



Jagiellonian University in Kraków

Faculty of International and Political Studies

Institute of European Studies

Amira Elmofty

student ID number: 2677870A

Field of study: European Studies

Signposts of (in)tolerance among young Poles: from attitudes towards immigrants to generational political rebellion.

Magister (MA) Thesis

Thesis written under the supervision of

dr hab. Jacek Kołodziej, prof. UJ

Professor David Smith.

Date: August 2023

Krakow, Poland

Field of Studies: International Masters of Central, Eastern European, Russian Eurasian Studies.

In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of:

Magister (mgr) of European Studies (Central and East European, Russian and Eurasian Studies):
Jagiellonian University in Kraków, Poland

International Master's (IntM) in Central and East European, Russian and Eurasian Studies:
University of Glasgow, UK

Master of Arts in Social Sciences (MA) in Central and East European, Russian and Eurasian
Studies: University of Tartu, Estonia

Word count of the thesis: 25,210

Authorship Declaration: I have prepared this thesis independently. All the views of other authors,
as well as data from literary sources and elsewhere, have been cited.

Amira Elmofty, 28 Aug 2023

Non-exclusive licence to reproduce thesis and make thesis public

I Amira Elmofty (5/2/1998) hereby grant the University of Tartu a free permit non-exclusive licence to the work created by me Signposts of (in)tolerance among young Poles: from attitudes towards immigrants to generational political rebellion. supervisor dr hab. Jacek Kołodziej, prof. UJ Professor David Smith,

- reproduce, for the purpose of preservation, including for adding to the DSpace digital archives until the expiry of the term of copyright;
- to make the work specified in p. 1 available to the public via the web environment of the University of Tartu, including via the DSpace digital archives until the expiry of the term of copyright;
- I am aware of the fact that the author retains the rights specified in p. 1;
- I certify that granting the non-exclusive licence does not infringe other persons' intellectual property rights or rights arising from the personal data protection legislation.

Abstract

An interest in tolerance and othering as well as an indirect correlation between age and tolerance has inspired this study about youth intolerance in Poland. Although most studies have investigated intolerance in relation to ideologies, this study is not ideology based. The main aim of this research study is to understand reasons behind youth intolerance and othering in Poland. It sets out to do that through conducting semi-structured interviews with fifteen participants between the ages of eighteen to twenty-four, who do not belong to a specific ideological background, based on the assumption that aspects of intolerance exist among all individuals from different ideologies globally. An inductive qualitative content analysis took place, partially aligning with evolved grounded theory in order to analyze data. Many themes occurred during the interviews such as a backlash against the church and the government in Poland, as well as a feeling of Russian threat. However, the main finding of this research that participants expressed was their support towards LGBTQ rights and abortion rights while expressing reservation towards immigrants. Details shared in the interviews indicate this is due to a negative representation in media and a lack of exposure as well as historical narratives in Poland.

Keywords: intolerance, othering, immigration, cultural and material threats, Ukrainian refugees, Middle Eastern refugees, media, news platforms, exposure.

Streszczenie

Zainteresowanie tolerancją i odmiernością, a także korelacją między wiekiem a tolerancją, zainspirowało niniejsze badania dotyczące nietolerancji młodzieży w Polsce. Chociaż większość badań dotyczyła nietolerancji w odniesieniu do ideologii, niniejsze badanie nie jest oparte na ideologii. Głównym celem tych badań jest zrozumienie przyczyn zakładanej nietolerancji i specyficzności młodzieży w Polsce. Próbowano tego dokonać poprzez rekrutację piętnastu uczestników w wieku od osiemnastu do dwudziestu czterech lat, którzy nie należą do żadnego środowiska ideologicznego. Oparto się na założeniu, że nietolerancyjne tożsamości istnieją wśród wszystkich osób z różnych ideologii na całym świecie. W celu analizy danych przeprowadzono indukcyjną jakościową analizę treści, częściowo zgodną z rozwiniętą teorią ugruntowaną. Podczas wywiadów pojawiło się wiele tematów, takich jak sprzeciw wobec Kościoła i rządu w Polsce, a także poczucie zagrożenia ze strony Rosji. Jednak głównym wnioskiem z tego badania, który uczestnicy wyrazili, było ich poparcie dla praw osób LGBTQ i prawa do aborcji, przy jednocześnie odczuwanej rezerwie wobec imigrantów. Podobne wątki i przekonania w wywiadach wskazują, że jest to spowodowane negatywną reprezentacją w mediach oraz brakiem ekspozycyjności wiedzy o imigrantach, a także polskimi historycznymi narracjami założycielskimi.

Słowa kluczowe: nietolerancja, inni, imigracja, zagrożenia kulturowe i materialne, uchodźcy z Ukrainy, uchodźcy z Bliskiego Wschodu, media, platformy informacyjne, ekspozycja.

Acknowledgments:

First, I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Jacek Kołodziej and Professor David Smith. Their guidance and continuous support have been instrumental throughout this journey, providing me with knowledge and encouragement to carry out this project.

I would like to thank all my participants who generously contributed their time and openly shared their insights. Without you, this project would have never been possible, and I deeply appreciate it.

To my friends, Tanguy, Elodie, Korlan, Toby and Becca, who became my second my family abroad, I am grateful for all your support on a personal and academic level. From brainstorming ideas for our theses, to collectively enduring the stresses that came with it, to finally doing it together.

Lastly, I would to thank my mom, my brothers and my friends back in Egypt. Their support and love have been the driving force behind this journey. Without their constant motivation, none of this would have been possible.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1- Introduction	8
1.1 Research Questions & Methodology.....	9
1.2 Findings.....	10
1.3 Research Structure.....	11
Chapter 2 – Conceptualization and Literature Review “Intolerance Othering”	13
2.1 Conceptualization of Youth Intolerance	14
2.1.1 Othering	15
2.1.2 Conceptualization of youth.....	16
2.2 Identity & Prejudice.....	16
2.3 Intolerance Explained Through the Lens of Politics, Economics & Culture.....	20
2.3.1 Cultural & Material Threats.....	24
2.3.2 Nationalism.....	24
2.3.3 Islamophobia & antisemitism.....	26
2.4 The State of Intolerance in Central & Eastern Europe.....	28
2.5 Conclusion	31
Chapter 3–Methodology	32
3.1 Aims and research questions.....	32
3.2 Methodology: Understanding Polish Youth Intolerance	33
3.3 Methods	34
3.4 Recruitment & Participants.....	38
3.5 Analysis	39
3.6 Limitations.....	39
3.7 Ethical Consideration	40
Chapter 4– Analysis, Discussion and Interpretation	41
4.1 General Trends & Summary of Findings.....	42
4.2 Welcoming or Wary: Attitudes towards Migrants	46
4.2.1 Media Representation	50
4.2.2 The Polish-Belarusian Border: Between Humanity and Geopolitics.....	53
4.2.3 Ukrainian Refugees	56
4.2.4 Are Migrants an Economic Threat	59
4.2.5 World Immigration.....	61
4.3 Nationalism & Religion: Between Ethnic and Civic Nationalism	63
4.3.1 History & Nationalism: What Makes Poland Unique?	65
4.3.2 Religion Influence on Youth	67
4.4 The State of Intolerance towards Migrants among Polish Youth.....	70
4.4.1 Economic Reasons	70
4.4.2 Social & Political Reasons	71
Chapter 5– Conclusion	75
5.1 Research Significance & Direction for Further Research Chapter 3– Methodology.....	77
Bibliography	78
Appendices	87
Appendix 1: Participants’ Information Sheet	94
Appendix 2: Participants’ Consent Form.....	89
Appendix 3: Interview Guide.....	91
Appendix 4:Ethical Approval University of Glasgow	92
Appendix 5:Jagiellonian University Ethical Approval.....	95

1. Introduction

Intolerance against “others” has been a heavily researched topic (Bates, 1975; Crawford & Pilanski, 2014; Fukuyama, 2022; Mierina & Koroļeva, 2015). The first reference to an “other” was in Hegel’s “master-slave dialectic”, in which he referred to the other as different from the self, the first reference to exclusion. Then othering, which offers the basis of exclusion (Tajfel, 1974), was further developed with post-colonial studies and feminist studies (Crenshaw, 1989; Mohrem, 2020).

Although intolerance and othering were extensively studied, most of the studies about these concepts have dealt with identity as a rigid category, relating intolerance to ideology or researching only one aspect of intolerance (Citrin & Sides, 2008; Mierina & Koroļeva, 2015; Minkenberg, 2002). Therefore, this research aims at uncovering different layers of identity and othering, discovering if tolerance and intolerance are rigid categories related to ideology, or if identity has several layers with several “others”.

This research contributes to the literature on identity studies, as it aims to understand why othering happens and how, as well as against who and why specifically this group faces intolerance. This is aimed to be discovered in respect to Polish youth.

Poland forms an interesting case study because of the popularity of *Konfederacja*, a far-right party gaining popularity among young Poles (Goldstein, 2021; Sińczuch et al., 2021; Tomaszewicz, 2020). According to the current polls in Poland, *Konfederacja* is one of the most popular parties among youth, with around 20% support in the 18-24 age range (Tilles, 2023; CBOS, 2021). However, this study is not about those who support far right ideology. Rather, it aims to understand factors that lead to intolerance and othering. Therefore, it aims to understand attitudes towards different minorities and reasons behind these attitudes.

The research starts with the assumption that identities have several layers and that intolerance or tolerance can be identified across different individuals, based on Brandt et al.’s, (2014) findings that both liberals and conservatives can hold similar levels of intolerance regarding some issues. Therefore, the literature review includes a general discussion of othering and then tries to understand different political, economic and cultural factors that lead to intolerance,

identifying reasons for intolerance and othering against different minorities. This research engages with literature on identity, as well as literature on support for far-right ideologies and populism. Literature on far-right ideologies and populism are introduced as both have a narrow definition for the people, “nationals” (Bos et al., 2021), meaning this definition would entail othering. While, as mentioned, this research does not deal with the far-right, it was used as an indicator for intolerance as far-right ideologies usually include exclusion and xenophobia (Mierina & Koroļeva, 2015).

In line with the above, the following research question and sub questions were formulated to understand the factors that contribute to othering and lead to intolerance.

1.1 Research Questions & Methodology:

The research question and sub-questions were identified as follows:

1. Why do youth adopt intolerant attitudes towards others?

- To what extent can intolerance be identified across youth in Poland?
- What factors affect youth intolerance in Poland the most and how does it happen?
- Does (in)tolerance entail a certain ideology in Poland?

The research seeks indicative answers to the above question and sub-questions. Due to the qualitative nature of the investigation, answers are not definitive and further research would help confirm findings of this research. In order to provide indicative answers to these questions, fifteen in-depth interviews were conducted with young Poles between the ages of 18-24; most participants were commencing either their Bachelor’s degrees or Master’s degree. The literature offered the guidelines for the interviews. Therefore, questions were formulated according to three main categories: politics, economics and culture. Culture is treated as a broad category to include factors such as religion, media, traditions, education, and family and upbringing, as all of these factors influence or are influenced by culture. The category for politics included asking about attitudes towards the current government and political situation in Poland, as well as about nationalism and the uniqueness of Poland in terms of its historical narratives. In the context of this research, this entails viewing Poland as a victim of the partitions and being subject to influence between the East and the West, therefore viewing Polish nationalism and heroism as unique to other countries.

The originality of this research comes from its production of unique primary data from fifteen educated youth, and the fact that they were not chosen from any specific ideological background, aiming to understand their attitudes towards different minorities who may be ‘othered’. This research cannot generalize about youth in Poland. Rather, the main aim is to deepen the understanding of factors that shape youths’ intolerant attitudes, as well as produce useful data that can help in future research.

Although the method of recruitment for participants was snowball sampling, participants came from different backgrounds. While this did include a significant representation of men and those who come from rural areas, it should be noted that the data was slightly skewed towards women and those who come from cities. Participants had different religious beliefs, with two Catholics and seven irreligious from nine participants who chose unprompted to reveal their religious beliefs. Moreover, from those who chose to reveal their sexual identity, two participants belong to the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) community. Therefore, these differences helped observe patterns between participants during the findings and analysis stage.

Interviews were transcribed and the data was coded and analyzed through NVivo, the qualitative data analysis software. The data was analyzed inductively according to a qualitative content analysis approach and aligning partially with evolved grounded theory, which means it was analyzed in a bottom-up approach, in which findings are drawn from the data. Still, the data was analyzed to provide interpretation in its broader political and social context.

1.2 Findings

The main finding of this research that participants expressed (including two participants who belong to the LGBTQ community themselves), was their support for LGBTQ rights and abortion rights, while at the same time participants expressed reservation towards immigrants. Details shared in the interviews indicate this may be due to a negative representation in media. Participants referred to mainstream media, particularly news sources and television, a lack of exposure to diversity as well as nationalism, through ethnically defining the nation and a belief in the uniqueness of Polish history.

According to the interviews, the case for support for LGBTQ rights and abortion rights might in fact be an indicator of a backlash against traditional values of the church and the government and an exposure to the LGBTQ community through media, as well as personal ties with individuals who belong to the LGBTQ community.

In the context of asking about Ukrainian refugees, as well as refugees on the Belarusian border, as these incidents with immigrants took place around the same time, participants expressed different attitudes towards different groups of migrants. Participants expressed positive attitudes towards Ukrainian refugees, while they expressed reservation towards refugees on the Belarusian-Polish border. Participants treated the phrase migrants from the Middle East and Muslim countries not to refer to one ethnic or religious group, but rather to refer to individuals from different racial backgrounds. However, when economic factors were discussed, some of the participants expressed reservations towards Ukrainian immigrants, as well as Middle Eastern immigrants.

Many of the youth interviewed identified themselves as liberal. Even though almost all participants expressed respect for differences, they expressed feeling of threat because of immigration. Therefore, it does not appear that the stance towards migrants between the participants served as an indicator for self-perceived liberalism or conservatism.

1.3 Research structure

The paper starts with the conceptualization and literature chapter. This chapter begins with the conceptualization of intolerance, youth and othering, as these were the main concepts that guided the research. Then the literature is structured according to ideas: therefore, the literature starts with a section that mentions theories about othering, such as social identity and deprivation theory. These theories deal with identity setting the basic general explanations for othering. The next section delves into specific factors that generate intolerance and othering. Therefore, it deals with politics, economics and culture, with sub-sections on nationalism (how hegemonic discourses about the nation lead to othering), and on antisemitism and Islamophobia. This section includes general studies, as well as studies about Poland. In the last section, the research is narrowed down to include only Central and Eastern European countries, and most of this section includes studies specifically about intolerance in Poland. Finally, the literature and conceptualization chapter ends with a brief conclusion.

The next chapter is methodology, to set the grounds for analysis. It consists of seven sections. The first section is the aim of the study and the research question. The next section is about methods, then recruitment of participants and how the research is analyzed. Then there is a section about the limitations of the study. Lastly ethical considerations during the research are addressed.

The fourth chapter is analysis, with four sections. It provides indicative answers to the research questions. The first section is about general trends and main findings, where the demographics of the participants are analyzed according to the data and main findings are established. The second section is about participants' attitudes towards immigration. The third section is about nationalism, which covers ethnic and civic definitions of the nation, historical narratives, and religion, and the role of these in othering. The fourth section is about the state of intolerance in Poland, and here participants engaged directly with the question of what causes intolerance among youth in Poland. The thesis ends with its conclusion of the main findings and suggestions for future research.

2. Conceptualization & Literature Review: “Intolerance & Othering”:

This research was inspired by the radical right gaining prominence in Poland among young voters (Sińczuch et al., 2021), with *Konfederacja* gaining approximately 20% of youth support between the ages of 18 to 24, compared to less than 10% between 2019 and 2020 (CBOS, 2021). This inspired an investigation not into radical right support, which is already well researched (Mieręga and Koroleva, 2015; Minkenberg, 2017; Mrozowicki et al., 2019), but into forms of intolerance in the general population. Although the literature is abundant on intolerance, it deals with intolerance as one form of identity. The literature treats individuals as either tolerant or intolerant and then tries to investigate reasons behind intolerance. On the other hand, this research aims to study intolerance without relating it to any ideological background.

The main aim of this research is to deepen the understanding of factors that lead to intolerance, especially among youth as several country-specific studies established that youth are more tolerant than older generation (Hjerm et al., 2020; Milkman, 2017; Twenge et al., 2015). Moreover, other studies established a correlation between age and tolerance (Hagendoorn & Nekuee, 1999), and between education and tolerance and area of living and tolerance (Hagendoorn & Nekuee, 1999; Hall & Rodeghier, 1994; Maykovich, 1975; Stouffer, 1955), establishing that those who are more educated and live in cities are more tolerant. However, participants of this research are all young university educated, or at least finished their high school. Therefore, it is interesting to investigate intolerance within this group.

As this research is about intolerance, the literature starts by the conceptualization of tolerance and intolerance. Moreover, a discussion of prejudices in identity will be included in order to develop an understanding of how identity is formed around othering. Afterwards, literature on politics, economics and culture will be reviewed as reasons for intolerance. The main aim of this research is not to deal with factors identified in the literature separately but to investigate their interaction and their influence on intolerance. The literature review ends by reviewing the current state of intolerance in Central and Eastern Europe to build an understanding of the case of Poland.

2.1 Conceptualization of Youth Intolerance

As per the first section, I will start by the conceptualization of intolerance, to provide the definition used in this research.

In the *Oxford Learner's Dictionary*, intolerance is defined as “the unwillingness to accept behavior that differs from one’s own opinion” (*Oxford Learner's Dictionaries*, n.d.). According to the *Cambridge Dictionary*, it is “the fact of refusing to accept ideas, beliefs, or behavior that are different from your own” (*Intolerance*, 2023).

In order to provide the concept of intolerance used in this thesis, first, a definition for tolerance is provided as intolerance is a derivative of tolerance in language; therefore, tolerance can have a negative connotation, just as accepting something that an individual generally cannot bear (Paul, 2015; Verkuyten et al., 2020). A toleration of behavior does not mean that an individual is not prejudiced against it. Tolerance in its positive meaning can be defined as the total acceptance of others and valuing them, while at the same time recognizing the difference between the other and one’s self (Augoustinos & Reynolds, 2001). However, this definition is not agreed with in this research as recognizing differences in itself can hold some prejudice against the other, meaning that race, ethnicity, sexuality and religion would hold a certain value when dealing with anyone, which can lead to prejudice.

Janmaat and Keating defined Tolerance as:

denoting acceptance of, and favourable and inclusive attitudes towards, various minority groups that are often marginalised and/or discriminated against by the majority (Janmaat & Keating, 2019, P.46).

The definition of ‘tolerance’ that is adopted in this research combines Augoustinos & Reynolds (2001) definition with Janmaat and Keating (2019), and Hjern et al. (2020), who conceptualizes tolerance to include acceptance, respect and appreciation of difference. Therefore, tolerance is defined as the total acceptance of others *and valuing them*, while *appreciating differences*, which includes acceptance and *appreciation of* minorities who often face discrimination and marginalization in the society, and holding the believe that these minorities should be treated equally.

Therefore, ‘intolerance’ can be defined as discrimination and/or adopting negative attitudes towards minorities or often marginalized groups with no appreciation or respect for differences (Janmaat & Keating, 2019). Thus, there is a correlation between intolerance and prejudice, hostility and exclusionism. This research adopts Eagly and Chaiken’s definition of attitudes as:

“a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor” (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993, p.1)

When applying this definition to the context of this research, it captures the nature of attitudes as holding certain positive or negative views towards minorities.

2.1.1 Othering

According to the previous mentioned definitions, intolerance requires a discussion about who are the marginalized groups. Therefore, a conceptualization of othering is necessary for this research. The literature on othering began with Hegel’s “master-slave dialectic” when he referred to the other as not the self; so, the “other” was first introduced an exclusionary concept of what is not the self (Brons, 2015). Then the term developed to be included in post-colonial studies, for example Said describing the difference in how the “orient” is viewed from occident “Western countries” (Said, 1978), as well as feminist studies with Crenshaw’s theory of intersectionality and how the intersectionality of race and sexuality can lead to marginalization (Crenshaw, 1989). These studies set the ground for othering and prejudice.

The literature on othering is abundant, for example: Michel Foucault mentioned othering indirectly when he discussed biopower. Fiaccadori summarizes Foucault’s concept of biopower, where he argues that power does not only rely on the state but that a number of micro-level institutions have power over individuals (Fiaccadori, 2015). He speaks about how power on a micro-level such as power in local and regional institutions serve as tools for exclusion. This was supported by Antonio Gramsci. Bates, reviewing the work of Gramsci, mentions that his theory of hegemony states that individuals are not only controlled by force but also by ideas (Bates, 1975, p.351). Although exclusion here was not directly addressed as othering, it refers to how institutions can have control over individuals and therefore serve as tools for exclusion. Institutions in the context of this research can refer to government or discourses that are generated by institutions that offer rhetoric of a “different other” within a certain society.

Powell and Menedian used othering to refer to prejudices. In a traditional sense this can mean tribalism. However, this term can also be used to explain group based identity in contrast to other groups (Powell & Menedian, n.d.). Othering includes all categories that do not belong to the dominant group. Thus, it can be caused by different things such as nationality, religion and sexuality, as this definition specifies factors that individuals can be excluded for (Powell & Menedian, n.d.). This is the concept of other that is used in this research, as this definition aligns with the definition adopted for intolerance, which mentions holding prejudices in the context of this research is having negative attitudes and/or actively discriminating against the other because of differences.

2.1.2 Conceptualization of Youth

The second concept that will be defined is youth, as this research investigates youth intolerance in Poland. United Nations defined youth as those between the ages to 15 and 24 and in the transition period, between the end of compulsory education and looking for a job (*United Nations: DEFINITION OF YOUTH*, 2013). The age that is looked at in this research is from 18-24, as 18 is the voting age in Poland (Hackett, 2023), which means that this group is more likely to have formed political opinions and attitudes towards different minorities and reflect it in voting.

As the concept of othering requires an understanding of how identities are formed and requires an understanding for prejudices, the first section discusses identity and how othering is formed.

2.2 Identity & Prejudice

As mentioned in the previous section, a discussion of intolerance requires an explanation for identity and how it is formed. Therefore, literature on identity is reviewed in order to understand prejudices and where they come from and test some of the introduced theories during the interviews

Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper (2000) provided a conceptualization for identity. First, identity provides an understanding of certain actions that people take, either in a group or individually. Second, they conceptualized identity only according to the group as a tool for collective action, as it provides similarities between members of the group or one's self and

signifies differences with “others”. This is particularly relevant in the studies of ethnicity, race and nationalism. Their third conceptualization of identity is something that is essential for someone’s “social being”.

Brubaker and Cooper (2000) gave more detailed explanation of how identity is shaped around ethnicity, race or nation. They argue that every individual has an identity shaped around those things, but they need to discover this identity.

The second conceptualization of identity within a group as a tool for collective action, entails a degree of similarity between the group to provide othering. Several studies have established a relationship between homogeneity between a group and othering (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000; Erkem, 2009). These studies find that the more homogeneous a group is, the more exclusionary the group would become. This is interesting in the context of this research, as Poland can be described as one of the most homogeneous countries in the world (Michał Buchowski et al., 2023). Therefore, this study can offer grounds for developing the link between homogeneity and exclusion in a country specific context.

Another argument that is relevant to the research topic is that authoritative institutions provide the definition for the “other”. Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper (2000) defined the state as an important source of categorization. They quote Pierre Bourdieu and Foucault who argue that the state monopolizes power and gives itself the right to categorize individuals. Therefore, the state can be seen as a strong source of identification because it has a monopoly over categorizing individuals, and it has the material and symbolic resources to force these categories upon its citizens. Other forces can be seen to play a role in shaping identity such as family, school, and religious institutions. In the context of this research, this means that the state itself can be the force that leads to intolerance as it can practice control over school, media and religious institutions. Therefore, when it comes to the question of intolerance, these factors and the state influence on them should be tested.

Brubaker & Cooper (2000), Hogg (2016) and Henri Tajfel (1974) explained reasons for exclusion. Brubaker and Cooper argue that a group identity can arise because of commonality, connectedness and a feeling of belonging. Commonality refers to characteristics that individuals have in common, such as ethnicity, whereas connectedness entails the interdependence and social

ties between group members. Therefore, this leads to a feeling of belonging to the group and feeling of exclusion who do not possess this commonality and connectedness. Tajfel (1972) spoke about commonality in social identity theory as the group provide common characteristics that are distinct from the outgroup, therefore leading to exclusion. Tajfel (1972) argued that being a member of a group provides a reason for exclusion in itself. He defines identity as “individual’s knowledge that he belongs to certain social groups together and the cultural significance of these groups membership to an individual” (Tajfel, 1972, p.292). Brubaker, Cooper and Tajfel all emphasized on symbolic factors such as race, ethnicity and culture to form reasons for exclusion. However, material factors such as economy are missing in their analysis. In this research it is believed that a combination of symbolic factors provide grounds for exclusion.

While social identity theory looks only into symbolic factors, Jeffrey Noel et al. (1995) explained identity as a mixture of factors, hence, prejudices can be caused by being a member of a group, or by other economic, cultural and political factors. They explain how those who strongly identify with a group are more likely to discriminate against an out-group or in-group members who would appear to be disloyal to the group (Noel et al., 1995). This framework can be used in order to explain the polarization in the Polish society, as the society itself is highly polarized between different ends and not just towards outsiders (Harring et al., 2022; Jasiewicz, 2008). Noel et al. (1995) explain that those who have a peripheral group identity, “defined as people within the group who are not prototypical for the group” (Noel et al., 1995, p.127), are more likely to express prejudices against out-groups in order to fit in. They give as an example that those who are insecure with their sexual identity are more likely to express homophobic views. However, in this sense it should be mentioned that those on the periphery or those who are marginalized are more likely to exhibit tolerant or accepting attitudes towards minorities as a result of feeling more empathetic and developing more understanding (Schnabel, 2018, p.4). Therefore, whether a periphery group member is more likely to exclude or include outsiders might be context specific, depending on individual’s experience in a group, which Noel et al. did not mention in their study.

Noel et al.’s periphery theory can be related to Ted Gurr’s (1970) deprivation action theory, which assumes that deprivation produces discontent, and discontent leads to dissent: in this case dissent is defined as individuals desires to change governmental institutions (Gurr, 2015). Deprivation can also mean belonging to a periphery group. According to deprivation action theory,

individuals would join a group activity because of deprivation; in this case deprivation can mean discrimination which can lead to dissent, hence a lack of satisfaction with the system can lead to dissent, which means “joining a group” in order to get benefits. Therefore, it can be said that deprived groups identify with each other which produces dissent (Lichbach, 1998). This might confirm Noel et al.’s theory that those on the periphery might be more likely to express negative attitudes towards outsiders: for example, the poorest in a society who believe there is an economic threat from migrants are more likely to exhibit negative attitudes against migrants and rebel against an opened policy towards immigration. Van Leeuwen & Vega (2021) explained this through describing dissatisfaction with the economy as a reason for discontent.

Moreover, deprivation action theory can apply in a Polish context to explain far-right ideologies, as voting for far-right parties might entail a rebellion against the government, and far-right groups are associated with intolerance, and might provide a different option to the mainstream government (Crawford & Pilanski, 2014). Discontent can also be expressed through voting behavior and can explain why some people would vote to conservative parties.

Several studies indicate that right wing identity or conservative identities emerged as a reaction to liberal values (Fukayama, 2022; Bichelt and Minkenberg, 2002). These studies were able to apply Gurr’s theory to explain the appeal of right wing parties through cultural and economic threats. This can be tested in the context of Poland to understand whether youth develop any kind of intolerance as a reaction to liberal values. Francis Fukayama argued that today’s liberal values make those who do not support it feel discontent as they feel forced into it and they do not agree with its economic principals nor its individualism that precedes religion and cultural values. Therefore, this feeling of threat leads conservatives to demand a change in the system because of feeling threatened by mainstream politics (Fukuyama, 2022; Beichelt & Minkenberg, 2002). Fukuyama, Beichelt and Minkenberg like Tajfel, Brubaker and Cooper, only focused on symbolic, cultural factors as reasons for discontent, and a reason to explain a right-wing appeal. However, they all missed the explanation of economic values that can in itself lead to discontent and a right wing appeal. Fukuyama only explained economy as a part of post-materialism, but not as a material factor.

Allport (1954) developed his theory about contact, which was named contact hypothesis, which suggests that different contact between different groups can lead to less prejudice under certain conditions, which are:

“equal status between the group, common goals, intergroup cooperation, support of authorities, law or custom” (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005, p.6).

Even though Pettigrew & Tropp (2005) agreed with Allport, they added some factors, such as that intergroup contact without intergroup friendship “cooperation” is a sufficient factor to reduce prejudices. However, the reduction of prejudice because of intergroup contact does not only depend on the four factors Allport hypothesized but on a variety of factors, such as “*perceived ethnic diversity*” (Piekut & Valentine, 2016, p.139). Therefore, Pettigrew and Tropp (2005) suggested the extension of Allport’s theory to include context under which prejudice reduction would take place.

This theory suggests that those who have been in contact with minorities are more likely to accept them. Therefore, it can be extended to apply to racial, ethnic, religious and sexual minorities, and it means that those who come from more diverse places are more likely to accept diversity. Therefore, it will be interesting to test in this theory in this research, as participants from urban as well as rural areas are interviewed.

Overall, this section reviewed literature about identity to shed light on how group identity and prejudiced attitudes are formed within a group.

2.3 Intolerance Explained Through the Lens of Politics, Economics and Culture

As mentioned in the last section, economic and cultural threats offer reasons for in-group prejudices towards outgroups. Moreover, politics, economics and culture were recurring themes in the literature about intolerance. Therefore, the questions for the interviews were formulated according to these three categories. Culture in this research is dealt with to include religion and media, family and upbringing, as well as education. Carl F. Graumann, quoted in Hauser’s study, gave a definition for cultural identity. Hauser concluded that identity consists of three factors: “identification of one’s self, identification of others, and being identified by others” (Hauser, 2010, p.7). For Graumann, identity is not just instilled in individuals but is relevant to symbols, locations

and things that surround them, (cited in Hauser, 2010, p.7). According to this definition, religion, media, family and school are all part of culture, as they can be defined as tools that generate symbols (Croucher et al., 2017). Therefore, all these factors can contribute to generating othering and prejudice towards minorities.

The importance of these three factors are mentioned by several authors; however, they all agree that the significance of these factors differs according to an individual's specific context, whether economic or cultural (Almond & Verba, 2015; Coenders & Scheepers, 2003; Krawatzek, 2022). However, Almond and Verba and Krawatzek argue that the value of these factors depends on individuals.

Therefore, the next section will review literature about both cultural and material threats and their role in generational intolerance.

2.3.1 Cultural Threats & Material Threats

Citrin and Sides (2008) argue that cultural threats are more important than material threats when it comes to attitudes towards immigrants. They build their argument on data from the European Social Survey and Citizenship Involvement, Democracy (CID) survey in the US. Citrin and Sides (2008) argue that attitudes towards immigrants are similar across all countries in Europe and the US, and that they are irrelevant to country-level differences such as GDP, level of employment, and the number of foreign-born nationals, because the number of foreign-born nationals was always overestimated in their study.

According to their analysis, five key factors can lead to intolerance towards immigrants, which are orientations towards homogeneity, economic uncertainty, education, ideology, and immigrant status. They believe that attitudes towards immigrants has more to do with cultural threats such as attitudes towards cultural homogeneity than material threats such as financial status and employment status:

Attitudes toward immigrants and immigration are grounded in predispositions that, relative to education levels or financial satisfaction, are less susceptible to change (Citrin & Sides, 2008, p. 48).

These five factors offer interesting insights in order to test youth attitudes towards diversity and immigration in the case of Poland, especially given the homogeneity of Poland, in which less than 3% of the population are national minorities (European Commission, 2022; Michał Buchowski et al., 2023). Both Krawatzek (2022) and Citrin and Sides (2008) underestimated the role of education that was probed by several scholars, as a correlation between education and tolerance was established (Hall & Rodeghier, 1994; Hagendoorn & Nekuee, 1999).

Mierina and Koroleva (2015) combined material and cultural threats in order to explain prejudices. This is one of the most important studies for analysis. This research does not treat both material and cultural threats as separate factors, but rather it aims to understand their interaction with each other, as well as measure their influence on attitudes separately, when they occur as separate factors.

They conducted a large-N study on 16,935 individuals from 14 different European countries in order to understand youth support for nationalist and far-right agendas. They found that youth growing intolerance, xenophobia and anti-migrant sentiments are caused by economic insecurity combined with financial instability and ethnic nationalism. Here, Mierina and Koroleva (2015) identify a combination of material as well as cultural threats as reasons for intolerance. They find that both education and media can lead to youth supporting far-right ideologies, which in turn leads to xenophobia and intolerance towards migrants and minorities. Therefore, those who are politically less educated are more susceptible to far-right ideologies.

Mierina and Koroleva (2015) discuss the influence of media, which is believed to be one of the most important factors that influences intolerance. Olasunkanmi Arowolo (2017), provides an explanation for how media influences attitudes. This can happen through providing frames. According to framing theory, the media highlights certain issues and then associates these issues with certain meanings. These meanings then translate into people's choices, as frames affect choices, and are used to give meaning to messages. The most prevalent type of framing is media framing. In this theory, the media is seen as an entity that makes choices about topics covered and chooses to convey a message, leading to the public forming positive or negative opinions about the issues presented, this forms a way in which media can create intolerances (Olasunkanmi Arowolo, 2017). This can be applied to news channels and how news is conveyed in a certain way, which might translate into either positive or negative attitudes.

Mierina and Koroleva (2015) also identify ethnic nationalism as a reason for intolerance. A difference between ethnic and civic nationalism should be defined here, as these definitions play a role in understanding the concept of the nation as either ethnically homogeneous (and only those who are ethnically tied can belong to the nation), or as something individuals can belong to depending on an individual's choice to identify with the nation. Anthony D. Smith defines ethnic nationalism as an ethnic consciousness based on territory, religion, dynasty and community, which he calls "*a myth-symbol complex*" (cited in Breuilly, 1988, p. 415).

According to Smith (1994), ethnic nationalism offers a reason for exclusion in today's world. Smith differentiates between "territorial nationalism" and "ethnic nationalism". He defines territorial nationalism as the need for every person to belong to a nation, but an individual can decide which nation to belong to. Hence, it is based on a rational decision, and he defines four conditions to the territorial nation, which are the equality of citizens before the law, social and political rights to citizens, a civic religion and a public culture.

He defines ethnic nationalism as perceiving the nation as a product of history and culture, the emphasis here is on familial bond rather than on land. He also emphasizes that one of the differences is that in the ethnic nation, cultural characteristics such as language and customs are more valued than equality before the law, and in terms of history, ethnic nationalism emphasizes more on the presence of "native history and ethnic culture" (Smith, 1994, p.188).

Bloom et al., (2015) use the concepts of material threat and cultural threat in order to explain different attitudes towards immigrants. They define material threat as the negative perception of immigrants to the extent of being seen as competing in the use of scarce resources. At the same time, they have defined cultural threat as a threat that is caused by negative attitudes towards racially and ethnically different groups.

They argue that those who feel culturally threatened would prefer immigrants from their own cultural background. So, for example in Europe, European immigrants would be preferred compared to other immigrants and materially threatened individuals would prefer immigrants from different racial or ethnic backgrounds (Bloom et al., 2015).

According to their findings fear of immigration from other racial groups is only caused by a cultural threat; however, the argument of this article can be criticized as materially threatened nationals usually do not prefer migrants from other racial backgrounds. For example according to the European Social Survey (ESS), Europeans prefer low-skilled laborers who also come from Europe, yet when it comes to professional workers the country of origin does not make a difference, hence this theory is not seen to reflect the reality when examined (Heath et al., 2016).

Family forms one of the tools of socialization and it is one that forms culture, and therefore influences intolerance, not just against migrants but other minorities as well. Several authors have mentioned the significance of the family's role in intolerance (Dechezelles, 2008; Gabriel, 2009; Kimmel, 2007). All spoke about far-right support. Gabriel and Kimmel (2007) spoke about the role of family as a tool of socialization that encourages intolerance, as well as violence as a reason for far-right support. Gabriel and Kimmel (2007) argue that those who come from low or middle income families are more likely to support parties. Their economic argument reflects back on the argument that those who are economically threatened are more likely to exhibit intolerant attitudes. While Stephanie Dechezelles (2008) argues that far-right support among youth is caused by cultural frames that are provided by the far-right parties that represent ideal societies, and these ideal societies are based on historical narratives about the land and the nation. These frames allow for in-group identification which leads to youth mobilization in far-right parties.

As previously mentioned, an interplay between politics, economics and culture serve as factors that explain tolerance and intolerance, with culture being a broad category that includes media, family and education. Most literature has probed cultural factors to economic factors and vice versa. However, this research tries to give both categories the same importance, trying to understand how both material and cultural threats can generate intolerance.

2.3.2 Nationalism:

As mentioned above, nationalism is one of the key factors that can lead to intolerance and it falls under the political factors that lead to intolerance. It is influenced by many cultural factors, such as education (Coenders & Scheepers, 2003).

Jaskulowski's (2019) study investigates nationalism and how it affected Polish people's acceptance of migrants during the 2015-2016 refugee crisis. His study is based on 191 semi-structured interviews that took place between 2015-2017. He suggests that people in Poland associate immigrants to Muslims, which he links to the public debate about Muslim refugees. However, this case might have changed with the influx of Ukrainian refugees. For example, according to a Public Opinion Research Center (CBOS) survey asking about the number of migrants in Poland, conducted in 2015 and 2019, 70% and 92% respectively estimated that the largest number of migrants from Poland are Ukrainians, therefore this refuted Jaskulowski's finding (CBOS, 2020).

Based on his study Jaskulowski (2019) agrees with Mieriņa & Koroļeva (2015), arguing that those who defined the nation ethnically were more likely to exclude "others" who are from different backgrounds. Moreover, he spoke about the role of national discourses and public officials as tools that generate Islamophobia. He identified factors such as education, international experience and speaking foreign languages as factors that lead to more tolerance. This aligns with contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005; Piekut & Valentine, 2016), that those who deal with diversity are more likely to accept it. Therefore, Jaskulowski's (2015) established factors that lead to tolerance, can be seen to lead to tolerance not just in the case of Muslims but other ethnic, racial, as well as sexual minorities.

Jaskulowski (2019) argues that nations are created through othering and he argues and that this is what happened during the 2015-2016 refugee crisis, as refugees were seen as other because of the Law and Justice (PiS) party's hegemonic discourses of identifying Muslims as a threat. At the same time this was supported by the European Union (EU), framing the 2015-2016 events as a "refugee crisis", introducing a moral panic in the whole of the EU (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019). Jaskulowski emphasized on cultural threats, without mentioning the role of material threats in its role in the 2015-2016 refugee crisis.

Brubaker (2017) offers a broader explanation than nationalism for intolerance. He argues that populist parties in Europe do not use othering as a national category but rather what he called a broader civilizational category, and this shift in the narrative from civilizationalism was caused by Islam being used as a civilizational threat. In this sense, Islam forms a threat to Christianity not in a religious sense, but rather in a secular sense, which means that values like freedom of speech,

LGBTQ rights and women's rights are all cultural identities associated to former Christian countries, which now embrace their secularism, but feel threatened by Islam. Therefore, the emphasis is not based on othering according to language and national cultures, but rather on religious traditions and their history of secularism (Brubaker, 2017). This offers an interesting scope for the analysis in this research paper, as to whether liberal values correlate with an acceptance for everyone, or to a protection against others. Therefore, it would be interesting to listen to participants' opinions to understand if their definition of tolerance means excluding some groups such as migrants to protect others such as LGBTQ minorities.

2.3.3 Islamophobia & Antisemitism:

As it was mentioned in the last section, nationalism played a role in othering Muslims (Jaskulowski, 2019), as well as Jews (Golec de Zavala & Cichocka, 2012; Krzemiński, 2002; Żuk, 2017), historically in Europe (Allen, 2004).

Islamophobia can be traced back as early as the start of relations between European Christians and Muslims: "It constituted the subjection of the primitively portrayed Orient to the self-proclaimed civilized Occident" (Tavkhelidze, 2021, p.143). However, the shape of Islamophobia today as a security threat can be traced back to the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers (Allen, 2004; Tavkhelidze, 2021). With 9/11, Islamophobia became a prominent public debate in Europe. Intellectuals started depicting all Muslims as a threat, seen with "Baroness Thatcher's condemnation of Muslim leaders in *The London Times*, in which she insisted that all Muslims take responsibility for the attacks" (Allen, 2004, p.17). This shows that all Muslims were depicted as a threat and the spread of racial stereotypes was fueled by these attacks on Europe through media, such as news outlets and politicians (Allen, 2004; Morgan & Poynting, 2016; Tavkhelidze, 2021). This fits in the research to understand the role of media, especially news outlets and official discourses in generating intolerance.

Antisemitism dates back to the migration of Jewish people to Europe, and although the intensity of antisemitism differed over time in Europe and across different countries, it peaked from 1899-1939 and the Holocaust (Brustein & King, 2004). Antisemitism in Europe is a result of nationalism and history (Golec de Zavala & Cichocka, 2012; Krzemiński, 2002; Żuk, 2017). Jewish people were seen as "dirty", "criminals" and as an "other", which is a stereotype used to

marginalize migrants and refugees universally (Žuk, 2017, P.63-64). Therefore, understanding the influence of nationalism can unravel other grounds to understand intolerance in Europe and specifically in Poland.

The research focuses more on Islamophobia rather than antisemitism when it comes to intolerance, as recent events such as the refugee crisis in 2015-2016 and the terrorist attacks on France and Belgium fueled Islamophobia and xenophobia (Zunes, 2017).

Several studies explain intolerance through the scope of religion. Responding to criticisms of *Orientalism* (1978), Said (1985) defined the main reasons for intolerance to be that those who belong to the minority are misrepresented or underrepresented because of their inability to define themselves, therefore leading to the exclusion of these groups and misrepresenting their history. This idea of misrepresentation was confirmed by Dauda (2020) as he argued that media, literature and public discourses portray Islam in a negative way, which affects the public's view. This also confirms Olasunkanmi Arowolo's (2017) argument that media provides frames, which shape people's attitudes towards an issue. Włoch (2009) and Górak-Sosnowska (2016) argue that the depiction of Muslims in Western media and the EU is the main reason behind intolerance toward Muslims in Poland, as Western media leads to the generation of stereotypes.

Scholars have proven that mass media produces racial stereotypes, hence showing the role of media in generating intolerances. This can be explained through how majority culture has the power to generate stereotypes about other cultures as a way of maintaining power. However, media can also generate tolerance through producing certain images for minorities. Therefore, majority culture can extend through mass media as they provide channels such as news, which is a source of mass media and provides national discourses as well as representation of different groups of citizens, that easily spread in society (Abraham & Appiah, 2006; D. R. Browne et al., 1994).

Bobako (2017) argues that Islamophobia in Poland is shaped by the dependence of Poland on the West, which means that Poland as a semi peripheral state does not have enough consciousness to form its own opinions. This could have been argued before Poland joined the EU in 2004, but this is unrealistic today in terms of Poland's position as an EU member. This draws on dependency and post-colonial theories, which do not stand true for Poland today. Therefore, it is not agreed upon as a reason for defining intolerance. Moreover, Bobako does not define the term

dependency itself clearly, therefore it is not clear whether means, societies influence on each other or a post-colonial dependency.

Jaskulowski (2019) believes that Islamophobia in youth comes from a need to rebel against the mainstream culture. While young people use social media, they trust it as a way to rebel against the mainstream system (Jaskulowski, 2019). However, a definition mainstream culture is necessary to understand what youth are rebellious against, whether it is the church, the government and traditions— therefore they are more liberal – or that the mainstream culture is liberalism, as mentioned earlier by Fukuyama (2022), therefore liberal values are seen as mainstream and they are against all of them.

Another study was conducted about religious tolerance in Poland (Golebiowska, 2004). This study looked at four different beliefs, “Orthodox, Protestant, Islam and Judaism”. Protestantism and Orthodox were more accepted within the sample surveyed, which was based on a representative sample of Poles collected in 2001 by the Center for the Study of Public Opinion (CBOS). It was found that younger, better educated, less religious, those living in big towns or cities, financially satisfied and those who consider themselves as leftists, treated the four religions in questions similarly (Golebiowska, 2004). This study was conducted before Poland joined the EU, so the results might be outdated given changes that happened in Poland. This article is useful as the indicators used in the article such as looking into big cities versus rural areas, financial status, as well as ideological attitudes are all useful measures for intolerance, and they can affect things such as exposure and feelings of material and cultural threats, which have been discussed earlier in the literature review.

2.4 The State of Intolerance in Central & Eastern Europe:

As reasons behind intolerance were discussed earlier, in this section literature about intolerance in the context of Central and Eastern Europe has been reviewed. However, most of the studies mentioned were conducted on youth who support far-right ideologies. The far-right has been on the rise in all of Europe (ZDF, 2021), and support for the far-right might serve as an indicator for intolerance (Bos et al., 2021; Szczerbiak, 2020). However, as Poland is the case study of this research, and as Central and Eastern Europe are compared in different areas, such as the rise of right-wing ideologies, as well communist past (Abbass et al., 2011; Luka, 2021; Welsh,

1996), this section focused on the state of youth intolerance in Central and Eastern Europe. As this thesis aims to understand reasons behind youth intolerance in Poland.

According to several studies based on representative surveys, people in Central and Eastern Europe are less accepting of minorities, such as ethnic, religious, racial and sexual minorities, than in Western Europe (Mitchell, 2018; Bell et al., 2021; Strabac et al., 2011). This is counter-intuitive as Central and Eastern Europe receives fewer migrants than Western Europe (Grzymała-Każłowska, 2013, p.7). Therefore, it would be expected that these countries would have less anti-migrant attitudes. Hence, it makes the interaction between material threats and cultural threats such as media, family and education interesting to investigate in this case, whether they generate intolerance.

In Central Europe, far-right parties have been gaining popularity among youth in both Hungary and Poland (Goldstein, 2021). There is no consensus on a unified definition for far-right parties, however. Far right can be either extreme “fascists” or moderate “crisis”: the difference is that the extreme is anti-establishment and moderate seeks reforms but adheres to democratic norms (Mudde, 2010, p.1172).

The far-right is on the rise in both Hungary and Poland (Goldstein, 2021). The nature of far-right parties supported in both countries is different. *Konfederacja*, which is the main party that appeals to youth with far-right ideologies, adopts neoliberal economic policies, whereas Jobbik, which is similar in Hungary, opposes all neoliberal values including economics. It has more of a centrist approach as it has a pro-EU approach, while in Poland *Kofederacja* has a more far-right, anti-EU, anti-establishment approach (Goldstein, 2021), and arguably it is a “fascist party” (Mudde, 2010, p.1172). *Kofederacja* has around 20% support from youth in Poland, making it one of the most popular parties among youth (CBOS, 2021), and about about 10.9% of young Poles identified economic freedom as a priority (KAŹDZIELA, 2023). This means that economic factors can be seen to play a role in Polish youth support for right-wing parties (Sińczuch et al., 2021). This shows that support for *Konfederacja* might be motivated by its economic policies. Therefore, youth who support this party might not be intolerant or ideologically socially right wing but rather youth who value economic freedom. Hence, this makes Poland an interesting case study, as the nature of *Konfederacja*'s economic policies might lead to its support. This shows the fluidity of left-right spectrum and the difficulty of identifying individuals according to their votes, however

usually these parties have intolerant policies and views, such as xenophobia as well as homophobia (Szczerbiak, 2020).

Mrozowicki & Kajta (2021) and Mrozowicki et al. (2019), based on interviews with far-right youth, establish a link between youth's search for nationalism, religiosity as well as traditional values and support for far-right parties, undermining the role of economic factors. They have explained that far-right identities are not just to be found in less educated, financially unstable individuals, but also in those who are better educated and who fear threats over Polish nationalism and traditional values. Comparing this data to surveys on support for *Konfederacja*, they mostly come from villages, with 37.4% in villages compared to 8.4% support from those who come from cities. Moreover, 40.4% of those aged 18-30 with higher education support *Konfederacja*. 46.5% of Polish youth are believers and practitioners of Christianity (KĄDZIĘLA, 2023). The surveys can back-up Mrozowicki et al. (2019) and Mrozowicki & Kajta's (2021) findings, as a lot of those with higher education support *Konfederacja*. However, economic policies should not be ignored, as it offers a motivation for the same group to support the far right.

Bandelj and Gibson (2020) argue that framing refugee issues causes attitudes of hostility towards immigrants in Central and Eastern Europe; they gave two examples of frames, either economic or cultural. According to their findings, people in Central and Eastern Europe are more likely to not accept migrants if the questions around them are economic. According to them, economic and employment status affect individuals' stances towards immigration. This can reflect previously mentioned arguments about material threats and their contribution on influencing attitudes towards migrants (Bloom et al., 2015; Mierina & Koroļeva, 2015).

Several studies have explained Poles' attitudes towards different refugees, comparing Polish attitudes towards Ukrainian refugees and Middle Eastern refugees. They suggest that negative attitudes towards Ukrainians is caused by feelings of material threat, therefore linking it only to the economy, meanwhile negative attitudes towards Middle Eastern refugees is caused by cultural factors (Łaciak & Freelak, 2018; Nowak et al., 2023; Winiewski & Bulska, 2020). This all confirms previous studies about group identification (Brubaker, 2017; Noel et al., 1995; Tajfel, 1974). Because Ukrainians are similar in culture and ethnicity (Nowak et al., 2023), this means that the type of othering they face, might be caused by economic factors, while cultural and symbolic factors remain an important source to explain feeling of fear and threat, towards those

who are portrayed as different (Bloom et al., 2015; Jaskulowski, 2019; Mieriņa & Koroļeva, 2015). However, each of these factors should not be treated separately, as both factors combined together can lead to intolerance, as reviewed in the literature.

2.5 Conclusion

The aim of the literature review was to provide a framework for reasons behind intolerance. The main argument of this thesis is that forms of intolerance can be identified across different youth owing to different cultural and material threats. Therefore, the literature started by a fluid discussion of identity and othering, then it went more in-depth, identifying reasons for intolerance through discussing material, cultural and political factors, as literature reviewed identified the significance of these three factors. It is believed in this research that all factors combined together can lead to intolerance. A sub-section was included about nationalism, which plays a role in intolerance. Afterwards Islamophobia and antisemitism were discussed as a product of intolerance. It was decided to focus on Islamophobia, as currently fear of immigrants, especially those coming from the Middle East and Muslim countries, is salient on the European and the Polish agenda (Bobako, 2018; Zunes, 2017). As Poland is the case study of the research, the literature review ended by discussing literature about intolerance in Central and Eastern Europe and specifically Poland.

3. Methodology

3.1 Aims and Research questions

The main aim of this paper is to find out reasons behind youth intolerance in Poland. In order to do so this, this paper seeks to understand youth attitudes, including several layers of identity that an individual can have.

This research looks into youth as several studies have established an indirect correlation between age and tolerance (Edgcumbe, 2022; Hagendoorn & Nekuee, 1999; Janmaat & Keating, 2019). Additionally, *Konfederacja* has been gaining popularity among Polish youth (CBOS, 2021; Goldstein, 2021; Sińczuch et al., 2021; Tomaszewicz, 2020). The topic of why youth vote for far right parties in Poland is however already well researched (Mierina and Koroleva, 2015; Minkenberg, 2017; Mrozowicki et al., 2019). Therefore, I decided to look into forms of intolerance in the general population, under the assumption that some elements of intolerance can exist in individuals across all societies (Brandt et al., 2014).

In order to test this assumption, it was decided to conduct semi-structured interviews with Polish youth. The sample was chosen to be a general sample of Polish youth who were not chosen on any ideological basis, to uncover intolerances that an individual can have. As individuals do not necessarily have one identity but rather identity can be formed of several layers. Hecht & Phillips (2022) defined identity as the views of one's self, the identity performed, the identity that an individual have compared to others and an identity a person shares with a group "collective identity". However, identity can also be seen to consist of many intersectional identities, intersectionality of identity meant that individuals can belong to several groups at the same time (Frame, 2016). Therefore, this can lead to othering of different groups depending on different identities.

This research can contribute to the field of identity studies through achieving significant results about othering in youth, and identify issues that youth are mostly intolerant about. As well as, offer grounds for future research. The literature is extensive on identity and othering the (Mierina & Koroleva, 2015; Citrin & Sides, 2008; (Bandelj & Gibson, 2020; Brubaker, 2017; Gurr,

2015; Jaskulowski, 2019; Tajfel, 1974). However, this research uniqueness is based on how it aims to uncover intolerances that individuals can have, therefore it would not deal with individuals as tolerant or intolerant, which was investigated in previous research. but rather aims to understand youth opinions, and othering can mechanisms towards different issues, which could add to the literature on youth intolerance.

In line with the aims of this research, the research seeks indicative answers to the following questions:

1. Why do youth adopt intolerant attitudes towards others?

- To what extent can intolerance be identified across youth in Poland?
- What factors affect youth intolerance in Poland the most and how does it happen?
- Does intolerance/ or tolerance entail a certain ideology in Poland?

3.2 Methodology: Understanding Polish Youth Intolerance

This is a hypothesis generating single case study of Polish youth intolerance. The main aim of this research is to provide explanations for youth intolerances in the Polish context. It does not appear that previous research, tried to investigate intolerance in Poland without being ideologically driven, which this study is trying to do. hypothesis generating case studies aim to help in the process of theory instruction, rather than the theory itself (Ndam, 2023), this is a hypothesis generating case study as it uses as bottom-up approach, where participants of this research provide the argument “hypothesis” that can be further tested in future research. Single case studies are useful as they allow for an in-depth study that are hard to notice in comparative case studies or large-n case studies (Landman, 2017).

This research employs a qualitative approach, based on semi-structured interviews. Qualitative research is the best suited method for this study, as it seeks to understand phenomena in a real world context without manipulating real life events (Golafshani, 2015). The main aim of qualitative research is not to generalize or predict but rather to explain and understand similar situations (Golafshani, 2015). Therefore, it aligns with the aim of this research, which is to understand why youth adopt certain identities in Poland in respect to their nationality, religion, culture and gender, without providing generalizations or predictions.

Qualitative research employs an inductive, interpretive and naturalistic approach, where phenomena cannot be investigated from one perspective, because of the complexity of reality (Yilmaz, 2013). Therefore, the research was inductive as it was guided by participants' perspectives and understanding of reality, and their understanding of themselves in relation to "others". As qualitative research can capture the complexity of human behavior more than quantitative research, as well as generate unpredictable findings (Aspers & Corte, 2019; Bryman, 1984, 82) . Therefore, this type of research study is best suited to uncover different attitudes and identities that exist in individuals, and the interaction between tolerance and intolerance inside one's self. Under this assumption, this research can lead to unpredictable findings such as finding individuals with liberal identities to adopt some intolerant views and vice versa.

3.3 Methods

In line with what was mentioned above, the chosen method for this thesis is qualitative semi-structured interviews. Interviews are useful in order to understand attitudes, behaviors and experiences of participants (Rowley, 2012). Through interviewing, the researcher is able to associate meanings to behavior by understanding this behavior (Seidman, 2006). This research aims to understand intolerant attitudes across non-ideologically oriented youth. Therefore, interviews were chosen as a tool to carry out this research, as they allow for in-depth exposure to participants experiences (Seidman, 2006).

While structured interviews explain behavior within predetermined categories, semi-structured interviews allow for more understanding of complex human behaviors and understanding different layers of human behavior (Fontana & Frey, 2000). Semi-structured interviews allow for open, in-depth interviews (Scanlan, 2020). Therefore, in this research, semi-structured interviews were chosen as they allow for better explanation for the complexity of attitudes and identities. The choice of interviews rather than surveys was taken because interviews offer a deeper understanding of how and why things happen (Jain, 2021), which aligns with the aim of this research to find out why youth adopt intolerant identities. Moreover, interviews offer a personalized exchange of information when compared to surveys (Jain, 2021; Bryman, 2016), therefore allowing for in-depth uncovering of more information about the participants.

In order to conduct semi-structured interviews, an interview guide was prepared in line with the literature review (Appendix 3, interview guide). The questions covered the three main categories of politics, economics and culture, as these were the three main factors indicated in the literature as reasons behind intolerance. However, the category of culture is a broad category that includes religion, media, upbringing, social circles as well as education. The order of the questions, as well as questions asked were determined according to the direction of the conversation. Therefore, not all questions were asked in every interview to avoid participants' repetition of themselves.

One of the questions of the interview involved showing the participants pictures of refugees on the Polish-Ukrainian border and the Belarusian-Polish border and asking participants what they feel (see Figures 1, 2, 3 and 4 below). Initially the intent was to show pictures with representation of different genders, ethnicities and age groups. However, the pictures of Ukrainian refugees on the internet only included women and children because most men were not allowed to leave the country (DW, 2022) and a large variety of pictures of refugees on the Polish-Belarusian border was difficult to identify, which might relate to Poland's state of emergency rules restricting journalists' access (Human Rights Watch, 2022). Therefore, participants were shown different pictures to evaluate if they express different feelings. For example, in the case of refugees on the Belarusian–Polish border, participants expressed that they were mostly men, therefore, a picture of a child was shown to understand if there is a change of reaction between participants who saw the pictures of the child and those who were shown a picture of a wide group of people. However, expressions remained similar. Moreover, most of the participants were able to identify where the pictures were from, which guaranteed that I did not explain the pictures with any biases.

Fig 1:



Source: Picture-alliance. (2022). *Ukrainian refugees from 2022, crossing into Poland.*
<https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/47039/how-poland-took-on-the-challenge-of-accommodating-ukrainian-refugees>

Fig 2:



Source: Culmone, G. (2022). *Hrushiv, Ukraine, March 2022. A group of Ukrainian refugees waiting to cross the Polish border.* <https://voxeurop.eu/en/at-the-polish-ukrainian-border-european-solidarity-finally-shines/>

Fig 3:



Source: Scheglov, L. (2021). *Migrants walk towards the Bruzgi-Kuznica Bialostocka border crossing in an attempt to cross the Belarusian-Polish border in the Grodno Region, Belarus.* <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/locals-helping-migrants-poland-belarus-border-fear-backlash-2021-11-15/>¹

Fig 4:



Source: Radwanski, W. (2021). *A man holding a child wipes his eye as the Kurdish family from Dohuk in Iraq waits for the border guard patrol, near Narewka, Poland, near the Polish-Belarusian border.* <https://www.npr.org/sections/pictureshow/2021/11/16/1051199592/photos-belarus-poland-border-migrants>

3.4 Recruitment & Participants

Participants were invited based on being Polish and between the ages of 18-24, based on the UN definition of youth (*United Nations: DEFINITION OF YOUTH*, 2013). The participants did not have to belong to any ideological background. While doing this research I tried to maintain gender parity, as well as having equal representation between those who live in urban and rural areas, to investigate if these factors have influence on the research participants. However, the data was slightly skewed towards women and those who live in urban areas with nine female participants and nine participants who came from urban areas.

Recruitment was conducted through snowball sampling. This took place via three distinct networks in Poland, with each initial contact providing one or more contact and each additional contact extending the sample further. The diversity of the network reached was improved by the fact that the three initial contacts all came from different places. Anyone who held Polish citizenship, grew up in Poland, is a usual resident in the country and was within the mentioned age bracket was eligible for an interview. Although two participants recently moved abroad, they grew up in Poland and usually reside in Poland. Snowball sampling refers to the technique where participants are recruited through social networks (Browne, 2005). This technique was chosen as the research was trying to recruit a general sample that does not have any ideological affiliations, and recruitment through different networks offered this kind of consideration.

The research was conducted with fifteen participants. Interviews took place between April and June 2023. All interviews were audio-recorded and were transcribed later. The interviews were all conducted online, using the University of Glasgow's Zoom services, to make sure that participants could express their opinions openly in a private setting. Interview typically lasted one hour, with a variation of 15 minutes above or below. Interviews were all conducted in English.

One expert interview was conducted with a university professor in Poland who specializes in migration studies in line with results found in the interviews.

3.5 Analysis

A qualitative content analysis was conducted, which “involves a process designed to condense raw data into categories or themes based on valid inference and interpretation” (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009, p.2). The interviews were transcribed manually and this improved familiarity with the data. According to the transcripts, the most recurring themes were coded in the qualitative data analysis software NVivo. Recruitment was brought to a stop when there were clear recurring themes in the interviews. Themes were found to be recurring from the tenth interview, and five more interviews were conducted in order to make sure of saturation of recurring themes. The research is analyzed partially in line with “evolved” constructivist grounded theory (Mills et al., 2006, p.27), which assumes that “the researcher has nothing to prove or disprove” but rather that the research is inductive and derives its results from participants’ stories (Mills et al., 2006, p.26). Although the aim of traditional grounded theory is to reconstruct theories with no guidance from the literature (Glaser, 1999, p.841), evolved grounded theory employs an interpretivist approach (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p.19 ; Mills et al., 2006, p.29). This entails active engagement with the literature: as Corbin & Strauss (2008, p.24) argue, “Though it is not our usual practice, sometimes the literature does get the analytic juices flowing”. Even though the research was also guided by concepts introduced in the literature based on the research questions, the analysis and findings of this research were primarily guided by participants’ stories, trying to reflect on their political, social and historical contexts. Therefore, there were no pre-conceived ideas to prove or disprove and the main argument of this research was derived from participants.

3.6 Limitations

One of the limitations of this research is language: all the interviews were conducted in English as I do not speak Polish. This might hinder the quality of the research, as Polish was the first language of all participants, therefore they might have been more comfortable in it. In order to overcome this limitation, only participants who were fluent in English were invited via a network of participants who already spoke in English. Some of the participants had dual citizenship and/or lived abroad; hence, English was an everyday language that they used.

The topics discussed in this research were sensitive to participants as they were all about Poland, and I am not Polish, which may lead the participants to mask opinions that they have

regarding some of the topics discussed. To overcome this limitation, building a rapport with participants was always a priority to make them comfortable with sharing their thoughts, which in line with Guillemin & Heggen's (2009) argument ensures the richness of data.

One of the limitations was the difficulty to reach anyone who openly declared belonging to an intolerant group or any kind of right wing ideological orientation. However, the research overcame this limitation through interviewing a general sample with no ideological affiliations, so that the sample interviewed would not feel targeted and would speak comfortably.

I come from Egypt, and during the interviews, the topic of migrants from the Middle East and Muslim countries was discussed. Therefore, I was conscious of my own biases and that it might be a sensitive topic for me. Moreover, I was aware the participants might mask their opinions if they knew where I come from. However, participants shared thoughts about the threat from immigrants from the Middle East and Muslim countries, which made it unclear if they knew where I am from. To overcome my own biases, I tried to listen to participants' opinions carefully without making any judgements. The main aim of the research was never to judge its participants but rather to understand reasons behind their opinions.

3.7 Ethical considerations

This research was approved by the University of Glasgow School of Social and Political Science ethical committee, and Jagiellonian University Institute of European Studies ethical committee. The protection of personal data of participants was ensured through encryption of data and the storage and transfer of data on the University of Glasgow's OneDrive. Participants have been given pseudonyms in the analysis section to make sure that participants cannot be identified.

Interviews were carried out using the University of Glasgow's Zoom services to ensure the safety of participants, not expressing their opinions in public in line with the ethical application approved at the University of Glasgow.

Emotional distress was considered during the interviews. Participants signed consent forms and read details of the interview, which gave them the right to withdraw from the interview whenever they wanted to. Details of psychological organizations could have been provided if any participant needed it. However, none of the participants expressed any emotional distress during the interviews.

4. Analysis, Discussion and Interpretation

The main aim of this research is to understand intolerance in youth, and understand factors that contribute to shaping intolerance in youth. In this chapter, the main findings of this research are discussed in line with the research questions and the literature. These new findings add to the literature on youth intolerance and what shapes youth identities and attitudes. First, a demographic overview of the participants will be highlighted, then general trends and findings will be discussed thoroughly.

This research is based on interviewing 15 participants who are between the ages of eighteen to twenty-four and have Polish citizenship, in line with previously mentioned information in the methodology chapter. In terms of education, most participants were either bachelor's (N=11) students, with three master's students and one participant who just finished high school. The participants had different academic backgrounds: around half of the participants studied humanities and social sciences and the other half studied different majors such as informatics, accounting and physiotherapy, which supported a diversity of opinions when the participants were asked different questions about different social issues (see Table 1 below).

While I aimed to maintain an equal ratio between the urban and rural divide, as well as a gender parity, the data was slightly skewed towards people who live in urban areas, with six participants coming from rural areas and the rest coming from big cities in Poland. A similar skew happened with gender representation, with six males while rest of the participants were females.

Some of the participants chose, unprompted, to reveal their religious beliefs, sexual identities as well as life plans or personal details that are believed to have influenced the results of the research (see Table 1 below).

An expert interview with a university professor in Poland specializing in migration studies was also conducted in line with the findings of this research. The interview contributed to and confirmed the findings of this research.

Table 1: Demographic Overview of Participants.

Names <i>Pseudonyms</i>	Gender	Age	Parents' Degree	Religion	Area	Degree	Subject	Personal Information	Family Religious Status	No. of languages spoken
Bogdan	Male	19	Bachelor's	Irreligious	Rural	Bachelor's	Law	N/A	Not religious	2
Janusz	Male	24	No degree	Catholic	Rural	Master's	International Relations	Studying in North Africa. Spent more than a year abroad	Not religious	4
Milena	Female	23	Bachelor's	N/A	Urban	Master's	Accounting and controlling	N/A	Religious	2
Zuzanna	Female	21	Bachelor's	N/A	Rural	Bachelor's	Intercultural Studies	N/A	Not religious	2
Filip	Male	21	Bachelor's	Irreligious	Urban	Master's	European Studies	Dual citizenship Spent more than a year abroad.	Religious	4
Jakub	Male	22	Bachelor's	Irreligious	Rural	Bachelor's	Psychology	LGBTQ	Catholic but more secular now	2
Lukasz	Male	24	Bachelor's	Irreligious	Urban	Master's	Finance and Accounting	Dual citizen/lives abroad Spent more than a year one	Liberal	3
Maria	Female	22	No degree	Irreligious	Urban	Bachelor's	Physiotherapy		N/A	2
Marta	Female	23	Bachelor's	Catholic	Rural	Bachelor's	Intercultural studies		Religious	3
Kacper	Male	21	Bachelor's	Irreligious	Urban	Bachelor's	Law		N/A	2
Hanna	Female	18	N/A	N/A	Urban	Just finished high school	Will study fashion	Going to study abroad	Religious	2
Wiktoria	Female	19	N/A	Irreligious	Rural	Bachelor's	American/Croatian Studies	LGBTQ	Religious/ Liberal	2
Izabela	Female	22	N/A	N/A	Urban	Bachelor's	Informatics	Studied Erasmus abroad	Religious	2
Agnieszka	Female	23	N/A	N/A	Urban	Master's	European studies		Religious	2
Natalia	Female	23	N/A	N/A	Urban	Bachelor's	International Relations		Irreligious	2

Source: own

4.1 General Trends & Summary of Findings

This research does not seek to provide any generalizations. Data provided in this analysis can only speak for the participants of the interviews and no one else. Still, the findings of this research can help in the development of further research about othering and intolerance, not only in Poland but in other countries as well.

During the interviews, participants were asked around 15 questions. The questions were designed in order to measure prejudices against different groups, such as ethnic, religious and sexual minorities, as well as prejudices against women in the society. The questions were designed in line with the literature review, focusing on three main factors: economics, politics and culture. Each of

these categories included subcategories. For example, culture included questions about media, religion and education, and politics included questions about the government, as well as nationalism – measuring nationalism through asking about the uniqueness of Poland, as well as who can be a Polish citizen (Appendix 3: interview guide). The questions asked about domains of social life to understand how they view minorities in Poland. Participants were asked to express personal opinions as well as opinions about their social circles and acquaintances. The main aim was to encourage the participants to come up with the data themselves and provide explanations for their thinking patterns themselves.

All fifteen participants were supportive or somehow supportive of LGBTQ rights and women's rights, but eight of the participants expressed reservations towards immigrants, which led to a thematic focus on immigration during the interviews. All fifteen participants expressed positive attitudes towards Ukrainian refugees, with some exceptions when speaking about jobs and the economy. Therefore, the term “immigrant” was more associated to diverse ethnic groups, contradicting Jaskulowski's (2019) finding mentioned earlier that the term immigrants is associated with Muslims among the sample he interviewed.

The recurring theme during the interviews was expressing reservations towards refugees and migrants from the Middle East and Muslim countries, seeing them as a threat. While the questions that were asked referred to economic, political and cultural threats in line with the three main factors identified previously in the literature, questions about migrants from the Middle East and Muslim countries led to a discussion about different ethnic minorities. Therefore, migration was dealt with to measure support for ethnic diversity among participants.

When it comes to culture and social media there are some influences in the West to change the color of the skin [...] the historical color, Polish people find it problematic and do not accept it (Bogdan).

As shown from Bogdan's quote, when asked about immigrants from the Middle East and Muslim countries, most of the participants like Bogdan gave answers that deal with ethnic diversity. This is assumed to be the meaning of Bogdan's quote as Western Europe is believed to be more ethnically diverse than Eastern Europe (Maxwell, 2016; Turton & González, 2000). According to an EU report, the main ethnic minorities with integration challenges and who are stereotyped in Europe are Black people, Roma and Muslims: these minorities are usually associated with the West

(Triandafyllidou, 2010). It was confirmed by the expert that Poles often consider a variety of racial minorities to be Muslims.

“There are very negative attitudes towards others, but others were mostly labelled as Muslims, especially young people, they do not have much of expertise. So by Muslim they label almost everybody who is non-white (Expert)”.

Therefore, this suggests that Bogdan was referring to the historical color of the skin as “ethnically Polish” given the homogeneity of Poland (Michał Buchowski et al., 2023), in contrast to the more ethnically diverse West (Maxwell, 2016; Triandafyllidou, 2010; Turton & González, 2000).

Demographics seemed to have influenced participants’ answers. First, by looking at gender, no difference was observed between men and women’s attitudes towards any of the issues discussed. However, other demographic factors appear to be influential, such as experience in living abroad and sexual identity: while three men expressed support for immigrants, two of these had dual citizenship and lived in Western Europe and one belonged to the LGBTQ community. However, there was an exception, as one of the participants who expressed reservations towards immigrants from the Middle East and Muslim countries lives in North Africa in a Muslim majority country, and is learning Arabic. Meanwhile, the two men who possess dual citizenship and lived abroad confirmed contact theory – that more exposure leads to more tolerance – which was previously mentioned in the literature. The case of the man who lives in North Africa might be puzzling and could potentially challenge Allport’s contact theory (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005).

In the context of female participants, four out of nine women expressed supportive attitudes towards immigration and diversity. One of these women belonged to the LGBTQ community and voiced similar opinions with the male who belonged to the LGBTQ community, which might indicate a correlation between marginalized groups supporting other marginalized groups (Schnabel, 2018, p.4). A participant who was about to start her studies abroad in a Western European country expressed a supportive opinion towards immigrants, which again might confirm contact theory among participants, as the three people who lived abroad or accept living abroad in diverse societies expressed support for diversity in Poland (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005). Another female participant who studied her Erasmus abroad in a diverse Southern European country expressed reservations towards migrants, which might offer another challenge to contact theory.

According to the literature, those who come from cities show more supportive attitudes towards minorities as a result of being in contact with minorities (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005; Piekut & Valentine, 2016). This was not the result found here, as around eight participants expressed less support for immigration, and most of them came from urban areas, such as big cities in both Southern and Western Poland. Therefore, the area of living is not considered a factor that influenced the attitudes of these research participants and this might be relevant to the fact that all the participants are university-educated, or it can be attributed to different experiences. However, this might offer grounds for further scholarly research.

Measuring religiosity was not part of the questions asked to participants. However, around nine of the participants chose to reveal their religious beliefs: most of them were irreligious, while both participants who expressed religious affiliations to Catholicism were reserved towards immigration. Meanwhile, among the seven who said they were irreligious, four were supportive of immigration, whereas three expressed reserved attitudes towards migrants. Therefore, this research is unable to establish any potential correlation between level of religiosity and support for immigration. However, religion proved to be a significant factor in participants' support for values such as LGBTQ rights and abortion rights, as it can be seen as a result of a rebellion against the government, traditions and the church.

And the church has a huge role in politics as it is dealt with as a pressuring group in Poland as it has huge links with the government and it influences policies like abortion, LGBTQ rights. It does not enable social progress (Filip).

Around twelve of the participants chose to share details about religiosity of their family. However, participants' support or reservations towards immigrants did not seem to be influenced by this factor. However, if one considers liberalism to mean less religiosity, then family upbringing would have an influence: in this case, of the thirteen participants who provided data about their family, seven supported allowing migrants into Poland, and five either mentioned that their family is liberal or irreligious. Meanwhile, almost everyone who mentioned that their family is conservative also mentioned that their family is religious and had more reserved attitudes towards immigration.

Overall, many participants described themselves as liberals. However, participants' political ideologies did not appear to influence their attitudes towards migrants, except for the two LGBTQ

participants, who both described themselves as left and expressed an opened approach towards immigrants. This suggests that liberalism does not imply acceptance for everyone.

In conclusion, the main finding derived from participants' answers is that almost all participants appeared to support LGBTQ rights and abortion rights, even though many simultaneously expressed reservation towards immigration. Data suggests that media representation (such as mainstream media, social media, as well as new platforms) combined with exposure to minorities, as well as nationalism (through ethnically defining the nation and a belief in the uniqueness of Polish history) are the main reasons behind these reserved attitudes.

Furthermore, data suggests that a general rebellion against the church, the government and traditions, as well as an exposure and awareness about LGBTQ and abortion issues, are the main reasons behind support for LGBTQ rights and abortion rights. The following sections will discuss and interpret the findings thoroughly.

4.2 Welcoming or Wary: Attitudes towards Migrants

Always come to Poland, but I understand that some people might not be happy about it. [which] I don't really understand (Maria).

Maria's quote captures participants' answers about reservations towards immigration and ethnic diversity in Poland. Participants provided different explanations for their attitudes towards immigration.

Trends among participants suggest that a negative attitude towards immigration among participants is caused by a feeling of a threat, which may be caused by media, especially news framing, as well as a lack of exposure to ethnic diversity, which Agnieszka captures perfectly:

I think we are still kind of scared from people from other countries, because we simply don't know them, and they don't look like most of us. And for some people, it might be confusing.

Participants were asked to comment on two studies to capture their attitudes towards migrants: one study found that majority of Polish people are not accepting of migrants because of economic reasons and the other study found that majority of Polish people view refugees from the

Middle East and Muslim countries as a threat (Leszczyński & Wyborcza, 2015; Pew Research Center, 2017) (Appendix 3, interview guide). When asked about whether Polish people feel threatened by migrants from the Middle East and Muslim countries, most participants expressed a feeling of threat for different reasons. For example, when asked this question, Maria answered:

Yeah, maybe a little bit. People are still scared of people like this. But this is [...] a stereotype. But I think personally that I'm also a bit scared of them. But I cannot explain why, maybe because there is an opinion on them. And when I am in the city, and I see some people on the streets, there are [...] people looking like they're from the Middle East but it is not a rule.

When asked about the reason why she thinks that way, Maria said:

Maybe from television and that people think of them as people with guns. Maybe because of the wars that happened in the Middle East or something. I think they were shown as the bad guys sometimes. [...] I think I've never seen anything good about them. And this is the thing that they show the bad things. They don't show the good things. You know, when I think about it, right now [...] I've never seen anything good about them

Maria mentioned her support for the LGBTQ community, as well as watching awareness videos about this minority on TikTok. Therefore, she was asked if the LGBTQ community is more accepted than migrants among youth in Poland, Maria agreed, and she gave the following reasons:

Yes, because [...] LGBTQ people [are] Polish and they are not foreign, and Polish people are scared of foreign people.

Maria's answers suggest that exposure from media, such as social media and mainstream media, as she mentioned using TikTok and watching television, as well as daily interactions, as reasons behind acceptance or holding reservations towards different minorities. Maria mentioned the threatening image exported from the media about Middle Eastern and Muslim migrants, combined with her lack of interaction with Middle Eastern migrants, as reasons to experience fear from this group. Furthermore, she expressed her exposure to the LGBTQ community, through positive content on social media, in addition to this group being Polish, as reasons to support this group.

Maria's opinion can be seen as a result of this threatening image about Islam in the media, especially through news platforms and Western governments' discourses, that started since 9/11 (Allen, 2004; Morgan & Poynting, 2016; Tavkhelidze, 2021). This is clear in Maria's answer about being scared from people from the Middle East, because she has "never seen anything good about

them”. In this answer, she reproduced threatening narratives about Islam and the Middle East, such as “people with guns”. Meanwhile, when Maria spoke about the LGBTQ community, she referred to a similar phenomenon, mentioned earlier by Agnieszka, which is the fear of foreign people, but that she is exposed to the LGBTQ community and that she accepts it because it is still part of the Polish society. Therefore, Maria’s answers suggest that exposure and media play a role in acceptance or reservations towards minorities, which aligns with the literature on contact theory (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005; Piekut & Valentine, 2016;). Nevertheless, Maria herself comes from a large city in Southern Poland, making her quote saying ‘sometimes I see people from the Middle East’ likely. Therefore, it is not exposure per se but a lack of interaction, in line with Pettigrew and Tropp’s (2005) and Allport’s (1954) contact theory, which might be reasons for a feeling of threat.

Moreover, most participants confirmed this threatening narrative about the Middle East and Muslims, as most of the participants referred to the threatening Western experience. As Bogdan put it:

Due to the experience that happened beyond the Western border. And I believe that in Polish mindset there is little knowledge about Muslim culture, so people base their opinions on stereotypes rather than knowledge.

Most participants voiced similar opinions to Bogdan. Bogdan provided an explanation for what he meant by “experience beyond the Western border”: he mentioned districts being overtaken by refugees and danger on the streets. Moreover, most of the participants referred to organized crime and terrorism as reasons behind reservations towards immigrants from the Middle East and Muslim countries. When asked about why they think this way, they mostly mentioned media and stereotypes as reason for their patterns of thinking.

A few years ago, it was time when [...] we were reached with news about rapes and terrorist attacks in Western Europe. and it used to affect the way people think and how they used to be scared of Muslims in Poland (Marta).

The previous quotation confirms the literature regarding the association between Islam and danger (Allen, 2004; Morgan & Poynting, 2016; Tavkheldze, 2021). Moreover, it confirms Mieriņa & Koroļeva’s (2015) findings about how international media focusing on ethnic nationalism and exclusion in the West influenced opinions in Central and Eastern Europe, making these countries less accepting of immigration (Mieriņa & Koroleva, 2015). The participants’ quotes support Dauda’s

(2020) and Said's (1985) arguments that mass media, such as through news broadcasts, contributes to the spread of stereotypes, as the dominant culture can spread its narrative through mass media, which generates stereotypes (D. R. Browne et al., 1994; Dauda, 2020; Said, 1985).

The expert stated that those who migrate for a year or more should be more opened towards immigrants as a result of more exposure to foreigners, which follows the same logic of contact theory (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005). This was proved right in the case of the two participants who held dual citizenship and lived abroad, as well as in the case of participant who was about to start her studies abroad. However, Janusz, who is studying in a North African country, comes from a rural town in Poland and identifies as Catholic, expressed some reservations towards immigration from the Middle East and North African countries. This was similar for Izabela, who studied her Erasmus in a diverse Southern European country. Janusz said:

I mean from my perspective I wouldn't take anyone. You need to check, I wouldn't open the borders like Germany and if you want to get refuge or travel you need to be checked. [...] That's my point anything can be done but according to procedures. Just to make sure everything will be alright [...] because you'll never know. I don't like this government that much but I support them in this point. That you can't just open the country and to get people all over the place, that you do not know who they are. If you checked people and they are eligible to come they should come. We should not be opposing this.

In the expert interview, when the expert was asked about reasons behind participants' reference to Western Europe and crimes when speaking about immigration, he confirmed that this image comes from media. He referred to news and the government-controlled public media *Telewizja Polska* (TVP) (Żuk, 2020, p.287; OSCE, 2019, p.4). He spoke about the migration crisis, following PiS's withdrawal from the relocation schemes, "the movement from asylum seekers from an EU country that granted them international protection to another country that will grant them international protection" (European Commission, n.d.), which was agreed upon by Civic Platform. PiS infiltrated public media, which they influence with negative images of refugees and migrants. The expert said:

They took over the public television and for the last eight years, young people at least would watch television from time to time, and the message they are conveying is thanks God we are not France or Germany because there is a rising criminality. if you see what happened in France in the last days, it is a way of saying look this is what would happen if Donald Tusk had the government, so it is a way of scaring people, this is threat. So thank God until now we are still a traditional Catholic

country, but things can start to change if we allow “others”, Barbarians who will invade our country [...]. So definitely public media had a huge influence on the attitudes of the young people.

Wiktora who belongs to the LGBTQ community, for example, confirmed this,

I was born in 2003, so I remember all those situations in Paris and the Western countries with terrorism; I think a lot of people are afraid of that.

Overall, it is clear that news representation of minorities such as migrants can lead to reservations towards minorities, even though in one survey only 10.6% of Polish youth stated that they watch TV (KAÐZIELA, 2023). However, most participants of this research said that they do, simply that they do not sit intentionally and watch television. Rather, it is always on as a result of living with their parents or as means to gain different perspective. This reflects Jain’s (2021) argument earlier mentioned in the literature about how interviews can offer a deeper understanding than surveys and can capture things that surveys cannot.

Okay, I'm watching mainstream media TVP and TVN it's the governmental service and it's the opposition station. I just wanted to see a different perspective. I don't watch news, I'm not into politics, I hate watching news. So everyday I watch a different station (Marta).

In conclusion, while both exposure and media representation are dealt with as separate factors in the literature, combining both factors together can contribute in deepening the understanding of reasons behind intolerance, as media can offer a negative stereotype and the lack of interaction might either confirm the stereotype, or at least not challenge it.

4.2.1 Media Representation of Minorities in Poland:

As mentioned, media provided an explanation for participants’ attitudes towards minorities. Therefore, media representation was an important topic that came up during the interviews. Participants were asked to speak about media representation of minorities as well as what media do they often use.

Most of the participants referred to mainstream media, such as news platforms, as well as public media TVP and private media TVN. In terms of representation of minorities, participants mentioned that mainstream media talks the most about Ukrainian refugees, then LGBTQ people and after that migrants from the Middle East and Muslim countries. Moreover, almost all participants expressed that refugees from the Middle East are portrayed negatively in the mentioned media sources. This aligns with many findings in the literature about how Islam is portrayed negatively in Western and European media, therefore subjecting everyone from this region to stereotypes (Allen, 2004; Brubaker, 2017; Dauda, 2020; Górak-Sosnowska, 2016; Jaskulowski, 2019; Rezaei et al., 2019; Said, 1985; Shahwar, 2014; Triandafyllidou, 2010; Włoch, 2009).

Participants expressed the following,

Minority that is present in the media in Poland is the LGBTQ minority, you would not see anything about Muslim celebrations in media except if it is unfortunately related to terrorist attacks and I think it would be depicted in a negative way. I do not really follow the opposition media to make a point but I think generally in Poland Islam would not be depicted in a good way (Filip)

They only talk about Ukraine, but not other countries except when it comes to natural disasters. When it comes to natural disasters, they say we have to help these people, but when it comes to Polish Belarus border, they tend to show these people as animals and share these fake videos with pedophilia (Marta)

Participants mentioned that the government-owned media (Żuk, 2020, p.287; OSCE, 2019, p.4) offers negative representation for immigrants from the Middle East and Muslim countries, as well as the LGBTQ community. They also stated that both the government and the church offer a negative portrayal of the LGBTQ community. However, participants expressed the visibility of the LGBTQ community and emphasized that members of the community are Polish. Moreover, most participants expressed their hostility towards the church because of its rhetoric about the LGBTQ community and abortion, as well as the overall conservatism of the church.

When it comes to public media there is no [...] place for representation of minorities, in fact minorities are those who are targeted by this media. So they show how wicked the minorities are and how dangerous they are. So they are spreading hatred towards these groups. The LGBTQ community is the one that is corrupting children according to the public television media, but when it comes to private television there is no hatred towards minorities, so they are much more supportive towards these people (Bogdan).

Another minority that participants spoke about and viewed positively was Ukrainians. In contrast to the LGBTQ community, participants referred to positive representations of Ukrainian in public media.

I would say that the mainstream media focuses mostly on Ukraine and then the Muslims. For Ukrainians in a good way and for Muslims in a bad way (Janusz).

Moreover, most participants spoke about their use of social media and mentioned following things they are interested in. Therefore, social media does not offer a tool of exposure as all participants referred to social bubbles on social media, following only things that interests them. Hanna captured this perfectly by saying:

I use Instagram mainly I would say. I watch television but rarely only when it's like connected with some political stuff that I am really interested in, sometimes TikTok, but not that much. so especially Instagram and I think I follow many different things a lot of it connected with Art, but also like some pages connected with [...] climate changes and also LGBTQ, and also some pages connected with abortion because it's an important topic

This was confirmed by the expert:

...young people are living in social bubbles and this is the myth of the internet (Expert opinion).

When asked about what media they often use, most participants mentioned several platforms. Almost all of them use social media Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, as well as mainstream media such as TV, contrary to expectations as mentioned previously. No difference in platforms used was found between those who exhibited favorable attitudes towards migrant and those who held some reservation when speaking about migration. As mentioned, participants' themselves spoke about living in bubbles on social media. Although it appears that social media generates positive attitudes towards the LGBTQ community, it is important to know its limitations: individuals who exhibit prejudices, which are motivated by factors such as a lack of exposure or a negative portrayal in the news, are unlikely to be exposed to diverse opinions through social media. This is because they would use it in a way that either reinforces their internal biases or they would not follow anything that challenges these prejudices (Guo & Chen, 2022)

When speaking about TV, most participants mentioned a polarization between the state-

owned media, “TVP”, and private media, “TVN”, in which TVN simply counteracts everything that is said in the state-owned media. Participants believed that both are extreme and many participants expressed negative feelings towards both platforms.

I think both TFP and TFN are radical and I do not agree with both because I do not like radicalism. It was a narration on the governmental media and another different narration on the other media (Marta).

Overall, participants’ support for LGBTQ rights and abortion rights, as mentioned previously, can be explained through exposure to this community, either through real life interactions or through positive representation. Moreover, participants’ hostility towards the church and the government might offer an additional factor that explains participants’ positive attitudes, which will be discussed in detail later in section 4.3.2, whereas participants’ reservations towards immigrants can be explained through negative representation in the news, as well as an overall lack to exposure. This lack of exposure might be caused by the homogeneity of Poland that many participants referred to, as appeared earlier in Agnieszka’s quote, in which she mentioned that people are scared of different migrants because they do not look Polish and people are not exposed. In light of this, it should be mentioned that Poland is one of the most homogeneous countries in the world (European Commission, 2022; Michał Buchowski et al., 2023). Therefore, it might make it harder to get exposed to diversity, which serves as an explanation for participants’ opinion that they made a reference to themselves.

As mentioned, participants referred to Ukrainians as the most represented minority in the media and to Muslims as the most negatively represented group in the media. Therefore, the next sub-section will compare reactions towards both groups of migrants.

4.2.2 The Polish-Belarusian Border: Between Humanity and Geopolitics:

As mentioned in the previous section, Ukrainians are the most represented migrant group in the media according to participants’ opinions. Therefore, the research was trying to draw comparisons between participants’ attitudes towards Ukrainian refugees and other refugees. Hence, a comparison between participants’ attitudes towards Ukrainian refugees coming to Poland in 2022 and the Belarus-Polish border crisis (2021-2022) was conducted, as both events took place around

the same time. While asking about these events, some themes came up such as government policies. Most of the participants were supportive of the policies taken on both borders. Despite accepting the pushbacks on the Belarus border, almost all participants mentioned humanitarian arguments in this case, such as that the refugees should have received better treatment. This sub-section starts with a discussion of the Belarus crisis, and the sub-section after will deal with Ukrainian refugees, referring to participants' reactions to both events.

The Belarus border crisis started in 2021 as a result of President Lukashenko's policy of transporting migrants from the Middle East to its border with the EU, creating a hybrid warfare in which humans were used as a tool (Bodnar & Grzelak, 2023). However, this turned into a humanitarian crisis as a result of pushbacks from the Belarusian border guards and the Polish border guards, where the refugees reportedly faced serious human rights violations, such as rapes and beatings on the Belarusian side, and violence that was used by the Polish border guards in order to push back migrants (Human Rights Watch, 2022). In addition to the previous, migrants were denied asylum applications, and abuse against vulnerable immigrants was reported. Immigrants were from the Middle East, Asia and Africa. In September Polish authorities banned access of the area to humanitarian aid workers, journalists and human rights observers (Human Rights Watch, 2022).

Participants were shown pictures of immigrants from the Polish-Belarusian border and were asked to comment on it (see Figures 3 and 4 in the methodology chapter). Participants were asked to comment on one of the pictures included, expressing their feelings and reasons behind them. Most of the participants agreed with the Polish government's policies; however, most also mentioned that refugees should have received treatment that is more humane.

Bogdan demonstrated participants' opinions in arguing for humanitarian treatment for refugees, while agreeing with government's policies to secure the borders, perfectly:

So I believe that on one hand closing the border was the right thing to do as to stop the actions of Belarus. And justifying ourselves and not changing the Polish policy towards immigrants. Not accepting too many so that they would distort the society. [...] on the other hand it is heart breaking, people in the forest. So I believe a tough decision was made and it needed to be made but I do not know whether it was conducted that well in general, I believe that it could have been done better but closing borders was the right thing to do.

On the other hand, some participants argued that these refugees should have been taken in for

humanitarian reasons, such as Lukasz:

Regardless of the fact how they got there, regardless, you know, whether it really was a Belarussian operation or not, because, you know, Lukashenko could do a lot of things, very unpredictable. [...] it was, just unacceptable how the Polish government handled that situation, because, like I've said, regardless of the background, they should have helped those people just for human reasons, [...] And they didn't do that. So I think the whole narrative was unacceptable.

However, the dominant attitude among participants was that these migrants should not have been allowed into Poland. Those who argued that they should have been accepted provided humanitarian arguments. This differed from the argument of accepting Ukrainians because of brotherhood and common history, which will be discussed in the next sub-section.

Janusz claimed that refugees from the Belarussian-Polish border did not want to apply for asylum in Poland:

I am working with refugees and they are not applying to asylum so what can you do. They did not apply for asylum, they wanted to go to Germany (Janusz).

Janusz's claim about refugees not wanting to seek asylum in Poland seems to be inconsistent with some of Human Rights Watch reports, which mention that some of the refugees were denied asylum applications (Lydia Gall, 2022; Human Rights Watch, 2022). Therefore, this might suggest that his perspective is influenced by his surroundings. Furthermore, it might suggest that he was subject to the misinformation that took place during the Polish-Belarussian crisis. The Polish government declared the state of emergency, meaning journalists were banned from accessing the border (Lydia Gall, 2022; Human Rights Watch, 2022). This was combined with Polish official statements, for example at a "press conference held jointly by the Polish Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Internal Affairs, migrants were accused of being terrorists and sexual deviants" (Adler, 2021.; Cielemeńska, 2023, p.10). Furthermore, there was a tweet by the ministry of defense about the danger from the migrants attacking the border guards (Cielemeńska, 2023, p.4). Therefore, all of these representations might have influenced participants' attitudes, given their previously mentioned arguments about how migrants from the Middle East and Muslim countries are a threat.

Even though in the context of the Belarussian crisis, most participants did not mention a direct threat from those stuck on the border, they mentioned that accepting refugees from the Belarussian border means that Belarus would transport more afterwards, making it an unstoppable cycle, which

is a threat.

...And if we let these people in, then, you know many more will come and this is just unacceptable (Janusz).

Participants' implied that these immigrants in themselves were a threat sent from Russia and Belarus due to the stereotypes attached to their ethnicity or religion. This is clear in Marta saying:

But I also believe that lots of people perceive [migrants] as a threat. Because [...] the situation on the Polish border was not long ago, I think they would still be perceived as a threat [...] when it comes to terrorism.

4.2.3 Ukrainian refugees

In February 2022, Poland welcomed a huge number of refugees coming from its border with Ukraine as a result of Russian aggression against Ukraine (David A. Fusiek, 2022).

Similar to the refugees on the Belarusian border, participants were shown a picture from the Ukrainian border (see Figures 1 and 2 in the methodology section). Participants were asked to express their feelings and provide reasons behind them. Almost all participants were supportive of Ukrainian refugees, who were mostly referred to as neighbors who need help. In addition, at least one participant mentioned that it could have been Poland in Ukraine's position. Many participants mentioned the ease of integration in the case of Ukrainians, referring to the similarity between Polish and Ukrainian cultures and languages. Moreover, many participants mentioned volunteering on the border to help Ukrainian refugees, which indicates the level of participants' support towards Ukrainian refugees.

Polish people in general responded very well to the refugee crisis in Poland, [...] they integrate well into society, because [...] we're neighbors [and] are culturally similar, even the languages are quite similar. So I think that's a very important factor why most Polish people support [...] the integration of Ukrainian refugees (Lukasz).

Although some participants supported allowing immigrants from the Belarusian border into Poland, they still argued that Ukraine is a neighboring country with closer cultural ties. This might imply that even though participants felt that the humane thing to do is to allow refugees on the Belarusian border into Poland, they still saw them as an "other". Lukasz's quote above captures this perfectly, as he supported accepting migrants on the Belarusian border into Poland for humanitarian reasons, while arguing that Ukrainians integrate well given their cultural and linguistic similarity,

which might indicate more positive attitude towards Ukrainian refugees. Therefore, this shows the discrepancy of feelings towards both groups.

The expert linked reasons such as media and the government's narrative to the Belarusian crisis to explain the attitudes towards these refugees. The expert explained how the refugees on the Belarusian border were framed as economic migrants, who are using the welfare of Poland by the government.

[...] so definitely Lukashenko is playing with this point and the threat of the Eastern border, which is that not Russian and Belarusians will come because they are not that different from us. But Kurdish people, African people, Latin American people. All of them are potential threats, and it is portrayed in the television.

Jarosław Kaczyński, who officially serves as deputy Prime Minister, but exerts power over Polish politics as the chairman of the ruling party, framed migrants on the Belarusian border as mere economic migrants (Koschalka, 2021). This might have influenced participants' opinions during interviews, especially when participants were asked about their feelings regarding pictures of refugees on the Polish-Belarusian border and those on the Ukrainian border. For example, as Kacper put it:

I think there is a little psychological trick in these photographs. In the first picture you know that not everyone is escaping from war but some of them are economic migrants, because you know that some of them are from Turkey, but they do not have financial abilities to live in Turkey (Kacper).

Most participants expressed more empathy towards Ukrainian refugees, saying that they are mostly women and children. Therefore, officials' statements, as well as the portrayal of refugees in both cases, might explain participants' opinions and attitudes towards Ukrainian refugees and those on the Belarusian border. Indeed, participants said earlier that portrayals of Ukrainians are positive in the mainstream media, including government-owned media, TVP (Żuk, 2020, p.287; OSCE, 2019, p.4).

Participants reflected the expert's opinion about how Poles do not consider refugees from Ukraine as a threat because of their similarity and, as he said, the view "that no Russians and Belarusians will come because they are not that different from us". Participants used cultural factors

to explain support for Ukrainian refugees in their social circles.

At least with Ukrainians their language is very close to our language. So they are learning by themselves or we understand them. But, for example, I can't imagine taking refugees from the Middle East and teaching Polish to them, it will be very hard (Janusz).

Janusz's opinion seems to confirm those who argue that cultural homogeneity leads to the acceptance of those who are culturally similar (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000; Citrin & Sides, 2008). As Ukrainians are culturally closer to Poles, cultural acceptance is therefore easier, whereas those who come from the Middle East and Muslims are portrayed as a threat both by officials, as well as by media such as in the news, which was reflected in participants' opinions (Allen, 2004; Brubaker, 2017; Dauda, 2020; Górak-Sosnowska, 2016; Rezaei et al., 2019; Said, 1985; Shahwar, 2014; Triandafyllidou, 2010; Włoch, 2009). Bates (1975) and Jaskulowski (2019) spoke about hegemonic discourses and their influence on individuals' ideas, referring to the role of officials in constructing narratives around the nation and the "other". Therefore, participants' answers might suggest an influence of officials' discourses on attitudes, combined with negative representation in the news.

Feelings of a Russian threat might explain the discrepancy of participants' attitudes towards refugees on the Belarusian border and Ukrainian refugees, which was a recurring theme during the interviews. Janusz, speaking about refugees on the Belarusian border said:

[...] it was also like a dilemma because if we take them Russia will transport more refugees and the cycle will continue (Janusz).

Because when it came to the help for Ukrainians, it was mostly the people not the government. And this help for Ukrainians was motivated by the fear for Russia. People think they have to help because [...] we're next. Most of my friends when they were speaking about taking immigrants they were speaking about hate of Russia (Janusz).

Janusz referred to Russia speaking about both refugees on the Belarusian border and Ukrainian refugees. He referred to Russia in the first quote as a reason not to accept those on the Belarusian border, and in the second quote, Janusz used Russia as a reason for accepting Ukrainian refugees. Therefore, this indicates an influence between Russian threat narratives and attitudes towards immigrants.

As mentioned previously in the expert's argument, politicians framed refugees on the Belarusian border as a criminal threat or as economic migrants. Hence, this implies that Russia

pushed these immigrants in order to threaten Poland, as Russia is an enemy state to Poland and the refugees were on the border with Belarus, a close Russian ally (Mudrov, 2022; Paszewski, 2016).

On the other hand, Russia is the main threat to Ukraine, therefore offering more similarity between Poland and Ukraine. Therefore, the feeling of a Russian threat might explain participants' attitudes alongside other arguments, such as exposure and representation of immigrants in the news.

Even though currently Russia is seen as the enemy, participants made references to historical narratives when Ukraine was the enemy.

Like, for example, many people wanted to help refugees from Ukraine. But also there is big amounts of people that are still remembering the massacres when Ukraine was an independent country (Kacper).

Kacper is referring to the Wołyń mass killings of Poles by Ukrainians in 1944, which some people recall today, exhibiting negative attitudes towards Ukrainians because of it. Although none of the participants of this research expressed negative attitudes towards Ukrainian refugees, some mentioned this argument. This shows how different historical narratives can play a role on how certain groups are framed as an "other or an enemy". However, participants seem to have a positive attitude currently towards Ukrainians that might be caused by a Russian threat and a feeling of similarity with Poland, which as participants discussed is the current narrative in Poland.

4.2.4 Are Migrants an Economic Threat?

Although attitudes towards Ukrainian refugees were positive, some participants expressed economic concerns when it came to both Ukrainian refugees, as well as refugees from the Middle East and Muslim countries.

Some of the participants when asked about economic threats mentioned that Ukrainian refugees are not a threat as long as they remain in low skilled jobs. For example, when asked about whether jobs in Poland should be kept for Poles, Izabela answered:

Yeah, that could be the reason that Polish people don't like the fact that Ukrainians are a lot now in Poland. I think many Polish people think that Ukrainians now [...], are lazy and do not do much. And maybe that's better when it comes to jobs. [...], Ukrainians and immigrants are taking certain jobs. And I think they're not everywhere in every area of the job market. So probably people who are involved in this exact area would have a problem, but others not that much.

When asked about whether young poles feel threatened by immigrants or not, Agnieszka said:

Young people, not anymore, because they are aware that [...]there are not that many immigrants in big corporation, politics and this kind of jobs that they are desired, No, they are working much more in services. [...]most of them are from Eastern Europe, who as I said, work much more in services, [...]. not in [...]. places that Polish people desire. And that's why I think it does not complicate stuff.

Both Izabela and Agnieszka expressed that Ukrainian immigrants are not a threat in the job market for young people because of taking low skilled jobs, and not competing in the graduate job market. Participants of this research are all university educated, therefore as Agnieszka and Izabela mentioned, Ukrainians competing in low skilled jobs are unlikely to directly affect them and any of the participants of this research. Therefore, the results of this research could have been different if participants had been low-skilled Polish youth. As Izabela said in a previously mentioned quote, people who compete in low-skilled jobs feel an economic threat but others “not that much”.

Some of the participants expressed economic concerns towards migrants from the Middle East and Muslim countries as well, however the economic concerns expressed were different. As participants expressed concerns regarding accommodating refugees from this region.

[...] to provide to them we need money for shelters to get them some place. While we still have problems for housing within young people. The housing is getting much more expensive. Also there is the language barrier. So if these refugees want to work in Poland or if they want to live in Poland they have to learn the language and we don't have capacity for teachers to teach the language to refugees (Janusz).

Zuzanna, who was supportive of immigration from everywhere, said when asked about if people feel threatened economically by migrants:

Yes, it was an argument 2015, 2016 that even I could understand. It was that we don't have money to take these people here, and it was very common. People do not think this is related to prejudice in any way so they are more opened about it.

Even though both Janusz and Zuzanna expressed an economic threat caused by refugees, as they believe Poland does not have the capacity to host them, both expressed unconditional support for Ukrainian refugees. Janusz justified this by drawing on the similarity of culture and language between Poles and Ukrainians:

At least with Ukrainians their language is very close to our language. So they are learning by themselves or we understand them. but for example I can't imagine taking refugees from the Middle East and teaching Polish to them it will be very hard.

It is true that both Polish and Ukrainian are Slavic languages, and that the culture and history of both countries share similarities (Nyberg, 2023), which as mentioned are factors that played a role in support for Ukrainian refugees. However, as mentioned by most of the participants, refugees from the Middle East are considered a cultural threat connected with danger and crime (Allen, 2004; Dauda, 2020; Górak-Sosnowska, 2016). This may make Poles hosting them in their own houses, which happened with Ukrainian refugees, harder. With Ukrainian refugees, some of the research participants actually hosted and helped to accommodate Ukrainian refugees, which Hanna described:

Even in my group of friends, many people were giving apartments, or were helping with food or volunteering at a train station my sister was doing that. So a lot of like, good things that I think we really took part in.

Moreover, participants mentioned a welcoming policy by the government towards Ukrainians and a positive representation for Ukrainian on both public and private TV platforms, which was mentioned earlier in the media representation section. Furthermore, as mentioned before, participants of this research are less likely to be influenced by the influx of Ukrainian refugees if they are taking low-skilled jobs, in contrast to youth who are low-skilled (Mierina and Koroleva, 2015). Therefore, these factors provide explanations for the acceptance of Ukrainians within the participants and the reservations towards those coming from the Middle East and Muslim countries.

Finally, participants did not view refugees from Ukraine as an economic burden or a threat. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, this contrasted participants' views about refugees from the Middle East. However, a few participants expressed their support for all economic migrants, owing to the demographic situation in Poland, saying that Poland needs more workers:

That is bullshit because Poland is in need for people to work. Poland is in search for solving a demographic crisis in contrast to France which faces high unemployment, Poland does not have any unemployment issues, which shows the lack of work force. That is why the wave of refugees coming from Poland are valuable for the Polish economy (Filip)

4.2.5 World immigration

Although participants expressed some negative thoughts when it came to immigration. When asked directly whether Poland should accept immigrants from all countries equally, every participant

said yes. This might indicate that participants are unaware of their own fears and biases. For example, Maria, who expressed a fear of immigrants from the Middle East, when asked directly answered:

Honestly for me I think Poland should be opened for everyone, to immigrants from all the countries. But this is just my opinion. [...] I don't have any arguments for that. But I just this is the way I feel.

Filip and Lukasz held similar opinions, that everyone should be accepted. As Lukasz said:

I think Poland [...] should be open to developing a more friendly, [...] immigration policy. Meaning that [...] the whole process to get a working visa or working permit [...] in Poland should be a lot easier. Especially this should be an interest of anyone in Poland, basically, because Poland is in a very bad demographic situation. So it actually needs to rely on foreign immigrants to keep its economy going because the birth rate in Poland is very, very low, and there are far more deaths. Than births [...] I would be totally opened to immigrants from all over the world regardless of the country where they come from.

Most of the participants who stated their support for all immigrants consistently either belonged to the LGBTQ community or had international experiences, aligning with Schnabel's (2018, p.4) theory that marginalized groups support each other as a result of empathizing more with each other. Data can also support contact theory (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005), that being in contact with foreigners under certain conditions leads to acceptance. However, both Izabela and Janusz, who studied abroad, expressed reservations towards immigrants, which might challenge contact theory.

Some of the participants expressed concerns, due to economic and cultural reasons. For example, Agnieszka supported accepting immigrants, but mentioned:

Of course, I'm aware that it may cause many, different aspects like human trafficking, illegal aspects like organized crime, and also, like, [...] the Polish [population] is declining now (Agnieszka)

Agnieszka also expressed that there is no need for more immigration in Poland as current Ukrainian refugees have filled the gap, which shows the discrepancy of opinions between Agnieszka and participants like Lukasz, Janusz and Filip, who expressed the opposite. However, in terms of media followed by both Lukasz and Filip, they follow social media, as well as international media such as following news from different sources, while Agnieszka follows the radio, Instagram and Facebook. In addition, Janusz only follows the Polish Press Agency. It is true that some occupations still face a labor shortage in Poland (European Commission, 2023). Therefore, this shows that this discrepancy of opinions can be linked to different news sources or misinformation about the situation

of immigration and how much it has influenced the labor market, which indicates that news sources and misinformation can influence the overall attitudes towards immigration.

Agnieszka accepted immigrants, however she mentioned that she accepts the crime that she believes comes with it. As previously said, this is an argument that might come from news sources as well as officials' discourses (Allen, 2004; Brubaker, 2017; Dauda, 2020; Górak-Sosnowska, 2016, Jaskulowski, 2019). Izabela voiced similar opinions to Agnieszka:

In my opinion, we should be opened to immigrants. To what extent probably to the extent that they are a minority, that we Polish people are more [...] than other people, Because at the end, nationality. [...] and to the extent that there are less of them than us. But at the same time, I don't have a problem with like, it's hard to say to what extent (Izabela).

Both Izabela and Agnieszka expressed some concerns. Agnieszka mentioned a risk of a declining Polish population and Izabela mentioned that immigrants should be welcomed as long as they are less than the Polish population. This means that both are accepting of immigrants as long as they stay a minority, suggesting they believe there is a risk that they would not. Izabela also referred to nationalism by saying, "because at the end, nationality". This shows that both participants expressed some kind of fear of being replaced by other nationalities or having their traditions change, which might be translated into cultural fear. Both Agnieszka and Izabela made a reference to the importance of the nation and traditions. Therefore, a certain narrative about the nation might indicate more reservations towards immigrants, which will be discussed in the next section.

4.3 Nationalism & Religion: Between ethnic and Civic nationalism:

As mentioned in the previous section nationalism might explain why participants had reservations towards immigration. Therefore, questions addressing nationalism were asked during the interviews.

Participants were asked who could become a Pole, in order to understand whether they had ethnic or civic definitions for the nation (Smith, 1994). Most participants' definitions included some elements of ethnic as well as civic nationalism. Nevertheless, most of those who supported immigration defined nationalism in a purely civic manner, except for Filip who gave an ethnic definition for who can become a Pole yet defined nationalism in civic terms for the other country where he has lived and holds citizenship.

When asked how to define a Pole, Izabela answered:

Probably a person that wants to be a Pole not because they want to have a paper [...] but want to have the same tradition and the same first language and probably family because when they hold it their families in the future should be Poles as well.

It is clear that Izabela here emphasized on tradition and language as two very important elements of becoming a Pole, which is an ethnic definition of nationalism, in line with Smith's definition for ethnic nationalism previously referred to in the literature (Smith, 1994, p.188). Izabela's mention of a paper might entail that no one should be Pole, because of the privileges that come with an identity paper, but rather she emphasizes on values such as, culture and traditions, making her definition of the nation purely ethnic. When asked the same question, Agnieszka expressed similar thoughts to Izabela, saying:

So definitely connected to religion connected to tradition, also connected to family. I think it is very important, like our family bounds for each Polish citizen.

Both Agnieszka's and Izabela's answers can be linked to their answers about the extent to which immigrants should be accepted from all countries. As mentioned previously, both of them expressed some concerns regarding a declining Polish population. Details shared by both participants were that they both use mainstream media: in the case of Agnieszka, she uses the radio, and Izabela watches television, Agnieszka linked migrants to threat. Moreover, she mentioned that media generate stereotypes. Both mentioned that they come from religious families and both emphasized on the importance of tradition. This indicates that those who feel culturally threatened and defined the nation in ethnic terms are more likely to hold conservative views towards immigrants that they see as different. Participants' view of the "other" might be motivated by news sources and exposure, which were discussed previously, and/or their surroundings, which will be discussed thoroughly in section 4.5.

Other participants offered a purely civic definition of nationalism. For example, Jakub, who considered himself far-left, mentioned:

Anyone who considers themselves as Polish, because borders should be abolished.

Jakub making a reference for abolishing border indicates that he is not bound by the nation as a territorial entity, thus, this suggests that he has a civic definition of the nation (Smith, 1994, p.188). Jakub belongs to the LGBTQ community; he mentioned that he only consumes foreign social media to view political content. Moreover, Jakub mentioned that he is irreligious and comes from a liberal family. He described himself as living in a bubble and that he does not surround himself with any right-wing content. Therefore, it can be argued that his sexuality and his political ideology, combined with not surrounding himself with any right-wing content, could serve as indicators for Jakub's acceptance of immigrants and his civic definition for the nation. However, further in-depth research can develop this claim.

To conclude, it appears that participants' civic and ethnic definitions of the nation correlates to their behavior towards migrants. As mentioned previously, the term immigrants refers to ethnically diverse groups. The data suggests that participants who demonstrated a receptive attitude towards migrants coming and living in Poland without associating any conditions to immigration had a more civic definition for citizenship, while those who expressed concerns regarding immigration provided an ethnic definition for citizenship.

This is unsurprising, and it aligns with the literature, such as Mierina and Koroleva (2015). Moreover, this also aligns with Jaskulowski's (2019) argument linking ethnic nationalism and cultural nationalism as reasons for Islamophobia.

4.3.1 History and Nationalism: What makes Poland unique?

In order to understand participants' opinions about nationalism, another question was asked about what they think makes Poland unique. The main aim of this question was to understand if participants' understanding of Polish uniqueness affects their openness regarding their attitudes towards migrants.

Most of the participants referred to the uniqueness of Poland in terms of its geographical position between East and West. Some mentioned different wars and the partitions of Poland. In addition to that, the role of religion was a recurring theme: many participants mentioned it as a unique factor about Poland. Tough history and pain were also recurring themes as many participants

mentioned it as something unique about Poland.

I think our history is pretty tough and is one of the toughest in Europe (Milena)

I think Poland is a very unique country. Because of the history. The history of countries around Poland is not that unique compared to Poland. Because of most of the time were not independent. [...] I think history of Poland is very unique when you look at the wars, the struggles. Because it used to be the biggest country in Europe for some time (Janusz).

Mentioning the pain and struggle of Poland seems to be a significant factor in terms of acceptance or reservation towards immigration. This is significant in the context of presenting Poland as a country that fought for its freedom and therefore that Polish traditions and cultures should be preserved, hence framing immigration as an outside threat that can change these traditions and cultures that people fought for. Agnieszka captured this meaning perfectly when asked about causes for xenophobia in Poland, by saying:

I think the pain, being scared about changes. Being scared about being different not being connected to this tradition, which we were taught by our mother our grandmother, and our great grandmother. And I think, because in Poland, the values traditions were so similar for many years, and now it started changing and people from older generation don't want that. And they're not open to changes, to other people or to mixing with other cultures being multinational now.

The data suggests that Poland's position between the East and the West and the partitions might have influenced participants' attitudes towards outsiders, but as mentioned all participants accepted Ukrainian refugees and did not see them as "outsiders", but rather as a similar nation, threatened by a common enemy, Russia. Here we can draw back on participants' earlier arguments viewing Ukraine as a similar nation with a similar culture. Therefore, according to the participants of this research Ukraine is not an "outside" threat. However, as mentioned earlier, it seems that participants view migrants from the Middle East and Muslims as a cultural threat, referring to the Western experience (Mierina & Koroleva, 2015; Allen, 2004). Therefore, this might suggest that a lack of exposure or interaction might have contributed in the narrative about outsiders who can corrupt the culture.

The expert confirmed the above interpretation by saying:

If this kind of narrative arises, if you hear the stories about Polish uniqueness, Polish greatness and Polish difficult past [...], this is already a bias, because this way of thinking presents Poland as the

fortress of righteous people who are in constant threat from the external world. So in this case there is no room for immigrants. For instance, how can you agree that you can become a Pole without fighting for our freedom? I mean this you can do only when you are the grand, grand parent of a Pole.

Jaskulowski's (2019) findings support the arguments of this section that Islamophobia is caused by ethnic and cultural nationalism, which are the result of right-wing discourses as well as general prejudices in the society. Therefore, participants' attitudes are explained through officials' narratives about immigrants framing them as an "outside" threat. An example can be seen in how officials reacted to the Belarus crisis or the overall negative representation for Muslims in Europe, which was mentioned earlier. This leads to othering in the context of the ethnic definition of the nation, as well as viewing the nation as unique and in need for protection.

When asked about what makes Poland a unique country, some participants expressed the importance of religion in the Polish society. For example, Filip expressed:

I think religion has always played a huge role, because especially in Poland it is a symbol of fight against imperialism and it is rooted deep into history (Filip).

In Filip's quote, religion and nationalism are both connected. Hence, the next section will be about how the participants viewed religion in Poland and how they spoke about it and how it influences their attitudes.

4.3.2 Religion Influence on Youth:

Religion and Catholicism were both themes that recurred in participants' interviews. Participants were asked about the importance of religion in the Polish society, and what value Catholicism holds today among Polish Youth.

Most of the participants, when asked about the value of Catholicism in their lives, answered that Catholicism is related to history and tradition and for these reasons it is part of the Polish culture. For example, Agnieszka expressed:

In Poland, it is very [...] connected with our culture. From the beginning, we go to church, probably most of us. It teaches us to be a right person, from this point of view, or these things.

Although one of the common themes was the relation between religion and culture. When asked about the religiosity of young people, most participants expressed that young people are becoming less religious now and most of the participants expressed anger towards the church.

I believe that in Polish society there is the inner obligation to go to church to attend religious classes, to listen to what the priests said because especially in small villages the priests offered the only option to see the world, that is why their influence is so big although generations are changing. That is why there is such a rebellion against church right now, due to abuses (Bogdan).

Most of the participants were asked why there is a rebellion against the church, participants mentioned religious classes from their childhood, and likewise they mentioned the authority of the church and the government. For example, Maria expressed:

I think young people are fed up with all the religion stuff and seeing the religion everywhere. They are fed up with the government being connected to Catholicism. So I think in my generation, there are many people that would have believed in God, but are just fed up with the religion so they don't believe or maybe they believe but they don't practice it. With all the stuff about abortions, as opinions are strictly connected to Catholicism.

Most of the participants expressed dissatisfaction with the church and its relations with the current ruling party. All of them mentioned attending religion classes from a young age, and almost all expressed that these classes did not have any representation of other religions; furthermore, they mentioned that these classes were politicized. The majority of participants expressed that they discussed topics such as abortion and LGBTQ issues during these classes, in spite of disinterest in these discussions. For example, Lukasz mentioned:

...but every now and then, the teacher both in primary school and middle school, they would share their, political views on abortion, women rights, gay rights, etc. So it was very, political and us students, we didn't like that.

Most of the participants expressed that religion is important in the society. Moreover, some expressed how this societal pressure served as a reason to attend the church as well as religious classes. Natalia expressed how she did not attend church as a child. While referring to societal pressure, she said:

My parents if they were not forced, they would probably not baptize my sister.

In conclusion, participants expressed anger with the church for not keeping up with the societal

change nowadays. Filip expressed this opinion:

And the church has a huge role in politics as it is dealt with as a pressuring group in Poland as it has huge links with the government and it influences policies like abortion, LGBTQ rights. It does not enable social progress.

The expert expressed that young people usually behave opposite to what is the popular narrative of the church and the government:

Especially when you look at young people and you have all these messages conveyed by mainstream media, for instance about abortion, about religiosity defending the good name of John Paul the second after the pedophile scandals. Usually young people behave the opposite but maybe in this case, if this is combined with relative ignorance on this external world, maybe this somehow syncs into the brain.

According to the expert interview, acceptance of LGBTQ rights as well as the opposition to the current abortion laws, which almost all the interviewees expressed might be a result of an overall dissatisfaction with the church and the conservative values it holds. While Fukuyama (2022) and Minkenberg (2017) argue that liberal values are the main reason behind youth conservatism, within the participants of this research it appears that conservative values are creating a backlash from the youth. As Filip put it, “it does not allow for social progress”. Therefore, a dissatisfaction with the church combined with an ignorance of the outside world, in other words a lack of exposure to other people, might offer a reason for why participants expressed favorable attitudes towards LGBTQ rights and abortion rights, while expressing lower levels of acceptance towards immigration. Filip demonstrated this perfectly when asked about to what extent he thinks young Poles accept same-sex relations by saying:

Definitely, more than immigration and it has to do with the fact that young people are much less religious.

In Filip’s quote, it is clear that the dissatisfaction with the church explained above, is the reason why youth express favorable attitudes towards LGBTQ rights more than other minority issues, such as immigration.

4.4 The State of Intolerance towards Migrants among Polish Youth:

In this section participants were asked if they encountered intolerance among their social circles or acquaintances and why they think these people thought that way. Moreover, participants were asked about reasons why other youths would vote for *Konfederacja*. *Konfederacja* is included as it serves as a possible indicator for intolerance due to its conservative policies regarding immigrants and LGBTQ issues (Goldstein, 2021).

Participants gave similar answers to both these questions. Therefore, they are grouped together in this section. Participants explained intolerance in their circles through economic and social factors. Moreover, participants expressed other reasons such as disagreeing with the current ruling party and a desire to change the politics.

4.4.1 Economic reasons

When participants were asked why youth vote for *Konfederacja*, many participants referred to economic reasons. For example, Wiktoria spoke about her cousin, who votes for *Konfederacja* for economic reasons:

Because even when I look at my cousin who is a woman, I don't think she's 30 yet. And she votes for *Konfederacja*. And you know, we had the women's strike. And people, different women were commenting on her Facebook wall, why are you still voting for *Konfederacja*? And she was like, but we won't have women's rights, if we do not have stable economy.

When we discussed reasons for intolerance, Kacper expressed the following:

I think people are scared of, any changes of differences of the people have, and I think they have some insecurities about the economic situation, because, Polish people are just scared that those migrants will become richer than them. Because there is really massive amounts of people in Poland that are not homeless, but really close to homeless and are living in blocks. So there are poor people that are not homeless, but they are really close to being homeless, those people are scared.

As previously mentioned in the literature and according to the participants interviewed, economy can play a role in youth support for far right parties (Sińczuch et al., 2021; Mrozowicki et al., 2019; Bandelj & Gibson, 2020). Furthermore, many participants mentioned that this appeal happens because of the current government's economic policy, which might serve as another reason for why youth vote for *Konfederacja*:

... it's very strange that conservative parties are giving out money, this is not really a good working system

that is giving money if you have two or more kids. When the current government started to give money in Poland you had that little boom in the low income families, only in the low income families. In some parts of the country you really started to see like dysfunctional families that were buying alcohol with this support money, the bad thing is that current government really doesn't want to change the system (Kacper).

This could challenge Mrozowicki and Katja's (2021) and Citrin and Sides's (2008) studies mentioned earlier in the literature review. Both studies established that economic factors do not play a role in youth support for far-right parties but rather that it is motivated by social factors. This does not mean that social factors do not play a role in youth voting for far right parties, but rather that economic factors might do as well.

However, according to participants' responses, one could argue that a discontent with the current Government's economic policies, might lead some youth to vote for far-right parties. This aligns with the literature as Leeuwen and Vega (2021) mentioned that discontent with economy might lead youth to vote for conservative parties.

In conclusion, economic factors play a role in youths' far-right support, as well as reservations towards immigrants. However, it is not the only factor, as the argument that was derived from participants' answers is that government framing of "others" in the context of Muslim immigrants, as well as their representations in the news, combined with a lack of exposure, might lead to reservations towards immigrants. Therefore, if economic factors were the only factors at play, participants would have had similar feelings towards Ukrainians and other immigrants. However, the different attitudes can be linked to cultural factors more than economic factors, as mentioned before. Hence, it can be said that interplay between both factors can lead to reservations towards immigrants.

4.4.2 Social & Political Reasons for Intolerance:

Participants also referred to social and political reasons for youths' votes for *Konfederacja* and intolerance. The recurring themes were family and upbringing as well as dissatisfaction with the current government's policies. The church was also mentioned as a factor that contributes to intolerance. For example, Hanna expressed:

I think for sure, in, in media, like some things connected with pain, but also, for example, my grandfather is not tolerant. [...]. It is a lot connected with church, because Church says, like LGBT [...] it is a sin. People believe in it..

Wiktoria explained both upbringing as well as a dissatisfaction with the current government saying:

But I guess the case for most people if they aren't exposed to certain different views, they won't have [...] the platform to explore their views, they won't change it and they just will keep what they learn at home. Or it may go the other way around, because some of my family from the countryside are supporters of PiS. But my Uncle [...] has children who are really against PiS currently, they went far-right and they support *Konfederacja*, a fascist party, but nobody will say about those things. So I feel like there are two points, either you are really against what your parents taught you, and you go either leftists or fascists. Or you just keep what you learnt at home.

Wiktoria's explanation aligns with Gabriel's (2009) argument mentioned in the literature, that racism between youth is caused by socialization in the family and their social circles.

Some other participants provided explanations such as loneliness and the need to belong to a group as reasons for intolerance. Therefore, Gurr's deprivation theory can be used as a frame of analysis to participants answers, as in this context discontent with the government policies or a need to change the government, produces dissent which leads to individuals joining certain groups and voting for far-right parties (Gurr, 2015; Lichbach, 1998).

Participants when speaking about intolerance mentioned family, church and the media as reasons behind tolerance or intolerance. For example, Maria spoke about the power of social media as an educational tool:

For sure, I don't have that much friends that are not LGBTQ friendly. But I think that someone who sees it, it may change his mind. Yeah. Like people are making really nice stuff on TikTok, about LGBTQ. TikTok has become a little bit of an educative app. An example, educating about women's menstruation or things like this.

Marta mentioned family and religion as major factors that influences young people in Poland:

I think from the one hand [...] the fact that lots of people were raised in conservative families, because conservatism used to be part of the Polish culture. but those people do not like PiS and do not want to vote for them for lots of different reasons [other] than religion, so here comes *Konfederacja*, as PiS was seen as a party for old people. Young people perceive it as a shame to vote for them. Because some stuff are pretty similar [to PiS] but others are totally different such as the economy. I think these people raised in strong Catholicism and they could not understand the Liberalization of Polish culture.

Therefore, family, religion and media according to participants can have a huge role in promoting tolerance or intolerance towards minorities.

When participants were asked about intolerance among youth, polarization of Polish youth came up in most interviews to express the discrepancy between youth in the society. Many participants described Polish youth as radical, for example Jakub expressed:

Konfederacja is in Polish parliament. There is an organization called All Polish Youth it is a historical organization formed maybe in the 1930s or something and you can say it is a fascist organization. ONR is also a fascist organization, it is popular among Polish young people. But also there is big support for leftist scholars and leftist artists. So it is really polarized. I would generally say that young people in Poland are radical.

This aligns with what was mentioned in the literature about the polarization of Polish society and how this Polarization in itself serves as basis for excluding “others” or outsiders (Noel et al., 1995; Jasiewicz, 2008). As each group of those on the right or the left exclude those within the community from it. Therefore, implying more exclusion for those who are considered “outsiders”.

Although many participants exhibited some indicators of intolerance, most of the participants also identified as liberal and expressed respect for everyone:

I am [...] a liberal person (Kacper)

Luckily I grew up in a family of very liberal people, nothing was ever imposed on me. I got to choose what I want to do and what I want to believe in [...] (Bogdan).

Both Bogdan and Kacper identified as liberal, however both expressed reservations towards immigrants. Therefore, this suggests that liberalism as an identity does not necessarily imply tolerance in all areas, or that liberalism entails different values in different national contexts. Therefore, in the Polish context it might imply acceptance of LGBTQ rights and abortion, while immigration might be outside the scope of liberalism. Overall, further investigation in tolerance and intolerance and their interaction with ideology would be interesting.

In conclusion family, upbringing and media either social media or news sources play a role in intolerance according to participants' answers. Most of the participants mentioned that negative representation for minorities without exposure to minorities could motivate intolerance. This concludes the overall argument of this thesis that minorities representation combined with exposure among other factors, such as economy and upbringing, can influence intolerance.

5. Conclusions

The main finding of this research is that all participants expressed their support for LGBTQ rights and abortion rights, even though many expressed some reservations towards migrants. Therefore, the focus of the research shifted towards migrants in line with grounded theory. The reasons for the reservations towards minority ethnic immigrants can be found in key details shared by participants during the interviews. These include: news and mainstream media portrayals in the West (especially negative portrayals of Islam after 9/11); a lack of exposure and/or interaction; certain interpretations of historical narratives of the partitions and the heroism of Poland; and an ethnic definition for the nation, all of which might have been transmitted through different channels including the media and the government.

Participants' support for LGBTQ rights, as well as abortion rights, seem to have been caused by a general rebellion against the church, the government and traditions, as well as an exposure to these issues. Most of the participants expressed that seeing and knowing individuals who belong to the LGBTQ community is a reason for them being accepted in the society.

Moreover, even though some of the participants openly defined themselves as liberal, they still held reservations towards immigration. This might suggest that holding a liberal identity while the above factors are still present (such as an ethnic definition of the nation, or an influence of government rhetoric and news sources) means that liberalism holds different meanings in different national contexts. However, future quantitative research can test this hypothesis.

Although most of the factors that were tested were mentioned in the literature, it was found that a mixture of factors can lead to having reservations towards immigrants; however, media, exposure, as well as the historical narratives of Poland, could be grouped as three big categories that can provide explanations for participants' opinions. There are other explanations that were investigated under these three categories, and they could provide explanation for participants' attitudes as well, such as economic and cultural threats, family and upbringings, as well as religiosity.

The main findings confirm with Brubaker and Cooper (2000) and Jaskulowski (2019), who argue that political entrepreneurs lead to the construction of reality. According to the participants, the fear of immigrants from the Middle East and Muslim countries stemmed from a fear from what

was done in the West, which the expert confirmed comes from a certain governmental narrative transmitted through the media. The participants expressed this narrative in addition to a lack of exposure, which confirmed Mierina & Koroļeva's (2015) and Olasunkanmi Arowolo's (2017) findings on the influence of media. However, they did not mention that exposure plays a role on intolerance. Therefore, this research suggests expanding the scope of research on youth on Poland to see the impact of both media and exposure together on tolerance.

Other reasons, such as the definition of nationalism, seem to have influenced participants' answers: almost all of the participants who defined the nation in ethnic terms expressed reservations towards immigrants, and those who defined the nation in civic terms expressed supportive attitudes towards immigration. Moreover, participants who mentioned the founding narratives of Poland, as in mentioning the pain and the struggle of the nation, appeared to be more likely to hold reservations towards immigration. Therefore, one could argue that nationalism played a role in participants' attitudes towards immigrants.

Participants appeared to be very positive towards immigration from Ukraine. They expressed no personal feeling of economic threat, and some participants mentioned that Ukrainians mostly take low-skilled jobs; therefore, they do not form an economic threat to highly educated youth. However, participants mentioned that support for *Konfederacja* might be motivated by economic factors, which confirms Mierina & Koroļeva, (2015) and Sińczuch et al., (2021).

Finally, two events were compared: the migrants of the Polish-Belarusian border and those on the Ukrainian border. Participants expressed more supportive opinions towards Ukrainian refugees: they all expressed opinions of cultural and language similarity. When it comes to the Belarusian border, a few participants expressed that these are economic migrants and mostly men. However, the point of comparison between these two events was a Russian threat, which pushed the participants towards an acceptance of Ukrainians and being skeptical of those of the Belarusian border, although almost all participants expressed that they should have been treated in a more humane way.

5.1 Research Significance & Direction for Further Research

This research identifies interesting trends among the participants. It cannot generalize anything, but it reveals insights that could direct further research.

This research can add to the literature as it has generated original data from fifteen Polish youth and has investigated reasons for intolerance among them and the reasons behind it: it appears that no other study has looked into all of these factors when studying Polish youth. Therefore, this study can contribute to the literature on intolerance.

This study can be conducted in other countries, which might generate interesting findings in other contexts, especially with the current support for the far right in Europe.

Some of findings of this study set the ground for further research. For example, studies suggest a correlation between education and tolerance could be further developed (Golebiowska, 2004; Hagendoorn & Nekuee, 1999; Hall & Rodeghier, 1994; Mierina & Koroļeva, 2015). All participants of this research were either studying their bachelor's or master's degree, all participants spoke at least two languages fluently (English and Polish), some spoke three or four languages fluently, and at least four of them lived abroad. Even though these are all indicators for a high level of education, participants expressed reservations towards immigration. Therefore, a survey or a large N study representative of the whole population of youth in Poland, which includes youth who support the far right, can further detect reasons of intolerance among educated youth in Poland, which could provide insight into other countries.

Moreover, a correlation between coming from urban areas and tolerance was established in previous research (Golebiowska, 2004; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005). This is related to contact theory, which suggests that those who come from urban areas have more exposure and therefore are more tolerant. However, in this research, coming from urban or rural areas did not seem to influence the results. Moreover, the one participant who lived in a North African country held reservations towards immigrants from this region. These findings could potentially challenge contact theory. Therefore, it would be interesting to find out if education plays a role in overcoming the urban-rural divide, and whether nationalism, as well as other factors such as media and upbringing, can contribute into intolerance, even in the case of exposure and interaction with the "other".

This research is not trying to challenge any well-established theories from conducting fifteen interviews; it identifies interesting findings from the qualitative data and suggests that future quantitative research could test their application more generally.

Bibliography:

- Abbass, M., Tvrdá, K., Walach, V., Rydliński, B., & Nociar, T. (2011). *Right-wing extremism in Central Europe: An overview*.
- Abraham, L., & Appiah, O. (2006). Framing News Stories: The Role of Visual Imagery in Priming Racial Stereotypes. *Howard Journal of Communications*, 17(3), 183–203.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10646170600829584>
- Adler, N. (n.d.). *Poland-Belarus border: 'People are dying in the forest.'* Retrieved August 21, 2023, from <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2021/11/15/belarus-poland-border-people-are-dying-in-the-forest>
- Agustín, Ó. G., & Jørgensen, M. B. (2019). *Solidarity and the "Refugee Crisis" in Europe* (1st ed. 2019). Springer International Publishing: Imprint: Palgrave Pivot.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-91848-8>
- Allen, C. (2004). Justifying Islamophobia: A Post-9/11 Consideration of the European Union and British Contexts. *American Journal of Islam and Society*, 21(3), 1–25.
<https://doi.org/10.35632/ajis.v21i3.505>
- Allport, G. W. (1954). *The nature of prejudice* (pp. xviii, 537). Addison-Wesley.
- Aspers, P., & Corte, U. (2019). What is Qualitative in Qualitative Research. *Qualitative Sociology*, 42(2), 139–160. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11133-019-9413-7>
- Augoustinos, M., & Reynolds, K. J. (2001). *Understanding Prejudice, Racism, and Social Conflict*. SAGE Publications, Limited.
<http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/gla/detail.action?docID=254701>
- Bandelj, N., & Gibson, C. (2020). Contextualizing Anti-Immigrant Attitudes of East Europeans. *Review of European Studies*, 12, 32. <https://doi.org/10.5539/res.v12n3p32>
- Bates, T. R. (1975). Gramsci and the Theory of Hegemony. *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 36(2), 351–366. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2708933>
- Beichelt, T., & Minkenbergt, t. (2002). Rechtsradikalismus in Transformationsgesellschaften: Entstehungsbedingungen und Erklärungsmodell. *Osteuropa*, 52(3), 247–262.
- Bell, D. A., Valenta, M., & Strabac, Z. (2021). A comparative analysis of changes in anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim attitudes in Europe: 1990–2017. *Comparative Migration Studies*, 9(1), 57. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-021-00266-w>
- Bloom, P. B.-N., Arikan, G., & Lahav, G. (2015). The effect of perceived cultural and material threats on ethnic preferences in immigration attitudes. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*.
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01419870.2015.1015581>
- Bobako, M. (2018). Islamofobia. Konteksty. *Praktyka Teoretyczna*, 26(4), 8–13.
<https://doi.org/10.14746/prt.2017.4.0>
- Bodnar, A., & Grzelak, A. (2023). The Polish–Belarusian Border Crisis and the (Lack of) European Union Response. *Białostockie Studia Prawnicze*, 28(1), 57–86.
<https://doi.org/10.15290/bsp.2023.28.01.04>
- Bos, L., Wichgers, L., & van Spanje, J. (2021). Are Populists Politically Intolerant? Citizens' Populist Attitudes and Tolerance of Various Political Antagonists. *Political Studies*, 003232172110492. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00323217211049299>
- Brandt, M. J., Reyna, C., Chambers, J. R., Crawford, J. T., & Wetherell, G. (2014). The Ideological-Conflict Hypothesis: Intolerance Among Both Liberals and Conservatives. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 23(1), 27–34.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721413510932>

- Breuilly, J. (1988). Review of *The Ethnic Origins of Nations; Nationalismus in vorindustrieller Zeit* [Review of *Review of The Ethnic Origins of Nations; Nationalismus in vorindustrieller Zeit*, by A. D. Smith & O. Dann]. *The English Historical Review*, 103(407), 414–418.
- Brons, L. (2015). Othering, An Analysis. *Transcience, a Journal of Global Studies*, 6, 69–90.
- Browne, D. R., Mickiewicz, E. P., & Firestone, C. M. (1994). *Television/radio news and minorities*. Aspen Institute ; Carter Center of Emory University.
- Browne, K. (2005). Snowball sampling: Using social networks to research non-heterosexual women. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 8(1), 47–60.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1364557032000081663>
- Brubaker, R. (2017). Between nationalism and civilizationism: The European populist moment in comparative perspective. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 40(8), 1191–1226.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2017.1294700>
- Brubaker, R., & Cooper, F. (2000). Beyond “Identity.” *Theory and Society*, 29(1), 1–47.
- Brustein, W. I., & King, R. D. (2004). Anti-Semitism in Europe before the Holocaust. *International Political Science Review*, 25(1), 35–53.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0192512104038166>
- Bryman, A. (1984). The Debate about Quantitative and Qualitative Research: A Question of Method or Epistemology? *The British Journal of Sociology*, 35(1), 75.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/590553>
- Bryman, A. (2016). *Social research methods* (Fifth Edition). Oxford University Press.
- CBOS. (2020). *Praca obcokrajowców w Polsce [Work of foreigners in Poland]*.
- CBOS. (2021). *Komunikat z badań* (122/2021).
- Cielemeńska, O. (2023). The Grammar of Belonging: Bodies, Borders and Kin in the Belarusian—Polish Border Crisis. *Feminist Review*, 134(1), 1–20.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/01417789231166700>
- Citrin, J., & Sides, J. (2008). Immigration and the Imagined Community in Europe and the United States. *Political Studies*, 56(1), 33–56. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9248.2007.00716.x>
- Coenders, M., & Scheepers, P. (2003). The Effect of Education on Nationalism and Ethnic Exclusionism: An International Comparison. *Political Psychology*, 24(2), 313–343.
- Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of Qualitative Research (3rd ed.): Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*. SAGE Publications, Inc.
<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452230153>
- Crawford, J. T., & Pilanski, J. M. (2014). Political Intolerance, Right and Left. *Political Psychology*, 35(6), 841–851.
- Crenshaw, K. (1989). *Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics*.
- Croucher, S. M., Zeng, C., Rahmani, D., & Sommer, M. (2017). Religion, Culture, and Communication. In S. M. Croucher, C. Zeng, D. Rahmani, & M. Sommer, *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Communication*. Oxford University Press.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228613.013.166>
- Dauda, K. O. (2020). Islamophobia and Religious Intolerance: Threats to Global Peace and Harmonious Co-Existence. *QIJS (Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies)*, 8(2), 257. <https://doi.org/10.21043/qijis.v8i2.6811>
- David A. Fusiek. (2022). *A solidarity package helps Poland integrate Ukrainian refugees*.
<https://www.eib.org/en/stories/ukrainian-poland-infrastructure-refugees>

- Dechezelles, S. (2008). The Cultural Basis of Youth Involvement in Italian Extreme Right-wing Organisations. *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 16(3), 363–375. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14782800802501005>
- DW. (2022, February 25). *Ukraine president orders general mobilization*. Dw.Com. <https://www.dw.com/en/ukraine-president-orders-general-mobilization/a-60908996>
- Eagly, A. H., & Chaiken, S. (1993). *The psychology of attitudes* (pp. xxii, 794). Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers.
- Edgcumbe, D. R. (2022). Age Differences in Open-Mindedness: From 18 to 87-Years of Age. *Experimental Aging Research*, 48(1), 24–41. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0361073X.2021.1923330>
- Erkem, G. P. (2009). Identity Construction of Europe by Othering: A Case Study of Turkey and the EU Relations from a Cultural Perspective. *Europolis, Journal Of Political Science And Theory*, 3(01 (5)), 489–509.
- European Commission. (n.d.). *Relocation: Migration and Home Affairs*. Retrieved August 20, 2023, from https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/networks/european-migration-network-emn/emn-asylum-and-migration-glossary/glossary/relocation_en
- European Commission. (2022). *Population: Demographic situation, languages and religions*. <https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-education-systems/poland/population-demographic-situation-languages-and-religions>
- European Commission. (2023). *Labour market information: Poland*. https://eures.ec.europa.eu/living-and-working/labour-market-information/labour-market-information-poland_en
- Fiaccadori, E. (2015). State Racism and the Paradox of Biopower. *Foucault Studies*, 151–171. <https://doi.org/10.22439/fs.v0i19.4828>
- Fontana, A., & Frey, J. H. (2000). *The Interview, From Structured Questions to Negotiated Text*.
- Frame, A. (2016). *Intersectional identities in interpersonal communication*.
- Fukuyama, F. (2022). *Liberalism and Its Discontents*. Profile Books.
- Gabriel, T. (2009). Right-wing extremism in Switzerland: National and international perspectives. In *Right-wing extremism in Switzerland: National and international perspectives* (1. Aufl, pp. 193–202). Nomos.
- Glaser, B. G. (1999). The Future of Grounded Theory. *Qualitative Health Research*, 9(6), 836–845. <https://doi.org/10.1177/104973299129122199>
- Golafshani, N. (2015). Understanding Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research. *The Qualitative Report*. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2003.1870>
- Goldstein, A. (2021). Right-wing opposition to the mainstream radical right: The cases of Hungary and Poland. *Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe*, 29(1), 23–40. <https://doi.org/10.1080/25739638.2021.1957483>
- Golebiowska, E. A. (2004). Religious Tolerance in Poland. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 16(4), 391–416. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ijpor/edh036>
- Golec de Zavala, A., & Cichocka, A. (2012). Collective narcissism and anti-Semitism in Poland. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 15(2), 213–229. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430211420891>
- Górak-Sosnowska, K. (2016). Islamophobia without Muslims? The Case of Poland. *Journal of Muslims in Europe*, 5(2), 190–204. <https://doi.org/10.1163/22117954-12341326>

- Grzymała-Kazłowska, A. (2013). Migration and Socio-Demographic Processes in Central and Eastern Europe: Characteristics, Specificity and Internal Differences. *Central and Eastern European Migration Review*, 2(1), 5–11.
- Guillemin, M., & Heggen, K. (2009). Rapport and respect: Negotiating ethical relations between researcher and participant. *Medicine, Health Care and Philosophy*, 12(3), 291–299. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11019-008-9165-8>
- Guo, J., & Chen, H.-T. (2022). How Does Multi-Platform Social Media Use Lead to Biased News Engagement? Examining the Role of Counter-Attitudinal Incidental Exposure, Cognitive Elaboration, and Network Homogeneity. *Social Media + Society*, 8(4), 205630512211291. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051221129140>
- Gurr, T. R. (2015). *Why Men Rebel*. Routledge.
- Hackett, A. (2023, April 26). Polish opposition party calls to lower voting age to 16. *Notes From Poland*. <https://notesfrompoland.com/2023/04/26/polish-opposition-party-calls-to-lower-voting-age-to-16/>
- Hagendoorn, L., & Nekuee, S. (1999). *Education and Racism: A Cross National Inventory of Positive Effects of Education on Ethnic Tolerance*. <https://www.routledge.com/Education-and-Racism-A-Cross-National-Inventory-of-Positive-Effects-of/Hagendoorn-Nekuee/p/book/9781138312630>
- Hall, R. L., & Rodeghier, M. (1994). More Is Sometimes Less: Education's Effects on Tolerance. *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies*, 16(3–4), 297–314. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1071441940160305>
- Harring, M., Lamby, D., Bíró-Nagy, A., & Szabó, A. (2022). *GROWING UP IN CENTRAL EASTERN EUROPE*.
- Hauser, R. (2010). *Cultural Identity in a Globalized World? A theoretical approach towards the concept of cultural identity*.
- Heath, A., Richards, L., Centre for Social Investigation, Nuffield College, Oxford, Ford, R., & University of Manchester. (2016). *How do Europeans differ in their attitudes to immigration?*
- Hecht, M. L., & Phillips, K. E. (Eds.). (2022). *Engaging theories in interpersonal communication: Multiple perspectives* (3rd edition). Routledge.
- Hjerm, M., Eger, M. A., Bohman, A., & Fors Connolly, F. (2020). A New Approach to the Study of Tolerance: Conceptualizing and Measuring Acceptance, Respect, and Appreciation of Difference. *Social Indicators Research*, 147(3), 897–919. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-019-02176-y>
- Hogg, M. A. (2016). Social Identity Theory. In S. McKeown, R. Haji, & N. Ferguson (Eds.), *Understanding Peace and Conflict Through Social Identity Theory: Contemporary Global Perspectives* (pp. 3–17). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-29869-6_1
- Human Rights Watch. (2022, June 7). Violence and Pushbacks at Poland-Belarus Border. *Human Rights Watch*. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/06/07/violence-and-pushbacks-poland-belarus-border>
- Intolerance*. (2023, May 24). <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/intolerance>
- Jain, N. (2021). Survey Versus Interviews: Comparing Data Collection Tools for Exploratory Research. *The Qualitative Report*. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2021.4492>

- Janmaat, J. G., & Keating, A. (2019). Are today's youth more tolerant? Trends in tolerance among young people in Britain. *Ethnicities*, 19(1), 44–65.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1468796817723682>
- Jasiewicz, K. (2008). The New Populism in Poland: *The Usual Suspects? Problems of Post-Communism*, 55(3), 7–25. <https://doi.org/10.2753/PPC1075-8216550302>
- Jaskulowski, K. (2019). *The Everyday Politics of Migration Crisis in Poland: Between Nationalism, Fear and Empathy* (1st ed. 2019). Springer International Publishing: Imprint: Palgrave Pivot. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-10457-3>
- KĄDZIELA, A. (2023). *POLITYCZNY PORTRET MŁODYCH POLAKÓW 2023*. KONRAD ADENAUER STIFTUNG - CENTRUM BADAŃ INDICATOR.
- Kimmel, M. (2007). Racism as Adolescent Male Rite of Passage: Ex-Nazis in Scandinavia. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 36(2), 202–218.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241606298825>
- Koschalka, B. (2021, October 8). Belarus “importing economic migrants” to Poland in “hybrid war against EU”, says Kaczyński. *Notes From Poland*.
<https://notesfrompoland.com/2021/10/08/belarus-importing-economic-migrants-to-poland-in-hybrid-war-against-eu-says-kaczynski/>
- Krawatzek, F. (2022). A Sign of Things to Come? Youth and Politics: Regimes, Values and Agency. *Europe-Asia Studies*, 74(7), 1105–1122.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09668136.2022.2108260>
- Krzemiński, I. (2002). Polish-Jewish Relations, Anti-Semitism and National Identity. *Polish Sociological Review*, 137, 25–51.
- Łaciak, B., & Frelak, J. S. (2018). *THE WAGES OF FEAR ATTITUDES TOWARDS REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS IN POLAND*.
- Landman, T. (2017). *Issues and methods in comparative politics: An introduction* (Fourth edition). Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Leszczyński, A., & Wyborcza, A. L. of G. (2015, July 2). “Poles don't want immigrants. They don't understand them, don't like them.” *The Guardian*.
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jul/02/pires-dont-want-immigrants-the-y-dont-understand-them-dont-like-them>
- Lichbach, M. I. (1998). *The Rebel's Dilemma*. University of Michigan Press.
- Luka, D. (2021). *History in comparative perspective. Resistance in communist dictatorships after 1945 in Central and Eastern Europe with a focus on Hungary and agriculture*.
- Lydia Gall. (2022, June 27). Polish Court Rules Pushback of Asylum Seekers Unlawful. *Human Rights Watch*. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/06/27/polish-court-rules-pushback-asylum-seekers-unlawful>
- Maxwell, R. (2016). Cultural Diversity and Its Limits in Western Europe. *Current History*, 115(779), 95–101.
- Maykovich, M. K. (1975). Correlates of racial prejudice. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 32(6), 1014–1020. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.32.6.1014>
- Michał Buchowski, Adam Mickiewicz, & Katarzyna Chlewińska. (2023). *Tolerance and Cultural Diversity Discourses in Poland | European Website on Integration*.
https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/library-document/tolerance-and-cultural-diversity-discourses-poland_en

- Mieriņa, I., & Koroļeva, I. (2015). Support for Far Right Ideology and Anti-Migrant Attitudes among Youth in Europe: A Comparative Analysis. *The Sociological Review*, 63(2_suppl), 183–205. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-954X.12268>
- Milkman, R. (2017). A New Political Generation: Millennials and the Post-2008 Wave of Protest. *American Sociological Review*, 82(1), 1–31. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122416681031>
- Mills, J., Bonner, A., & Francis, K. (2006). The Development of Constructivist Grounded Theory. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 5(1), 25–35. <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690600500103>
- Minkenbergh, M. (2002). *The Radical Right in Postsocialist Central and Eastern Europe: Comparative Observations and Interpretations*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/088832540201600201>
- Mitchell, T. (2018, October 29). Eastern and Western Europeans Differ on Importance of Religion, Views of Minorities, and Key Social Issues. *Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project*. <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2018/10/29/eastern-and-western-europeans-differ-on-importance-of-religion-views-of-minorities-and-key-social-issues/>
- Mohrem, B. (2020). *Examining the Concept of the "Other" According to Edward W. Said*. 6, 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.24113/ijohmn.v6i2.171>
- Morgan, G., & Poynting, S. (2016). *Global Islamophobia: Muslims and moral panic in the West*. Routledge.
- Mrozowicki, A., & Kajta, J. (2021). Young People, Precarious Employment and Nationalism in Poland: Exploring the (Missing) Links. *European Review*, 29(4), 470–483. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1062798720000514>
- Mrozowicki, A., Trappmann, V., Seehaus, A., & Kajta, J. (2019). Who Is a Right-Wing Supporter? On the Biographical Experiences of Young Right-Wing Voters in Poland and Germany. *Qualitative Sociology Review*, 15(4), 212–235. <https://doi.org/10.18778/1733-8077.15.4.10>
- Mudde, C. (2010). The Populist Radical Right: A Pathological Normalcy. *West European Politics*, 33(6), 1167–1186. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2010.508901>
- Mudrov, S. A. (2022). “We did not unleash this war. Our conscience is clear”. The Russia–Ukraine military conflict and its perception in Belarus. *Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe*, 30(2), 273–284. <https://doi.org/10.1080/25739638.2022.2089390>
- Ndame, T. (2023). Case Study. In J. M. Okoko, S. Tunison, & K. D. Walker (Eds.), *Varieties of Qualitative Research Methods* (pp. 67–72). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-04394-9_11
- Noel, J. G., Wann, D. L., & Branscombe, N. R. (1995). Peripheral ingroup membership status and public negativity toward outgroups. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 68(1), 127–137. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.68.1.127>
- Nowak, B., Brzówska, P., Piotrowski, J., Żemojtel-Piotrowska, M., & Jonason, P. K. (2023). They will (not) deceive us! The role of agentic and communal national narcissism in shaping the attitudes to Ukrainian refugees in Poland. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 208, 112184. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2023.112184>
- Nyberg, R. (2023). *Russia, Ukraine, and Poland: The End of a Tragic Triangle*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. <https://carnegieendowment.org/politika/90289>
- Olasunkanmi Arowolo. (2017). *UNDERSTANDING FRAMING THEORY*. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.25800.52482>
- Oxford Learner's Dictionaries*. (n.d.). Retrieved May 30, 2023, from <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/intolerance>

- Paszewski, T. (2016). Can Poland Defend Itself? In *Survival* 58.2. Routledge.
- Paul, S. (2015). *Defining tolerance—UNESCO Digital Library*.
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000232631>
- Pettigrew, T. F., & Tropp, L. R. (2005). Allport's Intergroup Contact Hypothesis: Its History and Influence. In J. F. Dovidio, P. Glick, & L. A. Rudman (Eds.), *On the Nature of Prejudice* (pp. 262–277). Blackwell Publishing Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470773963.ch16>
- Pew Research Center, N. (2017, November 29). Europe's Growing Muslim Population. *Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project*.
<https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2017/11/29/europes-growing-muslim-population/>
- Piekut, A., & Valentine, G. (2016). Perceived Diversity and Acceptance of Minority Ethnic Groups in Two Urban Contexts. *European Sociological Review*, 32(3), 339–354.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcw011>
- Powell, J., & Menendian, S. (n.d.). *The Problem of Othering: TOWARDS INCLUSIVENESS AND BELONGING*.
- Rezaei, S., Kobari, K., & Salami, A. (2019). The Portrayal of Islam and Muslims in Western Media: A Critical Discourse Analysis. *Cultura*, 16(1), 53–73.
<https://doi.org/10.3726/CUL012019.0004>
- Rowley, J. (2012). Conducting research interviews. *Management Research Review*, 35(3/4), 260–271. <https://doi.org/10.1108/01409171211210154>
- Said, E. W. (1978). *Orientalism* (1st ed). Pantheon Books.
- Said, E. W. (1985). Orientalism Reconsidered. *Cultural Critique*, 1, 89.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/1354282>
- Scanlan, C. L. (2020). *Preparing for the Unanticipated: Challenges in Conducting Semi-Structured, In-Depth Interviews*. SAGE Publications Ltd.
<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781529719208>
- Schnabel, L. (2018). Sexual Orientation and Social Attitudes. *Socius: Sociological Research for a Dynamic World*, 4, 237802311876955. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2378023118769550>
- Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as Qualitative Research: A Guide for Researchers in Education and the Social Sciences*. Teachers College Press.
- Shahwar, D. (2014). Portrayal of the Muslim World in the Western Print Media Post-9/11: Editorial Treatment in “The New York Times” and “The Daily Telegraph.” *Pakistan Horizon*, 67(3/4), 133–166.
- Sińczuch, M., Michalski, P., & Piotrowski, M. (2021). Inequalities Among Youth and Support for Right-Wing Populism in Poland. In M. Giugni & M. Grasso (Eds.), *Youth and Politics in Times of Increasing Inequalities* (pp. 231–257). Springer International Publishing.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-63676-0_10
- Smith, A. D. (1994). Ethnic Nationalism and the Plight of Minorities. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 7(2–3), 186–198. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/7.2-3.186>
- Stouffer, S. A. (1955). *Communism, Conformity, and Civil Liberties: A Cross-section of the Nation Speaks Its Mind*. Transaction Publishers.
- Strabac, Z., Listhaug, O., & Jakobsen, T. G. (2011). Patterns of Ethnic Intolerance in Europe. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-011-0222-4>
- Szczerbiak, A. (2020, January 6). What are the prospects for Poland's radical right Confederation? *EUROPP*. <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/2020/01/06/what-are-the-prospects-for-polands-radical-right-confederation/>

- Tajfel, H. (1974). Social identity and intergroup behaviour. *Social Science Information*, 13(2), 65–93. <https://doi.org/10.1177/053901847401300204>
- Tavkhelidze, T. (2021). Historical Origins of European Islamophobia: The Nexus of Islamist Terrorism, Colonialism and the Holy Wars Reconsidered. *Journal of the Contemporary Study of Islam*, 2(2), 142–162. <https://doi.org/10.37264/jcsi.v2i2.64>
- Tomasiewicz, J. (2020). Confederacy—The polish new right wing between tradition and modernity. *Studia Politicae Universitatis Silesiensis*, 30, 7–32. <https://doi.org/10.31261/spus.11379>
- Triandafyllidou, A. (2010). *Addressing Cultural, Ethnic & Religious Diversity Challenges in Europe*.
- Turton, D., & González, J. (2000). *Ethnic Diversity in Europe: Challenges to the Nation State*.
- Twenge, J. M., Carter, N. T., & Campbell, W. K. (2015). Time Period, Generational, and Age Differences in Tolerance for Controversial Beliefs and Lifestyles in the United States, 1972–2012. *Social Forces*, 94(1), 379–399.
- United Nations: DEFINITION OF YOUTH. (2013).
- van Leeuwen, E. S., & Vega, S. H. (2021). Voting and the rise of populism: Spatial perspectives and applications across Europe. *Regional Science Policy & Practice*, 13(2), 209–219. <https://doi.org/10.1111/rsp3.12411>
- Verkuyten, M., Yogeewaran, K., & Adelman, L. (2020). The Negative Implications of Being Tolerated: Tolerance From the Target’s Perspective. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 15(3), 544–561. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691619897974>
- Welsh, H. A. (1996). Dealing with the Communist past: Central and East European Experiences after 1990. *Europe-Asia Studies*, 48(3), 413–428.
- Winiewski, M., & Bulska, D. (2020). Beat, Ignore, Force to Conform: Development and Initial Validation of a Multidimensional Scale of Acceptance of Collective Violence. *International Journal of Conflict and Violence (IJCV)*, 1-17 Pages. <https://doi.org/10.4119/IJCV-3775>
- Włoch, R. (2009). Islam in Poland: Between Ethnicity and Universal Umma. *International Journal of Sociology*, 39(3), 58–67. <https://doi.org/10.2753/IJS0020-7659390303>
- Yilmaz, K. (2013). Comparison of Quantitative and Qualitative Research Traditions: Epistemological, theoretical, and methodological differences: *European Journal of Education*. *European Journal of Education*, 48(2), 311–325. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ejed.12014>
- ZDF. (2021). *Altersstruktur der Wähler: Bilderserie: Wer wählte welche Partei*. <https://www.zdf.de/uri/e7c82ac3-04b1-4a69-9bdc-df1aced6ce87>
- Zhang, Y., & Wildemuth, B. M. (2009). *Qualitative Analysis of Content*.
- Żuk, P. (2017). Anti-Semitism in Poland, yesterday and today. *Race & Class*, 58(3), 81–86. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306396816667045>
- Żuk, P. (2020). One Leader, One Party, One Truth: Public Television Under the Rule of the Populist Right in Poland in the Pre-Election Period in 2019. *Javnost - The Public*, 27(3), 287–307. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13183222.2020.1794413>
- Zunes, S. (2017). Europe’s Refugee Crisis, Terrorism, and Islamophobia. *Peace Review*, 29(1), 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10402659.2017.1272275>

Appendix 1: Participants Information Sheet

Plain Language Statement

Title of project and researcher details: Polish Youth identities: A Contemporary Study About Media and its Impact on youth Identity Formation

Researcher: Amira Elmofty

Supervisor: David Smith and Jacek Kolodziej

Course: International Master in Central and Eastern European Russian and Eurasian Studies

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Thank you for reading this'.

1. What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of this study is to understand youth identities.

2. Why have I been chosen?

Because you are a person whose age is between 18-25 and you are Polish.

3. Do I have to take part?

You do not have to take part in this study. If you do not want to take part. If, after you started to take part, you decided to change your mind, just let me know and I will not use any information you have given me in my writing.

4. What will happen to me if I take part?

If you decide to take part you will be included in a discussion about identity, how certain groups are viewed in your community, do you feel that there are any sources that affects youth identity formation. You do not have to engage in any discussions that you do not want to. This will take about one hour. I will record the answers on a voice recorder so that afterwards I can listen carefully to what was said.

5. Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

I will keep all the data I collect about youth identity formation in a locked file on my computer. When I write about what I have found, your name will not be mentioned. You may choose a pseudonym which I will use when writing up the final assignment.

Please note that assurances on confidentiality will be strictly adhered to unless evidence of wrongdoing or potential harm is uncovered. In such cases the University may be obliged to contact relevant statutory bodies/agencies.

6. What will happen to the results of the research study?

I will analyse the data I collect from you and the other participants and present this in the dissertation which I am writing for my qualification, Individuals who have participated will receive a written summary of the findings and I will also present the information to colleagues. I will destroy the data at the end of the project.

8. Who has reviewed the study?

This study has been reviewed and agreed by the School of Social and Political Sciences Ethics Forum, University of Glasgow

Contact for Further Information

If you have any questions about this study, you can ask me Amira Elmofty,
(2677870E@student.gla.ac.uk)

Or **my supervisor**, David Smith (David.Smith@glasgow.ac.uk)

Or **the Ethics officer** for the School of Social and Political Sciences, Professor Gerda Reith
Gerda.Reith@glasgow.ac.uk

Thank you for reading this.

Appendix 2: Participants' consent form:



Consent Form

College of Social Sciences

Title of Project: **Polish Youth identities: A Contemporary Study About Media and its Impact on youth Identity Formation**

Name of Researcher: Amira Elmofty

Name of Supervisor: David Smith, Jacek Kolodziej

Please tick as appropriate

Yes No I confirm that I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

Yes No I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

Yes No I consent to interviews being audio-recorded

Yes No I acknowledge that participants will be referred to by pseudonym.

I agree that:

Yes No All names and other material likely to identify individuals will be anonymised.

Yes No The material will be treated as confidential and kept in secure storage at all times.

Yes No The material will be destroyed once the project is complete.

Yes No The research material will be destroyed once the project is complete.

Yes No I waive my copyright to any data collected as part of this project.

Yes No Other authenticated researchers may use my words in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs, only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information as requested in this form

Yes No I acknowledge the provision of a Privacy Notice in relation to this research project.

I agree to take part in this research study

I do not agree to take part in this research study

Name of Participant Signature

Date

Appendix 3: Interview guide.

The questions were semi-structured, therefore, these were not the only questions that were asked, they only served as guides for the interviews. As the interviews were led by the participants, in line with the methodology. Moreover, the order of the question depended on each interview and the direction of the conversation with participants.

- **Demographics:**
 - Can you tell me your Age & where are you from?
- **Education:**
 - Tell me about your school. Which subjects were mandatory at school?
- **Religion:**
 - What do you think about teaching religion at schools?
 - Do you think that the Catholicism plays a major role in youths' value system?
- **Economic:**
 - According to a study conducted in 2013 by the Center of Research on Prejudice, 69% of Polish people do not accept immigrants because of economic reasons. Can you please comment? If this survey was conducted among youth, would it achieve similar results? (Leszczyński & Wyborcza, 2015)
 - To what extent do you think it is rational that jobs in Poland should to be limited to Poles?
 - What is the difference between a migrant and a refugee?
- **Political:**
 - *Show a picture of the refugees on the Polish-Belarussian border.* How do you feel about this picture and why?
 - *Show a picture of Ukrainian refugees.* How do you feel about this picture and why?
 - To what extent do you think that Poland should accept immigrants from all countries?
 - According to a Pew Research Centre study, 60% of Polish respondents viewed migrants from the Middle East and Muslim refugees as a threat. Can you please tell me your opinion? (Pew Research Center, 2017)
 - In your opinion, what makes Poland unique compared to other countries/nations?
 - How would you define a Polish citizen?/ In your opinion who can become a Pole?
- **Culture and Media**
 - What media do you often use?
 - Do you feel that there is enough representation of minorities in Polish mainstream media? (Ethnic, religious and sexual.)
- **General question:**
 - What do you think is the main reason for intolerance among youth?
 - Have you encountered any form of intolerance among young people? Why?
 - Why do young people vote for *Konfederacja*?
 - What do you think of the current ruling party?
- **Abortion and LGBTQ:**
 - To what extent you think young Poles accept same-sex relations. Do you agree on same-sex relations?
 - Can you share your thoughts about the topic of abortion and the laws surrounding it in Poland

Appendix 4: Ethical Approval: Glasgow University



University
of Glasgow

Ethics Committee for Non-Clinical Research Involving Human Subjects

Notification of Ethics Application Outcome – UG and PGT Student Applications

College of Social
Sciences

Application Details

Undergraduate Student Research Ethics Application Postgraduate Student Research Ethics Application

Application Number: PGT/SPS/2022/315/IMCEERRES

Applicant's Name: Amira Elmofty

Project Title: Polish Youth Rising Intolerance: A Contemporary Study About Media and its Impact on Youth Far-right Identity Formation.

Application Status: Fully Approved

Date of Review: 15/11/2022

Start Date of Approval

16/11/2022

End Date of Approval

15/09/2023

NB: Only if the applicant has been given approval can they proceed with their data collection with effect from the date of approval.

Recommendations (where changes are required)

Where changes are required by reviewers all applicants must respond in the relevant boxes to the recommendations of the Committee and provide this as the Resubmission Document to explain the changes you have made to the application as well as amending the documents. **Changes to the application form or supporting documents should be highlighted either in block highlight or in red coloured text to assist the reviewers.**

All resubmitted application documents should then be provided.

Approval Subject to Amendments means that the applicant can proceed with data collection with effect from the date of approval, but amendments must be fulfilled.

Amendments Subject to SEF should be submitted to ethics administrator.

If your application is rejected a new application must be submitted to the ethics administrator. Where recommendations are provided, they should be responded to and this document provided as part of the new application. A new reference number will be generated.

REVIEWER MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS	APPLICANT RESPONSE

--	--

REVIEWER MINOR RECOMMENDATIONS	APPLICANT RESPONSE

ADDITIONAL REVIEWER COMMENTS	APPLICANT RESPONSE
<p>In point 16, you have stated that: <i>“I will be traveling to unfamiliar places and I do not speak Polish, I will manage them by providing the details of the dates and times of the focus groups to a local friend, I will leave all my contact details to my local friends so they can check up on me, this friend is Polish, as A way of mitigating any risks the focus groups will be conducted online to avoid any risks”</i>.</p> <p>You have said that you will conduct your focus groups online so I am really struggling to understand the rationale for travelling to unfamiliar places (you do not use participant observation as a method in this project). I will consider that the project will conduct the focus groups in online format only thus downgrading the risk of the project as both the researcher’s safety and the participants will be better guaranteed, thus preventing some harmful situations.</p> <p>Section 10.1 and 11b is unclear in this respect too. So, please, conduct your focus groups in online format only.</p> <p>Please use Microsoft Teams when conducting the focus groups or Zoom with the following precautions:</p> <p>If you need to use Zoom: “• If you use the University of Glasgow’s Zoom service make sure you enable local recording and that you continue to follow the University’s guidance on handling confidential data.</p>	

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Zoom is not recommended for highly confidential or sensitive data; you should use UofG Microsoft Teams instead. | |
|---|--|

(Retrieved from <https://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/socialpolitical/students/studentinfo/researchethics/>)

Please retain this notification for future reference. If you have any enquiries, please email [School ethics email address](#)

University of Glasgow
College of Social Sciences
Glasgow G12 8QQ
The University of Glasgow, charity number SC004401

Appendix 5: Jagiellonian University Ethical Approval.

Ethics in Research Commission
Institute of European Studies
Jagiellonian University in Kraków



Kraków, 24th April 2023

APPROVAL DECISION

for the project

Polish Youth Rising Intolerance: A Contemporary Study About Media and its Impact on Youth Far-right Identity Formation.

The Ethics in Research Commission of the Institute of European Studies of the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, having assessed the scope and consequences of research undertaken within the project *Polish Youth Rising Intolerance: A Contemporary Study About Media and its Impact on Youth Far-right Identity Formation* submitted by Ms. Amira Elmofy, hereby declares that the project meets the standards of ethical research as adopted by the Institute of European Studies.

The Commission finds that the applicant have considered thoroughly the ethical dilemmas that may be involved in their research and safeguarded adequate protection of all potential participants as well as their personal data.

The Commission issues an additional recommendation to the applicant:

The submitted outline of interview questions should be used in a way which will not directly trigger the interviewees or put them in a situation in which some level of intolerance will be expected of them. In other words, during the interviews no prior assumptions about intolerance should be made; questions pertaining thereto should rather appear after some gateway intolerance marks have been found. Otherwise the interviews will prove what was assumed and put the interviewees in the uneasy position of defending themselves against presuppositions made about them.

Members of the Commission:

Dr. hab. Jacek Kolodziej, prof. UI (Chair)

Dr. Ewa Kamarad

Dr. Joanna Orzechowska-Waślawska

Dr. Przemysław Tacik

On behalf of the Commission,

Dr. Przemysław Tacik

Secretary of the Commission