacts with other individual-level indicators like political interest, political knowledge, and education.

This study also aims to contribute to the literature on political sophistication and inter-group relations in two ways. First, most studies on political sophistication focus on either the United States or Europe. Therefore, studying political sophis-

tication in a hybrid regime like Turkey can help us understand how individuals acquire information and how they use it to form their attitudes when media sources are severely restrained (Esen and Gümüşçü 2016). Second, out-group attitudes that will be studied in this chapter are concerned with immigrants and minority members. Turkey has received millions of Syrian refugees in the last decade in addition to its already existing ethnic, linguistic, and political minorities. Therefore, studying out-group attitudes when there is not only one single unified out-group but numerous out-groups can improve our understanding of how out-group attitudes are formed and the role of media and elites play in this process.

To investigate how political sophistication and media interactively affect out-group attitudes, I will first review the literature on the media environment of Turkey and how out-group members are represented in media. Then, I will discuss the theories related to biased media consumption and how they interact with political sophistication and state my hypotheses formed in light of these theories. Next, I will present my research design using data from the Turkish Election Study, conducted as part of CSES Module 4. Lastly, I will discuss the implications of my findings and the limitations of the empirical analyses.

3.2 Review of Previous Literature

As already discussed in the second chapter, media environment and how minority members are framed in media sources have significant effects on political sophistication and, consequently, on individual attitudes. Leeson (2008) finds that when government puts more restrictions on media and possesses media outlets, it can control the content and make citizens more apathetic and politically ignorant. That, in turn results in less knowledgeable citizens who participate to politics at lower levels (Prat and Strömberg 2005). On the other side of the coin, more media freedom means more accountability and it has been found to lower corruption (Brunetti and Weder 2003). Therefore, media freedom is essential for a democracy to function. However, elites try to control the flow of information to citizens. The pressure on media can take various forms e.g., it can come directly from the state through censorship, press laws, and regulations or through financial pressure (Leeson and Coyne 2005).

As a developing democracy that has experienced two coups, media freedom in

Turkey has always been a sensitive topic. A considerable number of studies in previous literature argue that press-party parallelism in Turkey has always been at high levels (Bayram 2010; Kaya and Çakmur 2010). Turkey (along with its neighboring countries like Greece, see: (Hallin and Papathanassopoulos 2002)) went through a transformation at the end of the 1980s. As a result of that, previously state-controlled media were reshaped into a free market economy environment with privately owned television channels and newspapers (Christensen 2007, 182). However, this "flourishing" media environment did not lead to more informed citizens as political discourse took a populist turn at the same time. Some even call it "anti-politics" (Cizre-Sakallıoğlu and Yeldan 2000, 503). Therefore, the new media that emerged after this period had often reported politicians' assaults on traditional political actors, institutions, and the systems, with anti-establishment messages rather than aiming to inform the public about them. The fast and unregulated commercialization of Turkish media has also enabled new business owners to get hold of media channels and this prevented journalists who had been working in these channels from working freely.

Another reason why the Turkish public did not get politically as sophisticated despite the the rising number of media channels was the "tabloidization" of news (Bek 2004). Brants and Neijens (1998) define tabloidization as the next stage of "infotainment" which describes adding entertainment into informative programs like news. Tabloidism is argued to allow the viewers to detach themselves from the gruesome and tiring reality of the world. Therefore, consuming media alone does not guarantee that the consumer will be more informed. After the depoliticization process in the aftermath of the 1980 coup, tabloidization in Turkish media prevented the public from gaining correct information about the political system, parties, and public policies. Bek (2004, 382) describes this new media environment as that "television news becomes a base for the big media groups to promote their other businesses and compete with their rivals." Therefore, coupled with the abolishment of the Journalists' Union of Turkey (TGS), media outlets have not been able to serve their duties for the functioning of a healthy democracy as described at the beginning of this chapter and in the previous chapter.

In the midst of these, media channels that belong to ethnic and religious minorities have always remained limited in their reach (Yanardağoğlu 2014). Christensen (2007) also underlines that most popular TV channels and newspapers belong to few well-known conglomerates like Dogan or Ciner Media Groups. The slow yet steady acquisition of smaller outlets by these conglomerates was enabled by

a lack of state regulation and decreased the plurality of the media and furthered press-party parallelism by segregating media outlets into two major camps: secular and conservative (Kaya and Çakmur 2010). Çarkoğlu, Baruh, and Yıldırım (2021) suggest that press-party parallelism still continues, and Çarkoğlu and his co-authors (2014) highlight that the two biggest parties according to vote shares, AKP and CHP, tend to give advertisements to newspapers that share their own views. The authors interpret this as "campaign strategies that are oriented toward mobilizing their voting base rather than trying to convert voters from other parties" (Çarkoğlu, Baruh, and Yıldırım 2014, 313). Moral and Çarkoğlu (2018) also argue that, due to polarization in the media outlets in Turkey, individuals with higher partisan attachments expose themselves to more biased content to avoid cognitive dissonance and they become more and more vulnerable to misinformation.

As for the coverage of minorities in media, when AKP (Justice and Development Party) became the incumbent in 2002, Turkey had the status of a candidate country to join the European Union (EU). The first term of AKP was marked with legal reforms, including the abolishment of capital punishment, that were applauded by both domestic and foreign media. However, media freedom was considered to be a prominent shortcoming of Turkey's democratic steps. Starting slowly from 2004 but especially during the Peace Process, between 2009 and 2015, media freedom related to the Kurdish issue was higher and broadcasting in minority languages was allowed. Yet starting from 2015 and the end of the Peace Process, a backsliding can be observed (Yeşil 2014; Yılmaz 2016). Beginning primarily in this period, the reputation of Turkey's media freedom has rapidly deteriorated. European Commission and several foreign media outlets have criticized arrests and restrictions put on journalists. Hence, media outlets of minority members and their coverage are still considered important issues.

Besides media's transformation in Turkey, moderate content no longer sells globally. Herbert Gans' book (1979) on media and journalism argues that, among other ones, media has an enduring value of "Moderatism." Gans suggests that this enduring value would discourage radical or extremist approaches. However, it is clear that this has changed with broadcast television and more prominently with the internet and social media becoming more widespread. Whether the masses are polarized and elites are following their tendencies, or if it is the other way around, is beyond the scope of this study and still contested in literature. Yet, one thing is clear, people are more polarized today than they used to be and news outlets cater to their tastes by providing more and more biased news (Bennett and Iyengar 2008).

However, with the increase to access to broadband internet, media exposure of individuals has also changed. Behrouzian and their colleagues (2016) argue that, according to "motivated resistance to censorship", individuals who live under strict media restrictions and have demands for freedom move towards alternative online information sources to get information so that they can circumvent the effects of a restricted media environment to some extent.

3.3 Theoretical Framework

As it was discussed in the previous chapter, a wide array of studies confirm that, as intergroup contact theory explains, contact with out-group members reduces prejudice and improves intergroup relations. This contact can be either direct or indirect/mediated. All forms of media, whether they are printed or broadcast, serve as mediators in intergroup relations and this mediated contact has been shown to be beneficial to intergroup relations just as much as direct contact is. However, when it comes to minority members and immigrants, media coverage is usually negative (Eberl et al. 2018; Esses, Medianu, and Lawson 2013; Greussing and Boomgaarden 2017; Jacobs, Meeusen, and d'Haenens 2016). Nevertheless, as long as there is media freedom and plurality of outlets, the negative coverage of minorities can be counterbalanced with positive sources. In cases where media freedom is low, mass representation of minorities is usually left at the hands of the majority and this can prevent positive mediated contact (Boomgaarden and Vliegenthart 2007, 2009).

Furthermore, individuals have been shown to be more confident in their views after corroboration from media (Taber and Lodge 2006) which means that biased media coverage not only prevents positive mediated contact but also assists further polarization. The negative effect of media is more prominent if the individual had little or no direct contact with out-group members themselves because they live in an area with a lower percentage of minority members (Czymara and Dochow 2018). However, even if respondents live in locations where there is a considerable number of immigrants, the extra media attention paid to immigrants can make them more worried about them (Dunaway, Branton, and Abrajano 2010).

There is also a strand of research that looks into the positive effects of media. Schemer (2012) finds that positive news coverage about immigrants can foster

more positive attitudes towards them among the less knowledgeable individuals. Van Klingeren 2015 (2014) finds a similar result arguing that is the tone of news covering immigration is positive, then the attitudes of the viewers will be more positive. However, Jacops and their colleagues (2016), comparing public and private news channels in Europe, argue that commercial channels broadcast more negative news about the immigrants because negative news is more sensational among the public. Jacops and their colleagues (2016) also conclude that even public channels need a special agenda to foster positive intergroup relations and this can be hard to find where there is political polarization. Not only quick and unregulated commercialization of media and tabloidization but also political polarization are issues of Turkey as discussed in the previous section. Therefore, due to the findings of the prior research, in this study, I will assume that the news coverage regarding minority members and immigrants in Turkey is predominantly negative and argue that this media environment will foster more negative attitudes towards the out-group members.

H_1: Those who consume media more are more negative towards out-group members.

While restricted media can deteriorate intergroup relations, the political sophistication of individuals can mitigate this effect. Usually, politically sophisticated individuals are more likely to be exposed to news due to their interest yet they also have mental tools and knowledge to resist the misinformation. When an informed individual receives information, they filter it through their prior knowledge to decide whether to believe it or not. Motivated reasoning, as explained in the previous chapter, argues that individuals tend to be skeptical towards new information that conflicts with their prior beliefs and they rely less on cues given to them (heuristics) (Taber and Lodge 2006; Zaller 1992). Therefore, knowledgeable individuals would be less affected by biased news coverage of minorities. In contrast, less politically sophisticated individuals have less interest therefore they are not exposed to media as much as the more sophisticated ones. Yet, less sophisticated ones are more prone to accepting media and political party cues given to them and to consequently use shortcuts to form their opinions. Strabac (2014) includes education and political knowledge of individuals in the determinants of out-group attitudes as they can act as filters when individuals are exposed to biased information regarding the out-group members and finds empirical evidence for knowledge's positive effect. Similarly, Eberl and Meltzer (2021), find evidence for their argument that exposure to media causes individuals to be more worried about immigration only if their political sophistication levels are low.

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Eberl and Meltzer (2021), studying how individuals form their opinions about immigration based on what they learned from media explain it in two steps. First, the minority group in question should be "visible" to the individual, which can happen either directly in their lives or (more likely) indirectly through media. The second step is about the nature of this contract and whether the members of the out-group are portrayed positively or negatively. Therefore, step one of this part visibility necessitates that individuals should consume media and be exposed to images of out-group members. The second step requires individuals to be politically sophisticated enough to resist the biased coverage of out-group members. Accordingly, in my second hypothesis, I include media consumption as a moderator and I argue that high political sophistication will have a positive effect on out-group attitudes only when there is high media consumption.

H₂: High political sophistication decreases the negative attitudes towards out-group members when there is high media consumption.

Not all individuals are affected in the same way by media coverage. Hostile Media Perception is the name used to describe tendencies of partisan individuals to not trust mass media coverage. Along with hostile media perception, confirmation bias causes individuals to seek out information that conforms with their prior beliefs, therefore individuals with partisan attachments will prefer media outlets that have the same tendencies as them and tend not to consume neutral or opposite media outlets. This will cause their partisan attitudes to be reinforced and I believe this will also cause them to view the out-group members more negatively.

H₃: Individuals with stronger partisan attachments have more negative attitudes towards the outgroup members.

3.4 Data and Research Design

The data source for the empirical analysis of this chapter is the Turkish Election Study (TES) (Çarkoğlu, Aytaç, and Moral 2018) incorporated in CSES Module 5 (2020). TES includes all CSES questions discussed in the previous chapter along with additional media consumption questions. Therefore, it is ideal for analyzing the effects of media consumption in a country with low media freedom. Furthermore, TES used data from Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK) to select address blocks from all over Turkey to administer their interviews face-to-face.

Interviewers had visited both rural and urban areas, and its investigators used random sampling, adopting a probability proportionate to population size (PPPS) principle while determining their sampling sites from urban and rural regions. Therefore, the findings from our analysis, thanks to the probabilistic sample, can be generalizable to the voting eligible citizens of Turkey. There were 57,547,968 voting eligible citizens at the time of the TES interviews and 1069 Turkish respondents were included in the sample. After recoding missing answers, my estimation sample is limited 821 of those.

3.4.1 Dependent Variable

The dependent variable of this chapter is, as it was in the previous chapter, a five-item scale. Five questions aimed to measure out-group attitudes are used to create a scale of out-group attitudes in which higher values indicate more positive attitudes towards the immigrants and minorities and negative values indicate more negative attitudes. One thing to note about the Turkish context is that since the Syrian civil war started in 2011, there has been a flow of refugees into Turkey. At the time of the survey in 2018, the number of registered Syrian refugees living in Turkey was close to 4 million and less than one million of them gained "exceptional citizenship". Therefore, in this context, most of the respondents probably had Syrian refugees in mind while answering the questions about immigrants. [1]

Furthermore, there are many minority groups in Turkey yet only religious minorities like Armenians and Greeks are constitutionally recognized in the Lausanne Treaty as non-muslim minorities. Muslim ethnic minorities are socially known but not legally recognized. Out of these ethnic minorities, Kurds are the ones that have the largest population size after the Turks, whereas the number of non-muslim religious minorities has declined drastically since the foundation of the Republic of Turkey. Erişen and Erdoğan (2019), investigating tolerance and prejudices towards least liked groups in Turkey, identify 15 groups including but not only limited to atheists, Alevis, headscarved women, communists, Kurds and homosexuals. Therefore, while the survey questions measuring attitudes towards the minorities do not specify any kind of religious, ethnic, sexual, or political minority, these are the categories the respondents could have in mind while answering the questions in the Turkish context.

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[1]Exceptional citizenship is the type of citizenship given to people with specific professions such as artists or doctors. The numbers presented here are taken from the Turkish Refugees Association, a more detailed explanation of which can be found at https://multeciler.org.tr/turkiyedeki-suriyeli-sayisi-aralik-2018

3.4.2 Independent Variables

The main independent variables of this chapter are, again, political interest, political knowledge, and education, which, when brought together, are expected to approximate one's political sophistication. In addition, in this chapter, I also include self-reported media consumption levels of the respondents to assess whether exposure to media affects out-group attitudes. Similar to the previous chapter, I measured political knowledge as the absolute distance between respondent's placement of a political party and the mean placement of that party on the ideological scale (Gordon and Segura 1997). In cases which respondents did not provide an answer to the question, assuming that they would have failed to correctly locate the party, the same penalty of mean response plus 1.96 standard deviations was implemented.

Media exposure can be defined as "the extent to which audience members have encountered specific messages or classes of messages/media content" (Slater 2004, 168). Even though media consumption and exposure might have slightly different connotations, for the purposes of this chapter, I will use media consumption and media exposure interchangeably. Media consumption is measured by either tracking or collecting self-reports. de vreese and neijens 2016 (2016) find that most previous studies on media use self-reported media consumption. Yet, the validity of self-reported media exposure has been a topic of debate in the literature as previous research has shown that the accuracy of self-reported media habits is low (Ansolabehere, Iyengar, and Simon 1999; Price and Zaller 1993; Prior 2009a).

While preparing questionnaires, the researchers hope that respondents will go through a mental process and then answer the questions. Schwarz and Oyserman (2001) explains this process in 9 steps. First, the respondent should understand the question, then they should determine which behavior of them the question asks for, and following it they should reach for its occurrences in their memory. After these initial three steps, the researchers expect that the respondents will understand the relevant time period, scan their memories from this period specifically, successfully separate relevant and irrelevant occurrences in this time period, correctly calculate all the times they can remember, determine which response option is the best for them, and honestly pick that option (2001, 129).

This mental process requires respondents to have willingness, good memory, and adequate cognitive capabilities, as well as time to answer the question accurately.

This is the ideal course. However, mistakes can occur in each one of these steps. Respondents can underreport or overreport their behavior if they do not clearly remember the specified time period, which is called a "telescoping" error. Further, respondents can exaggerate their answers because they might mix up the times they actually had that behavior with the times they thought they did (Belli, Traugott, and Beckmann 2001). Moreover, they can also overreport if they are estimating the times rather than counting them (Brown and Sinclair 1999; Burton and Blair 1991).

Besides these unintentional mistakes, the respondent may be unwilling to provide true information due to social desirability bias or lack of motivation. Satisficing hypothesis suggests that when there is no motivation to dig into their memories and find a true answer for the questions, respondents can overreport their media consumption habits. Social desirability bias, on the other hand assumes that respondents may have a tendency to alter their responses according to what is seen as more appropriate behaviour in their society (Belli, Traugott, and Beckmann 2001; Bernstein, Chadha, and Montjoy 2001; Holbrook et al. 2005).

Prior (2009b) conducted a list experiment to look into social desirability bias that allowed respondents to reveal their true behavior without worrying about how they will be perceived with the help of item count technique but he found no evidence of it in media exposure questions. He also found no evidence for satisficing hypothesis when extra time and additional opportunities were given to respondents to answer media exposure questions. In the experiment he designed, Prior also included "anchor questions" to inform the respondents about the general tendencies of the population before they answer. These anchoring questions also seem to help respondents with reporting a more genuine media exposure.

There are multiple questions asked in the TES regarding respondent's media consumption habits. The main one asks the respondent to indicate how frequently they use radio, newspaper, television and the internet to get political news. The respondents choose between "Never", "Once a month", "A few times a month", "Once a week", "A few times a week", and "Always". After each one of these questions, TES continues to ask them which channels or brands they prefer. Evaluating the TES media consumption questions in the light of previously mentioned research allows us to see both their advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, the TES media consumption questions do not include "vague qualifiers" (Schwarz and Oyserman

2001) such as "Sometimes" or "Regularly". Therefore, they are easier for respondents to comprehend and they have clearly defined periods in the answer scales. On the other hand, there are no anchors for respondents to compare their behavior. For this reason, the consumption habits may be overreported. According to de Vreese and Neijen's (2016) classifications, TES' media consumption questions are free to recall questions (without any cues or aid provided). Moreover, TES questions include the medium type (radio, newspaper, etc.), and specific vehicle (their channel/ brand preferences). However, there is nothing in them to specify the specific unit of media or genre (politics or entertainment). Unit in this sense, refers to the measure of how much they consume a specific media source, for instance in the case of newspapers, unless the unit such as the first page or reading the newspaper front to back is specified, comparing the answers of the respondents can be problematic. Furthermore, Tewksbury (2007), analyzing the American National Election Study, argues that the ideal time frame for exposure measures should be a week. In this sense, TES questions are more demanding regarding the memories of their respondents as they ask for up to a month.

With the entrance of newspapers and television companies into the internet with their webpages, it has become impossible to distinguish one form of media from the other (Taneja and Mamoria 2012) because more and more people access television and newspaper from their smartphones, tablets, and computers via the internet. Due to this media convergence, instead of individually evaluating each media source's consumption, I have also created a media consumption scale composed of self-reported radio, newspapers, television, and internet usage.

Another independent variable in this study is partisan feelings. The partisan attachment variable is measured in two stages in TES. First, the respondents are asked whether or not they feel close to a political party. The follow-up question continues to ask them how close they feel to the party and the respondents have three choices: not very close, somewhat close, and very close. The partisan attachment used in the analysis has 4 values accordingly. Respondents are coded as 0 if they answered they do not feel close to any political party; coded as 1, 2, and 3 according to their responses in the follow-up question.

To account for individual characteristics that might affect out-group attitudes, I include nine control variables. The urban residence is a binary variable in which 0 means the respondent is from a rural area and 1 means they are from an urban area. Origin of the parents is used to measure if the respondent themselves come from an immigrant background. Satisfaction with democracy, economic evaluation,

and employment status variables are included as these being unsatisfied with the current state of their lives may increase the threat perception of the outgroup (Gurr 1970). Ideological stance, age, and gender are also included as important demographic indicators.

3.5 Empirical Analyses and Findings

Figure 3.1 below presents the media freedom of score of Turkey between 2013 and 2021, rated by the Freedom House.[2] The graph shows a steady decrease and a drastic fall after 2013. While, as expressed in the previous sections, media freedom has been problematic in Turkey for a long time, since 2013 a new media regime has been established. Differently from the physical methods employed in the 80s and 90s, journalists and critics are now repressed through legal means such as prosecutions and criminal sanctions, especially based on the so-called Anti-Terror Law (Akdeniz and Altıparmak 2018). This can also be seen in the figure, where the freedom score of Turkey declines drastically and Turkey switches from 'partially free' to 'not free'. The decrease in media freedom becomes more dramatic after the coup attempt in 2016 and the state of emergency especially due to the non-reviewable state of emergency measures. Regulation of social media was also coupled with total bans on websites like Youtube or Wikipedia in this period. Along with this, Radio Television Supreme Council (RTÜK) has become more restrictive in terms of the content shown on television channels. Due to these restrictions, representation of certain stigmatized groups, let alone positive representation, is now very rare. Therefore, media can hardly be assumed to function as a mediator for the contact between the stigmatized groups and majority while institutions like RTÜK persist. Under this new form of censorship, even pro-opposition outlets can only challenge the incumbent to a certain extent due to either security or economic well-being related concerns.

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[2]A more detailed explanation can be found at https://freedomhouse.org/reports/publication-archives

Figure 3.1 Media Freedom in Turkey over Time
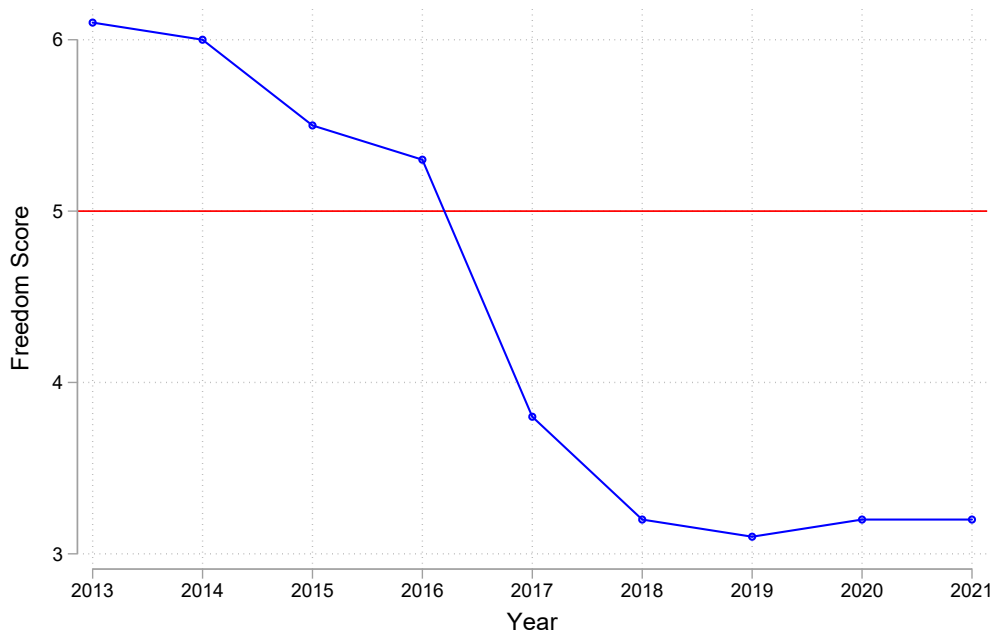
Descriptive statistics presented in Table 1 indicate that the mean political interest level of respondents in Turkey is 2.54, which means that most of the respondents reported having a high level of political interest. A similar case is seen in the political knowledge variable, where the maximum value is 8.22 and the mean is 6.60. The mean of the gender variable is .54, which indicates that female and male respondents are almost even in the sample. The employment variable tells us that majority of the respondents were not actively looking for a job at the time of the interview. When it comes to the control variables, the mean of the origin of the parents variable shows us that only 5% of the sample is born from immigrant parents. The urban residence variable, with a mean of .7, indicates that the majority of the sample lived in cities or large towns where they were more likely to come across members of other groups. Furthermore, the satisfaction with the democracy variable, ranging between 1 (unsatisfied) and 4 (very satisfied), suggests that the majority of the sample was satisfied with the democracy of their country Turkey, in the year 2018. Ideological stance variable, from left to right, with a mean of 6.03 indicates that most of the respondents placed themselves towards the right. The mean of the economic evaluation variable, 3.51, suggests that the majority of the sample perceived that the economy is doing better compared to the past.

Table 3.1 Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std.Dev.	Min	Max	N
Out-Group Attitude Score (IRT)	-0.79	0.80	-2.25	1.85	821
Political Interest	2.54	0.96	1	4	821
Political Knowledge	6.60	1.33	1.32	8.22	821
Partisan Attachment	0.71	0.45	0	1	821
Education	5.56	1.74	1	10	821
Urban Residence	0.70	0.46	0	1	821
Origin of Parents	0.05	0.21	0	1	821
Satisfaction with Democracy	2.69	1.05	1	4	821
Ideological Stance (L-R)	6.03	2.97	0	10	821
Economic Evaluation	3.51	1.26	1	5	821
Age	39.78	14.40	18	81	821
Gender	0.54	0.5	0	1	821
Employment	0.93	0.25	0	1	821

In the sample, as expected, all four measures of media consumption are correlated with political interest. However, they are less correlated with political knowledge (Only radio usage is not significantly correlated, which is most likely due to the low number of respondents who reported listening to the radio regularly) this suggests support for the argument that political interest and media exposure do not amount to political knowledge straightforwardly. These findings are similar to those of Andı, Aytaş, and Çarkoğlu's (2020) study in which they found empirical evidence for their argument that usage is significantly correlated with political knowledge using the 2015 data of Turkish Election Study.

Among the three measures that I use to approximate political sophistication, the correlations are lower in the Turkish sample compared to the previous chapter. The correlation between political interest and political knowledge is only .19 which suggests that while individuals might report that they are interested in media, this does not reflect their knowledge. This might be caused by two effects mentioned earlier. The first one is that the respondents, due to social desirability bias, might be reporting their interest levels higher and the second one is that the information they get from media is not accurate.

In addition, correlations of television consumption with newspaper (0.05), radio

(0.04), and internet (-0.01) are very low. On the contrary, the correlations between newspaper and radio (0.34), newspaper and internet (0.40), radio and internet (0.25) are higher than those of television. This suggests individuals prefer television or other types of media, not both of them so the audiences of television and other types of media are different. Furthermore, the correlations between education and different types of media seem to support this. Education is correlated most with newspaper (0.33) and internet consumption (0.32). Following them, education is correlated with radio (0.14) and television is the media outlet that is least correlated with education (0.04). This also seems to support the idea that audiences of television and other types of media differ from each other and there is a positive association between consumption of radio, newspaper, internet, and education.

Table 3.2 Correlations of Political Interest and Media Consumption

	Political Interest	Political Knowledge	Education	Newspaper Consumption	TV Consumption	Radio Consumption
Political Interest	1					
Political Knowledge	0.19**	1				
Education	0.26**	0.18**	1			
Newspaper Consumption	0.25**	0.15**	0.33**	1		
TV Consumption	0.09**	0.10**	-0.04	0.05	1	
Radio Consumption	0.11**	0.04	0.14**	0.34**	0.04	1

N=821. * p<0.05, ** p<0.01

The distributions of all four types of media sources that are included in the study are presented in Figure 1. On the one hand, as the frequencies in the histograms indicate, the majority of the sample reported that they never use radio to get political news. It appears to be the least popular media source. On the other hand, the majority of the respondents indicated that they watch television every day to follow politics. Television is by far the most popular media outlet. Furthermore, in the cases of newspapers and the internet, approximately the same amount of people reported that they never use them but there were some respondents in each source that indicated that they quite frequently use each of them. The average age in the sample is around 40. We can thus see that the sample includes individuals who prefer to use more traditional media sources such as newspapers and those who prefer new ones like the internet. However, as it was explained in the previous section, media convergence after the internet has become widespread and makes the lines between the internet and other types of media blurry. [3]

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[3] Another version of this analysis with controls for individual media outlets did not show different findings and can be found in Table B.1 in Appendix B.

Figure 3.2 Distribution of Media Consumption in the Estimation Sample
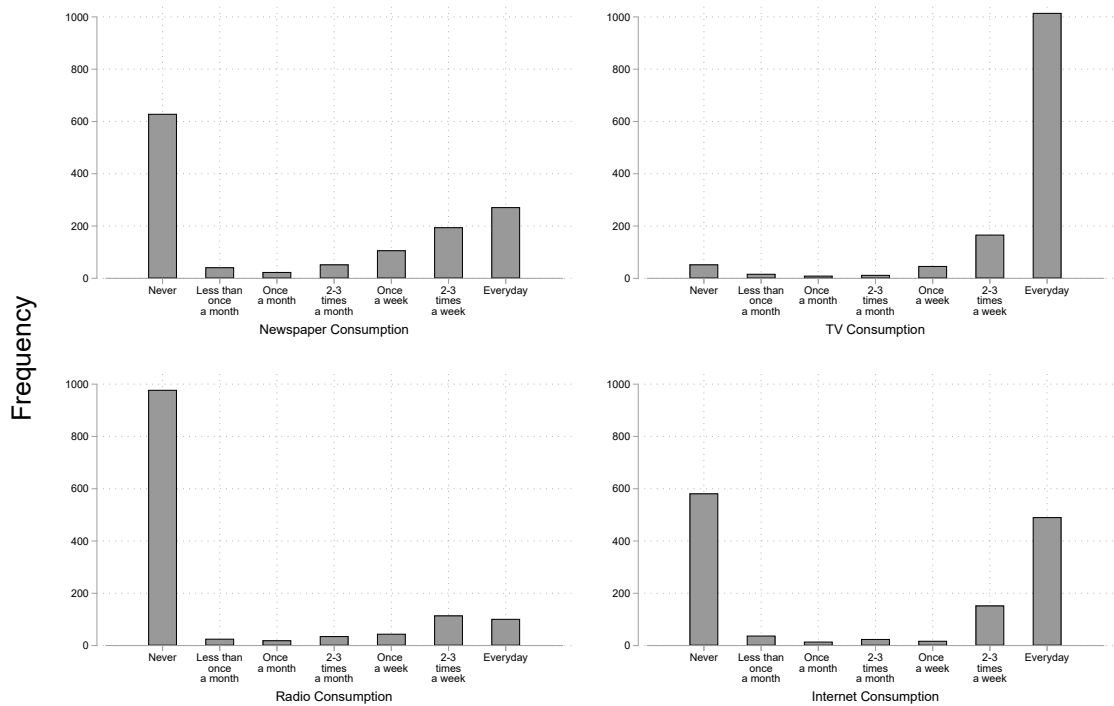
The distribution of the dependent variable in Figure 2 suggests that the majority of the respondents in the sample have negative attitudes towards immigrants and minority members. Only about 11% of the respondents in Turkey seem to have positive attitudes. In addition, this can also be seen in Table 1 where the average out-group attitude score is -0.79. The aggregated out-group scale includes both immigrants and minorities. When examined separately, the mean score for the minority questions is 2.84 and it is 2.20 (from 1 to 5) for immigrants. This means that Turkish respondents, on average, are more positive towards minorities when compared to immigrants. T-test of this difference indicates that (with 736 degrees of freedom), the t statistic is -12.6 which suggests that there is a statistically significant difference between the attitudes of Turkish respondents towards immigrants and minority members.[4]

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[4]Regression analyses on only attitudes towards immigrants show substantively very similar findings and can be found in Table B.2 in Appendix B.

Figure 3.3 Distribution of the Dependent Variable in the Estimation Sample
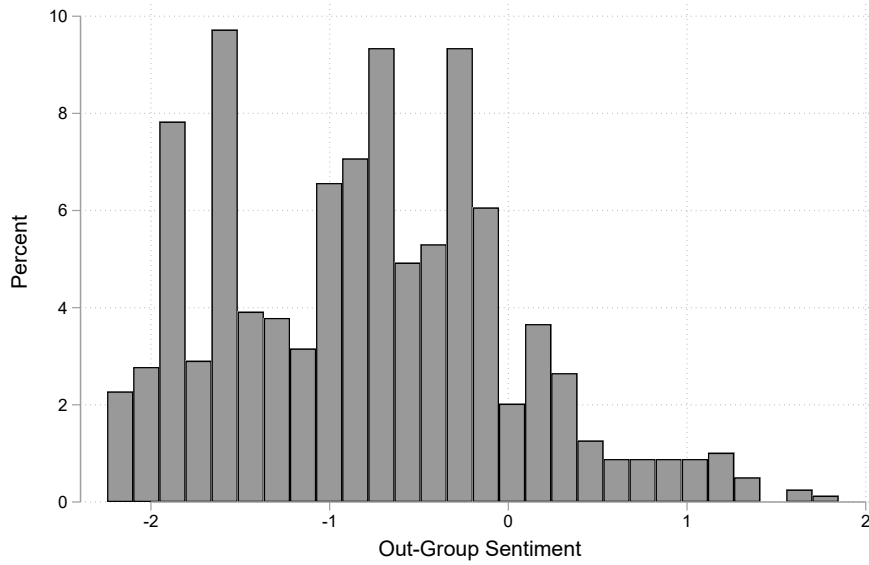
The OLS regressions on out-group attitudes of the respondents are presented in Table 3.[5] In Model 1, there is no evidence for a statistically significant effect of either political interest or political knowledge on out-group attitudes. Therefore, I find no evidence to support my first hypothesis. The only two variables that have statistically significant effects are the control variables, economic evaluation, and age. If an individual perceives that the state of the economy comparing the year before the interview date, they have more positive attitudes towards out-group members. Furthermore, the age variable indicates that older respondents tend to have more positive attitudes towards immigrants and minority members. The effects of these control variables remain significant in Models 2 and 3 as well. As for the third hypothesis, arguing that partisan attachment would lead to more negative out-group attitudes, the effect of partisan is not statistically significant. Thus, my third hypothesis is not supported.

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[5]Another version of this model, where each indicator of political sophistication is introduced seperately, does not present substantively different results and is reported in Table B.3 in Appendix B.

Table 3.3 OLS Regressions on Out-Group Attitudes (IRT)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Media Consumption	0.013	0.019	0.052
	(0.038)	(0.037)	(0.040)
Political Interest	-0.011		
	(0.032)		
Political Knowledge	-0.013		
	(0.021)		
Political Sophistication		0.042	0.038
		(0.051)	(0.051)
Sophistication × Media Consumption			0.116*
			(0.055)
Partisan Attachment	0.024	0.007	0.016
	(0.067)	(0.066)	(0.066)
Education	0.034		
	(0.019)		
Urban Residence	0.010	0.021	0.019
	(0.061)	(0.061)	(0.061)
Origin of Parents	0.057	0.042	0.045
	(0.135)	(0.135)	(0.135)
Satisfaction with Democracy	0.033	0.031	0.031
	(0.038)	(0.038)	(0.038)
Ideological Stance	-0.004	-0.004	-0.004
	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)
Economic Evaluation	-0.125**	-0.119**	-0.118**
	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.028)
Age	0.005*	0.004*	0.004
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Gender	0.014	0.018	0.011
	(0.057)	(0.057)	(0.057)
Employment	-0.030	-0.043	-0.053
	(0.112)	(0.112)	(0.112)
Constant	-0.708*	-0.581**	-0.585**
	(0.293)	(0.217)	(0.216)
N	821	821	821
R^2	0.038	0.034	0.040

Standard errors in parentheses. Two-tailed tests. * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$

Based on Models 2 and 3, the main independent variable is the political so-phistication of respondents created via factor analysis rather than individuals indicators. Factors analysis enables me to create a standardized measure of political sophistication with a mean of zero consisting of these three indicators. In Model 2, the effect of political sophistication on out-group attitudes is not statistically significant. Yet, my theory suggests a conditional relationship between political sophistication and out-group attitudes based on varying levels of media consumption. Therefore, I include an interaction term in Model 3. The interaction term is statistically significant at 95% confidence level. F-test results for Model 2 and 3 indicate that the interaction term improves the model (F value= 0.0673). The marginal effect of political sophistication on out-group attitudes at varying values of media consumption is shown in Figure 3. Figure 3 demonstrates that at low levels of media consumption political sophistication does not affect out-group attitudes. Yet, at high levels of media consumption, political sophistication increases positive attitudes towards immigrants and minority members. Therefore, the second hypothesis arguing that highly politically sophisticated individuals who consume media have more positive attitudes towards the out-group members is supported by this analysis. Starting from the .5 media consumption level, each .5 increase in media consumption results in an almost .1 increase in the effect of political sophistication on out-group attitudes. The standard deviation of the out-group attitudes variable is .8 therefore and it ranges between -2.25 and 1.85 (shown in Table 1). Thus, the conditional effect of political sophistication on attitudes towards immigrants and minority members is also substantively significant.

Figure 3.4 Marginal Effect of Political Sophistication on Out-Group Attitudes |
Media Consumption (95% Confidence Level, Model 3 in Table 3)
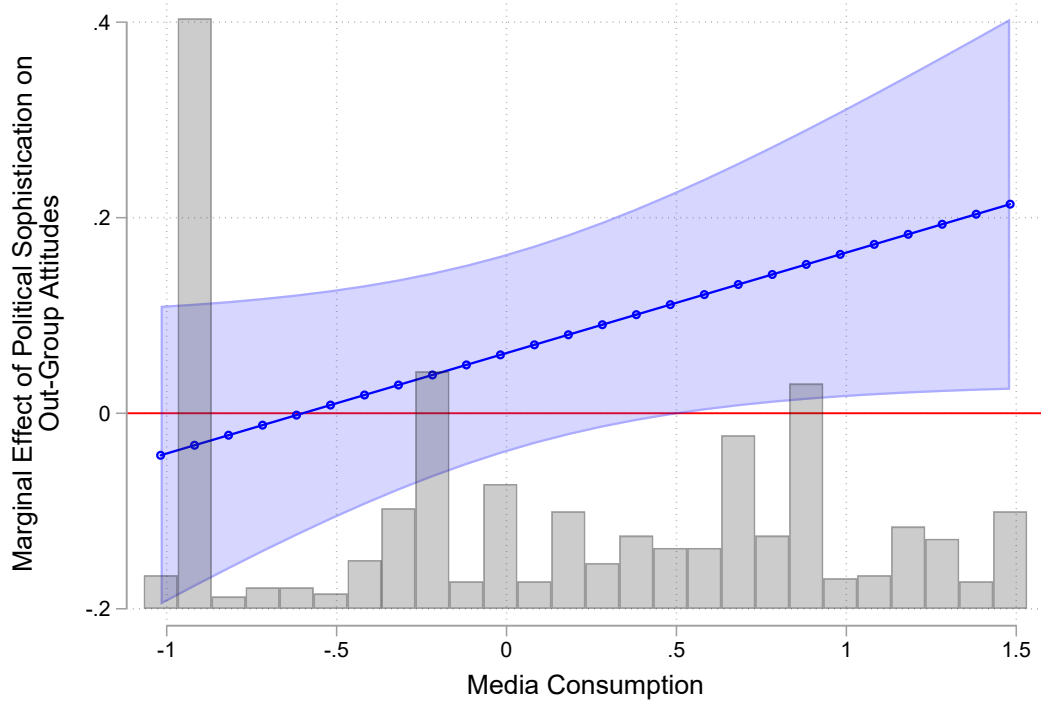
3.6 Discussion

To conclude, this chapter aims to investigate how political sophistication affects out-group attitudes in Turkey, taking into consideration the current media environment and intergroup relations. The findings from the empirical analyses do not support the first hypothesis that more media consumption leads to more negative out-group attitudes. Prior (2009b, 893) states that "[n]ull findings may reflect not the absence of media effects, but flawed measures of exposure." As it was discussed in the previous chapters, without anchoring statements, respondents are likely to over-report their media exposure (Burton and Blair 1991) and this study has to rely on self-reported measurements of media exposure. Therefore, future studies may prefer to include effective anchors in questionnaires to reduce such an over-reporting and have a more valid measurement of media exposure.

As for my second hypothesis, the findings suggest that political sophistication, as sum of political interest, knowledge, and education, affects out-group attitudes positively only when those who are politically sophisticated also consume media at high levels. This finding is in line with Eberl and Meltzer's (2018) theory on two-staged out-group attitude formations from media. Eberl and Meltzer (2018) hypothesize that for media to serve as a mediator for intergroup contact out-group members should be visible and the nature of the content on media should be positive, or individuals should be knowledgeable enough to disregard the negative framing. In this study, due to the fast and unregulated commercialization of Turkish media outlets, political polarization, and tabloidization, it is assumed that the news content individuals were exposed to is biased against out-group members and individuals thus need a certain degree of political sophistication to disregard the negative framing in the news. Future research can also couple a similar analysis with a content analysis of newspapers, television channels, or internet sources to also measure how minorities and immigrants are framed in those distinct media outlets and empirically assess how different frames interact with varying levels of political sophistication.

In addition, my third hypothesis, suggesting that individuals with higher levels of partisan attachments have more negative attitudes towards out-group members due to their selective exposure and cognitive biases is not supported by empirical findings. Measuring partisan attachment is not easy as the concept itself varies across countries. In this study, I took "feeling close" questions as the measure

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of partisan attachment and created a four point scale of partisan attachment. Different measures and scales of partisan attitudes can lead to different results.

One reason for these findings might be related to the coverage of certain minority groups in Turkey in news media outlets. The literature on the coverage of Syrian refugees provide opposite findings in Turkey. One strand of research argues that the coverage has been positive. Efe (2019) argues that Syrian immigrants' framing in the news is very hard to compare to the coverage in the US or Europe. In Turkey, the government welcomed the refugees as "guests" at first, and an analysis of news coverage related to refugees until 2013 reveals that their coverage was actually mostly humanitarian, portraying refugees as victims. However, there was also a lot of coverage of Syrians as threats to economic welfare and security. Efe (2019) finds that framing of Syrians as "kardeşlerimiz" (our brothers/sisters) was seen in media outlets that sided with the government and a harsher criticism of government's policies regarding refugees, more negative coverage, was seen in opposition outlets. A more recent study (Narlı, Özaşçılar, and Turkan Ipek 2020) finds that Turkish media differ from Western media in the sense that Turkish media do not stereotype refugees, there is usually a humanitarian tone. Furthermore, some other studies argue that the welcoming attitude towards the refugees and the shared Muslim identity have mostly disappeared in around 2016. Therefore, the references to coverage of refugees is neither consistent with the rest of the world nor over time in Turkey. As the news coverage in Turkey related to Syrian refugees is quite different than the coverage in the West, attitudes towards Syrians are hard to measure using the same measurement.

In conclusion, even though in the first empirical chapter there was a clear, positive effect of political sophistication on out-group attitudes, it does not seem to be generalizable to countries with restricted media environments such as Turkey. The Turkish media landscape is complex in terms of its polarization, commercialization, and censorship, and distinctiveness from the Western media due to its coverage of stigmatized groups. For this reason, quantitative analyses alone cannot explain the effects of media on individual-level cognition and its transformation into out-group attitudes. In addition, this study employs data from only 2018. However, as it was discussed, the Turkish media landscape is very dynamic. Therefore, future research examining these variables over time varying findings might be reached.

4.   CONCLUSION

Political literacy and sophistication are the backbone of democratic regimes. Democracies depend on rational and informed decision-making of their citizens in elections to function properly. In this context, the media are responsible of informing the citizens and holding officeholders accountable and a free media environment has been shown to reduce malpractices in a democracy (Brunetti and Weder 2003). While the importance of media freedom is well discussed in literature, in practice, it is hard to achieve. There can be state-imposed restrictions on media such as censorship or media due to commercialization can tend to follow the agendas of certain political movements. Press-party parallelism explains how media groups follow political parties or movements and become tools for the elite to shape citizens' information about politics. One might argue that while some channels present biased information, viewers can easily switch to another brand or channel to get their news and this would even out the bias. Yet cognitive studies indicate the opposite. Studies on media consumption preferences and partisan attachments claim that individuals tend to prefer media outlets that confirm the information they already have and they abstain from being exposed to different views.

This tendency to avoid cognitive dissonance is very problematic for democratic principles and positive intergroup relations. Intergroup contact theory argues that direct or mediated (in this case through media) contact with members of different social groups can improve intergroup relations if it is a positive experience. When individuals stick to their preferred media channels in a polarized media environment because of motivated skepticism (Taber and Lodge 2006), they are not affected by positive mediated intergroup contact or cognitive dissonance. As important as the framing of minority members is important in media, most media outlets adopt a negative frame while referring to them (Boomgaarden and Vliegenthart 2007; Müller et al. 2017; Schroeder 2019) and this turns out to be detrimental for inter-group relations.

In the first empirical chapter of this thesis, I employ the CSES Module 5 dataset to investigate the effects of the determinants of political sophistication on attitudes towards immigrants and minority members. While political interest is a subjective measure of sophistication, following Gordon and Segura's (1997) measurement, I coded political knowledge from the correct placements of political parties on the left-right spectrum as a more objective measure of general political knowledge. Previous studies in the literature have presented how important media environment is for political knowledge. Thus, I include restrictions on media coded from the World Press Freedom Index as a moderator to relationship between political sophistication and out-group attitudes. CSES includes data from a wide array of countries with varying levels of media freedom. Therefore, my sample in the second empirical chapter includes countries from both ends of the media freedom spectrum.

First, I find that political interest has a positive effect on out-group attitudes. When I compare this to the effect of political knowledge, I find that they have similar effects on out-group attitudes. Furthermore, when I include an interaction term with restrictions on media score, I find that when there are few restraints on media, the effect of political interest is positive. However, when there are numerous restraints on media, the effect is negative. The findings support my expectation that a free media environment is one of the most important prerequisites of informed citizens and healthy inter-group relations.

In the second empirical chapter of this thesis, to further look into how media affects this relationship, I examine the Turkish media environment and media consumption habits of its citizens using the Turkish Election Study (2018). In the third chapter, political sophistication and out-group attitudes are measured in the same way they were measured in the previous chapter, and I added media consumption as a new variable. Previous studies suggest that media can affect both political knowledge levels of citizens and their attitudes towards an out-group. Accordingly, I introduced an interactions of those two to the model. The marginal effect plot shows that in a polarized and commercialized media environment like Turkey when individuals do not consume much media, their political sophistication does not affect their out-group attitudes. Yet, when individuals' consumption of media is at high levels, political sophistication affects attitudes towards immigrants and minority members positively. This analysis confirms the second hypothesis of this chapter that there is a conditional relationship between sophistication and

out-group attitudes in restricted media environments.

In conclusion, CSES Planning Committee's decision to remove factual political knowledge questions because political interest and education questions provide enough data for approximating political sophistication seems to be awrong one. In the first empirical chapter, after coding political knowledge following Gordon and Segura (1997), while the effect of both political interest and knowledge turn out to be very similar, their magnitudes are estimated to be slightly different. In the second empirical chapter focusing on Turkey, the difference between them is larger. I argue that the difference between political interest and knowledge is due to misinformation stemming from media sources or due to social desirability bias in reporting political interest. Therefore, including different measures of political knowledge such as factual questions can improve the validity of our measures of political sophistication even further.

Cohabitation of different social groups is a very delicate yet necessary balance for governments to achieve. This study highlights quite a few factors that might cause intergroup relations to become more negative. The first one of those is related to the framing in broadcast media and news media channels. Internet and social media are double-edged swords. On the one hand, they provide quick access to more information and news circulate faster than ever. However, on the other hand, individuals with radical or far-right tendencies can easily find like-minded individuals and this contact can bolster their in-group identity even more which in turn causes them to be more negative towards the out-group members. Polarization in media and anonymity on internet leads to a higher frequency of the "Junk News", outlets that spread incorrect information deliberately, to increase in number (Narayanan et al. 2018). It has been argued that people with partisan attachments are more receptive to online content and they are more likely to share what they find (Weeks and Holbert 2013). This combination makes fake or biased information circulate faster on the internet, which in turn increases polarization. So, in the end, it leads to a vicious cycle. Its implications for the future of our democracies are not cheerful either. Increasing support for populism undermines trust in institutions and democratic regimes throughout the world which, as noted above, are necessary for democratic regimes to function.

The politicization of media is a concern for every single country regardless of the composition of their nation . Yet in the Turkish case it is a more serious concern. Taking into account the democratic backsliding in Turkey in the last decade, her various minority groups, and her already polarized society, the politicization of media poses a great threat to the continuation of her democracy. While findings from previous studies and this thesis indicate that press-party parallelism, political polarization in media, commercialization, and tabloidization are all harmful for intergroup relations, they are of course not the only factors. The first empirical chapter shows that political sophistication, living in urban areas, satisfaction with democracy and economy can all contribute to more positive out-group attitudes and consequently a more harmonious society. The second empirical chapter demonstrates that political sophistication can improve out-group attitudes even when there are high levels of press-party parallelism and restrictions on media.

Furthermore, the social identity theory of Tajfel (1974) underlines that social categorization is a product of the social context. While it is very hard to change the social context of a country, there are methods argued to be effective in reducing intergroup aggression. The first one of those is direct inter-group contact taken account of in this thesis through the urban or rural residency of survey respondents. The second is mediated intergroup contact, which is assumed to happen through media. Intergroup contact has been shown to personalize the relationship between individuals and cause a shift from "us and them" to "you and me", which in turn decreases the salience of group identities (Ensari and Miller 2002).

However, such a decrease in the salience of identities can also be considered assimilation of minority identities. Therefore, rather than a decategorization, efforts to construct for dual identity may prove to be more productive for our future. The dual identity model assumes that individuals have hierarchies in their identities (Allport 1954). In such a case, having a human or a citizen of the Republic of Turkey identity would not clash with but include other ethnic, religious, political, sexual, or linguistic minorities, which is an essential principle for a well functioning and inclusive democracy. Therefore, rather than allowing populist discourse and radical media content to further polarize the society, it should be acknowledged that positive representation of all minorities in the media and, through that better informing the electorate about how citizenship can be an umbrella identity including more diverse categories is crucial for the future of any healthy democracy.

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Table A.1 OLS Regressions on Additive Out-Group Attitudes Scale

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Restraints on Media	-0.008**	0.009**	0.017**	0.029**	-0.008**	-0.008**
	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Political Interest	0.074**	0.227**	0.069**	0.203**		
	(0.009)	(0.020)	(0.009)	(0.020)		
Political Knowledge	-0.029**	-0.029**	0.068**	0.055**		
	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.012)	(0.012)		
Restraints on Media ×		-0.006**		-0.005**		
Political Interest		(0.001)		(0.001)		
Restraints on Media ×			-0.004**	-0.003**		
Political Knowledge			(0.000)	(0.000)		
Political Sophistication					0.159**	0.510**
					(0.011)	(0.028)
Restraints on Media ×						-0.014**
Political Sophistication						(0.001)
Education	0.072**	0.073**	0.072**	0.074**		
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)		
Politics in Media	0.029**	0.030**	0.030**	0.031**	0.041**	0.039**
	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.008)	(0.008)
Urban Residence	0.354**	0.347**	0.351**	0.345**	0.379**	0.366**
	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)
Origin of Parents	0.097**	0.094**	0.095**	0.093**	0.108**	0.098**
	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.016)
Satisfaction with Democracy	-0.138**	-0.143**	-0.139**	-0.143**	-0.146**	-0.151**
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
Ideological Stance	-0.094**	-0.094**	-0.093**	-0.094**	-0.091**	-0.091**
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Economic Evaluation	0.043**	0.046**	0.044**	0.046**	0.054**	0.060**
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
Age	-0.007**	-0.007**	-0.007**	-0.007**	-0.007**	-0.007**
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Gender	0.050**	0.049**	0.053**	0.051**	0.061**	0.059**
	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)
Immigrants in Population (%)	0.009**	0.008**	0.011**	0.010**	0.008**	0.008**
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Employment	0.045	0.041	0.039	0.036	0.042	0.032
	(0.024)	(0.024)	(0.024)	(0.024)	(0.024)	(0.024)
Constant	3.261**	2.830**	2.571**	2.289**	3.710**	3.709**
	(0.059)	(0.078)	(0.101)	(0.108)	(0.052)	(0.052)
N	20407	20407	20407	20407	20407	20407
R^2	0.270	0.273	0.273	0.275	0.260	0.267

Standard errors in parentheses. Two-tailed tests.* $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$

Table A.2 OLS Regressions on Out-Group Attitudes Factor Scores

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Restraints on Media	-0.009**	0.006*	0.019**	0.029**	-0.009**	-0.010**
	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Political Interest	0.068**	0.205**	0.063**	0.179**		
	(0.010)	(0.022)	(0.010)	(0.022)		
Political Knowledge	-0.033**	-0.033**	0.077**	0.067**		
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.013)	(0.013)		
Restraints on Media × Political Interest		-0.005**		-0.005**		
		(0.001)		(0.001)		
Restraints on Media × Political Knowledge			-0.004**	-0.004**		
			(0.000)	(0.000)		
Political Sophistication					0.152**	0.487**
					(0.012)	(0.031)
Restraints on Media × Political Sophistication						-0.013**
						(0.001)
Education	0.075**	0.076**	0.076**	0.076**		
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)		
Politics in Media	0.042**	0.043**	0.043**	0.044**	0.052**	0.051**
	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.008)	(0.008)
Urban Residence	0.358**	0.352**	0.353**	0.349**	0.386**	0.373**
	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)
Origin of Parents	0.100**	0.097**	0.098**	0.096**	0.113**	0.102**
	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)
Satisfaction with Democracy	-0.127**	-0.133**	-0.130**	-0.134**	-0.139**	-0.147**
	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)
Ideological Stance	-0.094**	-0.094**	-0.094**	-0.094**	-0.091**	-0.091**
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Economic Evaluation	0.058**	0.059**	0.057**	0.059**	0.068**	0.072**
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
Age	-0.006**	-0.006**	-0.006**	-0.006**	-0.007**	-0.007**
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Gender	0.057**	0.057**	0.060**	0.060**	0.070**	0.069**
	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)
Immigrants in Population (%)	0.007**	0.006**	0.009**	0.008**	0.005**	0.005**
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Employment	0.038	0.036	0.034	0.032	0.036	0.028
	(0.026)	(0.026)	(0.026)	(0.026)	(0.026)	(0.026)
Constant	0.081	-0.293**	-0.702**	-0.945**	0.533**	0.553**
	(0.065)	(0.084)	(0.111)	(0.118)	(0.057)	(0.057)
N	17787	17787	17787	17787	17787	17787
R^2	0.277	0.279	0.280	0.282	0.265	0.271

Standard errors in parentheses. Two-tailed tests.* $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$

Table A.3 OLS Regressions on Attitudes towards Immigrants

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Restraints on Media	-0.015**	-0.002	0.014**	0.022**	-0.015**	-0.016**
	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Political Interest	0.069**	0.185**	0.064**	0.157**		
	(0.009)	(0.020)	(0.009)	(0.020)		
Political Knowledge	-0.029**	-0.029**	0.082**	0.073**		
	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.012)	(0.012)		
Restraints on Media ×		-0.005**		-0.004**		
Political Interest		(0.001)		(0.001)		
Restraints on Media ×			-0.004**	-0.004**		
Political Knowledge			(0.000)	(0.000)		
Political Sophistication					0.143**	0.439**
					(0.011)	(0.028)
Restraints on Media ×						-0.012**
Political Sophistication						(0.001)
Education	0.066**	0.067**	0.067**	0.068**		
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)		
Politics in Media	0.046**	0.047**	0.048**	0.048**	0.059**	0.058**
	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.008)	(0.008)
Urban Residence	0.302**	0.297**	0.297**	0.293**	0.327**	0.316**
	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)
Origin of Parents	0.099**	0.097**	0.098**	0.096**	0.111**	0.101**
	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.017)
Satisfaction with Democracy	-0.126**	-0.130**	-0.128**	-0.132**	-0.136**	-0.143**
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
Ideological Stance	-0.079**	-0.079**	-0.079**	-0.079**	-0.077**	-0.077**
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Economic Evaluation	0.041**	0.042**	0.041**	0.042**	0.050**	0.054**
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
Age	-0.004**	-0.004**	-0.003**	-0.003**	-0.004**	-0.004**
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Gender	0.031**	0.031**	0.034**	0.034**	0.042**	0.042**
	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)
Immigrants in Population (%)	-0.000	-0.001	0.002	0.001	-0.001	-0.002
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Employment	0.020	0.017	0.014	0.013	0.017	0.009
	(0.024)	(0.024)	(0.024)	(0.024)	(0.024)	(0.024)
Constant	0.231**	-0.082	-0.548**	-0.738**	0.649**	0.673**
	(0.060)	(0.077)	(0.101)	(0.108)	(0.053)	(0.052)
N	18028	18028	18028	18028	18028	18028
R^2	0.259	0.260	0.262	0.263	0.248	0.253

Standard errors in parentheses. Two-tailed tests.* p<0.05, ** p<0.01

This dependent variable takes account of only three questions from the CSES Module 5 measuring attitudes towards immigrants.

Table A.4 OLS Regressions on Out-Group Attitudes (IRT) with All Determinants of Sophistication

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Restraints on Media	-0.012**	-0.013**	-0.012**	0.030**	-0.012**	-0.012**
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.004)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Political Interest	0.098**			0.196**		
	(0.009)			(0.021)		
Political Knowledge		-0.021**		0.078**		
		(0.003)		(0.012)		
Restraints on Media × Political Interest				-0.005**		
				(0.001)		
Restraints on Media × Political Knowledge				-0.004**		
				(0.000)		
Political Sophistication					0.162**	0.511**
					(0.012)	(0.029)
Restraints on Media × Political Sophistication						-0.014**
						(0.001)
Education			0.072**	0.075**		
			(0.004)	(0.004)		
Politics in Media	0.050**	0.123**	0.094**	0.045**	0.059**	0.057**
	(0.009)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.009)	(0.008)	(0.008)
Urban Residence	0.359**	0.357**	0.344**	0.322**	0.357**	0.344**
	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)
Origin of Parents	0.096**	0.093**	0.093**	0.083**	0.098**	0.088**
	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.017)
Satisfaction with Democracy	-0.150**	-0.149**	-0.134**	-0.139**	-0.142**	-0.147**
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
Ideological Stance	-0.094**	-0.096**	-0.090**	-0.092**	-0.090**	-0.090**
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Economic Evaluation	0.059**	0.055**	0.052**	0.051**	0.059**	0.066**
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
Age	-0.006**	-0.006**	-0.005**	-0.005**	-0.006**	-0.006**
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Gender	0.060**	0.048**	0.048**	0.050**	0.059**	0.057**
	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.011)	(0.012)	(0.012)
Immigrants in Population (%)	0.004**	0.009**	0.004**	0.005**	0.002	0.002
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Employment	0.059*	0.068**	0.033	0.032	0.038	0.028
	(0.024)	(0.025)	(0.024)	(0.024)	(0.024)	(0.024)
Constant	0.452**	0.645**	0.061	-0.909**	0.654**	0.655**
	(0.053)	(0.057)	(0.057)	(0.110)	(0.053)	(0.053)
N	20432	20432	20432	20432	20432	20432
R^2	0.242	0.239	0.250	0.262	0.245	0.251

Standard errors in parentheses. Two-tailed tests.* p<0.05, ** p<0.01

Table A.5 OLS Regressions on Out-Group Attitudes (IRT) with Country Fixed Effects

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Restraints on Media	0.100**	0.114**	0.114**	0.125**	0.094**	0.093**
	(0.018)	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.018)	(0.018)
Political Interest	0.082**	0.212**	0.081**	0.202**		
	(0.009)	(0.021)	(0.009)	(0.021)		
Political Knowledge	0.016**	0.016**	0.075**	0.065**		
	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.012)	(0.012)		
Political Interest × Restraints on Media		-0.005**		-0.005**		
		(0.001)		(0.001)		
Political Knowledge × Restraints on Media			-0.002**	-0.002**		
			(0.000)	(0.000)		
Political Sophistication					0.291**	0.594**
					(0.011)	(0.029)
Political Sophistication × Restraints on Media						-0.012**
						(0.001)
Education	0.090**	0.089**	0.089**	0.089**		
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)		
Politics in Media	0.045**	0.044**	0.045**	0.045**	0.030**	0.032**
	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.007)	(0.007)
Urban Residence	0.143**	0.140**	0.143**	0.140**	0.151**	0.146**
	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)
Origin of Parents	0.102**	0.101**	0.102**	0.101**	0.110**	0.103**
	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.016)
Satisfaction with Democracy	-0.133**	-0.132**	-0.132**	-0.131**	-0.131**	-0.126**
	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.008)
Ideological Stance	-0.102**	-0.102**	-0.102**	-0.102**	-0.102**	-0.102**
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Economic Evaluation	0.022**	0.023**	0.022**	0.023**	0.024**	0.026**
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
Age	-0.005**	-0.005**	-0.005**	-0.005**	-0.005**	-0.005**
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Gender	0.056**	0.056**	0.057**	0.056**	0.065**	0.062**
	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)
Brazil	-0.883**	-0.894**	-0.889**	-0.898**	-0.721*	-0.769*
	(0.320)	(0.319)	(0.319)	(0.319)	(0.320)	(0.319)
Chile	-0.570**	-0.565**	-0.541**	-0.540**	-0.464*	-0.446*
	(0.189)	(0.189)	(0.189)	(0.189)	(0.189)	(0.189)
Germany	0.067*	0.046	0.067*	0.048	0.077*	0.038
	(0.033)	(0.033)	(0.033)	(0.033)	(0.033)	(0.033)
France	-0.373**	-0.365**	-0.352**	-0.348**	-0.314*	-0.297*
	(0.129)	(0.129)	(0.129)	(0.129)	(0.129)	(0.129)
Greece	-1.234**	-1.220**	-1.200**	-1.192**	-1.097**	-1.050**
	(0.252)	(0.252)	(0.252)	(0.252)	(0.252)	(0.251)
Hungary	-1.921**	-1.927**	-1.887**	-1.898**	-1.788**	-1.774**
	(0.277)	(0.277)	(0.277)	(0.277)	(0.278)	(0.277)
Ireland	0.572**	0.548**	0.586**	0.561**	0.592**	0.560**
	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.036)
Lithuania	-0.702**	-0.693**	-0.674**	-0.670**	-0.625**	-0.604**
	(0.127)	(0.127)	(0.127)	(0.127)	(0.127)	(0.127)
Montenegro	-1.675**	-1.663**	-1.662**	-1.653**	-1.513**	-1.500**
	(0.321)	(0.321)	(0.321)	(0.321)	(0.321)	(0.320)
New Zealand	1.151**	1.107**	1.161**	1.118**	1.131**	1.081**
	(0.092)	(0.092)	(0.092)	(0.092)	(0.092)	(0.092)
Turkey	-4.014**	-4.028**	-3.956**	-3.978**	-3.778**	-3.821**
	(0.689)	(0.688)	(0.689)	(0.688)	(0.690)	(0.688)
USA	-0.524**	-0.515**	-0.493**	-0.490**	-0.414*	-0.385*
	(0.172)	(0.172)	(0.172)	(0.172)	(0.172)	(0.171)
Employment	0.078**	0.079**	0.074**	0.074**	0.085**	0.080**
	(0.023)	(0.023)	(0.023)	(0.023)	(0.023)	(0.023)
Constant	-2.139**	-2.491**	-2.521**	-2.788**	-1.112**	-1.120**
	(0.282)	(0.286)	(0.292)	(0.295)	(0.280)	(0.279)
N	20432	20432	20432	20432	20432	20432
R^2	0.338	0.340	0.339	0.340	0.335	0.339

Standard errors in parentheses. Two-tailed tests.* p<0.05, ** p<0.01

Table B.1 OLS Regressions on Out-Group Attitudes with Controls for Individual Media Outlets

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Media Consumption	0.026	0.029	0.011	0.010	0.014	0.044
	(0.037)	(0.036)	(0.038)	(0.038)	(0.038)	(0.041)
Political Interest	0.014			0.004		
	(0.032)			(0.033)		
Political Knowledge		0.001		-0.002		
		(0.022)		(0.022)		
Political Sophistication					0.064	0.062
					(0.052)	(0.052)
Media Consumption × Political Sophistication						0.103
						(0.056)
Partisan Attachment						
Education			0.031	0.031		
			(0.019)	(0.019)		
Partisan Attachment	-0.036	-0.033	-0.033	-0.033	-0.038	-0.037
	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.027)	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.028)
Urban Residence	0.016	0.015	0.006	0.006	0.013	0.012
	(0.062)	(0.062)	(0.062)	(0.062)	(0.062)	(0.062)
Origin of Parents	-0.001	0.001	0.014	0.013	0.004	0.006
	(0.137)	(0.137)	(0.137)	(0.137)	(0.137)	(0.137)
Satisfaction with Democracy	0.019	0.020	0.021	0.021	0.019	0.018
	(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.039)
Ideological Stance (L-R)	-0.002	-0.003	-0.001	-0.001	-0.001	-0.001
	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)
Economic Evaluation	-0.115**	-0.116**	-0.121**	-0.121**	-0.116**	-0.116**
	(0.028)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.028)	(0.028)
Age	0.003	0.003	0.005*	0.005*	0.004	0.004
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Gender	0.015	0.010	0.021	0.022	0.026	0.021
	(0.059)	(0.057)	(0.058)	(0.059)	(0.059)	(0.059)
Employment	-0.044	-0.044	-0.028	-0.028	-0.034	-0.044
	(0.116)	(0.116)	(0.116)	(0.116)	(0.116)	(0.116)
Constant	-0.519*	-0.494	-0.713**	-0.705*	-0.495*	-0.493*
	(0.234)	(0.269)	(0.260)	(0.300)	(0.219)	(0.219)
N	792	792	792	792	792	792
R^2	0.032	0.032	0.035	0.035	0.034	0.038

Standard errors in parentheses. Two-tailed tests.* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

Table B.2 OLS Regressions on Attitudes towards Immigrants

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Media Consumption	-0.016	-0.012	0.009
	(0.041)	(0.040)	(0.044)
Political Interest	0.018		
	(0.035)		
Political Knowledge	-0.007		
	(0.024)		
Political Sophistication		0.085	0.083
		(0.055)	(0.055)
Media Consumption ×			0.072
Political Sophistication			(0.060)
Partisan Attachment	-0.029	-0.034	-0.033
	(0.030)	(0.030)	(0.030)
Partisan Attachment			
Education	0.035		
	(0.021)		
Urban Residence	0.027	0.036	0.034
	(0.067)	(0.066)	(0.066)
Origin of Parents	-0.022	-0.030	-0.028
	(0.150)	(0.150)	(0.150)
Satisfaction with Democracy	0.014	0.012	0.010
	(0.041)	(0.041)	(0.041)
Ideological Stance (L-R)	0.001	0.001	0.001
	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)
Economic Evaluation	-0.125**	-0.119**	-0.119**
	(0.031)	(0.030)	(0.030)
Age	0.006*	0.005*	0.005*
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Gender	0.019	0.021	0.017
	(0.063)	(0.063)	(0.063)
Employment	-0.062	-0.069	-0.076
	(0.125)	(0.124)	(0.124)
Constant	0.040	0.280	0.284
	(0.321)	(0.235)	(0.235)
N	763	763	763
R^2	0.040	0.039	0.040

Standard errors in parentheses. Two-tailed tests.* $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$
This dependent variable takes account of only three questions from the
the CSES Module 5 measuring attitudes towards the immigrants.

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	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Media Consumption	0.026	0.029	0.011	0.010	0.014	0.044
	(0.037)	(0.036)	(0.038)	(0.038)	(0.038)	(0.041)
Political Interest	0.014			0.004		
	(0.032)			(0.033)		
Political Knowledge		0.001		-0.002		
		(0.022)		(0.022)		
Political Sophistication					0.064	0.062
					(0.052)	(0.052)
Media Consumption ×						0.103
Political Sophistication						(0.056)
Partisan Attachment						
Education			0.031	0.031		
			(0.019)	(0.019)		
Partisan Attachment	-0.036	-0.033	-0.033	-0.033	-0.038	-0.037
	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.027)	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.028)
Urban Residence	0.016	0.015	0.006	0.006	0.013	0.012
	(0.062)	(0.062)	(0.062)	(0.062)	(0.062)	(0.062)
Origin of Parents	-0.001	0.001	0.014	0.013	0.004	0.006
	(0.137)	(0.137)	(0.137)	(0.137)	(0.137)	(0.137)
Satisfaction with Democracy	0.019	0.020	0.021	0.021	0.019	0.018
	(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.039)
Ideological Stance (L-R)	-0.002	-0.003	-0.001	-0.001	-0.001	-0.001
	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)
Economic Evaluation	-0.115**	-0.116**	-0.121**	-0.121**	-0.116**	-0.116**
	(0.028)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.028)	(0.028)
Age	0.003	0.003	0.005*	0.005*	0.004	0.004
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Gender	0.015	0.010	0.021	0.022	0.026	0.021
	(0.059)	(0.057)	(0.058)	(0.059)	(0.059)	(0.059)
Employment	-0.044	-0.044	-0.028	-0.028	-0.034	-0.044
	(0.116)	(0.116)	(0.116)	(0.116)	(0.116)	(0.116)
Constant	-0.519*	-0.494	-0.713**	-0.705*	-0.495*	-0.493*
	(0.234)	(0.269)	(0.260)	(0.300)	(0.219)	(0.219)
N	792	792	792	792	792	792
R^2	0.032	0.032	0.035	0.035	0.034	0.038

Standard errors in parentheses. Two-tailed tests.* $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$