



Attitudes Toward Illegal Immigration and Exposure to Public Service and Commercial Broadcasting in France, Norway, and the United States

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This article investigates the relationship among political ideological orientations, exposure to news from public service and commercial broadcasters, and attitudes toward illegal immigration. Based on a comparative data set of a survey administered simultaneously in the United States, France, and Norway, we hypothesize that commercial news broadcasting drives stricter attitudes toward illegal immigration than public service broadcasting does. The findings suggest that political orientation is the strongest predictor of negative attitudes toward illegal immigration in all three countries. In addition, we find that exposure to commercial news broadcasting is positively related to negative attitudes toward illegal immigration in the United States, France, and Norway. Public service broadcasting, in contrast, leads to more positive attitudes toward illegal immigration in the United States but not in France and Norway. The implications for future research are discussed.

Keywords: illegal immigration, public opinion, media use, public service broadcasting, commercial broadcasting

The ways in which immigration is discussed in a democratic society reflect the core values of its citizens. Immigration is among the most hotly debated topics around the world and is a key challenge to achieving healthy, cohesive societies. What explains the differences in attitudes and opinions toward immigration in general and toward illegal or irregular immigration in particular? The literature on media use and media effects shows that the news media can set the public agenda for politics and current affairs (McCombs, Lopez-Escobar, & Llamas, 2000). News can also emphasize certain aspects of an issue when

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individuals evaluate a problem or a situation (Krosnick & Kinder, 1990) and can influence policy preferences and attitudes (Matthes & Schemer, 2012). In the issues of migration and immigration, scholars have identified a number of factors that shape anti-immigration attitudes, including age, education, socioeconomic status, and news media content (e.g., Beyer & Matthes, 2015; Dunaway, Branton, & Abrajano, 2010; Facchini, Mayda, & Puglisi, 2009; Gil de Zúñiga, Correa, & Valenzuela, 2012; Joyce, & Harwood, 2014; Igartua & Cheng, 2009; Schemer, 2012; Schemer, Wirth, & Matthes, 2012).

Nevertheless, pressing research gaps remain. First, most studies have attempted to explain attitudes toward immigration in general. In contrast to this large body of scholarship, knowledge about *illegal* or *undocumented*² immigration is much less advanced. Although numerous studies offer evidence of media effects on attitudes toward immigrants and migration in experimental settings (e.g., Igartua & Cheng, 2009; Igartua, Moral-Toranzo, & Fernández, 2011), evidence from surveys is scarcer and, therefore, highly needed (Schemer, 2012; Schemer et al., 2012). In addition, the role of audience selectivity in public service and private broadcasting is not yet well understood (Gil de Zúñiga, Correa, & Valenzuela, 2012). Finally, to the best of our knowledge, the effect of media exposure and ideological orientation on individual attitudes concerning illegal immigration has not been compared across countries.

In this article, we study the relationships among self-reported exposure to commercial and public service news broadcasting, ideological orientation, and attitudes toward illegal immigration in three countries—Norway, France, and the United States—that have different political systems and news media structures. While the U.S. television public-service broadcaster (PBS) is relatively weak, public-service broadcasters of Norway and France are strong, although there are notable differences between Norway's and France's media systems (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). However, the countries also share some characteristics. In fact, they have relatively similar proportions of immigrants (people who are foreign born, and, for Norway, also those who are born in the country to two foreign-born parents) residing in the country, between 11 and 13%. Regarding irregular immigrants, numbers and evidence are scarcer and less reliable. Estimates from research from Statistics Norway suggest between 10,000 and 30,000 irregulars in 2008; French estimates from 2004 suggest 200,000 (de Wenden, 2010); and more recent research conducted by Hoefer, Rytina, and Baker (2012) estimate the number of unauthorized immigrants³ living in the United States by January 2011 to be 11.5 million. Passel, Cohn, and Gonzalez-

² Throughout the article, the terms *illegal*, *undocumented*, and *irregular* are used interchangeably. These terms have different connotations and can reflect altogether different perspectives on the issue of immigration (see Merolla, Ramakrishnan, & Haynes, 2013, for an overview). However, as Merolla et al. point out, there is limited empirical evidence that the terms used actually have an effect on people's perceptions and attitudes. What matters more is the actual framing of policies (Merolla et al., 2013). We use these terms because the media themselves employed them during the period of data collection. Later, for instance, AP actually dropped the term *illegal immigrant* from its news coverage (Carrasquillo, 2013), certainly reflecting a change in how the media and society deal with such an issue. No doubt, the way the media frames this issue (e.g., by using different terms) probably reflects the broader discussion in societies about how a phenomenon is viewed, but for this study, we wanted to examine whether use of different outlets in general was connected to one's general attitudes.

³ Defined as all foreign-born noncitizens who are not legal residents (Hoefer, Rytina, & Baker, 2012).

Barrera (2013) estimate the unauthorized immigration population to be 11.7 million by March 2012. It is also worth noting that the issue of illegal or undocumented immigration has been increasing in saliency in all three countries during the last decades, earlier for France and the United States and somewhat later for Norway. This increasing saliency is apparent in politics, in the media, and in public opinion. Further, the issue of immigration in general has to a larger degree been framed within an illegality frame, focusing on several aspects of immigrants breaking the law.

Against this background, we explore how exposure to the different types of news content provided by public service and private broadcasting might be related to negative attitudes toward illegal immigration in Norway, France, and the United States. As discussed below, research has shown that the two types of broadcasting often differ in how they present the news (Aalberg et al., 2013; Curran, Coen, Aalberg, & Iyengar, 2012). Particularly relevant to the issue of illegal or unauthorized immigration is the tendency of commercial broadcasters to focus more on crime, conflict, and other negative aspects (e.g., Benson, 2013) than public service broadcasters. Thus, we argue that exposure to such content may drive stricter attitudes on the issue for the people that mainly get their news from commercial broadcasters.

Explaining Attitudes Toward (Illegal) Immigration

For decades, migration scholars have examined the predictors and antecedents of public attitudes toward immigration and immigrants. Among the key determinants that have been examined are the state of the economy, cultural proximity to immigrants, unemployment levels in the receiving country, and education levels among respondents (Freeman, Hansen, & Leal, 2013; Espenshade & Calhoun, 1993). In a recent review, however, Freeman et al. (2013) found little consensus on the factors that shape public opinion toward immigration. Even the claim with the highest degree of consensus within the scholarly community—that higher education increases support for immigration—is debated, as researchers cannot agree whether education is an independent variable or a proxy for higher skill (Freeman et al., 2013). More aggregate independent variables, such as the state of the economy in receiving countries and, particularly, unemployment levels, do not explain changes in levels of public opposition to immigration to a sufficient or convincing degree (Freeman et al., 2013). Fetzer's (2000) historical account of opinions toward immigration and immigrants in the United States, France, and Germany provides one of the few comparative investigations of public opinion and immigration. Fetzer (2000) found strict public opinions on the issue in all three countries.

In one of the first studies on public opinion of *undocumented* immigrants or *illegal* immigration, Espenshade and Calhoun (1993), using data collected in Southern California, tested five major hypotheses concerning possible predictors of illegal immigration attitudes based on structural characteristics. The labor-market-competition hypothesis holds that people with the lowest socioeconomic status possess the most negative views toward illegal immigration because of concerns over competition for jobs. The cultural-affinity hypothesis predicts that individuals with the cultural attributes most similar to those of illegal immigrants will have more positive attitudes. The education hypothesis assumes that higher education correlates with more positive attitudes, while the utilitarian-calculus hypothesis states that negative attitudes are associated with concern over personal material well-being. Finally, the symbolic-politics hypothesis holds that "challenges to important symbols of American nationality may evoke anti-

immigrant attitudes" (Espenshade, 1995, pp. 202–203). According to Espenshade and Calhoun (1993) and Espenshade (1995), the labor hypothesis has limited support. The cultural-affinity and education hypotheses are supported to a larger degree, along with the utilitarian-calculus and symbolic-politics hypotheses. Another study based on data from California found "that negative attitudes toward illegal immigrants are related to the stereotypes held about illegal immigrants . . . and negative attitudes toward legal Mexican Americans" (Cowan, Martinez, & Mendiola, 1997, p. 412).

Taken together, these studies present mixed and inconclusive evidence of the factors that shape attitudes toward immigration and immigrants. Therefore, scholars within the migration field increasingly acknowledge that communication may be key to understanding the formation of public opinion toward this increasingly important issue, and in the recent literature on public attitudes toward immigration, there is often a call for studies examining the impact of media and communication (see, e.g., Freeman et al., 2013). For instance, Schildkraut (2013), in a study of question wording in surveys, finds significant possible effects on attitudes toward immigration based on how the issue is framed. More complex information, where the issue is given more context, tends to produce more liberal attitudes, whereas more simple questions, highlighting only if a respondent is for or against more immigration, produce more strict attitudes. Thus, the quality and complexity of information, largely provided by the media, seems to matter when public opinion toward immigration is shaped.

Public-Service News Versus Commercial-Broadcasting News

A key factor in the news media's role in shaping anti-immigration attitudes is the difference in the way public-service and commercial broadcasting construct and present news stories. In this section, we examine the content differences between the two types of broadcasting. Then, we discuss the differences between the two with respect to attitudinal effects. It is worth noting that audience shares for public service broadcasting (PSB) differ substantially in the three countries. In our study, almost 60% Norwegian respondents state that they watch PSB news more than five days a week. In France, 40% report this, but in the United States, only 11% report this. For commercial broadcasting, the differences are much smaller.

Content Characteristics

The distinction between news from public service broadcasters and from commercial broadcasters has often been identified as quality of information (Cushion, 2012). News produced and aired by public service broadcasters is reported to be more fact oriented and less negative, whereas commercial channels tend to air more negative, sensationalist stories with less background (Curran et al., 2012). As we will review in more detail below, research has also shown that public service news tends to promote higher political knowledge and participation and that the media environments not solely based on market-driven news journalism also promote higher levels of political knowledge (Aarts & Semetko, 2003).

Vettehen, Beentjes, Nuijten, and Peeters (2011) found that commercial broadcasters employ more "arousing" characteristics in the presentation of news than public service channels. This tendency could be related to the sacerdotal and pragmatic views of politics: Public service broadcasters generally

adhere to the former, and commercial broadcasters to the latter. Findings by Vettehen et al. (2011) also suggest that commercial broadcasters use more tabloid-like elements in their news presentation than their public service counterparts. Thus, market-driven journalism tends to be more sensationalist and dramatized than journalism founded on public-service values. Similarly, in a comparative study of 11 countries on 5 continents, Aalberg et al. (2013) found that market-driven broadcasters air less international news, and when they do, it tends to be soft, rather than hard, news. The researchers showed that these tendencies influence public knowledge of international issues (Aalberg et al., 2013). Likewise, Curran, Iyengar, Lund, and Salovaara-Moring (2009) demonstrated that the public service model gives greater prominence to news and encourages more news consumption and smaller knowledge gaps.

In a comparison of news aired by public service and commercial broadcasters in five European countries (and U.S. commercial broadcasters), Curran et al. (2012) showed that, in general, commercial broadcasters air more soft (and thus less hard) and domestic (and less international) news and focus more on the gamesmanship of politics than their public service counterparts. Cushion (2012) also found clear distinctions in the priorities of public service and commercial broadcasters regarding soft and hard news. In a study of nine countries adapted from the work of Curran et al. (2012), Cushion (2012) identified a clear trend that public service broadcasters spend more time on and air more hard news than their commercial counterparts (with the exception of Norway). Cushion (2012) also reported that public service broadcasters tend to publish more serious content than commercial broadcasters, with Norway again the exception.

These well-documented differences between public service and commercial broadcasters have consequences for how irregular migration is covered in the news. Due to reporting style, commercialized news is prone to present a stereotyped, unfavorable, simplified image of irregular immigration, focusing on crime or other negative aspects (see Benson, 2013; Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2010; Kim, Carvalho, Davis, & Mullins, 2011). In contrast, public-service news broadcasting is more likely to cover more complex perspectives focusing on, for example, several different causes of illegal immigration, the humanitarian dimension, or the needs and individual stories of undocumented immigrants.

Effects of Exposure

In the previous section, we examined evidence from the literature concerning the differences between public service and commercial news broadcasting. In this section, we discuss evidence of the possible effects of exposure to such content on public perceptions and attitudes toward an object or topic. The vast majority of studies deal with the effects on general or issue-specific political knowledge (Aarts & Semetko, 2003; Jenssen, 2009; Curran et al., 2009; Soroka et al., 2012; Aalberg & Strabac, 2010). In a seminal study, Aarts and Semetko (2003) found that those who report watching public service television news rather than commercial news broadcasting tend to have higher levels of political knowledge. The researchers also identified clear positive effects from public-service news and negative effects from commercial television news on internal efficacy, or the "ability to be active in and to understand politics and political issues" (Aarts & Semetko, 2003, p. 776). Similarly, Curran et al. (2009) suggested that media systems dependent on a public-service model foster greater knowledge and contribute to a smaller knowledge gap among publics than market-based systems. In addition, a comparative study of six

countries (Canada, Japan, Norway, the United Kingdom, Italy, and Korea) by Soroka et al. (2012) demonstrated that, in general, public-service broadcasters have a positive but unequal effect on knowledge of hard news across countries. Similarly, Aarts, Fladmoe, and Strömbäck (2012), using comparative data from Europe and the United States, found that exposure to public service news has a positive relationship to political knowledge and trust. However, they found no such effect from commercial news exposure.

Evidence for the effects of patterns of media consumption on individuals' actual beliefs, behaviors, and attitudes is scarce, even though much research within the field has sought to find and map such patterns. In a study on television consumption and pro-environmental behaviors, Holbert, Kwak, and Shah (2003) showed "a clear positive direct relationship between fact-based television use and individual-level environmental activities" (p. 189). In research on television consumption and civic engagement, Hooghe (2002) found that public service broadcasting seems to have "a mitigating effect" (p. 101) on civic attitudes, but the effect is unclear. Thus, Hooghe concluded that the presence of a clear, strong public-service broadcaster "could be a crucial policy instrument for any effort to strengthen or maintain social cohesion in Western societies" (p. 101). More recently, Strabac, Thorbjørnsrud, and Jenssen (2012) showed that "watching commercial TV news increases opposition to immigration, while watching PBS TV tends to decrease it" (p. 185). However, Strabac et al. (2012) warned that their findings might be subject to spuriousness because the range of control variables in their study is somewhat limited. Finally, Gil de Zúñiga et al. (2012) showed that exposure to Fox News is associated with negative perceptions of Mexican immigrants and higher support for restrictive policies. However, this study controlled for only a few variables, mostly demographic.

Taken together, previous research suggests that there are clear and distinct content differences between public service and commercial TV news. Research also indicates that exposure to these two types of news is associated with different outcomes, where commercial broadcasters might foster more negative views of immigrants. However, none of the studies discussed has shed light on the relationship of public service and private news broadcasting to attitudes toward irregular immigration. There is also a lack of comparative studies, using the same survey instrument at the same time periods between different media and political contexts. Finally, most survey studies control for only a few variables, such as demographics, and therefore, the explained variance of anti-immigration attitudes is comparatively low.

The present study adds to this literature by testing the association of exposure to public service and private broadcasting with illegal-immigration attitudes. Based on earlier findings that commercial broadcasters air more sensationalist and negative news and public-service broadcasters more facts-oriented news, we expect commercial news to drive stricter attitudes toward illegal immigration and public service news to drive more positive attitudes. Unlike earlier research, we include a large range of control variables, such as ideological orientation and issue importance. Especially in correlational studies, controlling for such third variables is highly important. Consequently, we asked if commercial news broadcasting can drive stricter attitudes toward illegal immigration while controlling for relevant background variables that have been found to predict anti-immigration attitudes.

Differences between public service and commercial broadcasting have been observed globally with regard to both the content and the following effects of exposure. However, to our knowledge this has not been done simultaneously using the same measures in the same contexts. Therefore, we may assume that the association between broadcasting exposure and illegal-immigration attitudes does not differ among the three countries investigated. As well, the share of immigrant population in all three countries is fairly similar. Nevertheless, a lack of comparative research prevents prior research from helping us to formulate specific hypotheses about the relationships. We propose two hypotheses and one general research question:

H1: Exposure to commercial broadcasting is associated with stricter illegal-immigration attitudes.

H2: Exposure to public service broadcasting is associated with more positive illegal-immigration attitudes.

RQ1: How do the relationships between public service and private news broadcasting and illegal-immigration attitudes differ in Norway, France, and the United States?

Method

Data

We simultaneously conducted surveys in the United States ($N = 1,026$), Norway ($N = 1,048$), and France ($N = 1,034$). Respondents were recruited simultaneously through the online access panels of Ipsos, a global market-research company. Respondents were provided with an incentive. Quota sampling was applied for gender, age, and education in each country (U.S.: 60% female, $M_{age} = 53.01$, $SD = 15.36$; education: 66% some kind of college degree; Norway: 53% female, $M_{age} = 53.28$, $SD = 15.10$; education: 54.1% some kind of college degree; France: 58.3% female, $M_{age} = 46.82$, $SD = 17.10$; education: 18.4% college degree). Ipsos reported the following response rates from online data collection: RR1 = .29 (Norway), RR1 = .22 (France), and RR1 = .07 (U.S.). The sampling procedure and the timing were the same in all three countries.

Measures

The survey items were professionally translated by Ipsos and measured on 7-point scales. All the items are listed in the Appendix. The dependent variable—attitudes toward illegal immigration—was measured with five items, which were combined into a single index (Cronbach's alpha = .83). The unidimensionality of this measure was confirmed with exploratory PCA. We are aware that the use of wording might be a key determinant in survey studies (Schildkraut, 2013); thus, we used *illegal* and *unauthorized* immigrants/immigration interchangeably and randomly in the survey items. This is, however, not unproblematic, as these concepts are laden with highly normative and politically oriented implications. Still, in a study on equivalence and issue framing of immigration, Merolla, Ramakrishnan, and Haynes (2013) found no effects on preferences for different policies when different concepts were used. In addition to this, Merolla et al. (2013) found that the term *illegal* was by far the most used term in

U.S. coverage of the issue. For the French and the Norwegian versions of the survey, similar terms most frequently used in media content in the respective languages were used.

In line with previous research (e.g., Matthes, Morrison, & Schemer, 2010), we included various control variables to avoid making conclusions based on spurious relationships between the variables. The controls, listed in the Appendix, include basic sociodemographic variables and variables measuring political interest and inefficacy, political ideology, and issue importance (for the selection of these controls, see Aalberg & Strabac, 2010; Aarts & Semetko, 2003; Curran et al., 2009; Cowan et al., 1997; de Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2006; Jenssen, 2009; Soroka et al., 2012). Finally, we included a standard measure for exposure to both public service and commercial news television broadcasting. This measure asks only about general news consumption (see Appendix for exact wording), and not about exposure to news concerning illegal immigration. Thus, one could argue that some people may have different viewing patterns for different news issues such that they tend to follow immigration news more closely on one outlet while receiving their main general news from the other outlet. However, this should be quite limited, as viewing patterns probably are quite habitual. Also, the range of control variables used in the analyses could be argued as one way around this potential challenge regarding the exposure measure.

Results

Our main question concerns the relationships between exposure to commercial and public-service news and attitudes toward illegal immigration. To answer this question, we performed regression analysis separately for each country and one model combining all three countries. The results are presented in Table 1. The models consisted of three steps. In the first step, basic sociodemographic variables were added. In the second step, ideology and various controls for political interest, inefficacy, and general news attention were introduced. In the third step, self-reported measures of exposure to the two forms of television news were introduced to complete the final model. As can be seen, demographics alone explain 10.4% of the variance in France, 9.2% in Norway, and only 4.3% in the United States. The variables added in the second step greatly increase the explained variance in all three countries (FR: 39.2%; NOR: 29.9%; U.S.: 26.1%). As seen in the final model, there is a modest increase in explained variance when including the self-reported measure of exposure to public service and commercial television news. This finding contextualizes the importance of news exposure compared to the other predictors included in the model. The total amount of explained variance in all three countries is highly satisfactory.

In the final model including all predictors, older respondents are more likely to oppose illegal immigration than younger ones. However, this effect is significant only in France ($\beta = .14, p < .001$). Male respondents are more likely to hold stricter attitudes than female. This effect is significant in France ($\beta = -.09, p < .01$) and Norway ($\beta = -.07, p < .01$) but not the United States. As expected, education is significantly negatively related to anti-immigration attitudes in all three countries (FR: $\beta = .14, p < .001$; NOR: $\beta = .16, p < .001$; U.S.: $\beta = .06, p < .05$).

Political interest explains anti-immigration attitudes only in Norway ($\beta = -.14, p < .01$). Feelings of political inefficacy are a positive predictor of negative attitudes in all three countries; in other words, those with a lack of faith in the political system also develop more negative attitudes toward the issue of

irregular or illegal immigration (FR: $\beta = .07, p < .05$; NOR: $\beta = .08, p < .05$; U.S.: $\beta = .09, p < .01$). The strongest predictor in the model, political ideology, has a highly significant relationship to the outcome variable, suggesting stricter attitudes among right-wing than left-wing individuals (FR: $\beta = .42, p < .001$; NOR: $\beta = .31, p < .001$; U.S.: $\beta = .25, p < .001$). Issue importance is also strongly related to unfavorable attitudes (FR: $\beta = .21, p < .001$; NOR: $\beta = .23, p < .001$; U.S.: $\beta = .34, p < .05$). The more important the issue is to a respondent, the stricter the respondent's attitude.

Table 1. Use of Public-Service and Commercial Broadcasting Predicting Attitudes Toward Illegal Immigration in France, U.S., and Norway.

	<i>Model 1: Demographics</i>			
	Total sample	U.S.	France	Norway
Gender	-.064**	-.045	-.072*	-.104*
Age	.157***	.173***	.142***	.049
Education	-.151***	-.103**	-.236***	-.280***
Adj. Rsq (%)	5.7	4.3	10.4	9.2
	<i>Model 2: Political Controls</i>			
Gender	-.064***	-.055	-.068*	-.067*
Age	.099***	.049	.078**	.035
Education	-.083***	-.062*	-.167***	-.180***
Political interest (low-high)	-.052*	-.054	.002	-.142**
Political inefficacy (low-high)	.127***	.101***	.072*	.104**
View domestic news (low-high)	-.001	.027	-.040	.054
Left-right ideology (left-right)	.367***	.248***	.447***	.338***
Issue importance (low-high)	.240***	.337***	.214***	.240***
Adj. Rsq. (%)	30.6	26.1	39.2	29.9
	<i>Model 3: Full model</i>			
Gender	-.073***	-.061*	-.087*	-.072**
Age	.094***	.029	.075**	.007
Education	-.092***	-.059*	-.142***	-.157***
Political interest (low-high)	-.043	-.044	.020	-.144*
Political inefficacy (low-high)	.098***	.094*	.072*	.079*
Domestic news (low-high)	-.011	.032	-.056	.023
Left-right ideology (left-right)	.341***	.254***	.418***	.311***
Issue importance (low-high)	.233***	.336***	.205***	.234***
PSB news (low-high)	-.114***	-.122***	-.01	.012
Comm. news (low-high)	.157***	.080*	.125***	.179***
Adj. Rsq. (%)	33.6	27.5	40.4	32.7

$N = 2,643$ (U.S.: $N = 868$; FR: $N = 822$; NOR: $N = 953$). Entries are standardized Beta coefficients; * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. Positive coefficients indicate more negative attitudes toward illegal immigration.

Finally, to answer our hypotheses and research question, we observe a significant relationship between exposure to commercial news and negative attitudes toward illegal immigration in all three countries (FR: $\beta = .13, p < .001$; NOR: $\beta = .18, p < .001$; U.S.: $\beta = .08, p < .05$). This finding confirms our first hypothesis. However, exposure to public service broadcasting is negatively associated with anti-immigration attitudes only in the United States ($\beta = .12, p < .001$). This partially confirms hypothesis 2. To speculate, this finding might be partially explained by the much smaller and probably more homogenous audience group reporting high use of PSB news in the United States than in the two other countries. This may affect the likelihood of observing statistically significant relationships. Regarding the research question, we can conclude that an association between private broadcasting and illegal-immigration attitudes is present in all countries. As an additional difference test shows, this relationship is significantly stronger in France and Norway than in the United States. Public service broadcasting matters to attitudes only in the United States. Interestingly, general attention to news is unrelated to negative attitudes toward illegal immigration. General news attention is thus probably more related to general political interest, which proved significant only for the Norwegian respondents.

Discussion

The aim of this article was to determine the relationship of exposure to public service and commercial broadcasting to negative attitudes toward illegal immigration in three countries: the United States, Norway, and France. Our findings confirm those of previous studies (e.g., Espenshade & Calhoun, 1993) that gender, education, and political ideology are significant predictors of anti-immigration attitudes in all three countries in the final models. Additionally, we observe a significant association between feelings of political inefficacy and the outcome variable. Specifically, respondents who feel that they do not understand politics view illegal immigration more negatively. To explain this relationship, we observe that the attachment of high importance of this issue is associated with negative attitudes toward illegal immigration, most likely because dissatisfaction increases perceptions of importance.

More germane to the main purpose of this article, we find that general news exposure is not related to negative attitudes toward illegal immigration. In other words, the overall amount of news attention does not shape anti-immigration attitudes; the content or specific program does. This conclusion is based on the significant relationship of commercial news broadcasting exposure and negative attitudes toward illegal immigration. Commercial news broadcasting is often characterized by a sensationalist reporting style focusing on negative aspects of immigration, such as crime or cultural threats (see Benson, 2013). A significant relationship between exposure to commercial broadcasting and negative attitudes toward illegal immigration was observed in all three countries. Given the differences in these countries' media and political systems, this is a remarkable finding. It is important to note that this relationship was statistically significant even when controlling for key predictors of negative attitudes (with a high amount of explained variance). Therefore, one cannot argue, for instance, that it is not exposure to commercial news but, rather, political ideology (or other key predictors) that explains negative attitudes.

In contrast to private television news, public service news broadcasting is more likely to be evenhanded, for instance, also covering the humanitarian dimension of illegal immigration. However, a negative relationship between public-service broadcasting and negative attitudes toward illegal

immigration was observed only in the United States, not in France or Norway. The explanation might lie in the different way illegal immigration is discussed in the United States compared to the other two countries (see Benson, 2013). The United States has been heavily involved in immigration for centuries, and therefore, positive aspects of immigration might be more pronounced there than in France and Norway. In European countries, illegal immigration is perceived as not only an economic but also a cultural threat. African Muslims account for a considerable share of illegal immigrants to Europe. In the United States, a large share of illegal immigrants comes from Latin and Central America and has a Christian background. We speculate that public-service broadcasting is unrelated to negative attitudes toward illegal immigrants in Norway and France because coverage is rather balanced and, therefore, unlikely to exert significant effects. In the United States, an immigration-based country, public-service broadcasters might also point to less negative aspects of illegal immigration, such as the economic benefits and immigrants' personal stories. Additional comparative content analytical data are needed to confirm this speculation. In addition, we should stress that the U.S. public service broadcaster has a very modest audience share. Only approximately 10% of the American sample reports being exposed to public service broadcasting more than five days a week, compared to 57% and 42% in the Norwegian and French samples. Further, the differences between the U.S. public broadcaster and the commercial broadcasters are probably larger than between its European counterparts, where both the commercial and public service broadcasters target heterogeneous audiences.

A number of limitations of this study are worth careful consideration. Perhaps the most critical limitation is the use of cross-sectional data unsuitable for testing causal claims. Consequently, we cannot conclude that exposure to commercial news broadcasting *causes* negative attitudes toward illegal immigration. For such a claim, experimental or panel data controlling for the autoregressive effect of anti-immigration attitudes are needed. However, the inclusion of several important control variables strengthens our claim that there is, in fact, an independent effect of news exposure on the formation of attitudes toward illegal immigration. Related to that, audience selectivity may have a huge impact on news use because there is a self-selection for public versus private news (see Feldman, Myers, Hmielowski, & Leiserowitz, 2014; Garrett, 2013; Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2012; Knobloch-Westerwick, 2015). That is, attitudes may drive news selection, in contrast to (or in addition to) news exposure driving attitudes. Again, we cannot make any claim about causality. There may also be other explanations like omitted third variables that we cannot rule out. Even though we have statistically controlled for political ideology, future research should employ panel data to validate our findings. In addition, we operationalized only general negative attitudes toward illegal immigration. Future research should work with more fine-grained measures distinguishing various aspects of anti-immigration attitudes. In this study, we could not control the actual content that respondents were exposed to (Shoemaker & Reese, 1990). Future research should therefore strive to combine panel data with a fine-grained verbal and visual content analysis of the news.

In the present study, we conclude that exposure to commercial but not public service news broadcasting is related to negative opinions about illegal immigration. However, given the present data, we cannot provide a definite explanation of why this is the case. Future research needs to more carefully study which specific content characteristics of broadcasting media foster illegal immigration sentiment. That is, how are illegal immigrants depicted, visualized, contextualized, and evaluated on television

around the globe, and how do audience members with different predispositions process this information (see Schemer et al., 2012)? There are different news frames with which the topic of illegal immigration is associated. Future research also needs to look more closely into how different concepts and terms (*illegal, undocumented, irregular*) might foster different cognitive and affective outcomes, and if so, whether the employment of such terms is systematically different among media outlets. Furthermore, given the different illegal-immigration backgrounds in several countries, there are grounds to postulate significant country differences in news framing. These specific variations in content are key to understanding the effects of news content on negative attitudes toward illegal immigration. Clearly, the differences in news content in coverage of illegal immigration from public service and commercial broadcasters remains a fertile topic for future research, especially from a comparative perspective.

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APPENDIX

Issue-specific attitudes toward illegal immigration (DV)

Index based on five items that were confirmed as a single factor in an exploratory PCA (1—completely disagree, 7—completely agree)

- Illegal immigrants pose a problem for national security
- Unauthorized immigration is undermining the immigration system and immigration laws
- Illegal immigrants come to take jobs
- It must be easier for the government to deport unauthorized immigrants that do not leave the country voluntarily
- The government should improve border control

Issue importance

How important is the issue of illegal or unauthorized immigration to you?

Interest

Please indicate on a scale from 1 to 7 how interested you are in politics.

Inefficacy

How often do politics seem so complicated that you can't really understand what is going on?

Please indicate your answer on a scale from 1 (never) to 7 (frequently).

Ideology

Here is a seven-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal to extremely conservative. Where would you place yourself on this scale?

Domestic News

Please indicate on a scale from 1 to 7 how closely you follow domestic politics in the news.

Media Use (different for each country with respect to public service versus private television channels)

In a typical week, how often do you . . .

Watch news on public television, such as PBS?

Watch national network news (ABC, CBS, or NBC)?

5, daily; 4, 5–6 days a week; 3, 3–4 days a week; 2, 1–2 days a week; 1, seldom or never